

Spend Less to Give More (Part 2)

Series: Unwrapping Christmas

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Scripture: 2 Tim. 4:9-18

⁹Do your best to come to me quickly, ¹⁰for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry. ¹²I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. ¹³When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments.

¹⁴Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. ¹⁵You too should be on your guard against him, because he strongly opposed our message. ¹⁶At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. ¹⁷But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Group Session

Opening Questions

Were you surprised to hear that six percent of people are still paying for last year's Christmas? Why do you think people can't live within their means?

Discussing the Scripture & Life

1. Ecclesiastes 5:10-11 says, "Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income." Do you believe this describes our American culture? Why or why not?
2. We know that the best gifts are the gifts that come from a heart that loves God and that change the life of the person who receives the gift. Have you ever been given a gift like this?
3. Lesson One states, "Some opportunities to give never present themselves again." One biblical example is when Mary anointed Jesus with oil. Have you ever had opportunities to bless others that were one-time opportunities?
4. More money will never make you a more generous person. If you agree, why is this true?
5. Lesson Two states: "Simple gifts make all the difference in the world." Paul asked for books, parchment, his friend Timothy and Mark, and a cloak. The things with the greatest value usually aren't the most expensive. What are some examples of simple gifts that can make a big difference?

6. Lesson Three states, "God gives us good things for our enjoyment, not for our fulfillment." There is no physical gift that can bring us fulfillment. That comes from God.
7. Read Phil. 4:11 and 1 Tim. 6:17. What truths do we learn from these passages?
8. Matthew 25:40 says, "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of mine, even the least of them, you did it to me." Do you already give to the poor in any ways?
9. How do we decide how much to spend on others? What principles can you think of to help wisely navigate these decisions?

Closing Challenge

What can we do differently about Christmas this year? Are there some ways that we can honor God more fully through this holiday?