

*Culture Wars #5*

## The Consumer Culture

### Word

#### Scripture Reference

Revelation 3:7-8

#### Discussion Questions

1. We live in a consumer culture where we desire to have the widest selection of the best brands at the best price. A person can simply walk in a mall or a one-stop shop and find countless varieties for one product needed. Nowadays, even the schools our children attend, the courses they take in college, or the activities they engage in have grown in number—a far cry from the simple lifestyle not too long ago. Is this a good thing? Do you think a simpler life and fewer choices would have been better? Discuss.
2. Consumerism is basically the practice of trying to get the most (or the best) for the least cost to you, a concept that has unfortunately worked its way into the church. So many people would go church shopping, looking for the best church that would provide an all-in-one solution to their problems. What brought you to your church? Are you there just for the convenience it offers? How are you growing spiritually in your church? Examine your heart and see if you are one of those people who expect blessings from God but who do not want to do anything for Him in return. Discuss why a consumer mentality is not healthy especially for a Christian's church involvement.
3. Read Revelation 3:7-8. How did Jesus Christ describe Himself (v. 7)? Who is Christ as far as the church is concerned? Discuss how a change in perspective about Christ changes how we view church.
4. 2 Chronicles 16:9 teaches us that we are not the ones who choose God, but He is the One who chooses whom He will use. God is the “consumer” and you are the “product” that must make yourself attractive in order to please Him. What does God see when He looks at you? Will He put you down and choose another, just as you do when

you buy things and choose a better brand over another?

5. Describe God's selection criteria of who He will choose to do His work (v. 8a; Isaiah 6:8). In what areas of service have you been willing to serve the Lord? How does your willingness to serve Him help you develop your faith and the gifts He has entrusted you with?
6. Out of the seven churches in John's vision, the church in Philadelphia was commended for having “little strength.” (v. 8b). Why do you think would the Scriptures teach that having little strength is an admirable branding for a church, contrary to what our consumer culture promotes? What is the danger of being too talented? In what area of your life do you tend to rely on your own abilities, thus neglecting to depend on the Lord? Discuss what happens when a Christian becomes like a power strip that is unplugged from its source and plugged into itself.
7. A consumer looks for the best bargain where he/she gets the most out of the purchase price. What does God expect from His children in return for the price Jesus Christ paid (v. 8c)? Do you courageously stand up for your faith, or are you embarrassed about what the Bible teaches? Describe a situation in which you found it difficult to stand up for God. How can you show your loyalty to God in these circumstances?

### Walk

As a Christian looking to engage a consumer culture, do you see God as the Consumer who gets to choose whom He will use to do His work? Do you see Him as Someone who paid a very high price for you and therefore entitled to your commitment and loyalty to Him? If God takes away the talents and abilities you consider important in your service to Him, will you still cling to Him for strength? Take a look at your spiritual walk. Would you say that God got a good price out of you?

### Worship & Prayer

Pray for the spiritual transformation of the church's consumer culture into one abounding in willingness to serve the Lord, in looking to God for strength, and in unity in proclaiming Christ especially to the lost and broken.