



The Trial of Money

Small Group Work Sheet
April 3, 2011

Part 1 - Ice Breaker

- Divide your small group in half. Have each group take two minutes to brainstorm a list of famous people who died in the last ten years. The group that comes up with the biggest list wins!
- The *Beverly Hillbillies* reminds us that the rich and poor look at life differently. If you remember the show, share who was your favorite character or what was your favorite episode and what they did that was so funny.

Part 2 - Sermon Review

- Poverty can lead to discouragement. How is a Christian struggling financially to handle the discouragement that comes with tough financial times?
- What are specific aspects of our Christian character that are matured through financial trials?
- Financial comfort can lead to haughtiness and pride. What is it about financial comfort that can be so spiritually lethal? See Matthew 19:24-26?
- We often find our worth through comparing ourselves to others. Why is that a dead-end road for our identities? What is the only thing that matters about us? See 1 John 3:1-3 for another angle on this truth.
- According to 1 Timothy 6:17, what should our attitude be toward money? Should we feel guilty if we spend some of it on things we enjoy?
- Money is only one way we compare ourselves to others. Pastor Kurt mentioned other scales of comparison we use. (I'm smart, I'm dumb; I'm popular, I'm a social misfit; I'm good looking, I'm average; I'm a success, I'm a failure) Can you think of other ways we try to boost our ego by comparing ourselves to others? What area of ego boosting do you often fall to? How does, "We are who we are in Christ" liberate you from the bondage of comparison?
- How do you feel about the doctrine of eternal rewards? Does it feel weird that God *wants to* motivate us by rewarding us for our faithfulness to him through a trial? By definition, a reward *must be better* than the price we paid to get it, or it wouldn't be a reward. If the crown of life makes all our earthly trials nothing by comparison, how amazing do you think it will be?

Part 3 - Digging Deeper... *Be ready for every good work*

In the Trucksess family Bible study, I was struck by a theme that comes through Titus again and again. In fact, it is a theme throughout the New Testament. See if you can find it in the verses below.

Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, Titus 2:7 (ESV)

who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Titus 2:14 (ESV)

The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people. Titus 3:8 (ESV)

And let our people learn to devote themselves to good works, so as to help cases of urgent need, and not be unfruitful. Titus 3:14 (ESV)

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, Hebrews 10:24 (ESV)

Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from what is dishonorable, he will be a vessel for honorable use, set apart as holy, useful to the master of the house, ready for every good work. 2 Timothy 2:21 (ESV)

and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. 1 Timothy 5:10 (ESV)

so as to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10 (ESV)

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10 (ESV)

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. 2 Corinthians 9:8 (ESV)

Recently, my thoughts have centered around how we can reach our community for Christ. While presenting the gospel and teaching the Bible is of paramount importance, the church is more than just Bible teaching and a gospel invitation. The church is to be a lighthouse of good works that shines into our community. To do that, we will need to find ways to serve the community we live in, not just the church of which we are a part.

Of course, each one of us already has more than enough busyness in our lives, but *abounding in good works* is who we are in Christ. It is one way the world comes to know that Christ changed our lives.

As a small group, think through ways your group can be more than a Bible study and can be actively involved in “good works” in our community so the love of Christ is felt through us.

Place your ideas on the Christ2rculture web site under sermon comments. Make plans to do them

<http://www.christ2rculture.com/sermons/files/jamestrialmoney.html>