

Counterpunch
Get Off the Ropes- Session #3
Small Group Notes

Introduction:

How has your perspective changed on money in the last ten years?

Think about the past week. What is one thing you saw and thought, “I have got to have that”? How did you respond when you realized you couldn’t have it?

How does our culture fuel discontentment? How have you fallen for believing that you are discontent in the last week?

In this session we are going to discuss about how can be tempted to chase after things for our own selfish desires, especially when it comes to the area of greed i.e., how we handle money in our lives. Rather than touching on the principles of exact money management, we are going to discuss more of the heart behind why we pursue greed and then how God’s Word helps us to have victory in these areas.

Discuss: Keys to Getting Off the Ropes

1. Choose management not ownership

- Read 1 Timothy 6:17a; Psalm 24:1
- As a manager you don't have to feel guilt or anxiety over the resources you have been entrusted with, but you do need to be responsible.
- Managing God's resources will free you from the financial ropes.

Explain: Paul contrasted right and wrong responses to the possession of wealth. A wrong response involves an arrogant attitude and the making of wealth as the hope of one's life. As a deterrent to trusting in riches, Paul mentioned the transitory, uncertain nature of wealth. The word uncertain contains a reminder that it is by no means clear that riches will continue with the one who has them. The right response is to hope in a God who lavishes on His people all their needs (Psalm 24:1).

Ask:

How might having wealth tempt us to become arrogant? How is generosity an effective way to combat the pride and false security that the love of money brings?

How has the danger for us to put our trust in wealth revealed itself in the last few years?

How might considering that God “richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment,” change the way we think about our money? How might it help us learn to be generous?

2. Choose generosity or live in greed!

- Greed is the desire to acquire- Ecclesiastes 5:10; 1 Timothy 6:9-10
- Greed is deadly because it is close-fisted- 2 Corinthians 9:8
- Living generously is a chance for your faith to intersect with God's faithfulness
- Generosity and joy are always intertwined- Malachi 3:10

Explain: It's important to remember that the opposite of greed is contentment. And contentment comes from both being generous and appreciating what you have received from God. What is condemned here is harmful desires (greed), not the possession of things. The warning is not simply that love of money can be harmful, but that this craving has led some people to deny the faith and show themselves to be unbelievers.

Ask:

What are ways or excuses that we try to use to justify being greedy today? Why is generosity something that is for anyone, no matter their financial status?

How can a desire for money affect people spiritually? In what ways can it cause them to wander away from church (v. 10)?

How does generosity reflect our faith and dependence upon God?

3. Nothing shows the condition of your heart like your spending.

- Read Matthew 6:19-21, 24
- Your heart is connected to your money
- Nothing has a greater ability to drive a wedge between you and God than money.

Explain: Money is not evil in and of itself. If we as believers follow the many biblical principles of godliness and stewardship, God will enable us to act as His hands and feet on earth, glorifying His name and accomplishing much good for His kingdom through generosity and eternal investments. However, when we love money, we take our eyes off the One who is of infinitely greater worth. Jesus made it clear that we can either love God or we can love money, but we cannot love both (see Matt. 6:24).

Ask:

We have seen contentment doesn't come from something, but from someone. How might this realization change the way you pursue contentment?

How can having a proper biblical view of money become a way to share your faith in Christ?

Share with your group an area or opportunity that you are recognizing as a way to be generous with your time, talents, and tithes.

Group Challenge: Take a moment and repeat the memory verse for this week: 1 Timothy 6:17

Group Prayer Time:

- **Local**
 - **Liberty Station** Pray for adults with special needs as they learn new skills.
- **National**
 - **Life Spring Church Maine** Pray for collaboration with other Christian churches in the area to share resources, build strength in unity, and spur each other forward in reaching the lost.
- **International**
 - **POLAND** Pray for partnerships with local Ukrainian and Russian speaking believers who can work alongside our team to care for the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of the refugees who cross our paths.

Upcoming Serving Opportunities: Cleaning supplies for Journey Home and Last Call for Grace