

WHAT WOULD JESUS BUY?

Resource Guide

"We don't have all the answers, but I think we have the questions." Reverend Billy

Guide Overview: *What Would Jesus Buy?* is a documentary film that examines the commercialization of Christmas. *WWJB?* challenges us to examine **why** we buy so much, **where** we buy, and **how** we buy all in an effort to identify **what** we can do about it to transform our habits and communities... not just during Christmas, but year-round.

Let's Start With The Basics:

Examine why you buy the things you do – and ask yourself do I really need this? Do I have something like it? Where am I going to store it?

1. Learn and live by a simple motto: **The 3 R's** –

Reduce: Reducing the amount of waste you produce is the best way to help the environment

Reuse: Instead of throwing things away, try to find ways to use them again!

Recycle: Consuming less means you're using what you have already and actively recycling!

Further Questions

- What could you do with the extra money you save by curbing your shopping?
- Can you name products in your home that you could start use again instead of buying new?
- What about making your gifts? What could you make as a unique gift?

What Scripture Might Say About Consumption

It is clear that there is something to be said about consumption in the Bible. Here are several points to guide your discussion.

1. How does Exodus 20: 17 that addresses the issue of coveting contribute to our understanding about consumption?
2. Jesus tells a parable about the effects of giving money to several servants, traditionally called the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25: 14-30). How do you interrupt this parable? Do the passages before and after it lend any help to the meaning?
3. Jesus says in his Sermon on the Mount that we ought not to worry about what we should wear or what we should eat (Matthew 6:25-34). What should we be worried about?
4. Jesus cleared the Temple in Mark 11:15-18, days before he was crucified. It may be the only time that Jesus appears angry. Why was he angry and how does this add to a discussion on consumption?
5. Hebrews 13:5 talks about living in a way that is free from the love of money and the Christian church has placed greed as one of the seven most deadliest sins. What is the love of money? And, as I Timothy 6:10 says, why is it the root of all evil? Does Acts 8:20 play a role?
6. What did Jesus say to the rich man in Matthew 19:16-24?
7. Jesus told a parable of a rich fool who built bigger and bigger barns to hoard his grain (Luke 12:13-21). What happened and what was Jesus trying to address?

What Would Jesus Buy?

We really don't know what Jesus would buy, but they're a few points that we can infer from Jesus and the story of Christianity.

1. Greed is not good (gluttony is one of the seven deadly sins).
2. Wealth should be shared so the poor can have what they need.
3. Jesus cleared the Temple because merchants had taken it over.
4. Jesus would probably give away more than he kept for himself.
5. The Christmas story reveals Jesus in very modest (lowly) circumstances, not among the rich.

Web Resources

www.esa-online.org
www.sojo.net
www.bread.org

Where Do You Consume?

Why should I support local merchants versus big-box stores and franchises? How can I find out about companies that participate in fair labor and trade practices and how can I participate?

1. Buying local means you're supporting your local economy.
2. Look for products that are "Fair Trade Certified." The label means they pay their workers a reasonable wage and don't participate in child labor.
3. The corporations want us to have experiences only through their products. Our neighborhoods, "commons" places like stoops and parks and streets and libraries, are disappearing into the world of big boxes and chain stores.

Further Questions

- Can you name your favorite local stores?
- Is it possible to not shop for one week?
- How are big-box stores same and different from local stores?

Web Resources

www.fairtradefederation.org
www.coopamerica.org
www.sweatfree.org
www.ijm.org

How Do You Consume?

How can I be more aware of what I purchase and how it effects the environment around me?

1. Determine your carbon footprint. Your carbon footprint is the direct effect your actions and lifestyle have on the environment in terms of carbon dioxide emissions. Go to www.nativeenergy.com.
2. Look at the label, where and how is your product made? Green goods are more available today from paper towels and cleaning products to clothing and housing materials.
3. Find company websites and read about where and how products are made.

Further Questions

- What can you do to reduce your carbon footprint?
- What are you currently recycling?
- Are there local businesses committed to going and being green?

Web Resources

www.creationcare.org
www.nrdc.org
www.thedailygreen.com
www.nativeenergy.com

What Can We Do About It?

Where do I start? What can I do in the first week, month, year?

1. Beginning is important. Decide where you want to start.
2. Change your lightbulbs, reduce your heat/air conditioning consumption, and buy fresh foods.
3. Find other people and groups that are working toward the same ends. See what you can do together.
4. Go to www.revilly.com and see how you can get involved in rallies and boycotts.
5. Drive less, walk more.
6. Commit to only buying products that are made in America.