

What about the view that if a miracle man makes money from it that he is a fraud or possibly one?

Miracle mongers take advantage of the tendency shown by religious people to more readily believe miracle claims if the claimant is not interested much in money or worldly goods and if he or she does not try to financially profit from his or her claims. If the claimant does a lot for God they think that is hard work and proves her or his sincerity. They think the person has sacrificed a chance to live the good life - whatever that means to the person - for God.

But that is simplistic thinking.

Money makes you enemies for they are jealous.

The love of money means you suffer the fear of losing it.

Having money makes you suspect your friends of being out to get something off you.

The love of money makes you anxious to make more.

It is no sacrifice to show little interest in worldly things. Belief in miracles is dangerous because even if our beloved local miracle worker uses his religious role to fleece us financially it does not show him to be a fraud.

If you are going to believe in miracles, you need to consider believing in all the miracles that were disparaged by society and religion as the person at the centre of it sought financial benefits from the miracles. That will make you think miracles must be very common.

Safer not to believe ...

And many miracle-mongers want to be celebrities - it need not be about money.

You know that others like you to be like them in values and manners and thinking etc. If you fear that too many are not like you you may resort to trickery and lies in the hope of influencing them to become more inspired by you and thus to boost your ego. The "good" Catholic may fake apparitions from Mary or Jesus to gain influence.

We must remember too that some miracle mongers do not want any more money than anybody else - it is enough if they are guaranteed enough to live on. If you don't make a fortune from your fake miracles, you will make friends who will feed you and keep a roof over your head. So the miracle monger may not set out to make much money. But knowing you will always be looked after and have friends is a powerful incentive to fraudulently produce miracles.