

# Sermon-Based Small Group Preparation

For the week of October 23, 2011

## “Make It All About Money”

Sermon Series: *How to Wreck Your Life* (week 2 of 5)

Proverbs 14:30

» Please look over these questions *before* your Small Group meeting «

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### Getting Started

- 1) The focus for the sermon series that began last Sunday is on how having idols can wreck our lives. This week’s idol is money. Can you think of any songs, movies or plays that focus on people worshipping money? What, if anything, is wrong with having money?
- 2) If you suddenly became very wealthy, what impact do you think it would have on your life? What are the top three things you would want to use the money for?
- 3) Think of a person that you know who is very well-off financially and describe how you would rate them on a happiness scale of one to five, with five being extremely happy.
- 4) Do you feel that money, in and of itself, can make people happy or unhappy? Why or why not?

*Read Proverbs 14:30*

A heart at peace gives life to the body,  
but envy rots the bones. (NIV)

Try to restate the idea in this verse in your own words.

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### Into the Bible

It is interesting to note that quite a few of the Bible verses that talk about money warn against making money an idol in your life. If you remember from last week’s sermon, it was stated that an idol is anything that you

make the center of your life, your main priority, in place of where God should be.

*Read Ecclesiastes 5:10*

Whoever loves money never has money enough;  
whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. (NIV1984)

- 5) Why is it that no amount of money will ever be enough if money is your idol?

This verse points out exactly what Pastor Harrington brought up last week regarding idols... they require your time and energy and push God out.

According to this verse, people who have money as their idol will **never** be satisfied. Why? Because no matter how much money or wealth you acquire, you still want more. The cycle continues with you spending more time and more energy to get more money. The time and energy you are spending to gain wealth is time and energy that is not being given to discovering God’s will for your life.

*Read Matthew 6:24*

No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. (NIV1984)

Here again, it is pointed out that having idols puts a wedge between you and God. It says, in no uncertain terms, that if you **love** money, you **hate** God.

- 6) Another point that Pastor Harrington brought up was that according to studies done, on average, people with lower incomes give a higher percentage of their money than those in higher income brackets. Why do you think this is true?

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### Digging Deeper

Hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, the prophet Micah recorded these words that the Lord spoke to him:

He has showed you, O man, what is good.

And what does the LORD require of you?

To act justly and to love mercy

and to walk humbly with your God.

Micah 6:8 (NIV1984)

## Sermon Notes

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- 7) What do these verses say about what God prioritizes?
  
- 8) How can our unrestrained pursuit of wealth affect our ability to live according to the message here?

We all need money. That is a given in the world that we live in. The idea from the lesson is to figure out how to balance the time and energy that we spend on making money and still keep God at the center.

- 9) As we look at our individual financial situation, what steps can you take to improve your balance?
  
- 10) Is there a specific area where you feel God wants you to change (e.g., the amount of time you spend at work; what you spend your money on; the amount of your giving)?

There is a song by Casting Crowns that talks about the struggle with money and idolatry called “The American Dream.” Here is one of the verses:

All work no play may have made Jack a dull boy  
But all work no God has left Jack with a lost soul  
But he’s moving on full steam  
He’s chasing the American dream  
And he’s gonna give his family finer things

During the upcoming week, take time to reflect on the Bible truths from this study. Thank God for the blessings that he has given to you, and think about how you can share them with others.

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### **Prayer Requests and Closing Prayer**