

Title: ENCOUNTERING KINGDOM WEALTH

Text: Mark 10:17-31

The Deception of Self-Reliance

- I'm good enough...

- I'm rich enough...

The Impossibility of Self-Reliance

The Cure for Self-Reliance

- Rely on Someone bigger

- Anticipate something greater

- Imitate someone smaller

CONVERSATION STARTER

- How would you say that people normally define the “American Dream”? In what ways might the “American Dream” be antithetical to the Christian faith?
- Read Mark 10:17-31. Why do you think Jesus asks the man to sell everything, give to the poor, and follow Him? Why do you think Jesus uses such a strong metaphor in verse 25 to describe the difficulty with which the rich will enter the kingdom of God? In verses 29-31, what is Jesus actually promising as a reward to those who leave everything for the sake of the Gospel?
- Read Proverbs 30:7-9. These verses are a prayer to God. Why do you think the author desires neither poverty nor riches? What does the author understand to be the potential temptation of wealth? Poverty? What does this imply about our own view of money?
- Read the excerpt below. According to Keller, why is the sin of greed so deceptively hard to identify within our lives? Do you think he is right that most Americans consider themselves “middle class” to justify their manner of life? How can we recognize and become free from the power of money to blind us?
- What areas of comparison do you struggle with the most? Car? Income? House? Kids? In what ways are you most tempted to trust your own resources (money, education, job, family, status, etc.) rather than God for your overall well-being? What would be the hardest thing for God to demand of you right now?

EXCERPT FROM: *Counterfeit Gods*

BY: Tim Keller

Why can't anyone in the grip of greed see it? The counterfeit god of money uses powerful sociological and psychological dynamics. Everyone tends to live in a particular socio-economic bracket. Once you are able to afford to live in a particular neighborhood, send your children to its schools, and participate in its social life, you will find yourself surrounded by quite a number of people who have more money than you. You don't compare yourself to the rest of the world, you compare yourself to those in your bracket. The human heart always wants to justify itself and this is one of the easiest ways. You say, "I don't live as well as him or her or them. My means are modest compared to theirs." You can reason and think that no matter how lavishly you are living. As a result, most Americans think of themselves as middle class, and only 2 percent call themselves "upper class." But the rest of the world is not fooled. When people visit here from other parts of the globe, they are staggered to see the level of materialistic comfort that the majority of Americans have come to view as a necessity.