



Week #2 Spend less

BIG IDEA

This Christmas, let us conspire to Spend Less in order to gain more.

SCRIPTURE

*Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against wanting to have more and more things. Life is not made up of how much a person has." **Luke 12:15***

*Jesus called the crowd to him along with his disciples. He said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must say no to themselves. They must pick up their cross and follow me. Whoever wants to save their life will lose it. But whoever loses their life for me and for the good news will save it. What good is it if someone gains the whole world but loses their soul? Or what can anyone trade for their soul?" **Mark 8:34-37***

ICEBREAKER

Share a story about being stressed about giving a gift to someone.

OPENING DISCUSSION

We are encouraging everyone to live counter to our consumerist culture by spending less this Christmas season. What are some ways you can celebrate Christmas in ways that are counter to our consumerist culture whether you've finished your Christmas shopping or not?

BIBLE DISCUSSION

1. Read Luke 12:15 & Mark 8:34 - 37.

What words or phrases stand out to you? Why?

How do these passages call us to live counter culturally?

LIFE APPLICATION

What does it mean to you to spend wisely?

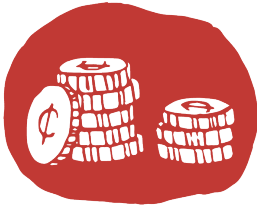
What does it mean to you to spend creatively?

What does it mean to you to spend purposefully?

What does it mean to you to spend justly?

NEXT STEPS CHALLENGE

The better we are about spending wisely, creatively, purposefully and justly the more joyous we will be when it comes to giving gifts to one another and to those in need. How can we as a group encourage one another in that effort? Brainstorm some needs in your community. Where could you and your group spend purposefully of your time or money to help someone else this Christmas season?



LEADERS GUIDE (Week #2 Spend Less)

OPENING DISCUSSION

Use these questions to get people talking about the stress of giving and receiving of Christmas presents. The previous Sunday featured a funny clip of Sheldon from "The Big Bang Theory," lamenting gift giving as the giving of an obligation. Another example is the Christmas card. How many people have stressed over whether or not to send a card to another person based on whether or not they've received a card from the individual or party in question. We can get too caught up in the materialistic side of Christmas, and miss the point of gift giving. Keep in mind that there might be individuals in your group who have already done all their shopping, so it is worth getting the group to think about ways to take the focus off the gifts in addition to spending less on them.

BIBLE DISCUSSION

Encourage the group to read through the passages highlighting the words and phrases that stick out to them. Let them share the words and phrases that stood out to them and let them ask questions they have about the passage. These passages cut across much of what our culture celebrates. We all can feel the pull into materialism, where we look to satisfy our desires in the next purchase. Yet, Jesus is saying that is one way to lose our lives. What does winning and losing look like to Jesus over and against our cultural norms? There are lots of interesting directions this could go.

LIFE APPLICATION

Spend some time brainstorming some ways everyone can spend less, spend wisely, or spend purposely. Be ready to let people share things they have found that have worked for them or their family. Let this be a time for the collective wisdom of the group to shine, and then discuss some practical ways to hold one another accountable.