

**MORE
THAN**



~~NOT~~
Enough

The New International Version is used in these questions.

1. What is materialism? Do you think, as a whole, Americans are materialistic? What makes you think this way? How would you know if you are materialistic?
2. Read James 5:1-3. How would you define a “rich” person? Do you consider yourself rich? Why or why not? According to this passage, why is it unwise to hoard wealth? Read Matthew 6:19,20. Did Jesus give the same warning? Read 2 Corinthians 4:18. What does Paul say is the way to avoid living for things that ultimately will be lost? Read Matthew 16:24-26. Do you think what Jesus says in this passage can be applied to our possessions? How?
3. Pastor Rick said that God is not opposed to us having wealth, but he is opposed to greed. How would you define greed? Read Philippians 4:11,12; 1 Timothy 6:8; and Hebrews 13:5. What do all three of these passages tell us to be? Do you think this is the opposite of greed? What does Hebrews 13:5 say you must believe is true in order to be content with what you have?
4. Read Ecclesiastes 5:10-16. Who wrote this passage? What do we know about him that would make him an expert on being wealthy? What principles does he teach in this passage about wealth? Which ones have you seen to be true in your life and the people you know? Can you give some examples?
5. Read Luke 12:15-2. What does Jesus say that is the exact opposite of what our society promotes? How does advertising count on you having this mentality? Does it work? What does Jesus say happens to people with this mentality? What does he suggest is the remedy to overcome this mentality? How can we be “rich toward God”?

Answers

- 1. Materialism, at its most basic idea, is that only the material world exists, there is no spiritual dimension. Materialism as a philosophy is the idea that life is all about living to gain material possessions because that is all there is to live for. Materialistic people therefore live only to get more things, thinking that is what brings happiness. Americans are very materialistic because our society promotes wealth and comfort as the purpose for life: Get all you can, can all you get, and then sit on the can. We are all materialistic to one degree or another as Americans, and the degree you are materialistic is determined by what physical things you are unwilling to do without.*
- 2. Being "rich" is usually defined by the culture you live in. What is rich in one country is considered poor in another country. In a materialistic society it is defined by the amount of "stuff" you have access to. In America, the "poorest" people have more material things available to them than half of the population of the world. James says it is unwise to hoard wealth because material things will cease to exist, they will be lost at some point. Jesus said the same thing in Matthew 6 when he said material things "rust and can be stolen". In 2 Corinthians 4, Paul said the way to avoid losing everything you live for is to live for things that will last eternally, to focus your life on eternal "stuff". When Jesus said that those who lose their lives will save it and those who save their lives will lose it, it does also apply to material wealth. If you only live for temporal things, they will be lost and you will lose what you based your life on but if you let go of the temporal things and live for the eternal, then everything you live for will last forever, thus "saving" you life.*
- 3. Greed is the lust, the aggressive desire to have more of anything for purely selfish reasons. The three passages mentioned all tell us to be content with whatever we have which is the opposite of greed. What we must believe in order to battle greed is that God will always provide what we need and that whatever we have at the present is exactly what He wants us to have. If we are discontent with what we have, it is a sign that we do not believe that He is in control of our lives and that He cares for us.*
- 4. Solomon wrote this passage and the scriptures tell us that he was the wealthiest king, his wealth being estimated as over 2 trillion dollars in today's money, making him the richest man in history. Some of the principles this passage teaches is that those who love money will never be satisfied with the amount they have, that the more you have, the more headaches you have in managing what you have and will lose sleep because of this, that those who hoard wealth are damaged by their greed, that we come into this world with nothing and will take nothing from this world with us when we die, so whatever we accumulate in this world we will ultimately lose.*
- 5. Jesus says that what makes your life valuable is not the amount of possessions you have, which is the opposite of what our society tells us. All advertising is based on the idea that all people always want more and that they can create in you a desire to get whatever they advertise, that your life is incomplete unless you have what they are selling. It works extremely well because of our materialistic society. Jesus said that people with this mentality will lose everything they live for when they die. The remedy is to put living for God's purposes as your highest priority in life.*