**Leader Copy | Fakes | March 9, 2016**

**Creational Text – Large Group**

**Choose your money!!**

**Handbags – Story about Chinatown**

**Watches**

**Manti Te'o**

You might think you are getting something very valuable, but perhaps you are getting something worth much less, maybe even something that is completely worthless.

**Creational Text – Small Group**

Have you or someone you know ever bought something counterfiet?

Did they know it was fake when you bought it? If you didn't know, how did it make you feel to be ripped off?

Have you ever had a relationship that was fake? How did it make you feel?

**Scriptural Text – Small Group**

The bible talks a lot about fakes too. Any fake that takes the place of God is called an idol. Some of theses fakes are pretty obvious shams, but others are pretty convincing. Often idols are good things turned in the ultimate things. Read the passages below, name the fake, and discuss how convincing it is.

**Fake #1**

**Daniel 5: 22, 23**

22 “But you, Belshazzar, his son, have not humbled yourself, though you knew all this. 23 Instead, you have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven. You had the goblets from his temple brought to you, and you and your nobles, your wives and your concubines drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood and stone, which cannot see or hear or understand. But you did not honor the God who holds in his hand your life and all your ways.

What is the fake? ***False images of God****, having a concept of god that is not God.*

How convincing is it? *Today very few people worship wooden statues, but false pictures of God can be tempting*

How appealing is it? *It can be tempting to make god look like anything WE want instead of recognizing who HE IS.*

**Fake #2**

**Luke 16: 13,14**

13 “No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.”

14 The Pharisees, who loved money, heard all this and were sneering at Jesus. 15 He said to them, “You are the ones who justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows your hearts. What people value highly is detestable in God’s sight.

What is the fake? ***Money*** *– a source of power and safety and comfort that not God*

How convincing is it? - *Very, money seems to tell you when you've arrived, it gives you worth and value. It is tempting to think that if you have money God loves you more than someone who doesn't it and you are better than them.*

How appealing is it? - *Very, it gives you a sense of worth, security and power. Having money allows you to have and do pleasurable things.*

**Fake #3**

**Luke 12: 15**

Then he [Jesus] said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

What is the fake? ***Stuff, possestions****. But our stuff doesn't give us a lasting identity.*

How appealing is it? *Very, it gives us a sense of identity. "I'm an iPhone owner, I drive a \_\_\_ brand of car, I like to wear \_\_\_\_ clothes"*

**Fake #4**

**Philippians 3**

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.

7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage

What is the fake? ***Religious tradition, following the law, rule follwing.*** *We think if we do good things and follow rules that is what makes God love us. God will give us more stuff if we behave appropriately.*

How convincing is it? *Very, it is tempting to think think that the good we do is most important to how God sees us. In actuallity, God sees us through the lens of His Son. That is how we have God's favor and how God causes us to do good things.*

How appealing is it? *Very, it puts us in charge. If we do good things God owes us favors. We are in the drivers seat.*

**Fake #5**

**Hosea 10:13**

But you have planted wickedness,

you have reaped evil,

you have eaten the fruit of deception.

Because you have depended on your own strength

and on your many warriors

What is the fake? ***Power.*** *Having power is a measure of our success.*

How appealing is it? *Having the upper hand in relationships makes us feel good in the short term, but God reminds us that "the last shall be first", and Jesus himself was a servant to all and lead with weakness.*

**Connections – Small Group**

* In the intro we looked at a lot of fakes items, how can you tell the difference between what is real and what is not? *They are cheaper, don't hold up as well, poor quality*
* How can you tell the difference between the real God and fake gods. *God desires that we listen to his word and the voice of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Sometimes you can tell something is fake because you just have an inner sense that it is not real. The Holy Spirit guides you in a similar way. We can test the thing against the measure of scriputre.*
* Why are fake products and relationships so tempting? *We think we are getting SO MUCH, but it is just a mirage. We are getting nothing valuable. They are easy for us to pick up.*
* Why are idols so tempting? *They are easy for us. They feel comfortable. They let us rely on our own ideas and power. They put us in control. Both idols that seem good and those that seem bad both say, "God, I don't need you. I know what is best for me"*
* What is the **real** good news of Jesus? *Jesus lived and died that he might be the real sacrifice for our lives. When we humble ourselves and trust in him, God sees us as perfect and holy just as His Son was and is!*

Prayer - Ask for any prayer requests and pray together.

Bonus text-

**Colossians 3:1-5**

3 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. 3 For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

5 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is *idolatry*.