

Small Group Study

Our Vision

To know God and enjoy Him forever.

Our Mission

To build a Christian community by making fully devoted disciples of non-religious and nominally religious people

Discussion

Building Kingdom People: Giving Generously

Scripture

Have volunteers read the following scriptures:
2 Corinthians 9:6-10 and Luke 12:16-21

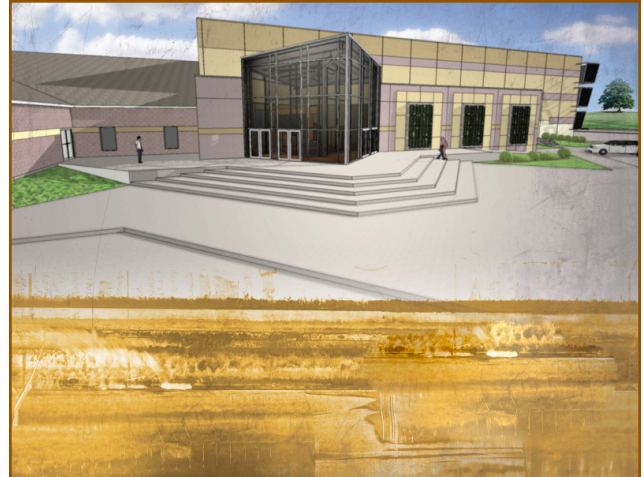
Questions

1. Consider the greyhound dog. He chases something he can never catch. Unlike most other dogs, when they chase a cat or a rabbit, they have a good chance of catching it, but the greyhound never has a chance of catching what he chases. And the rabbit he chases isn't real. It doesn't have legs like a real rabbit but scoots around the track on a rail. If by some chance the greyhound did catch up with that rabbit, he would be sadly disappointed—it's only a fake. When the greyhound sees that fake rabbit fly past him, he loses all common sense. Off he goes—maybe he thinks he will catch it this time!!

That greyhound chasing after that fake rabbit is a commentary on life. We spend a lot of time chasing after things that we think are valuable at the time but when seen in the bigger picture, they are just "fake rabbits." Too often, we are like the child who says to his mom, "If I can have a new fifteen speed, alloy framed, front and rear suspended, metallic red bike, I'll never ask for anything else in my whole life."

Can you relate to the greyhound? Have you ever felt like you were chasing a "fake rabbit?" Can you relate to the boy? Or perhaps you relate more with the boy's parents. Do you think God ever feels like the boy's parents?

2. Jesus tells the story of a man who had done very well for himself. Indeed, he had been truly blessed by God. He had become very wealthy and owned some of the best land in the district. And he used that land wisely. He employed very successful farming practices and it paid off with a bumper crop. The question now arises, "How should I manage this unusually large harvest? What should I do? I have no place to store my crops. I know what I will do. I will pull down my old barns and build bigger ones." But then something goes wrong. Our fine impressions of this successful farmer vanish when we discover his intentions. He will store his harvest all for himself. His own words condemn him: "Lucky



Ice Breaker

Use ONE of the questions to help people open up and to focus your meeting. It is very helpful to go around in a circle with the leader going first. (Remember if you have new members or guests you should take time to introduce everyone.)

- 1.** How many pets have you owned in your lifetime? Tell us about one of them.
- 2.** What's one of the best gifts you received as a child?
- 3.** What are 3 ways in which God has blessed you in your life?

man! You have all the good things you need for many years. Take life easy, eat drink, and enjoy yourself!" Now this isn't a story about an exceptionally wicked man. We don't hear of him mistreating his workers, or being dishonest or unjust. He is just an ordinary man who is careful, conservative and has been blessed by good rains, and good soil. But he loses sight of the fact that his farm is an asset given by God and that his good crops are gifts from God.

No sooner had the farmer finished congratulating himself than we hear the voice of God: "You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?" The rich man thought he had done everything right and could now sit back and enjoy his wealth but he had forgotten the most important thing of all—he had forgotten God. Jesus concludes his story saying, "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God." The farmer had got it all wrong. What good was all that wealth after he was dead?

Rick Warren, author of the book, "The Purpose-Driven Life," said the following in an interview: "I don't think it's a sin to be rich. I think it's a sin to die rich."

What can we learn from this parable? What kinds of things in our lives are temporal and what is eternal?

3. There is a story of a conversation between a young man and an older man who knew life.

"What will you do with your life?" asked the older man.

"I will learn a trade." said the young man.

"And then?" said the older man.

"I will set up business."

"And then?"

"I will make my fortune."

"And then?"

"I suppose that I shall grow old and retire and live on my money."

"And then?"

"Well, I suppose that some day I will die."

"And then?" came the stabbing question.

That about sums up this parable of Jesus. We constantly face the threat of our material goods, and our striving for them taking over our lives. We can be so easily consumed by all this striving to improve our lot in life. In 2,000 years things haven't changed that much. The tension in the story of Jesus is the tension in our lives. We can ignore the tension this parable creates within us and gloss over it saying, "Things aren't that bad." But Jesus confronts us and forces us to look within ourselves at the values and beliefs under which we operate. He wants us to recognize that we are chasing "fake rabbits." What are some "fake rabbits" you may be chasing? What kinds of things can we invest in that are eternal?

God bless,

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