

Making EPISODE ONE Change



Mister One Percent

About Money

Money. It's something we all need, something people fight over, something that can harm, and something that can give life. It's also a topic that the Bible speaks to at length. Out of 38 New Testament parables, 16 of them speak explicitly about money. The entire Bible includes about 500 verses on prayer, less than 500 about faith, and over 2000 about money. This sends a strong message. The ways we manage and spend our money can point directly to our faith and priorities in life.

Our comfort or discomfort with talking about issues related to money can be a cultural habit or personal preference. Some people are open to talking about their spending habits, whereas others want their money matters to be entirely private.

As Christians, how can we help each other to wrestle with money as a topic of faith? The following four sessions, which include videos and discussion materials, are meant to be a jumping-off point for diving into this topic. Use and adapt them to best suit the group you are leading.

Opening

As an opening, choose one of the scripture passages below that relates to money and read it aloud. After this, have group members think back over their week to times they have used money. Pose questions such as: When did you use money? How much did you use? What things did you use it for? Members can ponder these questions individually by writing down reflections, or share aloud in small groups as they are comfortable.

Scripture

Proverbs 30:7-9 (Agur's prayer for enough); Ecclesiastes 5:10-20 (words of wisdom about money); Matthew 6:19-24 (Jesus telling followers not to worry about tomorrow)

Video

Watch the "About Money" video together. www.makingchange.ca/episode-1/

Discussion

General questions

1. How do you view money? Is it yours? God's? Yours to share with others? Yours to spend however you wish?

Questions related to the video

2. The opening quotation referred to whether money makes us happy. How does it make you happy? How does it not make you happy?
3. The headline in the newspaper highlighted workers' feelings of being "perturbed" by the recent cutbacks at Little Abby's Mustard Company. Have you felt "perturbed" related to money? Have you lost work? Had a hard time finding work?
4. Callers were talking about what they would do with "that kind of money" – the amount that Terry made as an executive of Little Abby's Mustard Company. What would you do with "that kind of money"?
5. Which character can you relate to most? Why? Which character do you relate to least? Why?
6. The last caller said that it doesn't matter how much you make; what matters is what you do with that money. What do you do with your money?
7. Do you think of yourself as part of the 1% of the world's richest people? How do you use your money to share with the other 99% of the world's people?
8. This video talks about having "enough" money. Sandy said that \$80 000 would be enough for her. How much would be enough for you?

Questions related to scripture

9. Proverbs 30:7-9, or the Prayer of Agur, refers to having “enough”. What is enough? How do you know when you have enough? How much is too much? How much is too little? What do you think of this prayer, especially the depictions of rich and poor? Compare that passage to Mark Twain’s quote: “The lack of money is the root of all evil.”
10. The writer of Ecclesiastes 5:10-20 asks in verse 18: “What is the best thing to do in the short life that God has given us?” How would you answer this question?
11. Read Matthew 6:19-24. What does this passage say about money?
12. What are the Bible’s message(s) about money, and how money relates to faith?

As an alternative prayer and ending, read “Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front” by Wendell Berry (find this online or in his book entitled *The Country of Marriage*).

Prayer

Generous God, what is enough? You know our needs, and the needs of others in the world. Help us to use money for your purposes, to join in your activity in the world. Amen.