



THE THREE MOST REBELLIOUS THINGS JESUS DID

Our hero, the Reverend Doctor Martin “Winkie” Luther, is suffering from a terrible illness in this video commercial, which his always-wise wife, “Katie Lu,” quickly diagnoses as a bad case of “affluenza”—the distress and lack of fulfillment brought about by affluence and the accumulation of too much material wealth. Katie also has a cure: “Balm of Gilead” in a tube. According to an old hymn (though not in the Bible), the “Balm of Gilead” is a metaphor for the healing power of the Gospel.

1. Do you know of anyone who became ill from too much affluence? What sort of illness was it? Many have believed that affluence is a sign of God’s blessing. Would you agree? Why or why not?
2. Given that affluence carries the risk of illness, is it a risk you’d be willing to take? What attributes or character traits do you have that would allow you to handle the dangers of wealth that have been the downfall of others?
3. Jesus taught that the poor are blessed (Luke 6:20) and advised a rich man to give away all he had (Luke 18:18-30). Does this suggest that Jesus’ only cure for affluenza is to become poor? Can you think of any other alternatives? Does Luke 18:27 offer any clues? What about Matthew 5:3?
4. Teachings such as these have led some to conclude that Jesus was crucified because he was a political revolutionary. Are there other dimensions to Jesus’ teachings that some might have found offensive? Are there other dimensions that give comfort to those afflicted with affluenza?