

SHIFT

Week 3 - From Coveting to Content

THE MAIN POINT

We live in a very materialistic society. As a result, it's easy for students to fall into the attitude trap of covetousness. In this meeting, we want to help students understand when enough is enough and to be grateful for what they have. We hope that students will shift from coveting to content.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Bible
- Slips of paper and pens

GETTING STARTED

Welcome everyone and serve a snack. Ask everyone about how their week was. Start off by going over the rules of small group time together.

RULES FOR SMALL GROUP:

Commitment - Commit to being at every group meeting (make it a priority!)

Confidentiality - What is shared here stays here.

Be honest or be silent - don't make up an answer just to have one. Sometimes the most honest answer is no answer, so if you need to, just say pass.

Respect - for one another, their thoughts/ideas/opinions (no put downs).

Now have them share about their time this last week and how/if filling out the note cards helped them with their complaining attitude. Maybe ask:

Did you find it easier to be grateful as you went on in the week? Did it become easier to find things you were grateful for?

ACTIVITY

Empires

Hand everyone a small slip of paper and a pen. Ask each of them to write some item that they would write on their Christmas list (even if Christmas is not any time soon). Do not write your name on any of them. It needs to be a serious suggestion, but something that is unique to them that no one else will write (otherwise you'll get like 7 PS4s and the game won't work). As the leader, collect all of the slips of paper and mix them up. The object of the game is to try and guess who wrote which item. Read all of the slips of paper out loud twice. Each student will take turns trying to guess who wrote one of the items. If they guess correctly, that student will join their "team" and they get to guess again. If they guess incorrectly, their turn ends.

Students can consult their teammates with guesses, but the student whose item has not been guessed is the team's leader. If a team leader guesses another team leader's item, their whole team becomes theirs. At the end of the game, the student who conquers the whole room wins and has built an empire.

GOING DEEPER

We're going to teach you a new word this week. This word is this week's attitude: coveting. The definition of coveting is "To yearn to possess or have something." In other words, always wanting more of what someone else has or being jealous of other people's things or relationships.

Read Exodus 20:17

Why do you think God lists coveting someone else's things as morally wrong?

Tell students to close their eyes and imagine this scenario:

You're walking down the street and some random dude comes up to and gives you a brand new Apple or Android watch. He says nothing and just walks away. You start messing with it and checking out all the cool things that it does and fall in love with everything about this watch: the gadgets, apps, everything. Things are great for a short while until, two months later, you see that Apple/Android just came out with a newer and better watch that has way more gadgets and cooler features.

Feel free to share another example if you feel the need.

- Where did your mind go? Did you start wanting the new watch? If so, why?
- Why do you think we covet? Why is what we have never enough?

As humans we covet all the time. Even when we have everything we could ever want. Solomon, king of Israel, given the title "wisest man to have ever lived," had everything that he could ever want in this life. You name it, he had it. He had 666 talents of gold coming to him yearly and land as far as the eye could see. A talent was a unit of measure in the ancient world that is essentially 75 pounds. Do the math. That's nearly 50,000 pounds of gold a year. At today's (as of 3/14/18, you can check online if you want to update this statistic.) price of around \$1200 per ounce, that means is yearly salary was around 1 billion of today's dollars per year!

He also had lots of relationships...too many...he had over 300 wives. In addition, Solomon was SUPER famous. Other national rulers would travel across the world just to sit down, listen and to learn from him. These guys weren't flying over 600 miles per hour with a cushioned seat, neck pillow and ac. They were walking. It would take them weeks walking through hot deserts and mud just to have a conversation with him. And this dude still wanted more.

At the end of his life, Solomon wrote this book called "Ecclesiastes." He was looking back on his life and asked the question, "What is the meaning of life?" The book was his way of processing through all of the different ways he had spent his life and thinking through what is meaningless and what is important.

Read Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

What we're getting at is that no matter what we have, enough is never enough.

- What about Solomon's life stood out to you?
- What was he seeking after?
- Why do you think he always wanted more?

- Why do you think at the end of getting everything he wanted, he still felt like it was meaningless or like “chasing the wind?”
- If having all of the stuff you could ever want is ultimately meaningless, what is actually important?
- How could we start being more content with what we have?

Ask yourself this question: Am I a covetous person? Do I spend more time thinking about people to impact or things to accumulate? Am I constantly thinking about how much luckier other people are than me? Do I look at others’ clothes and gadgets and feel jealous? Do I envy someone else’s dating relationship or even the person they’re dating?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, you might struggle with coveting. You know what? You’re not alone.

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

This is a time where, as the leader, you get to share a part of your story. Be sure and share about how God has worked in your life. This is also a time for you to get vulnerable with the students.

(Leader) Share a time in your life where you found yourself coveting over things of this world and a time where you were content with what you have. How did it impact you? Make sure students know that it’s not bad to want things it’s a bad to want things so bad that you are ungrateful for what you have.

Then ask the students this question:

- Where in your life do you covet the most? What is the one thing that leads you to jealousy? (examples: technology, clothes, achievements, relationships)

TAKE AWAY

Theodore Roosevelt once said “Comparison is the thief of joy.” At the end of the day, coveting robs us of the joy of what we’ve already been given in life. It’s not wrong to desire improvement or even to get nicer, newer things. It’s when that jealousy and comparison attitude takes root that we move

into the sin of a covetous attitude. To be content means that you have a grateful attitude toward what you already have. Coveting says "I deserve more." Contentment says "I have more than I deserve." When you choose the attitude of contentment, you can more fully enjoy what you've been given.

We challenge you to try and go a week without coveting over that one thing (the thing they named above).