

Bible says people should share their excess

My mother's oldest sibling, Uncle James, was born in 1925. After a stint in the Navy during World War II, he landed a job in a hardware store.

When the owner retired in 1958, he took over the business and built it into a regional success. He routinely put in 16-hour days and expected the same from his employees.

Uncle James didn't believe in helping anyone with anything. By his reasoning, everything he earned was his and he was under no obligation to support those who "just need to work a little harder." One of his favorite sayings – he had several – was "hunger keeps you motivated."

Even though he was worth over half a million dollars by the mid-1960s, Uncle James hardly ever spent any of his money. Most of it went straight into the bank, although he was rumored to have a small fortune stashed around the house.

One year, the woman who lived across the street needed to buy school clothes. Her husband had died of cancer leaving her with four small children.

Uncle James refused to give her any money, saying she should just use her "welfare handout."

In the early 1970s, his son developed a drug habit. Mom used to talk about how her brother saw this as a sign of weakness and

turned his back on him. Certainly he never visited Jason while he was in prison.

Uncle James always seemed obsessed with his retirement; he was particularly worried about ending up in the "county farm." That wasn't going to happen to him.

And it didn't. He died of a heart attack in 1988, three months short of his 63rd birthday. His estate was worth approximately \$3 million.

For more about what ultimately happened to my Uncle James, see either Luke 12:16-21 or Matthew 25:41-43.

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