

Small Group Study Guide – **Member Guide**

For the weekend of 9.5.2010

Ephesians 4:17-24, 28 & Malachi 3.6-18 – That Money's Not Yours

Introduction

This weekend at the Summit we are working through the 8th commandment, "You shall not steal." Paul reinforces this command for the church and explains that it is part of the new life that we have in the Holy Spirit. Greed is associated with deceitful desires, ignorance, and corruption, whereas generosity is associated with productivity, renewal, and being like God. The Prophet Malachi uses the 8th commandment to expose some hidden arrogance on Israel's part. Though Israel was going through a tough time economically, Malachi calls the people to be faithful to the one who has the power to pull them out. When we are in a right relationship with God, we realize that the money we have all belongs to him, and that fundamentally changes our relationship to money.

Note: The small group study guide is designed to work in partnership with the weekend message. So each week you should work through this guide, take notes during the sermon, and come prepared to discuss both of these in your group.

Break the ice (pick one)

1. Tell the story about a toy or game that you saved up for when you were younger. How did you feel when you got to bring that toy home?
-Or -
2. Think back to the first time that you saw someone steal. Who were they stealing from and what was your reaction? Did you ever steal anything when you were younger?

Based on the sermon from this weekend, how is generosity a sign of a healthy soul?

Dig Into the text

Read Ephesians 4:17-24, 28 and look over any notes you have from the sermon. What challenged you from the sermon? Where you most convicted about greed in your own life?

Verses 18-19 talk about the hardness and callousness that come with the old way of life. How have you experienced this callousness? How has the Spirit melted away this callousness?

In verse 28, Paul lists generosity as a main motivation for Christians to go to work and be productive members of society. Why is generosity a clear sign of Christ's influence on a person's life?

Read Malachi 3:6-18. Why is generosity a necessary element of a healthy relationship with God?

Why does God say that he will spare the ones who feared him? How do we know that we are God's treasured possession?

Read Luke 2:1-4. Why does God call us to be generous even when we are experiencing economic hardship?

Apply it to your life

Identify the reasons in your life that cause you to hesitate at the thought of giving to the poor? Are these reasons legitimate? How can you overcome the illegitimate excuses that inhibit your generosity?

What does your budget indicate that you value the most? How does this match up with the legacy that you would like to be remembered for?

Prayer Guide

Hebrews 12:22-29 – The Eternal Kingdom

Take time in your personal study and then as a group to pray through this vision of our future as disciples of Christ. In praying through this passage pray the following:

- Thank Jesus for restoring your relationship with God and allowing you to return to him.
- Ask God for gratefulness for the material blessings he has given us.
- Thank God for establishing an eternal kingdom and inviting us into it.
- Pray that God would make us men and women who can put this eternal kingdom on display in our lives.
- Take a few moments to give God the reverence that he deserves.