Explore: Handling Our "Wants"

I Kings 21:1-20,29: Naboth's Vineyard



The things which enter into a person's thought, and not through the thought into the will [what we deeply love], do not defile him. But the things which enter through the thought into the will defile him because they become his, for the will is the person himself (Arcana Coelestia 8910).

Take a look at how the influence of good and evil spirits with us plays out in life situations. Compare the kinds of thoughts that come from evil spirits with the kinds that come from good spirits. Follow up with a role play activity.

Supplies Needed for Each Student

- copy of "Handling our 'Wants'" page with chart *or* board with chart information written up to share (see attached sheet)
- space for role play activity

Warm up

Have you ever considered where your thoughts come from? Why do people have good thoughts? Why do people experience selfish thoughts? This activity explores where our thoughts come from, and how our free response to our thoughts paves our path to heaven or hell.

Every person experiences good healthy thoughts and selfish thoughts. Thoughts come into our minds from spirits who are with us. Each person has two good and two evil spirits with them all the time. They are our associate spirits. The good spirits introduce good thoughts into our minds, and the evil spirits introduce selfish thoughts into our minds. We are not responsible for these thoughts flowing through our minds. But when an idea grabs our attention and we make a habit of returning to the same thought again and again and then look for a chance to act on it, that thought becomes part of our own life. Our spiritual freedom rests on our ability to choose between good and evil at every moment.

Let's look at some of the ways good and evil spirits may lead our thoughts. Imagine that you are in Ahab's shoes. There is something you badly want, but it is not yours to have. Compare the kinds of thoughts that flow in from good and evil spirits in the table.

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Role Play: Where Will It Lead?

Now we will take a look at how the influence of good and evil spirits with us may play out in life situations by doing a role playing activity.

Choose a scenario to act out with a partner in front of the group. Actors may decide whether to portray a person whose actions demonstrate a choice towards heaven or hell. Observing group members may replace an actor at any time during the scenario by entering the staging area, saying "freeze" and tapping the actor they wish to replace on the shoulder. The newcomer will then assume the pose and role of the actor. The first actor withdraws and sits down with the group. The scenario continues with the new player. Actor replacement may happen repeatedly at any time throughout the activity. If you wish to discuss scenarios, set a time limit. When the timer goes off, stop and discuss.



Handling Our "Wants"

I Kings 21:1-20, 29

Thoughts from evil spirits inspire you to	**Thoughts from good spirits inspire you to**
be angry	be happy for others
be sad	realize that *others* have wants/needs
be resentful	be thankful for what you *do* have
be jealous	trust that the Lord gives you what you need
blame (others, the Lord or "fate")	be thankful for what you do have
These thoughts may make you want to	**These thoughts may make you want to**
steal (take by force or sneakiness)	look for other ways to get what you want (ways that are right)
murder	"let go" of what you wanted (decide that you *don't* want/need)
lie	"wait on the Lord"—be patient

Scenarios for Role Playing

1. A valuable object is missing. Two people are talking about it.
2. Someone sees a person collapse on a busy city street.
3. Someone's valuable (wallet, calculator, iPod, *etc*.) has gone missing and they are telling someone else about it.
4. A tall person is sitting in front of a short person, blocking the shorter person's view.
5. Two people meet as they step out of their vehicles after a car accident.
6. A person is talking to a friend after hearing gossip being passed on about him or herself.
7. Someone finds out that a friend is abusing alcohol or drugs and decides to confront him or her.
8. Friends have tickets for a show. Just before they are due to leave, one feels sick and wants to stay home.
9. Someone feels desperate and decides to run away. A stranger meets him or her at a bus stop.
10. Two people are admiring a beautiful object.