



*Consumerism:*

1. Think about a recent purchase you made - what was it? What influenced you to make the decision to buy - advertising, product reviews, your friends, your own tastes?
2. Marketing is geared towards convincing us that buying a particular product will change our lives for the better. A US journalist recently tallied up how much it would cost to buy everything featured in the top magazines - Vogue proved the most expensive, averaging \$850 per page and \$343,368 to buy everything in that particular edition of the magazine. When bombarded by advertising, do you think we are aware of how unrealistic these expectations are? Is consumer mentality driven by logic or emotion?
3. To what degree are we responsible for where our products come from, how they are made, and where they go when we are done with them? How much do these questions affect what we buy?
4. Consumerism is closely tied to ego and self-esteem: acquiring possessions will enhance our image, make us seem more popular or desirable. How might being content within ourselves affect our approach to acquiring things?
5. Is consumerism a problem unique to our time in history? In Matthew, Mark and Luke, we read the story of the rich young ruler, who asked Jesus what he must do to be saved. Jesus told him to obey the commandments, and when the man replied that he did, Jesus told him to sell all he had and give it to the poor. In Luke, it says "he became very sad, for he was a man of great wealth." How do you interpret this story? Does it mean that being a Christian and living a comfortable life are mutually exclusive?
6. How do you think the commandment 'do not covet' relates to consumerism? Is it okay to want things for ourselves? Is all consumerism necessarily a bad thing?
7. Is consumerism solely about material possessions? What impact do you think consumerism has on our approach to relationships?
8. We sometimes hear about the phenomena of 'church shopping' - people going around and trying out different churches (and discarding them if they don't 'fit' their expectations or desires). Is church about what you get out of it? Why/why not? How can a consumer mentality affect the way we approach church? Is it easy to leave our 'what's in it for me' attitude at the door and focus on worshipping God and serving others?

*Rest Is More:*

9. Do you see the Sabbath as something that distracts us from consumerism or a solution for consumerism?
10. Romans 12:2 states - "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is - his good, pleasing and perfect will." What role do you think Sabbath plays in renewing your mind, and keeping you aware of God's will? How does Sabbath remind you to break away from the model of consumerism?
11. We might assume the opposite of consumerism is minimalism - however Jesus promises an abundant life. What does that promise mean to you? What role does the Sabbath play in this fulfilment?
12. How can we make Sabbath restful and a delight, while also not being self-focussed?
13. What can you do during the week that would make the Sabbath more restful?