

Community Group Discussion Guide

Step 01: Recap what our current series is all about.

Note: Remind the group what series we're currently on (since not everyone will have been at church recently) and read through the series description provided below to refresh everyone on what it's all about.

Series Title: Source Code

Description: During a grueling, snow-covered hike with his friends, 13 year-old Bill Gates imagined a simple, *source code* for the one computer that was currently on loan to his middle school. The simplicity of the code allowed him to remember it for years until he was finally able to implement it, and the power of the code ended up creating a multi-billion dollar company known as Microsoft.

In this series, Source Code, we are studying Jesus' most famous collection of teachings found in Matthew chapters 5, 6 and 7. The Sermon on the Mount, in its own simplicity and power has shaped the life of every follower of Jesus for the last 2,000 years. Let's take a closer look and see what Jesus taught.

Step 02: Recap of this week's message.

Note: Read through the message outline with everyone briefly. You can stop and make comments as you see fit or read straight through it. Make sure you take time to read through the main text.

Message Title: When Light is Darkness

Main Text: Matthew 6:19-34

Supporting Texts:

Message Outline:

We continue to ask the question throughout this series, "Is the sermon on the mount shaping us?" In week 7,

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Jesus speaks into our potential love for and trust in money as well as our propensity to worry.

Read Matthew 6:19-24 aloud in your group

Verse 19-21

Jesus doesn't want us to chase after the things of this world. Without all of our "stuff", we may live a different kind of life, but not necessarily a different quality of life.

Verse 22-23

The phrase "good eye" is a metaphor for being generous while "bad eye" is a metaphor for being selfish and stingy. In other words, generosity does not just impact our finances but our whole self and those around us.

Verse 24

Pastor Rich Villodas—

"Here Jesus gives us a much needed perspective—money is not a passive tool; but a rival god."

- 1. Money can absorb our lives.** Tolstoy illustration.
- 2. Money can cloud our moral judgement.** Easy to speak truth to power when nothing to lose...
- 3. Money can damage relationships.** "Jesus came to establish a human community that resists assigning value to people based on wealth." – see James 2:1-4 on partiality in the church.

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A good self-reflection from Jesus' teaching here, especially given our culture context, might be to ask ourselves, "what's my plan for falling out of love with money?"

Read Matthew 6:25-34 aloud in your group.

Jesus couples his teaching with money with one on worry/anxiety. The pairing suggest that the what presents as two different problems may actually share the same issue in your heart—a lack of trust that God knows and will provide what you need most.

Step 03: Lead group discussion.

Note: Do you best to keep the discussion going. Make sure you have read through the questions beforehand and are primed with thoughts of your own. Make everyone get specific with *how* they will apply this message in their own lives and in community—*no vague ideas allowed!*

Specific to this week's message:

1. It seems to be a natural thing for us to be drawn more towards "treasures on earth". Are Jesus' words here challenging to you?
2. Do you find our cultural context adds fuel to the fire (Consumerism, materialism, comparison via social media) How do you guard against this?
3. Pastor and author Rich Villodas makes the case that based on verse 24, Jesus is presenting money as not just a neutral/passive tool but "a rival god". How does that land with you? Share with the group.

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4. Do you have any examples from your own life of how money might have absorbed your life, clouded your judgement, or damaged relationships? Share with the group.
5. In what ways do you find yourself trusting in money?
6. Speak about a time you trusted God instead of trusting in money.
7. How has God used (or how might God use) generosity to help you have a more healthy relationship with money?
8. If you're naturally more of a worrier (or someone that has to prepare/plan/control every detail) share your honest reflections on Jesus words about worry in verses 25-34.
9. How can we grow in trusting God with our needs? Plans? Dreams? Desires?

General questions:

10. How did this message encourage you? How did it convict you?
11. What is your plan for applying this message to your personal/daily life?
12. What might it look like for us to live this out in community?
13. Was there anything about this message that stood out to you?