



CONSUMED

Consumed Church Pack – Children's Ministry Activities

AIM

To reconsider the difference between needs and wants, by expanding our perspective globally.

Materials

Access to the Internet on a big screen. Magazines, scissors, plain paper and glue. A handout for families with the suggested take-home activities.

Preparation

Play with the Dollar Street website to become familiar with it.

Context

'Relative deprivation' is the idea that if we think everyone is in the same boat as us, we'll be more content than if we think that others around us have more than us – making us feel relatively deprived. Imagine, for example, poor village children seeing a TV in a shopfront playing an American sitcom!

Consumerism makes us feel relatively deprived, so that we think we deserve more toys or clothes or things. It turns wants into needs. The aim of this discussion is to raise awareness of this difference by making our reference point more global.

'Dollar Street' was set up by a not-for-profit educational organisation and shows photographs of different families around the world. You can search by income or by country, and choose to compare everything from beds to bikes, from toys to toilets! This is a great tool for broadening our perspective on relative deprivation.



ASK

On a scale from 1-5, where 1 is extremely poor and 5 is extremely rich, where do you think your family sits? Remember your number (or get kids to write it down or write a scale on a whiteboard and get them to mark themselves on it.)



ASK AGAIN

Remember your number from the start? On a scale from 1-5, where 1 is extremely poor and 5 is extremely rich, where do you think your family sits? Would you like to change your number now?



SHOW

On a big screen <https://www.gapminder.org/dollar-street/matrix> Ask children to click on 'Families' and choose what they'd like to compare. Click on 'the World' to choose countries. Choose income levels by moving the slider from 'poorest' to 'richest'.



ACTIVITY

Make two columns on a whiteboard or piece of cardboard marked NEEDS and WANTS. Ask kids to find pictures in magazines for each column and bluetac/paste them on.

Possible Discussion Questions

- When you have spare time, what do you like to do?
- Do you need to buy something to do this?
- What do you most ask your parents to buy for you?
- What do your parents buy for you without you asking them?
- What do you need to have a good life?
- What makes you happier? New things? Playing with friends and family?
- How much do you like to share?
- How much do you think advertising affects you?
- Most Australians think we are too busy with work and money to give time to family and community. Do you agree?



CONSUMED

Look Up The Bible

In **Luke 12:15** Jesus said to the crowd: “Don’t be greedy! Owning a lot of things won’t make your life safe.” (CEV)

Philippians 4:6-7 says “Don’t worry about anything, but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God. Then, because you belong to Christ Jesus, God will bless you with peace that no one can completely understand. And this peace will control the way you think and feel.” (CEV)

So, the antidote to greed is gratitude!


Respond


Research shows that practising gratefulness regularly is one of the only things that actually increases happiness! What are you grateful for?


Pray


Thank God for all the things you are grateful for.


Family Activities At Home

-  Play a game of ‘Rigged Monopoly’ to notice the effect wealth has on us. Roll the dice before you start to choose one person who will start the game with twice as much money as all the other players. This person will also get twice as much money each time they pass GO. Give this person extra snacks. Play the game then discuss everyone’s feelings about the outcome!

-  Visit www.footprintcalculator.org to work out how many planets worth of resources your family is consuming.

-  Visit <http://www.globalrichlist.com/> to find out where your family sits compared to the rest of the world.

-  Take the GapMinder test at <https://www.gapminder.org/> to see how much your family knows about the state of the world. Warning: kids do better on this test than adults, but chimpanzees do best! Keep trying until you can get a Facts Certificate.

-  Talk as a family about what you’re grateful for over dinner or before bed each night.

*“If the only prayer you said in your whole life was ‘thank you’, that would be sufficient.”
– Meister Eckhart*