



**Mar 16-17, 2024**

### **Break the Ice**

During the pandemic, interest in tabletop game (boardgames) significantly increased (40% compared to pre-pandemic). Games are fun! There is nothing like games such as Monopoly, Life, and others where you win by winning the most money.

Ask your group: What is your favorite board game? Why?

Explain the following: What happens after a brief celebration that you won and got more money than the rest of the players? It all goes back into the box!

This is true in real life as well. We often spend so much time in our lives on gathering money and possessions. Then when we approach the end of our lives, much of it goes back into the “game” box. While God desires we enjoy what we have and pass it on to others, the dangerous potential is when our enjoyment becomes an idol/obsessions. And when they become idols/obsessions, then our pursuit of them creates anxiety and exhaustion.

Ask your group: What do you trust in? Are there idols/obsessions in your life you worship?

### **Up**

**Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19 out loud.** It is God alone who determines our resources. Therefore, to “hope in God” means that we should place our trust not in our wealth, but in the Giver (not the gifts). God is the one who controls all of our resources.

When we place our trust in the Giver, instead of worrying we will lose our gifts (wealth), we free ourselves up to enjoy what He has given us. It is so much easier to enjoy our wealth when we view it as a gift rather than something we worked for. Ask your group the following questions:

- What does the use of our wealth reveal what we believe to be true about God?
- How do we balance between trusting God, working hard, and stewarding well the resources God provides?

## In

**Read Luke 18:18-27 out loud.** An example of someone who did not handle their wealth in the way God desires is the rich young ruler. Because he held too strong a grip on his wealth, he could not release his hands to grab onto what Jesus was offering — eternal life. The man sought out eternal life through his own efforts. Jesus said that eternal life is not something you *obtain* through hard works but *receive* through God's grace. When we receive eternal life through God's grace, we also have access to abundant life. When we truly lean into this abundant life, we are become free to use our wealth to bless others.

Ask your group to search their hearts to determine whether they are living the abundant life that God desires for them to live. Then ask them to think about the following areas of their lives to help them see what they may be putting their trust in:

- Relationships
- Money
- Job Security
- Education
- Anything else?

## IV. Out

Ask your group to ponder the following quote:

*"If by God's power you can be generous, wealth begins to lose its grip on you. ... One crucial path to generosity is to give to people who are too poor to pay you back. Generosity that earns favors in return is not generosity but favor-buying. Real generosity is giving when no payback is possible, and this is what is rewarded in eternity."*  
(Theology of Work Project)

Though we may often be unaware, we tend to be generous to those who can pay us back somehow. Ask your group to think about someone who cannot pay them back in anyway. Encourage them to look for ways to be generous to them. Being generous to those who cannot repay us is a demonstration of our trust in God, not our money and possessions.

## V. Prayer

Conclude your time in prayer by focusing on the following:

- Ask God to reveal what we truly trust in in place of God. You can call these things "God-substitutes."
- Ask God to reveal how tight a grip we have on our "stuff" (our money and possessions).
- Ask God to reveal someone to whom they can be generous to.
- Praise God for His provision and blessings.