



CHUCK KNOWS CHURCH

The Committee: Stewardship

This group study is designed for a 45-60 minute discussion after viewing the film.

All Chuck Knows Church videos can be viewed and downloaded at:

www.ChuckKnowsChurch.com

Introduction:

The Committee is a humorous and poignant online series that examines the struggles congregation's face as they look toward a preferred future. Using real world topics, *The Committee* is sure to open discussion in your congregation.

The series follows Park Grove Community Church, a make-believe urban U.S. congregation, which has lost its pastor and is closing its doors, unless it reinvents itself. Park Grove is faced with a difficult decision. They seemingly have tried everything humanly possible. Should it close? Things are so bad that a retired pastor didn't show up to help them decide the congregation's future – so it's up to the last remaining members to discover it for themselves.

Although some of the characters and situations are simplified to accommodate the format, they may feel familiar. Your congregation may not be facing closure, may have a wonderful pastor, and be a vital and growing church. However, all congregations face the issues addressed in *The Committee* at some point.

Have an open conversation about the issues covered in the series.

Chuck Knows Church Resources

Website: www.ChuckKnowsChurch.com

Discipleship Ministries Website: www.UMCdiscipleship.org

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Suggest ways on Twitter to save Park Grove. Use this Hashtag **#SaveParkGrove**

> Watch *The Committee: Stewardship* (15 minutes)

> **Starters** (15 minutes)

The tagline for the stewardship banner for Park Grove Church is **“God Knows What You Can Afford.”** Few people would say that motivating people through guilt or a sense of duty is effective, so why is this a strategy that is used widely? Create three campaign slogans in each of the categories below:

Guilt, Duty, Obligation

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Hope, Joy, Compassion

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Discuss with one or two people:

- Share your slogans with the group. Put a “happy face” next to the one that is, for you, the best motivator; put a “sad face” next to the one that motivates you the least.
- Which category do you think you’re most likely to hear in your local church when it comes time to talk about stewardship?

> **Stewardship Defined** (15 minutes)

In some congregations, the word stewardship is all about how the church gets money to pay the bills, and that is a shame. Stewardship is about so much more. Funding the mission and ministry of a local church is important, especially if lives are being touched and transformed by the things your church is doing.

Stewardship is about helping people live faithfully and generously with all God has given. It is about shaping generous disciples. (Hey, that’s tweetable!)

Stewardship is about being faithful with more than money.

Discuss with one or two people, and then share with the whole group:

- What are we called to be good stewards of, besides our money?
- In your church, do people ever talk about money when they are not asking people to give it to the church? In the context of tithing (or percentage giving), do they ever talk about how to be faithful with the part we keep for our own needs and wants?
- When Chuck asks, “So at its heart, what is stewardship really all about?” Daniel answers, “It’s about relationships.” What does that mean?

> Reflection on the Bible (20 minutes)

**Ask a member to read aloud the following passage from Mark 10:17-22 (NRSV).
Ask another person to read the Background.**

17 As he was setting out on a journey, a man ran up and knelt before him, and asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” 18 Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone. 19 You know the commandments: ‘You shall not murder; You shall not commit adultery; You shall not steal; You shall not bear false witness; You shall not defraud; Honor your father and mother.’” 20 He said to him, “Teacher, I have kept all these since my youth.” 21 Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, “You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.” 22 When he heard this, he was shocked and went away grieving, for he had many possessions.

Background:

In the Hebrew culture in which Jesus lived, keeping the law and commandments was a big deal. Sometimes it is easy for Christians to think that Jesus didn’t have much regard for the laws we find in the Old Testament, but the Scripture doesn’t bear that out. Jesus did challenge the Pharisees and the Scribes, who used the law to beat people down and raise themselves over others. What was probably most radical in Jesus’ teaching was lifting commandments to love others – especially the least, the lowest, and the lost – above other laws and commandments.

So we shouldn’t be surprised when Jesus’ response to this man’s question about inheriting eternal life is to cite the commandments. It would seem this rich man has that area covered...or does he? The commandment that is not mentioned is the one about having “no other Gods” and Jesus senses that there may be another god in this man’s life – his possessions. It appears that letting go of possessions and wealth is a price too high, one this man is not willing to pay. The cost of discipleship is high.

Questions for Discussion:

If your group has more than seven members, divide into groups of four to discuss the Scripture passage.

- What do you think this man is really seeking when he asks Jesus, “What must I do to inherit eternal life?”
- Reread Mark 10:21. Why is that verse so important? Why should it be important to all of us?
- Do you believe that to “inherit eternal life” you just need to keep the commandments, to follow rules, to be good? Is there something in your life that is keeping you from giving more of yourself to following Jesus?