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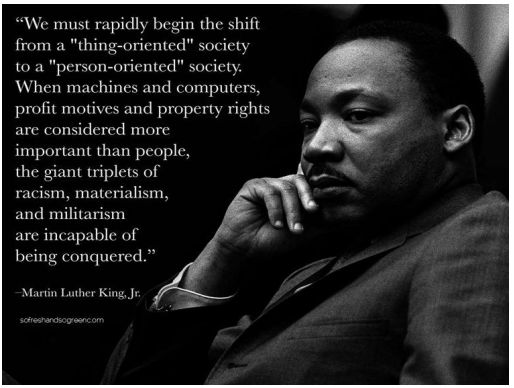
Christian Response to Consumerism

Rev. Silvan Chandrakumar A.

Genesis. 3: 1-7; Psalm 37; Phil. 3: 17-21; Matt. 6: 25-34

Key Thought: Some people willingly engage with temptation and dive into greed; some let others make that decision for them. Some follow the crowd instead of standing up for what they know is right.



The Church must recognize that our citizenship is not on this earth: Paul taught that 'our citizenship is in heaven from which the Lord Jesus Christ shall come to be the Savior' (Phil. 3:20). Our ultimate goal is in eternity.

21st century: After the Industrial Revolution, 21st-century consumerism rate began to increase in the face of increasing production. There is a way of

encouraging the unlimited quantity of goods, money or services, etc.

The Modern Generation: Today, for everything and anything the way of measuring is physical. Therefore, this is what makes consumerism so special and stands above everything else.

Ethics and Christian values: Today's generation lives in a consumerist culture. It is the church's mission to create awareness and express a Christian response to this consumerism. Many relationships are losing their Christian value because they see even relationships through this culture and time. Relationships are never solidified with the idea of making a profit. The Christian way of giving and sacrificing is a major challenge to consumerism.

1. The Modern Expression of Consumption (Gen. 3: 1-7)

'When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and *pleasing* to the eye, and also *desirable* for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it …' (Gen 3:6). **'Pleasing to the eye** תַּאֲוָה (ṯa·'ă·wāh-) lust, appetite, covetousness (*bad*

sense)- **desirable** וְנֶחְמָד (wə·neḥ·māḏ) for ….’ to want something that is pleasant out of desire or lust. The verse reveals Eve’s three motivations for crossing that line: The tree’s fruit could satisfy her body’s appetite for food, the tree was visually attractive, and the tree could make her wise. Those motivations line up closely with the Apostle John’s description of the things which still drive the world as we know it today: the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16).

Lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life have reduced human beings to nothing more than animal behavior, and the glorification of the individual. These three, I will agree is eroding Christian values because it promised material fulfillment above spiritual fulfillment. Consumerism inspires to sin.

Today, due to consumerist enticements People are captivated by the multinationals and their industries, products and advertisements. Couple of reasons are Expensive and luxury lifestyles. Children, young people and adults alike are addicted to this culture.

2. Set a Simple Life (Matt. 6: 25-34)

Scripture teaches us about a simple lifestyle. Paul's view was that we should think we are good enough to be clothed (1 Tim. 6: 8). Because those who want to be rich get caught up in temptation and traps and fall prey to all lusts. God can provide for all that is necessary for life. As a man who is burdened with the necessities of life, what to eat and what to drink bible exhorts us not to worry and trust in Christ (Matthew 6: 25-34). Here Mathew is giving us a call. Seek His Kingdom and Justice. Once the Kingdom is established, it means that we will have all the resources we need.

3. Aim for Eternity (Phil. 3: 17-21)

Only when we have a clear vision and desire for eternity will our love and affection for the world diminish. The love of the world is enmity with God (James 4: 4). That is why the flesh, the lust, and the glory of life are not of the Father but of the world.

The world passes away with its lusts but he who does the will of God abides forever (1 John 2:16, 17). Going after material things only goes against the Cross. Paul says their last destruction is their belly. Christian spirituality is the spirituality of humility

and simplicity. Unnecessary, Necessity, Necessary, and Essential-the items can be divided into four types. Christ's teaching is to persuade us to accept only what is necessary and not a luxury.

Questions / points for reflection:

1. Has consumerism taken over Christmas?
2. Is consumerism good for society?
3. Obvious social and economic problems, consumerism is destroying our environment. As the demand for goods increases, the need to produce these goods also increases. This leads to more pollutant emissions, increased land-use and deforestation, and accelerated climate change.
4. Consumerism a contributing factor to poverty around the world, a contributing factor to hunger amongst such immense wealth, and numerous other social issues.
5. Approximately 1.7 billion people worldwide (120 million in India) now belong to the 'consumer class'-the group of people characterized by diets of highly processed food, desire for bigger houses, more and bigger cars, higher levels of debt, and lifestyles devoted to the accumulation of non-essential goods.
6. Cheaply made manufactured goods that lead to a 'throw away' mentality.

7. 37 percent of species could become extinct due to climate change, which is very directly related to consumption.
8. Increased reliance on automobiles means more pollution, more traffic, more use of fossil fuels. Cars and other forms of transportation account for nearly 30 percent of world energy use and 95 percent of global oil consumption.
9. People are incurring debt and working longer hours to pay for the high-consumption lifestyle, consequently spending less time with family, friends, and community organizations.
10. Youths are obsessed with certain food products, clothing and lifestyle. Will it not impact our environment and cultural norms?
11. There is, of course, no easy solution to the problem. 'We need to change the way we produce goods and the way we consume them.'

'Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's needs, but not every man's greed.' - Mahatma Gandhi



HAVE A GREAT SUNDAY - Moving from

Luxuries to Necessities !!