



Newsletter

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- Up Words # 50

GOOD DEAL



All bargain hunters know that today is Cyber Monday. It is reported to be one of the least efficient work days of the year because many employees are furtively using their computers or smart phones to check out the super deals from thousands of online retailers. Apparently there are many who were not satisfied with the super sales of Thanksgiving weekend.

I've been wondering if all the hustle and bustle to find bargains is good or bad. I think I've come to the conclusion that it is generally a good thing. If people are getting the most for their hard-earned money, that is wise stewardship. Remember the Proverbs 31 woman? She's a great example of virtuous stewardship. She works with her hands (13), sews (18-19) and then sells linens and belts (24). She also buys land and plants a vineyard that will provide for her household (16). Her stewardship is a blessing to her family. Also noteworthy is her charitable spirit, for we read in Proverbs 31:20 that "she extends her hand to the poor, and she stretches out her hands to the needy." It is good to be a wise shopper so that you can have more to provide for your family or give away!

There is, however, a potential downside to deal hunting. Some consumers may be given to greed. They constantly have to have more and even though they may be able to buy it more reasonably, it could be nothing more than wasteful excess. Consider Jacob. Genesis 30:28-43 informs us of his deal with his father-in-law, Laban, to keep for his own all the speckled and spotted lambs born to Laban's sheep. Now Jacob must have had an advanced degree in biology and genetics for somehow he was able to get many of the sheep to produce speckled and spotted lambs by placing particular tree branches in their sight. Anyway, the end result is that he greedily and deceitfully took many of Laban's lambs. Like super-wealthy Solomon many greedy buyers will find that having it all is nothing more than "vanity and striving after the wind" and therefore unprofitable. It's the ultimate emptiness! (See Ecclesiastes 2:10-11). If you're buying to simply have more, it's not a good deal.

Here's the bottom line: Buying at discounts is good when it reflects wise stewardship; it is bad when it indicates wanton selfishness.

Looking Up,
Pastor Chuck Circle