



Our lives, our hopes and dreams, are not bought with bills or coins, but paid with our heart's submission. So then the question is not IF we have sold out, but to whom...

My Friends:

The morning after I preached in contemporary a woman came into the church and dropped off a sizable check for benevolence. She told Wanda she was convicted by my sermon, which mentioned the lack of funding for the benevolence ministry. Wanda, who had also heard the message, was excited and immediately came and found me. Of course I was happy (and a little startled that anyone would respond), but when I looked at the amount on the check and heard it was a single mom I started to waver. My message was not for the Widow's Mite; I did not want anyone to risk...

It is strange how risk free my faith is. Of course at times I have risked a lot to follow Christ, but often I place my trust in all the wrong places. So when I see sacrifice I get a little nervous. I forget that God's plan is bigger—riskier—than anything I can imagine. When I hoped for us all to give a little or maybe the well off to give out of their excess, God had a plan to use the one willing TO RISK...

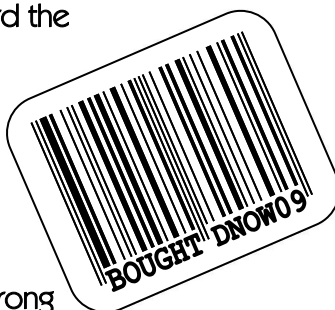
This weekend you are taking a step towards madness, a move from the comfort of your home into the chaos of a D-now house. But I want to ask you to take an even greater risk and be real with your students. The lessons focus on how we have sold ourselves to sin. All of us have struggles, depending far too often on our own strength. To steal from the brilliant Henri Nouwen, we are all Wounded Healers (see also Shyamalan's Lady in the Water).

So take the risk to walk alongside the students. Striving together the lessons will not become condemning or legalistic, nor will they be accepting of sin. Instead they will be a journey to find the grace of Christ and travel the path to become like Him.

Thank you for making this a great weekend, Sean

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"We have to pay for that..."

On occasion while shopping as a family we will buy something just for Ivy. It could be anything from sunglasses to pants to Sippy cups, but no matter what we get Ivy is thrilled. She will hold it like a treasure for the rest of the shopping experience. Yet when we get to the checkout counter she refuses to let go. Often wailing as the poor worker quickly scans the item...

We live in a world where everything has a price. To Ivy this may seem strange, but we know nothing is free. If it was, we would all have helicopters and mansions! But in reality everything has a price. And this extends far beyond the shopping mall. Good grades require time and brains. Friends require opinions and attitudes (sometimes they even have a certain dress code!).

Over time we will find we are not products of our own making, but products of the things in which we are involved! For while we thought we were the ones buying in reality we were the ones being bought...

We like to envision ourselves as heroes, able to rise above the fray, but in reality we are chained. As Paul proclaims we are slaves to the one we obey. So then the question is not if we have sold out, but to whom?

Over the following pages we will dive into the reality of our sinfulness. We will focus on some specific sins, including some uncomfortable topics. The climax will be Christ's offer of salvation, which does not set us free, but offers to replace our bonds. "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life." (Romans 6:22)

The following lessons are NOT complete. I have designed them that way. I do not want regurgitation. I believe God has called you to this position to deliver the message He has placed on your heart. Of course I have a direction for the weekend, but I want to empower you to teach where God connects with you.

This is evident in the form of the lessons. On every page the right column is blank for you to fill in with your notes.

The lessons are divided into four categories:

1. Focus: Basically the thesis...
2. Illustration: An activity to get the group involved...
3. Scripture: My understanding of the scripture passage...
4. Discussion [D]: Though I hope there will be discussion all along the way, this points a single question that I feel is important...

Saturday

8:30 Breakfast
9:00 QT (Student Book)
9:30 Lesson 3
10:30 Lesson 4
Noon Lunch
1:00 Something will happen...
(Two Shifts for Activities)
5:00 Supper @ Church (Moe's)
6:00 Concert
7:00 Leave to Host Homes
7:30 Lesson 5
9:00 One on Ones
12:00 Light's Out

Friday

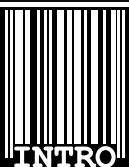
3:00 Leader Meeting
5:30 Pizza Supper
6:15 Meet Your Leader
6:45 Leave for homes
7:15 Lesson 1
8:45 Lesson 2
10:00 Free Time
Midnight Lights Out

Schedule

Sunday

8:00 QT (Student Book)
9:15 Breakfast @ Church
9:45 Sunday School
11:00 Service

bought



- Once students arrive at host homes, they ARE NOT to leave without permission of their leader and host family...and THEN only after Andy or Sean has been made aware of it. Your group needs you, and for you to get the most of the weekend, you need to be present the whole time!
- Students ARE NOT to use the telephone/cell phone except in the case of an emergency.
- The host/co-host will take care of minor discipline problems... Andy or Sean will be contacted and will take the necessary actions warranted by the problem.
- "Lights Out" means GO TO SLEEP!
- Students are not to have CD players, jam boxes, NDS, PSP, Walkmans, MP3, ipods, items for practical jokes, or anything else that might be a distraction.
- Video Games are allowed as long as the group is able to participate together (multi-player games or games that allow all to have a turn, i.e. Guitar Hero). Some games should be restricted based on content, as judged by the host home leader and parents.
- No egging, rolling yards, water balloons, shaving cream...or sneaking out of host homes to obtain any of the above.
- Leave toilet paper at home. Your host home will provide what you need (and you won't be needing any TP outside the bathroom!!)
- No Tobacco products, weapons, firecrackers, alcohol, etc., is allowed.
- What the leader and the host family says, goes. No exceptions. You are a guest in their home.
- NOTE: Having been informed of these guidelines, breaking any of the above rules will be dealt with as is deemed necessary by the D'Now leadership...and may include being sent home!

As a leader I do not expect you to be a disciplinarian. We hope this role will be taken up by the host home parents. But please do not become the instigator of anything that is against the rules...

bought

RULES



Focus: The Fall or what we may call The Sell-Out

As the first lesson it will be spent with introductions, under the visual section there is an intro game that will lead into the major illustration for the night...

Something that should be natural—following God, our creator—is impossible. We should know how to do it, much like there should be no need for Starbucks employees to have step by step instructions for washing their hands. And yet humanity does not naturally follow God. Even when we try we fail... How can this be? Why is doing right so difficult... Simply, we have Sold-Out to sin, because at the core we are prideful and selfish.

"I know without a doubt I am a person who is wired so that something outside myself tells me who I am." ~ Donald Miller

Visual: Claymation

Introduction Game ~ Materials: play-doh (clay) and question cards

Divide the group into two. Give each person a question card. They will write a ONE word answer on the piece of paper. SILENTLY, you do not want the other group to hear. Take up the pieces of paper, keeping the team's answers in separate stacks.

Now use the play-doh to play claymation (think the activity in Cranium). One member from each team will take a card (from the others team's stack, so they will not draw one of their own cards). Then they will mold the play-doh to help their team guess the one word answer (no words or hand-gestures, can not use play-doh to make numbers or letters). The first team to guess correctly wins a point, but the other team will continue to guess until they know the word. Then each team can earn a bonus by guessing who on the other team gave the answer. Continue until all the cards are gone...



Visual: Claymation (continued)

Transitioning into the lesson, continue the claymation game with your answers to the questions. Only now add a new level of difficulty by placing a mirror in between the “artist” and their clay. So as they try to make “pasta” (your favorite food), they will only be able to see themselves...

This will visualize the problem we have accomplishing the will of God. Because of our own pride and selfishness we are constantly wondering what is in this for me...

Scripture: Genesis 3:1-7

1-5 ~ We place ourselves in tempting situations...

6 ~ “saw”, “pleasing to the eye” ~ We focus on appearance rather than reality. On a very basic level we like the boy/girl who is beautiful rather than the person who has a loving heart (think Shallow Hal). But this moves beyond relationships to nearly everything. We want the name brand often for no other reason than the name. After the recent event,

After Party, the biggest complaint by HS is that Middle Schoolers were present. Asked why this changed things? It made us feel like it was for little kids, rather than a party for ourselves...

7 ~ “Naked” ~ Of course Adam and Eve were literally naked, but they were missing something more fundamental than clothes. They were missing the very essence of love and grace with which their creator surrounded them. And ever since we have been trying through deeds, possessions, relationships to again find that covering. To again find that security...[“Now that God was gone, now that He wasn’t around to help us feel that we are loved and important and good, we were looking for it in each other...” ~ Donald Miller]

I have seen movies where men will fall on their own sword rather than be taken captive. Supposedly it is historical, but all I know is that Hollywood tells me it is true (which I wonder how many of my “facts” are really just Holly-truths). But this is great representation of Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double edged sword.” We love to read this verse and think of ourselves as the sword wielder and in part this is true. But the sword should also pierce our own hearts (Read the whole chapter).

As you read and teach the scripture, be pierced. Then pierce the students. Scripture should hurt as often as it comforts (really in the beginning it will hurt more, until we bear the scars of Christ!)

Key Issue: Original Sin ~ THE original sin is endlessly debated, but there is a common thread between Adam and Eve and our lives. Of course we are not tempted by literal apples or oranges. But the desire for control roots in all our hearts. To break it down we find in all of our actions the sin of selfish pride. The pride to believe that we could attain something without God and the selfish belief that it is all about ourselves. Fundamentally the passage reveals the essence of life. Will we obey, be BOUGHT by God, or will we sell ourselves to the delusion that we can be in control? ...

bought

L-ONE

Scripture: Genesis 3:1-7 (continued)

Random Issues ~ “Why does Original Sin Affect Me?” ~ From birth we are born flawed. Not that we are born sinners, just born with a tendency toward evil. The root of this is pride, which shows itself in selfishness. Though it is not politically correct to call children evil (really it seems a little mean), but reality is from birth we are born selfish. (This is expanded in the discussion below!)

Random Issues ~ “Is this story Real?” ~ Anytime you approach the beginning of Genesis a debate may begin about whether this is a literal story (seven days vs. evolution). But this debate misses the point of the Genesis. The first two chapters are not about how, but WHO. God is the creator. Though Adam and Eve are not questioned as often, many still wonder if it is a literal story (and this question has been debated since the earliest church writings). But the point is not whether snakes could talk, but that humanity chose itself over God and humanity has fallen from grace (we are NAKED). Do not stress about this debate if it arises, but direct the group back to the core. Also, be careful one side of the debate is not dehumanized (which so often happens in today’s conversation, especially in the evolution/creationism debate—as though it is a litmus test rather than Christ!)

Random Issues ~ “Stinking Women Ruined It All” ~ Every guy will notice that it was the woman who took up conversation with the snake, but the story is also a great example of man’s greater struggle: we jump into sin with naked women! (HA). But in reality this also misses the point. It was not women first, but all of humanity that fell to sin. We are all fundamentally broken. Fundamentally missing the presence of God (we are NAKED).

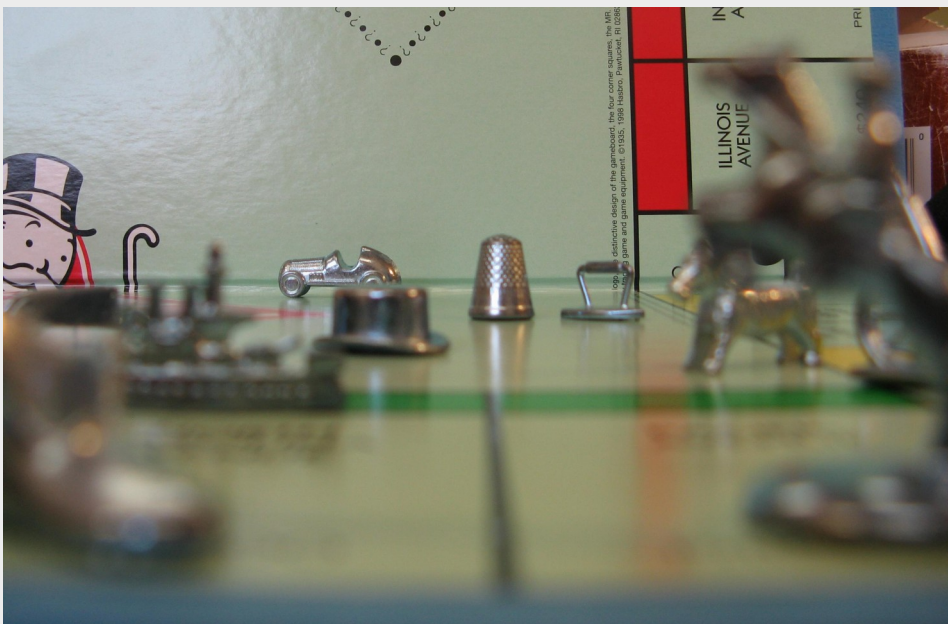


Reflex Action...

So many things are natural. We touch fire and our hand automatically recoils. Often we have a sixth sense knowing a situation is dangerous (even without the soundtrack movies provide!). Yet when it comes to sin we seem to naturally dive in. And it is difficult to do good. Take Ivy as an example, she naturally takes, but will rarely give! Literally the central concept of her preschool is to SHARE.

If we believe we have been created by God, in His image. Why is it so difficult to live like him? Why must we be trained to do good (and in all honesty have to work at it the rest of lives—seriously the world’s problems would be fixed if we could learn the toddler lesson of sharing!)? ... Of course the answer is original sin...





Focus: The Monopoly of our Life

This lesson will be a little different than most, since it will be centered around the board game monopoly. I would invite you to play the game as you discuss. Possibly after the first round look through the scripture. As always, do whatever you think is best—so you do not have to play the game. But it could be a great way to begin the evening uniting the group in conversation beyond just the lesson!

Why Monopoly? (The Point) ~ We have Sold Out to the world's view of success. And it is a "take all" vision; one where accumulation is the goal! Of course it is a little more complicated, we are not accumulating money and property, but accolades and friends and beauty and diplomas and ... While many of these things are not evil, the root of the problem is that success is no longer defined by the Creator. Life is no longer in His image.

"You don't go by monopoly, man!
That game is nuts! You don't just
pick up "Get out of jail free" cards!
Those things cost thousands!" ~
Creed on The Office

Illustration: The Game...

I assume everyone knows how to play monopoly, if not... well, call your parents and complain. You were deprived. ~ There are ton of thoughts from this game, so just be creative! But let me outline some of the similarities and differences to life...

Similarities:

- ◇ The goal is domination and it is achieved by getting more (and better)
- ◇ What you get takes away from others (limited resources)
- ◇ The more you control, the more you are able to get (rich get richer, poor get poorer)
- ◇ Personal Worth or value is based on \$ and possessions (We would add looks and talents; still, people do not have inherent value as God's creation. Instead they must EARN value!)



Illustration: The Game... (continued)

- ◇ (Similarity): Items are bought and sold without consideration of relationships or lives affected (of course in the game no one is affected when we buy Boardwalk, but we often treat our real purchases with the same attitude. We rarely consider if child labor produced our shirt or if our gasoline came from a country controlled by violent oppression. As an example my sister will no longer buy diamonds because of the war and death that occurs to control the mines...)

Differences:

- ◇ Everyone starts at the same place, with the same money, with the same chance (though the pieces pay homage to reality—the wheel barrel vs. the automobile, the top hat vs. the iron...)
- ◇ It is simplified—there are no permanent consequences
- ◇ You get \$\$\$ for making it around the block... (of course...)

“Prosperity and progress
You say bless me indeed
You fill up your bank accounts
While children die in their need
One day you’ll retire
You’ll have a house on the sea
But my friend where your treasure is
That’s where your heart’s gonna be
Woe to you, woe to you”
~ Matt Papa “Woe to You”
(every moment of this song is conviction)

Scripture: Romans 6:15-23

Though not necessarily the theme verse, this is certainly where the literature finds its roots. And it all focuses in one point, we are never free!

Living in the land of the free, the home of the brave—it is hard to imagine we are slaves. Moreover it is hard to accept we will never be free. Our Christian songs love to proclaim our freedom, as though we are completely free. In reality we are free from sin, but only if we choose another bond. Only if we choose to become slaves to Christ.

Though this may be hard to accept, it bears itself out in reality. There are so many sins that continue to plague me. Only when I am in the will of God am I able to overcome, only in prayer and scripture, only when I am pursuing His plan. Not that I am perfect, but when I submit to God “the benefit [I] reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.” (6:22)

You may ask why this weekend is called “bought” and not “slave”, to stick with the scripture. Well in part buying is as American as apple pie (though Wikipedia notes, apple pie was eaten long before the discovery of America, but we certainly perfected it, just as we have perfected buying...). But more, slavery in today’s culture is defined as racial. This was not the case in Roman culture, where anyone could become a slave—they did not discriminate!





The American Dream...

One of the basic strategies in Monopoly is to buy. As you skirt around the board you should buy every place on which your little battleship lands! If you do not you will just have money for the other cronies to take later!

Ok I am about to step off the map of many students, but understand the basic church maps stay pretty much on the surface. It is time to find some depth...

So much of what we do everyday runs counter to the gospel. Often we do not even realize that we have sold out to a destructive worldview! I think the

American dream, our classic goal, is one of these chains that bind us...

The dream expands and changes, but it involves a good job to support your family. A house is certainly a core element. Probably a car... There are many other aspects, but the dream is essentially a vision of security. A way for us to provide for ourselves.

This is certainly attractive. But it promotes the lie that we can be self sufficient, the basic lie of the Garden all spruced up!

I will confess of everything discussed this is my greatest struggle. I love my savings account and my IRA. I love the security they provide. I love that I will overcome... of course that last statement is ridiculous.

There is nothing wrong with a reasonable house, you could debate IRA's or life insurance, but THERE IS something wrong when we believe security is in ourselves.

There are many other questions: "Why are we so addicted to spending?"; the Matt Papa quote on the last page begs: "Why do we save—or spend—while children starve?" (A difficult question to which I do not know the answer, but I do give... of course I already mentioned my savings...)



A Rick McKee Cartoon

Every year we have put quiet times in the student books for Saturday morning. I choose a passage, wrote a story, and gave illustrations. But they have been received with mixed results. I think one way to improve them will be to make a connection with you. SO, this year their books will have a blank box to be filled in. Give them a passage a couple of leading questions. If you really want to go over the top you could prepare a story or illustration... Then follow-up on the QT in Lesson three!

bought

L-TWO



Since this is for "Girls Only" I asked Audrey, my sister, to write the lesson ...

Focus: Inner Beauty

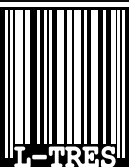
A few weeks ago I bought a pair of new dangly earrings. When I wore them to work someone made a comment about them and I mentioned how new earrings can make your day. They were just a little something to add some fun to my outfit and I was having a great day—because of earrings. I began to wonder, although there is nothing wrong with my cute earrings, when was the last time I had a great day solely because Christ met me for breakfast or when did I last smile because God thinks I'm beautiful, earrings or not?

Young women, probably since Eve, have been identifying themselves through their looks. We hear beauty is fleeting...but wait does that apply to me? I can't stay young forever? Once in high school I wrote a paper and mentioned that some days the only thing I had going for me was my tight skin...so as I notice my skin start to loosen, what do I have going for me?

This lesson will focus on the idea of how we define ourselves as women and where our confidence comes from as we live in a fashion conscious world (ultimate goal—Proverbs 31). Earrings should never be a part of my self esteem, but rather who Christ says I am in Him. For me, this is much easier said than done.

A Testimony: The woman reveled her struggle with anorexia (or bulimia, I am not sure) and went into detail describing how she viewed herself. How the mirror was no longer reality. And yet she began to seek Christ and one night had something like a vision. She was standing in her wedding dress, everything perfectly beautiful. Her hair just right. The dress perfect. Even her blemishes were gone. Then she realized this is how God sees me every moment... In Christ's love she was His bride.

bought



Illustration

I have a few ideas...please pick which works best for you.

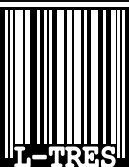
- ◇ **QUIZ TIME:** Women are bombarded by all sorts of media telling us how to look and what beautiful really means. Rarely does what the media tells us match up with the Bible. To begin the lesson have the girls take a beauty/fashion quiz from a teeny bopper magazine to see what the world claims as beauty. (This past weekend I have looked through quite a few magazines to find the perfect quiz, but since the prom issues are currently out I couldn't seem to find a quiz that wasn't about shoes or lip gloss or ways to get a prom date. There was an "okay" one in the back—pg 6—of the winter 2009 *Teen* titled "Could you be the Next 'It Girl'?" But really isn't the best. Feel free to use it or find your own, there are some great ones on-line, but they can be hard to print.) Have the girls take the quiz and use it as a starting point to compare what the world finds beautiful and what Christ looks for in us.
- ◇ **STICK GIRL:** Give each student a post-it note and have them write ways we find beauty, confidence, and self worth according to the world. (Example: wealth, long legs, accessories...) Create a poster of a "Beautiful-Confident Stick Girl": a drawing of a stick girl and put all the post-its around her. Then pass out the heart shaped post-its and as the lesson continues have the girls write what they learn makes us beautiful to Christ. When the lesson is over have the girls hang their heart shaped post-its on the poster.
- ◇ **REMOVE HER GLASSES:** Show a clip from one of the many chick flicks where the ugly girl is made over into a beauty and she becomes popular—discuss how this never solves her problems. (Examples: *Clueless*, *She's All That*, *Never Been Kissed*, *Devil Wears Prada*)

Scripture

1 Samuel 16:1-13—In this passage God has called Samuel to anoint a new king for Israel, even though the current king (Saul) is not yet dead. God instructs Samuel to go to Bethlehem, to the house of Jesse to anoint one of his sons. Samuel assumes he is there to anoint one of the good looking, older sons—yet, God makes an amazing statement. He sees the heart of man not the outward appearance. We need to remember this when a zit appears or when I really think a tummy tuck would make life wonderful—Christ doesn't value our outer appearance, but our inner. He finds us most beautiful when we love him.

Galatians 5:13-26—These verses describe the fruit of the spirit and plainly list exactly what God finds beautiful. Christ paid a high price for us and it had nothing to do with our looks. This alone should make us confident and overflow with joy since this is permanent and not fleeting like beauty.

bought



Scripture (Continued)

Isaiah 43:1-7—Sometimes we need a reminder of how much Christ loves us and how it's all about our heart, not our outer beauty. These are great verses to lean on for our confidence when we are lacking and remember how precious we are to Him.

D Saved by the Bell?

I remember waking up on the morning of my 20th birthday and taking a deep breath—I had not accomplished my childhood goal—I was not Kelly Kapowski. I didn't look like her, wasn't popular like her, and Zack Morris was not fighting to ask me to the Prom. As I lay there staring at my ceiling I knew I was crazy and that Kelly Kapowski had long since ceased to be cool, but it had been a childhood goal to be Kelly Kapowski by the time I was an adult (which to a fourth grader watching *Saved by the Bell* adult meant 20 years old). I wanted to be beautiful, well dressed, skinny, popular, talented, and liked by all the cute boys. Kelly wasn't only the most beautiful girl in school, but also the cheerleading captain, the star volleyball player, and had two boys fighting over her. As a ten year old this seemed perfect and even though at 20 I knew I didn't want half those things I still felt like a bit of a failure. Why did I think my life would be so much better if I looked like Kelly Kapowski? What other women do we envy and long to be like that might not necessarily reflect God's idea of beauty? What is the beauty in God's plan to make each of us different and unique?

Last week my husband and I rented the film *Burn after Reading* and I was appalled by the woman in the film. We meet her in the office of a plastic surgeon that is telling her about and literally marking all her flaws—floppy arms, sagging boobs, crow's feet, tummy fat. She becomes addicted to the idea that she must have four surgeries for her life to have meaning and purpose. Throughout the rest of the film she does and tries anything to get the money for these surgeries. She ignores the perfectly nice man who loves her and eventually gets two men killed so she can make this money. It was disgusting and I do not recommend this film—especially not for students. Yet, it left me thinking all week about how our obsession with outer beauty can hurt others and ruin lives. What does God think about aging and about us getting obsessed with stopping it? What are we missing in life because we are too preoccupied with our looks or our agenda?





Focus: Our Pornographic Lesson...?

[Do not stress - others have been! - I have already spoken with the 6th grade leader about doing just a brief cover of the lesson and turning to another topic. I also spoke with the 7/8th grade leader about sensitively approaching the topic.]

As I think about this lesson it is startling the images that flood clearly back into my mind. Honestly, I do not have an especially good memory and yet, I can still remember the first porn movie I ever saw. Ask me about any other movie during 7th grade... The issue of lust, of porn, is a stumbling block for nearly every guy. Growing ever more challenging as the internet becomes more and more accessible to teens (especially with mobile technology).

As we stride into this lesson, this is the time to be honest. It will be difficult. But as mentioned in the introduction, now is the time to risk...

Illustration: Fighting the Taliban

Check out the article on the next two pages...

As an introduction, ask the students to consider how to solve the war in Afghanistan. Tell them that the US has discovered the perfect tool to bring down the Taliban's network and ask them what they think it could be... After they list off the nuclear bomb (violent groups!) and you have revealed the answer, ask why does this work?...



Little Blue Pills Among the Ways CIA Wins Friends in Afghanistan

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/12/25/AR2008122500931.html>

By Joby Warrick

Washington Post Staff Writer

Friday, December 26, 2008; A01

The Afghan chieftain looked older than his 60-odd years, and his bearded face bore the creases of a man burdened with duties as tribal patriarch and husband to four younger women. His visitor, a CIA officer, saw an opportunity, and reached into his bag for a small gift.

Four blue pills. Viagra.

"Take one of these. You'll love it," the officer said. Compliments of Uncle Sam.

The enticement worked. The officer, who described the encounter, returned four days later to an enthusiastic reception. The grinning chief offered up a bonanza of information about Taliban movements and supply routes -- followed by a request for more pills.

For U.S. intelligence officials, this is how some crucial battles in Afghanistan are fought and won. While the CIA has a long history of buying information with cash, the growing Taliban insurgency has prompted the use of novel incentives and creative bargaining to gain support in some of the country's roughest neighborhoods, according to officials directly involved in such operations.

In their efforts to win over notoriously fickle warlords and chieftains, the officials say, the agency's operatives have used a variety of personal services. These include pocketknives and tools, medicine or surgeries for ailing family members, toys and school equipment, tooth extractions, travel visas, and, occasionally, pharmaceutical enhancements for aging patriarchs with slumping libidos, the officials said.

"Whatever it takes to make friends and influence people -- whether it's building a school or handing out Viagra," said one longtime agency operative and veteran of several Afghanistan tours. Like other field officers interviewed for this article, he spoke on the condition of anonymity when describing tactics and operations that are largely classified.

Officials say these inducements are necessary in Afghanistan, a country where warlords and tribal leaders expect to be paid for their cooperation, and where, for some, switching sides can be as easy as changing tunics. If the Americans don't offer incentives, there are others who will, including Taliban commanders, drug dealers and even Iranian agents in the region.

The usual bribes of choice -- cash and weapons -- aren't always the best options, Afghanistan veterans say. Guns too often fall into the wrong hands, they say, and showy gifts such as money, jewelry and cars tend to draw unwanted attention.

"If you give an asset \$1,000, he'll go out and buy the shiniest junk he can find, and it will be apparent that he has suddenly come into a lot of money from someone," said Jamie Smith, a veteran of CIA covert operations in Afghanistan and now chief executive of SCG International, a private security and intelligence company. "Even if he doesn't get killed, he becomes ineffective as an informant because everyone knows where he got it."

The key, Smith said, is to find a way to meet the informant's personal needs in a way that keeps him firmly on your side but leaves little or no visible trace.



"You're trying to bridge a gap between people living in the 18th century and people coming in from the 21st century," Smith said, "so you look for those common things in the form of material aid that motivate people everywhere."

Among the world's intelligence agencies, there's a long tradition of using sex as a motivator. Robert Baer, a retired CIA officer and author of several books on intelligence, noted that the Soviet spy service was notorious for using attractive women as bait when seeking to turn foreign diplomats into informants.

"The KGB has always used 'honey traps,' and it works," Baer said. For American officers, a more common practice was to offer medical care for potential informants and their loved ones, he said. "I remember one guy we offered an option on a heart bypass," Baer said.

For some U.S. operatives in Afghanistan, Western drugs such as Viagra were just part of a long list of enticements available for use in special cases. Two veteran officers familiar with such practices said Viagra was offered rarely, and only to older tribal officials for whom the drug would hold special appeal. While such sexual performance drugs are generally unavailable in the remote areas where the agency's teams operated, they have been sold in some Kabul street markets since at least 2003 and were known by reputation elsewhere.

"You didn't hand it out to younger guys, but it could be a silver bullet to make connections to the older ones," said one retired operative familiar with the drug's use in Afghanistan. Afghan tribal leaders often had four wives -- the maximum number allowed by the Koran -- and aging village patriarchs were easily sold on the utility of a pill that could "put them back in an authoritative position," the official said.

Both officials who described the use of Viagra declined to discuss details such as dates and locations, citing both safety and classification concerns.

The CIA declined to comment on methods used in clandestine operations. One senior U.S. intelligence official familiar with the agency's work in Afghanistan said the clandestine teams were trained to be "resourceful and agile" and to use tactics "consistent with the laws of our country."

"They learn the landscape, get to know the players, and adjust to the operating environment, no matter where it is," the official said. "They think out of the box, take risks, and do what's necessary to get the job done."

Not everyone in Afghanistan's hinterlands had heard of the drug, leading to some awkward encounters when Americans delicately attempted to explain its effects, taking care not to offend their hosts' religious sensitivities.

Such was the case with the 60-year-old chieftain who received the four pills from a U.S. operative. According to the retired operative who was there, the man was a clan leader in southern Afghanistan who had been wary of Americans -- neither supportive nor actively opposed. The man had extensive knowledge of the region and his village controlled key passages through the area. U.S. forces needed his cooperation and worked hard to win it, the retired operative said.

After a long conversation through an interpreter, the retired operator began to probe for ways to win the man's loyalty. A discussion of the man's family and many wives provided inspiration. Once it was established that the man was in good health, the pills were offered and accepted.

Four days later, when the Americans returned, the gift had worked its magic, the operative recalled.

"He came up to us beaming," the official said. "He said, 'You are a great man.'"

"And after that we could do whatever we wanted in his area."



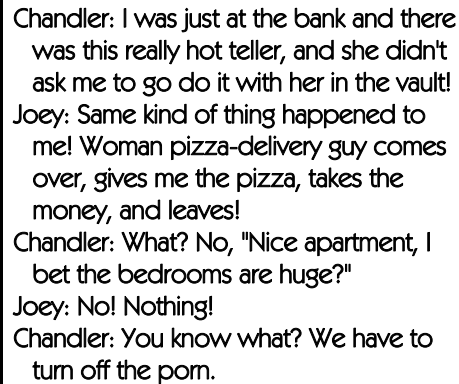
◇ 2 Samuel 11 "David and Bathsheba" ~ The Problem

This passage is haunting in its condemnation of David. The sheer audacity is unnerving - of course we do not understand life with a king! Still, it is an extreme example of the problem of lust.

A mom repeated that her son asked why it was wrong to look at porn? I was surprised someone would ask their mom, but it is a common question. For me, I first heard that porn was perfectly natural from *Friends*' Joey and Chandler - certainly reputable sources. And honestly, I never trusted their judgment... But this is a good question to address.

Of course porn, in the sense of pictures and video, did not exist when the bible was written. But lust is not a new phenomenon, I am sure since Eve... And lust is condemned, see Matt 5:27-30. Now they may ask, "Why does scripture condemn lust?" - since we need more than the Father's "because I told you so" (our problem from the beginning).

Porn dehumanizes women. Unfortunately most guys are not concerned about dehumanizing some random girl who agreed to a photo shoot (though we should be). But the dehumanization does not end there. It extends to how we begin to view every girl we encounter. We begin to see girls as sexual objects. In a relationship lust will dominate our thoughts. Rather than treat her as God's child, we will seek to make her our own (if only in our minds)... think Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (although honestly we are rarely pure!).



Chandler: I was just at the bank and there was this really hot teller, and she didn't ask me to go do it with her in the vault!
Joey: Same kind of thing happened to me! Woman pizza-delivery guy comes over, gives me the pizza, takes the money, and leaves!
Chandler: What? No, "Nice apartment, I bet the bedrooms are huge?"
Joey: No! Nothing!
Chandler: You know what? We have to turn off the porn.

◇ Genesis 39 "Joseph and Potiphar's Wife" ~ The Short-term Fix

Lust is an issue about which every guy should be legalistic. It is easy for all of us to fall to temptation, so we should flee! If the computer is the problem, move it out of your room. If a friend likes to watch movies, avoid going to his house. When the SI Swimsuit issue arrives, chunk it - I know they are not naked, but do not let them give you crap... we all know what is in our heads! FLEE!

◇ 1Corinthians 6:12-20 ~ The Solution

Legalism is not the remedy. The only true solution is to be bought by Christ (we will hit on this harder in the fifth lesson). Do not get me wrong, this sin will probably always tempt us. But selling out to the purpose of Christ will allow us to overcome. We will experience the love and grace of God. In this love we will find the solution.



bought





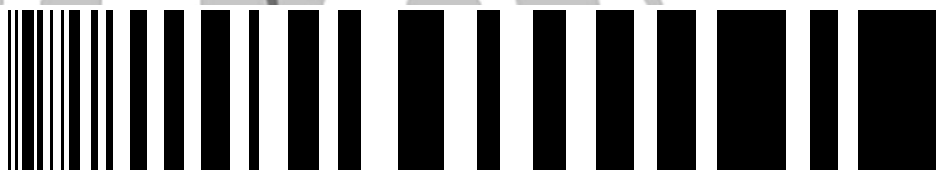
Tag-Team...

College was the first time I had an internet connection. This certainly dates me, but the internet opened up a whole new world and it could have opened the flood gates for pornographic material. Instead, I had a group of guys who strived to hold me accountable. Not that we were perfect. But I knew Nate or Tenny or Chris or... would stop by my room and ask how I was doing with the issue of lust.

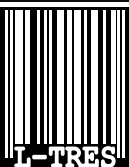
Finding the solidarity to form that group is difficult, but it is essential (not just on this issue, but so many). Together you can pray for one another. You can directly ask one another, to make sure you stand strong. Also, this group will give you strength - just the fact that there are guys who understand...

Who could you unite with to form a group? How would that group look? Where/when would you meet? Could FGO become that group? (FGO is the For Guys Only bible study)

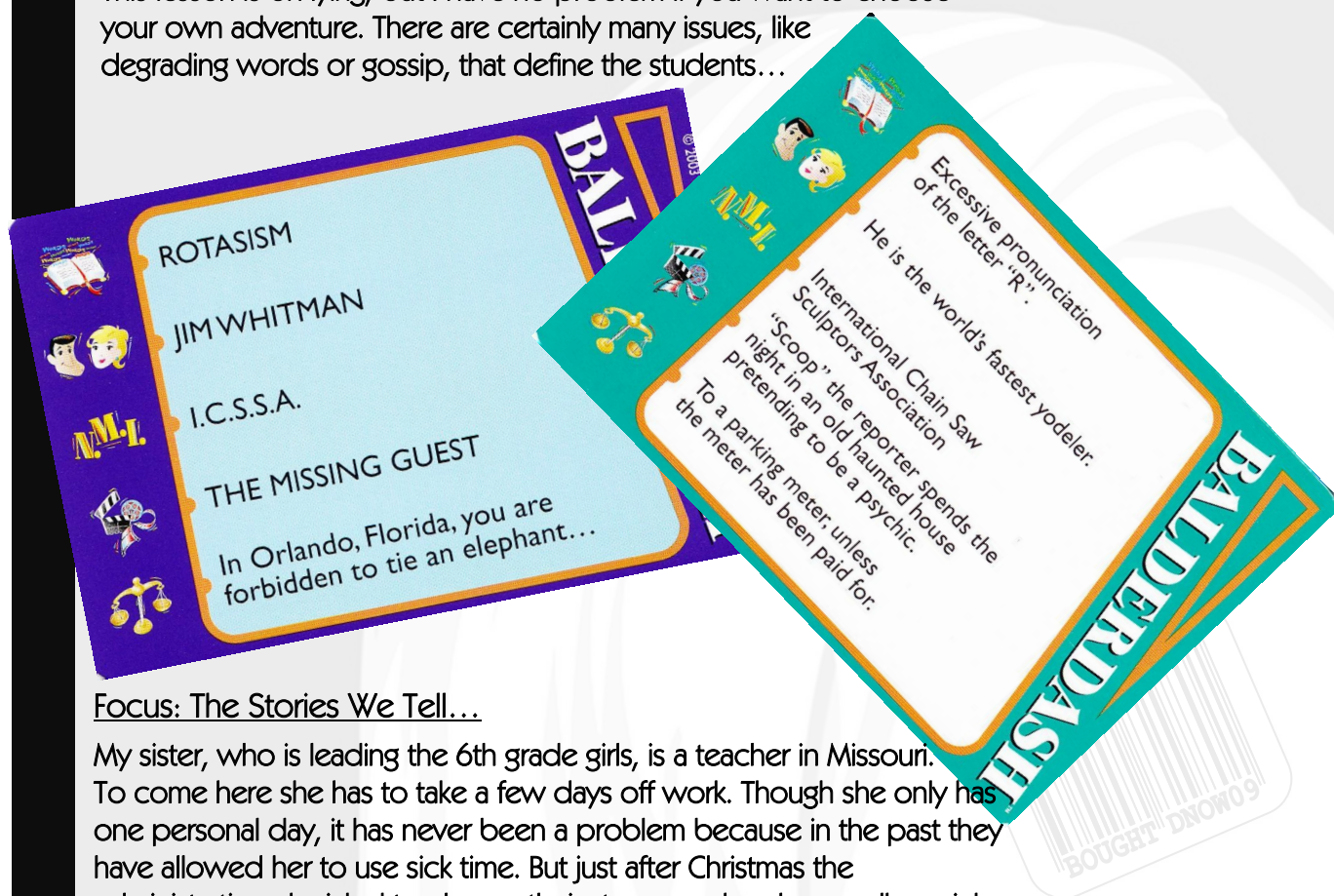
Random: The Issue of Masturbation. I have had this topic come up in a couple of D-now homes and honestly the conversation is never comfortable. Plus I am not sure of all the correct answers. I have read several Christian author's opinions and multiple support the practice (in moderation). Some were legitimate, like Richard Foster, and some were Christians on the edge, like Mark Driscoll of Mars Hill. Certainly others gave the answer I expected are others who come down on against the practice. So while I wound not bring it up, be prepared for the conversation.



bought



This lesson is on lying, but I have no problem if you want to choose your own adventure. There are certainly many issues, like degrading words or gossip, that define the students...



Focus: The Stories We Tell...

My sister, who is leading the 6th grade girls, is a teacher in Missouri. To come here she has to take a few days off work. Though she only has one personal day, it has never been a problem because in the past they have allowed her to use sick time. But just after Christmas the administration decided to change their stance and no longer allow sick days to be taken for personal time. So, while her time off had already been approved, Audrey would now lose a day of pay. Of course most people would just call in sick...

Lying has become second nature. Of course few people would consider themselves dishonest. I suppose this is because BIG lies, like did you run over grandma, are still avoided. But little lies, like claiming you didn't cheat, or lies of omission, because if you don't get caught..., are commonplace.

Integrity no longer holds a place in our definition of success...

Illustration: Balderdash

Materials: 20-30 Balderdash cards, 200ish small paper sheets

Of course we will not play out the whole game. We will do away with the board and pieces. Instead each group will get 20-30 cards and just have fun making up lies. If you have not played check out the card above. You can make up your own rules, but here is how I would play: Use only the random word category (in the example "rotasism"). Each player will have a sheet of paper. One person will draw a card (the Dasher, to use the game term). The Dasher will announce and spell the word. Then the Dasher will copy down the real definition. (next page)



Illustration: Balderdash (continued)

The others will make up definitions and write them on their sheets. All sheets will be passed to the Dasher. The Dasher will read all the definitions. Then the others will vote on the correct answer. A player receives a point if they get the correct definition. They also earn a point for every person who votes for the definition they made up. The Dasher gets 5 points if no one guesses the correct definition. Rotate Dashers and play again...

Scripture: So she is your sister?...

- ◇ Genesis 20:1-7
- ◇ Genesis 26:1-11

Ok both of these stories are crazy. Of course a liberal theologian is going to say only one is true (since the king has the same name, of course how many Henry's were there...), but honestly I can not imagine making this story up. Much less deciding to use it twice!

But both stories point to the core of why we lie: to save ourselves. The stories also reveal how often our lies are nonsensical.

A side note ~ I think the dueling stories also point to a characteristic of sin: it is passed down through the generations. This is a fact of student ministry that drives me crazy. The kids are who they are because of their parents. Yet, the parents wonder why their child is... but for the legacy to end, someone must choose to change. And honestly, I think the students are our best hope!



Please Excuse Me...

Many of the students may deny that they lie. Of course that is a lie!, but what are you going to do... One of the key dynamics of a lie is that it denies reality. And this is where excuses become lies, they deny our responsibility. But excuses will pour non-stop from every student when they are in trouble: "Yeah, well so and so was..." "It's not my fault, that guy was..." "I did not know..." And this drives me crazy!

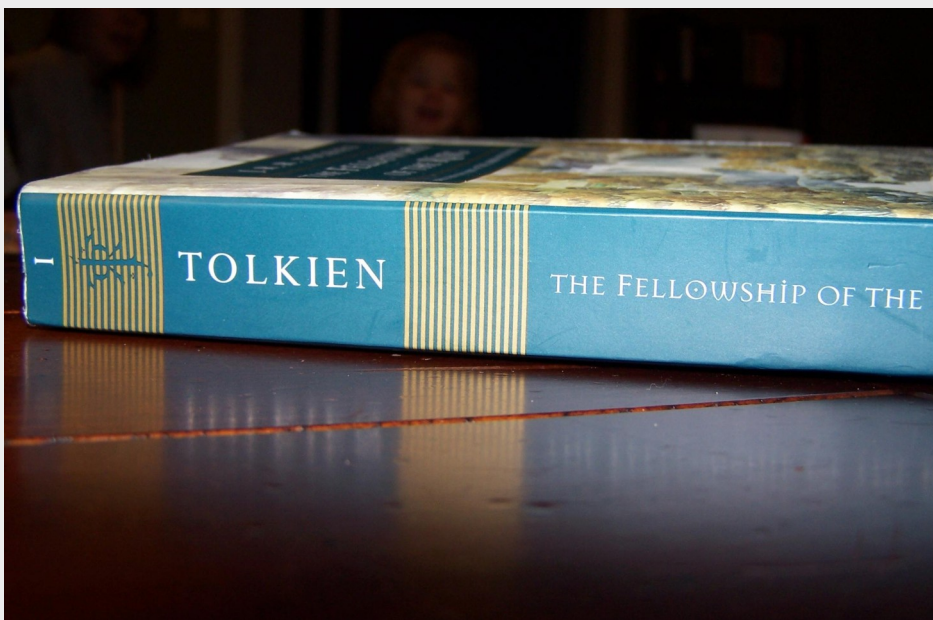
But excuses have been around from the beginning. Check out the aftermath in the Garden, Genesis 3:10-13.

Of course there are some real basic discussions, like, "Why do we lie?" or "When is it OK to lie?"...

Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

bought

L-FOUR



Focus: Bought by Christ

The grace of Christ is that no legalism will fix humanity's problem. Instead salvation from sin is found in relationship. Not a relationship among equals, but we are the servants. In our submission we will find righteousness. We will find that we have become like our Savior!

Illustration: The Hero

- ◇ Below you found my example of the false hero's tale (feel free to write your own). Begin by reading this story to the students...

My little brother, in the guild of Tolkien, has decided to write an epic tale. With terrible bears, a sought after sword, and an evil villain, it has the potential to become a great yarn. His effort has made me ambitious enough to try my own...

As Darkness fell warriors from the north rode near the town. He had once known they would come, but over the years they had drifted from his mind. Now with the reports of violence, he wondered if he was capable. Looking down at his hands, now calloused from the plow, he wondered if he could still fight.

Shouts. A scream. They were getting closer and he would soon find the answer. His wife and children huddled, as he extinguished the candle. He picked up his sword. It was dusty and dull, but he held the blade confidently and waited.

With a crash, the door was kicked open. For a moment the large man stood, a silhouette in the door, but he burst forward only to meet the farmer's blade. As he fell others were in the room. Metal clashed and a man cried out in pain. Then there was silence.

As the candle was relit two warriors lay on the floor, but the farmer was gone.

[continued on the next page]



Illustration (continued)

Racing over the hill he found the house he knew. The dark windows belied the group inside and his knock was quickly answered. Old friends welcomed him inside. "Are you alone," they asked. "Yes," he answered and then told the tale. As he finished they were amazed and all whispered in excitement, "a hero is among us."

- ◇ After reading the story (or if you want to rewrite your own version), ask the students, "What is wrong with this story?" Certainly the answer is simple. Everyone, even the most deluded, knows a hero can not save only himself. Instead a hero saves others. For the farmer to leave his wife and children behind was far from heroic. It was selfish.

It is selfishness, that pridefully believes we are the center. It is selfishness that quenches our chance to be heroic. It is selfishness that laments the hero's sacrifice (even lamenting George Bailey). To find the way out of darkness and into light will require that we sacrifice our own desires. That we remove ourselves from the center...

- ◇ You may give the students the chance to rewrite this story or write their own. Ask them to ID the common elements of their heroes.

"*It's a Wonderful Life* is a terrifying, asphyxiating story about growing up and relinquishing your dreams... It is a story of being trapped, of compromising, of watching others move ahead and away." ~ Wendell Jamieson, "Wonderful, Sorry George, It's a Pitiful, Dreadful Life", article in the NY Times.

An Aside: Cheap Grace

You may be wondering where is the grace in this literature? Though certainly a once popular sermon topic, sin has not been mainstream in recent years. I hope that you have not read the first lessons as hell-fire and brimstone...

These lessons have come out of the reality that our student's understanding of grace allows them to live a life identical to everyone around them. They do not see the calling of Christ, the church, as a radical departure, but a continuation of the life they are already living. Albeit one that involves a different final chapter.

Of course, I would not bank on the ending for such "cheap grace". As Bonhoeffer retorts, "The essence of grace, we suppose, is that the account has been paid in advance; and, because it had been paid, everything can be had for nothing... Grace alone does everything, they say, and so everything can remain as it was before... Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate." (The Cost of Discipleship)

My goal has not been to avoid hell, but to discover the grace of the cross, the grace of living as Christ. And this is "costly grace".

Swede and I had been used to oratory; our former pastor could exhort like everything and owned what Dad said must be a special edition of the Holy Bible, for it contained things omitted from our own - references to card playing, for example, and rock and roll, and the Russian people.

~ Leif Enger, Peace Like a River

bought

L-FIVE

Scripture: Matthew 6:25-34

[This in my estimate answers Romans 6, answers what it means to be a slave. So you may use that passage as a spring board. Better 1 Cor 6:20, which the guys have looked at, for what it means to be bought.]

While in college I memorized the Sermon on the Mount. Impressive, I know... of course, ask me to repeat it... Still, pouring over scripture never fails to reveal deeper levels. And while studying this passage in Matthew I understood my faith. I know most people will point to John 3:16 as the most important verse, but for me that verse is Matthew 6:33.

Upon this verse I have built my faith. Literally everything I do in ministry is guided by this verse. [For those that know me, Ezekiel 47 is a guiding passage, but even it is informed by Matt 6:33.]

On the surface the passage address money issues. Of course as a college student money was not my main concern (loans and my church job covered everything scholarships did not). I had an all you can eat meal plan, so food was no big deal. I honestly did not care about dress or looks - seriously, I was not showering regularly (how I convinced Meg to date me...). But of course we have struggles and as I worked over this passage I came to realize that seeking God was everything. The burdens I had, the sins I struggled with, my fears, my dreams... my life... "all these things will be given to you as well."

Seeking God, His kingdom and His righteousness, are what it means to become His slave. This is what happens when you are bought - when you sell-out to God.

But what this also means is that your goals, your dreams, your desires are sacrificed. And in their place will be the desires of God.

This is our faith.

And it is costly...

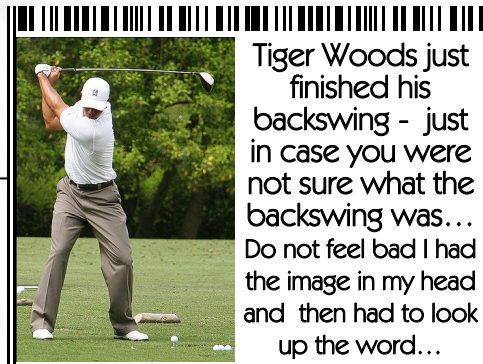


Seeking God

On the most basic level, how do we seek God? Now this is time for Sunday School answers like prayer and reading the Bible. Certainly it could also include fasting, meditation, memorization, or listening (which is a deeper understanding of prayer). Still this is only part of seeking. It could be compared with the back swing of a golf club, it is pretty useless unless you follow through and hit the ball!

In our situation, we hit the ball when we live out what we have heard. In these acts of faithfulness we prove that we have been BOUGHT by God!

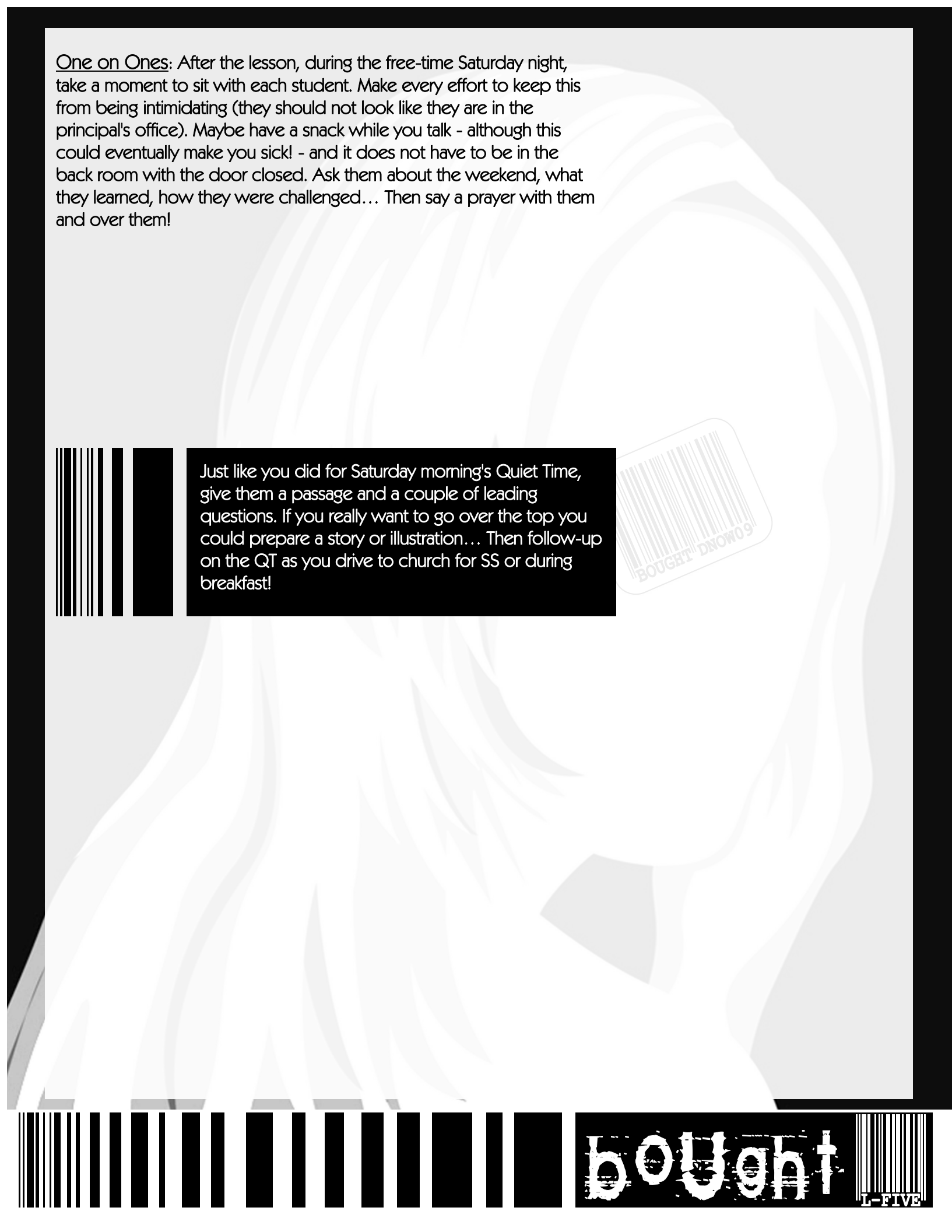
Take some time to pray as a group. Have the group pray over one another. Do not be scared to challenge them!



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One on Ones: After the lesson, during the free-time Saturday night, take a moment to sit with each student. Make every effort to keep this from being intimidating (they should not look like they are in the principal's office). Maybe have a snack while you talk - although this could eventually make you sick! - and it does not have to be in the back room with the door closed. Ask them about the weekend, what they learned, how they were challenged... Then say a prayer with them and over them!



Just like you did for Saturday morning's Quiet Time, give them a passage and a couple of leading questions. If you really want to go over the top you could prepare a story or illustration... Then follow-up on the QT as you drive to church for SS or during breakfast!

bought

L-FIVE