

Alley Rundown - October 21 & 22, 2017

Bible Story: Cheer Factor (God Loves a Cheerful Giver) • 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

Bottom Line: Use your money wisely.

Key Question: How can you best use your money?

Memory Verse: "Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much."
Luke 16:10a NIV

CONNECT TIME: (At Service Start) (5-7 minutes)

What You Need: A penny for every person

What You Do:

- **Give** everyone his or her own penny.
- **Show** them how to balance them on their chins—this means the penny lies flat on the chin and students are looking up into the air.
- **Share** that the goal of the game today is to knock other people's pennies off.
- **Tell** them that the winner is the last one still standing with a penny balanced on his or her chin.
- **Encourage** students to spread out and balance their pennies, then tell them to begin playing.

ATTENTION: Warn them that people who are too rough will have to sit out—it doesn't take much to gently knock the penny off. Be watching the students as they move around, so as to not injure themselves or run into the TVs.

Wrap Up and Say:

"It can be hard, even when playing a game, to stay cheerful. When your penny got knocked off, you were annoyed. There are things in life that knock us off balance, too. God talks about a lot of things in the Bible—even about the attitude He's looking for when people give money to the church or others in need. Let's head to Large Group to hear more."

WELCOME:

"Hey, everyone! How many of you have one of these?" (*Image on Screens*)

CG: Piggy Bank Slide

"Okay, so it doesn't have to be a piggy bank that's an actually pig like this one. For you, maybe it's a jar, an old shoebox, or maybe a legitimate wallet. But how many of you have a place where you keep your money?"

"Wow, that's a lot of you! So now I'm curious . . . how do you get or make money to put in there? How many of you cut grass or have some kind of job?"

Call on a few kids and have them share what they do.

“Very cool—and very responsible of you! So what are some other ways you earn money to put in your piggy?”

Allow time for responses.

“Those are great, too! As you’re growing up, you’ll find more and more opportunities to earn money. And, of course, earning money is pretty sweet; especially when you have things you want to buy or things you want to do. But getting all of that money can also create some challenges that maybe we weren’t ready for.”

Here is an opportunity to share a personal story. Use the following as an example of the sort of story you could tell.

“Take my friend, for example; we’ll call him . . . Rob . . . and for many years, Rob and I would go trick-or-treating on Halloween. We would get *loads* of candy! Now, me, I would burn through my candy in just a few weeks. I woke up in the morning: I’d have a candy! Head to school? Grab some candy! I played well in my football game? Reward myself with candy! I was like a man on a mission, powering through that candy bag. Then you had Rob. When it came to the candy, Rob took his sweet old time. I would go over to his house in late November, and his little pumpkin bucket of candy would *still* be full. In fact, he still had his *Easter* candy stashed away! And to make matters worse, and I’m not even joking, he would end up having to THROW CANDY AWAY because it was so old! Sometimes I think Rob is the only reason candy companies even put an expiration date on candy! And even with all of that candy, when I would go over his house and ask for a piece, he would say no! Can you believe that!?”

“So here’s the thing—when it came to my candy, I never saved any but used it all for myself. And Rob was really good at saving but not very good at giving. But we’re not talking about candy today, are we? No, we’re talking about money. And the truth is that we have the same issues when it comes to dollars and cents. We spend and spend without thinking about how we could save some. Or we stash it away but never put it to good use. Saving and spending are both good, but how can we know which one we should do when? How can we best use what we find in here?” (*Hold up the piggy bank.*) Do you think God has anything to say about how we spend our money? (*Pause for response.*)

“Thankfully, the Bible includes a TON about how God wants us to handle the money He allows us to have. One of those passages comes from the New Testament of our Bibles in a letter called 2 Corinthians. A Jesus follower named Paul wrote this letter. You might have heard of him, as Paul was an important leader in the early years of the church. He wrote this letter to a church in a city called Corinth, hoping that what he wrote would help them grow in their faith and make wise choices. That’s what today’s episode is all about. Let’s take a look...”

CG: Week 4 Lesson Video (Runtime: 13:30)

“Let’s take a look at what Paul said to the Corinthian church about money...”

CG: 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

“(Reading directly from 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 NIV) Here is something to remember. The one who plants only a little will gather only a little. And the one who plants a lot will gather a lot. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give. You shouldn’t give if you don’t want to. You shouldn’t give because you are forced to. God loves a cheerful giver.”

CG: Image of Seeds Packet

"You've probably seen one of these before, right? A packet of seeds. In the scripture I just read, Paul used an idea from farming."

"If you don't throw down a lot of seed, you can't expect much of a harvest. On the other hand, if you do the work to plant lots and lots of seeds, then you will likely see a big harvest. This is a principle for all sorts of work. If you don't do the job you've been given, chances are you won't receive any money in return. Think about those jobs we talked about earlier and the ways to earn money to put into the piggy bank. Do the work, you get paid, and you can put the money into the bank. But if you don't do ANYTHING, you won't really have much to put into there."

"But then Paul talked about what to do once you actually have money in your piggy bank. He didn't say, 'I am expecting this much money from each person,' or, 'I demand you give this amount.' What did he say?"

Allow time for responses.

"Give what you are led to give. AND . . . don't give if you don't want to or because you feel forced to."

CG: 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

"You shouldn't give if you don't want to. You shouldn't give because you are forced to. God loves a cheerful giver."

"What kind of giver? Yeah, a *cheerful* giver. God doesn't just care about what we give but also about our attitude while we're giving it."

God cares how we give, save, and spend our money. Remember, it's not ours. It's God's that He lets us borrow for a time. So, what we do with our money and our attitude toward our money really does matter. So here's the question to get you started in Small Group today:

CG: Key Question 4 Slide

"How can you best use your money? You might think you know the answer, but really give it a chance for that question to sink in. Have a great time together thinking about the creative ways God might want you to use the money He's given to you! Let's get ready to worship God. Watch this..."

CG: Worship Experience Video (Runtime 5:00)

NOTE: For this particular time of worship, students will take 3 minutes to make an offering box/piggy bank, and commit to using their money wisely.

Supplies Needed: Blank Take Out Boxes, Memory Verse Stickers, Sharpies, and Other Items for Decorating

(VIDEO WILL PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS)