



IGNITE
FAITH | FAMILY | FUTURE

Small Group Study

Plastic Donuts
By Jeff Anderson

Session 4 - Heart of the Matter

Before the lesson, read Chapters 7 and 8

Group Prayer

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Convert our hearts to trust in You.

The Heart of the Matter

Read Proverbs 21:3 - *[3] To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.*

What does God desire more than our offerings?

How do you see the relationship between a right heart and Generosity in your own life? Which one influences which one more?

Read Acts 5:1-10 - *Acts 5:1–10 - [1] But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, [2] and with his wife's knowledge he kept back for himself some of the proceeds and brought only a part of it and laid it at the apostles' feet. [3] But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land? [4] While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not at your disposal? Why is it that you have contrived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to man but to God." [5] When Ananias heard these words, he fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all who heard of it. [6] The young men rose and wrapped him up and carried him out and buried him. [7] After an interval of about three hours his wife came in, not knowing what had*

happened. [8] And Peter said to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much." And she said, "Yes, for so much." [9] But Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out." [10] Immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. When the young men came in they found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

What was the problem with the gift Ananias and Sapphira gave that cost them their lives?

Could they have chosen to give what they had given and kept their lives? Explain.

Read Matthew 5:23-24 - [23] [Jesus said], "So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, [24] leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift."

Why didn't Jesus say, "Give your offering, and then go make right with your brother?"

What should we do if our heart is not right?

See 1 John 1:9 and Proverbs 28:13 for guidance

Read Matthew 23:23 - [23] [Jesus said] *“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.”*

What does Jesus want the scribes and Pharisees to do?

Read Psalm 51:10-19

[10] Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. [11] Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. [12] Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit. [13] Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. [14] Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness. [15] O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise. [16] For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. [17] The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. [18] Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; build up the walls of Jerusalem; [19] then will you delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.

What was possible after being cleansed? (See v. 13, 14, and 19).

What are things you do to “clear your heart” before God?

Read 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 - [6] *The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. [7] Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.*

What happens when you give generously? What about when you don't?

What does God really want from you?

How did the story of Papa strike you? What does it teach us about God? (See pg. 99-101 for context).

Reflection

How has this book changed your perspective on God and generosity? How have you been challenged? Encouraged?

How can you see your giving in light of your relationship with God (rather than a simply "Christian Duty")?

If we at Trinity take this book to heart, what impact do you see in the Michiana area and beyond? How can you be part of that joyful mission?

The Four Rules and conclusions

- 1. The Amount Matters**
- 2. We Determine the Amount**
- 3. We Give According to Our Ability**
- 4. The Heart Makes the Gift Acceptable**

What one truth will you take away from this study? How will you apply it to your life?

Is there a person in your life who could be impacted by this book?