Making Change: Less is More

Pastor Derek Sanford

August 4, 2019

**Life Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Thinking back on this week’s sermon, was there a particular point, or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Read **Ecclesiastes 4:6**. Does the idea of achieving tranquility by having less material possessions coincide with our world’s message that more is always better?
3. Read **Ecclesiastes 4:6**. Can spending too much time working to own that “special item” really provide us true and lasting happiness? What in life really matters to you? Give examples.
4. Read **Proverbs 30: 7-9.** Do we ask God to give us,” neither poverty, nor riches,” but, “only my daily bread?” What does the world think of such a request?
5. Read **Philippians 4: 11-13**. Do we, as Paul, find ourselves, “content in any, and every situation?” How much does “living up to the world’s standards” influence our thoughts concerning this passage?
6. Read **Luke 19: 1-9**. What about Zacchaeus made Jesus say he was a “Son of Abraham”, a true Jew, when Jewish society excluded him, and other Jews who served as tax collectors? How was Zacchaeus spiritually, and financially reconciled to God?

**Next Steps:**

(a) Begin making changes in our attitudes, and actions towards earthly possessions. (i.e. Cut Back/Clear Out/Give Away)

(b) Begin setting goals, and develop a plan to become more financially disciplined.

**Prayer Thought:** Pray, following the **ACTS** Model

 **Adoration:** Praise God for who He is, and for how He has blessed your life.

**Confession:** Confess any sins of greed, envy, the pursuit of possessions, or any other “idol” that comes between you and God.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank our Heavenly Father that His Word provides us with the path that leads to tranquility and true happiness. He alone knows what our soul needs to be filled with contentment.

**Supplication:** Pray that the Holy Spirit will nurture, and guide each one of us to live a life of praise, and service to the Kingdom.

Making Change: Stress is Bad

Pastor Derek Sanford

August 11, 2019

**Life Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Thinking back on this week’s sermon, was there a particular point, or passage that challenged you, confused you, or caught your attention?
2. Read **Proverbs 10:15, Psalms 52:6-7.** Does the idea of achieving earthly wealth ease your stress levels? Although it may bring earthly power and influence, where is ultimate security found?
3. Read **Proverbs 22:7, Hosea 4:6, Proverbs 21:5.** Does being in debt worry you? Give examples of some ways you can avoid debt, or remove yourself from its burden.
4. Read **Proverbs 22:26-27, Proverbs 25:28.** How many of us have gone into debt in the form of a mortgage, or a car loan? Have credit card payments placed you in debt? How do using credit cards affect our purchases? Does a lack of self-control, or pride play into becoming debtors?
5. Read. **Nehemiah 5: 4-5.** Fortunately, in America, we need not fear being “sold into bondage” for failing to pay our taxes. However, our courts still may enforce penalties, including the loss of our possessions, or freedom when we’ve amassed great debt. What can we do to prevent debt?
6. Read **Luke 8:14**. In the Parable of the Sower, what does Christ tell us about the relationship between life’s worries (stress), riches, and our maturing as a Christian? Can we be so engulfed in worrying about financial debt that we fail to focus on the purpose for which we were created?

**Next Steps:**

(a) Begin making changes in our attitudes, and actions towards earthly possessions, which will prevent debt, and the fear it can cause. Exercise self-control when making purchases.

(b) Pursue financial understanding and assistance regarding debt. Develop plans for spending, saving, and getting out of debt, thereby reducing worry, and stress.

**Prayer Thought:** Pray, following the **ACTS** Model

 **Adoration:** Praise God for who He is, and for how He has blessed your life.

**Confession:** Confess any sins of greed, envy, the pursuit of possessions, worry, and any other “idol” that comes between you and God.

**Thanksgiving:** Thank our Heavenly Father that His Word provides us with guidance, and wisdom which leads to freedom of stress, and worry. He alone knows what our soul needs to be filled with contentment, and peace.

**Supplication:** Pray that the Holy Spirit will nurture and guide each one of us to live a life “set apart” from that the world promotes. Pray that we may be worthy servants of Christ.