

Small Group Study

Our Vision

To know God and enjoy Him forever.

Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people

Discussion

Building Kingdom People: Living Debt-free

Scripture

Have volunteers read the following scriptures:
Romans 13:8 and Luke 16:1-9

Questions

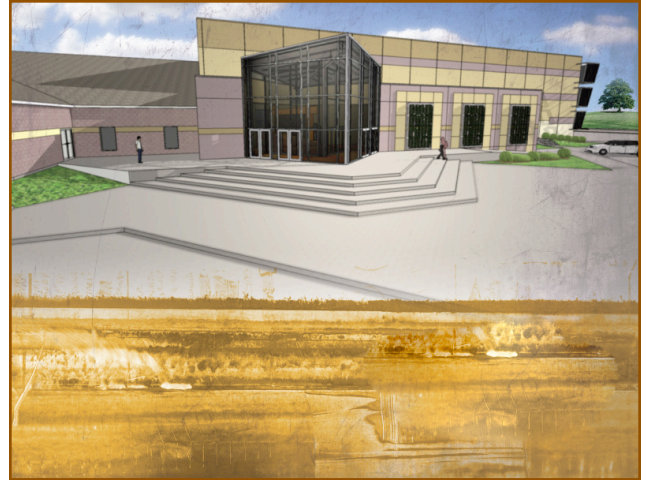
1. In the parable we just read, the rich man praises the manager for acting shrewdly, not dishonestly. Although we often think of money as a means of exchange to purchase goods and services, the manager understood that money has many other uses. In your opinion, what kind of spiritual power does money have?

2. "Affluenza" is defined as: a painful, contagious, socially transmitted condition of overload, debt, anxiety, and waste resulting from the dogged pursuit of more. Consumerism can best be described using this term. All too often, the effects of affluenza are mistaken for a simple headache or a backache. In reality, people's physical, mental, and spiritual health are at risk. Working extra hours in pursuit of more money is cutting into family time and demoralizing society as we know it. Through marketing, advertisers send people the message that they need to buy more things, in order to be happy.

"We buy a wastebasket and take it home in a plastic bag. Then we take the wastebasket out of the bag, and put the bag in the wastebasket." --Lily Tomlin, comedian

Does any of this resonate with you? Does anyone you know embody any of the traits of affluenza?

3. Here are some affluenza self-diagnosis questions. Give your small group members time to read through them and circle any that apply to them:



Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

- 1.** What was the highlight of this past week for you?
- 2.** If your house burned down and you could only remove 3 things (not including living beings), what would you take?
- 3.** If you were given a million dollars, tax-free, what would you do with it?

1. Do you get bored unless you have something to consume (goods, food, media)?
2. Do you try to impress your friends with what you own, or where you vacation?
3. Do you ever use shopping as "therapy"?
4. Do you sometimes go to the mall just to look around, with nothing specific to buy?
5. Have you ever gone on a vacation primarily to shop?
6. In general, do you think about things more than you think about people?
7. Do you personally fill more than one large trash bag in a single week?
8. Have you ever lied to a family member about the amount you spent for a product?
9. Do you frequently argue with family members about money?
10. Does each person in your house or apartment occupy more than 500 square feet of personal space?
11. Are any of your credit cards "maxed out"?
12. Do you worry about your debt load?
13. Do you spend more time shopping every week than you do with your family?
14. Do your conversations often gravitate toward things you want to buy?
15. Are you sometimes ashamed about how much money you spend eating out?
16. Has one of your credit cards ever been rejected because you were over the limit?
17. Do you have more than two active credit cards?
18. Do you usually make just the minimum payment on credit card bills?
19. When you get extra money, do you immediately think about how you can spend it?
20. When you shop, do you often feel a rush of euphoria followed by anxiety?
21. Do you have more stuff than you can store in your house?

Can you relate to any of these? If you circled 6 or more of these questions you may need to reevaluate your spending in order to stay healthy. You might want to sign up for the class, "Financial Peace University."

4. Jesus says, "...use worldly wealth to gain friends for yourselves, so that when it is gone, you will be welcomed into eternal dwellings." Here's Jesus's purpose for money: We are to use worldly wealth to show God's love to others. How can we do that?

God bless,

Roger Sodsod

Small Group Pastor

email: rsodsod@vineyardkcnorth.com
