



Welcome to *FAST FORWARD*. If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some simple instructions, as well as the continuation of the questions, on page 2, and this week's Group Practice Suggestion on page 3.

March 14, 2021

"When We're Held Captive by the Things We Love"

Luke 18:18-30

WEEK 4

Questions to use with your group:

- ▶ What has God been teaching you this week, whether through your prayer and fasting, or in other ways?
- ▶ In the middle of the sermon, Pastor Leah posed the question: "How do we know when God is asking us to give something up or move in a certain direction?"
 - ▶ As we begin, let's just all throw out a couple of quick responses to this question. What words or phrases immediately come into your head as possible answers?
- ▶ Now let's dig into the passage a little bit.
 - ▶ What do we know about the man who approached Jesus in this passage? What does Luke tell us about him, and what can we infer from his words and actions?
 - ▶ Look at Exodus 20:12-16. Which of these commandments does Jesus list in Luke 18:20, and which does he leave out? What significance do you see in this?
 - ▶ Why does Jesus ask the ruler to sell everything he has? Could he have followed Jesus *without* doing this? Why or why not? What was the one thing he lacked (v. 22)?
 - ▶ In verse 23, Luke tells us that the ruler "became very sad"—not hostile or defensive, but sad. Why do you think he felt this way?
 - ▶ How does the crowd react to what they have just seen and heard? What does Peter say? Why do you think they respond this way?

How to Use These Study Guides:

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- If your group is new this Lent, take some time during each meeting to get to know one another.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another, and be sure to set aside time for prayer.
- Don't feel like you need to discuss every question. Pick two or three that you think will be fruitful for your group, and invite people to reflect on those.
- Use the weekly Group Practice Suggestions (found on page 3) if they are helpful for your group.
- You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
- Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.

Questions, cont.

- ▶ Leah talked about how easy it is for us to become captive to the things we own.
 - ▶ Why do you think money and material possessions can exercise such a hold on minds, hearts, and imaginations?
- ▶ Leah led us in a Prayer of Examen that invited us to consider the **fears, attachments**, desires to **control**, and notions of **entitlement** that are standing in the way of us following Jesus wholeheartedly.
 - ▶ Which of these four categories do you sense is the greatest struggle for you currently?
 - ▶ What are some of the fears, attachments, desires to control, or notions of entitlement you have struggled with?
- ▶ How might “fasting from stuff” in some way—Leah talked about fasting from **buying stuff, keeping stuff**, and **fantasizing about stuff**—help us to follow Jesus more wholeheartedly?
- ▶ At the very end of the sermon, Leah challenged us: “If Jesus were to invite you to give something up today, what would it be?” With this question in mind as well, let’s return to the question we asked earlier: “How do we know when God is asking us to give something up or move in a certain direction?”
 - ▶ Does anything we have discussed together make you think about this question differently?

This Week's Group Practice Suggestion

- ▶ Jesus's teaching here is hard, no question. Maybe even impossible, on our own. But as Jesus said to Peter, "What is impossible with man is possible with God" (v. 27). Leah ended the sermon this week with this prayer: "May God be with you as he releases the chains of what is holding you captive today. Amen."
- ▶ As a group, listen to the song "[Chain Breaker](#)," by Zach Williams (3 min. 16 sec.). As you listen, pray for one another that each of you will trust God to break the chains that keep you bound to your possessions, fears, attachments, or need to control.

