

# Spending Money to Say “I Love You”

## Don’t Let Materialism Take the Meaning out of Your Celebrations

Angela Hutchison

I believe that most celebrations have been co-opted by materialism. Companies have drilled it into our heads that we have to buy the affection of the ones

**We see these ads, and we think we have to go out and spend money on useless stuff so that people will love us.**

we love. And we as humans are vulnerable to that message. Look at how much money we spend on holidays and birthdays. We are trying to let a family member or friend know that we love them,

but there is no reason to spend a ton of money to say, “I love you.”

Companies want to make money. So they show ads on TV of a man giving his girlfriend expensive jewelry and other gifts. Giving is very nice, but does he really have to go spend hundreds of dollars on candy, cards, and jewelry to show he loves her? Why can’t he just say, “I love you”? We see these ads, and we think we have to go out and spend money on useless stuff so that people will love us.

One holiday where we spend too much money is Christmas. It’s not about Jesus; it’s about the gifts under the tree. My kids don’t play with half the stuff they get. Most of the time, their toys sit on the living room floor in boxes until February. All the toy ads that my kids see make them think they want this stuff. They think they have to have it or it’s the end of the world. But why must we buy so much stuff? You might say: because it will make my kids happy. It is a way for me to show my love. Wrong answer! It’s because we are told by big business that we have to, and we give in to the pressure.

We should stop spending money to say, “I love you.” We should stop buying stuff that we

(and our kids) don’t need. We should put our money into a vacation or college fund. Let’s do something together instead of sitting inside playing with stuff that some big business told us we just had to have. Let’s stop trying to buy love. Let’s show our love with words or actions – not money and material objects.



Angela Hutchison recently graduated from North Kansas City Public Schools in Kansas City, MO, with her high school equivalency. She is happily married with two wonderful children. She is a natural caregiver, which is why she plans to go to college to get her bachelor’s degree in science and become a nurse.

### Economics 101

**The author says,** “Companies want to make money.” This sounds so obvious, it doesn’t need to be said. But it is a core principle of our economic system, and we should understand it because it affects our life at every level. Capitalism, according to freedictionary.com is “An economic system in which the means of production and distribution are privately or corporately owned and development occurs through the accumulation and reinvestment of profits gained in a free market.”

**Use the internet** to learn more about capitalism and these terms: means of production, profit, and free market.

**According to the author,** how does the fact that “companies want to make money” affect us?