northchurch

Group Discussion Guide

Planning for Success

Sunday, February 12, 2012

Read

Read Paul's encouragement to the church in 2 Corinthians 9:6-15.

Discuss

Paul encourages us to live with freedom and give with joy (see verses 6-8), knowing that God will meet all our needs (verses 10-11). It's an issue of identity and security: do we believe that God is who he says he is, and that he will meet our needs… or do we cling to the security blanket of our stuff (or our bank accounts)? Do you feel like you're living in freedom when it comes to your finances and how you use them for God's purposes?

Read what Jesus taught on this subject in Matthew 6:25-33. What do you think it means to "seek first his [God's] kingdom and his righteousness"? What do you think it means that "all these things will be given to you as well"? Is Jesus teaching that if you pursue his kingdom first, he will make you wealthy (as advertised on TV)? How have you experienced Matthew 6:33 as a reality in your life personally?

Let's get practical. The Bible never says there's anything inherently wrong with being rich or poor or somewhere in the middle. But it says a lot about how our heart condition affects what we do with our stuff. Investing in God's kingdom reflects a heart that wants to "make much of God" and trusts that God will provide for our needs. Investing in "my" kingdom reflects a heart that trusts to self, desires security in my stuff, and believes in the illusion of "control." Where would you say your heart falls on this scale:

1	5	10
Invested in "my" kingdom	somewhere in the middle	Invested in God's kingdom

Once you've picked a number, keep it in your head. To the extent you're comfortable, share with the group your struggles and/or successes with investing in God's kingdom. What heart issues came up for you along the way?

Pray

Reserve at least the last 15 minutes of group time to pray for the things that came up during your discussion and any other prayer needs.