



**“Storage Wars”
FUEL**

Small Group Plan

A little boy was talking to God and he asked, "What is time like to you?" God answered, "A million years to you is like a second to me." Then the boy asked, "What is money like to you?" God answered, "A million dollars to you is like a nickel to me." Seeing a great opportunity, the boy finally asked, "God, will you give me a nickel?" To which God answered, "Sure ... in a second."

We like this story because it mixes humor with touch of serious, thoughtful learning. If wealth were not so important to us the story would have no humor.

But our love of wealth and our accumulation of “stuff” can become a problem.

E. B. White described the problem this way ...

Every morning, when I left for work, I would take something in my hand and walk off with it, for deposit in the big wire trash basket at the corner of Third, on the theory that the physical act of disposal was the real key to the problem. My wife, a strategist, knew better...

A man could walk away for a thousand mornings carrying something with him to the corner and there would still be a home full of stuff. It is not possible to keep abreast of the normal tides of acquisition. A home is like a reservoir equipped with a check valve: the valve permits influx but prevents outflow. Acquisition goes on day and night — smoothly, subtly, imperceptibly...

Books and oddities arrive in the mail. Gifts arrive on anniversaries ... Veterans send ballpoint pens. Banks send memo book ... I had a man once send me a chip of wood that showed the marks of a beaver's teeth. Someone dies, and little trickle of indestructible keepsakes appears, to swell the flood. This steady influx is not counterbalanced by any comparable outgo. Under ordinary circumstances, the only stuff that leaves a home is paper trash and garbage; everything else stays on and digs in.

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- Why is it so easy for “stuff” to accumulate in our lives?
- How does our culture define “the good life”?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

1 Kings 10:1-7

¹ When the queen of Sheba heard about the fame of Solomon and his relation to the name of the LORD, she came to test him with hard questions. ² Arriving at Jerusalem with a very great caravan—with camels carrying spices, large quantities of gold, and precious stones—she came to Solomon and talked with him about all that she had on her mind. ³ Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her. ⁴ When the queen of Sheba saw all the wisdom of Solomon and the palace he had built, ⁵ the food on his table, the seating of his officials, the attending servants in their robes, his cupbearers, and the burnt offerings he made at the temple of the LORD, she was overwhelmed. ⁶ She said to the king, “The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. ⁷ But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard.

- Why did queen Sheba visit Solomon?
- What did she see “with her own eyes” (v. 7) that impressed her?

HOARDING BRINGS OPPRESSION ***Ecclesiastes 5:8-9***

⁸ If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights denied, do not be surprised at such things; for one official is eyed by a higher one, and over them both are others higher still. ⁹ The increase from the land is taken by all; the king himself profits from the fields.

- What is causing the oppression described here?
- Why does Solomon say, don't be surprised?

HOARDING BRINGS DISSATISFACTION ***Ecclesiastes 5:10***

¹⁰ Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

- How would you explain the addiction to money?
- What is “meaningless” here – loving money or not having enough? Explain

HOARDING BRINGS FRUSTRATION **Ecclesiastes 5:11-12**

¹¹ *As goods increase, so do those who consume them. And what benefit are they to the owner except to feast his eyes on them?* ¹² *The sleep of a laborer is sweet, whether he eats little or much, but the abundance of a rich man permits him no sleep.*

- What are the pluses and minuses of being poor or rich, weak or powerful?
- Why do many look to wealth to provide security?
- How would you describe the kind of security that is not helped or hurt by wealth?

HOARDING HURTS **Ecclesiastes 5:13-17**

¹³ *I have seen a grievous evil under the sun: wealth hoarded to the harm of its owner,* ¹⁴ *or wealth lost through some misfortune, so that when he has a son there is nothing left for him.* ¹⁵ *Naked a man comes from his mother's womb, and as he comes, so he departs. He takes nothing from his labor that he can carry in his hand.* ¹⁶ *This too is a grievous evil: As a man comes, so he departs, and what does he gain, since he toils for the wind?* ¹⁷ *All his days he eats in darkness, with great frustration, affliction and anger.*

- How can hoarding wealth hurt a person?
- How can wasting wealth also hurt a person?

HOARDING CAN'T GIVE WHAT WE NEED **Ecclesiastes 5:18-20**

¹⁸ *Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labor under the sun during the few days of life God has given him—for this is his lot.* ¹⁹ *Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God.* ²⁰ *He seldom reflects on the days of his life, because God keeps him occupied with gladness of heart.*

- **God** gives my life joy (v. 18)
Why is it good to enjoy life, and what are godly ways of doing so?
- **God** gives my work fulfillment (v. 19)
How can God give us a bigger reason to get up face each day?
- **God** gives my heart contentment (v. 20)
How can focusing (“occupied”) on the giver (God) rather than on the gift bring true satisfaction?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- Was “the good life” in Solomon’s time different than in our time? Explain.
- On a scale of (1-10) how attached are you to the “stuff” you own?
- Why keep something that you might not even remember having?
- Why is it often satisfying to downsize and simplify our life-style?
- How would you describe the satisfaction of generosity?
- Close in prayer asking God for generous hearts that are not ruled by wealth.