

## **SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE**

Message Series: Economic Atheist  
Message Title: How You Work  
Speaker: Pastor Kevin Myers (PK)  
Date: February 19, 2012

### **Icebreaker:**

Children always have something they “need” desperately. What was that “thing” that you wanted as a kid that you just couldn’t live without? Did you get it? If so, how?

### **Message Overview:**

Pastor Kevin (PK) kicked off today a new series called “Economic Atheist” that challenges how we approach economics. He narrowed a myriad of potential topics, regarding finances, to four:

1. How you work
2. How you honor
3. How you budget
4. How you Sabbath

Today’s focus was on the first of the four. How do you approach the reality of work? Do you plug away day in and day out, or do you take short cuts to get ahead? What do you do when life seems hopeless? What does it take to be inside the “fence” of God’s favor? PK proposed that the answer to these types of questions lies in understanding three terms. Take a few moments to review what each means.

1. What is an Economic Cycle? (Remember: Sow-Grow-Harvest)
2. What is an Economic Theist? (There is one God and He governs how I do all of life.)
3. What is an Economic Atheist? (There is no God over my economics. I decide how I do life.)

In the book of Leviticus, God clearly declares that He’s the God of Ethics AND Economics. Through the laws delivered in Leviticus, God set up a “Fence of Favor” around His chosen people, the Israelites. He established **His** standards for economics, morality, and ethics for them—principles that apply to our lives as well. Within the boundaries of these principles, we find favor, blessing, and fruitfulness. Outside these boundaries, we find barrenness, economic and moral famine, and unfruitful living. As followers of Christ, we too are chosen and called to be holy and set apart, living inside the fence of God’s favor (Leviticus 19:1).

### **Discussion:**

(Leaders: The questions that follow are designed to stir reflection and discussion on this week’s primary message points. Please read through them prior to your meeting, so you can be prepared to prayerfully pace your group well. And remember, as leader, your goal is to promote

increased *biblical* awareness, as well as individual *self-awareness* – a combination that with the help of the Holy Spirit, results in revelation and...transformation!)

- The opening solo asked a haunting question, “Why is it so hard to find one rich man in ten with a satisfied mind?” What are your thoughts on this? Refer to the verses cited in the song, Ecclesiastes 5:10 and 19.
- Read Leviticus 18:1-5. God told His people that He expected them to live differently from the people around them. When it comes to economics, how should the attitudes and practices of those of us who follow God be different from those of the world around us?
- Some of us want to cheat God’s economic cycle of Sow-Grow-Harvest by skipping out on the hard work and perseverance of planting and growing and going straight to the consumerism of the harvest. How does a mindset of Harvest-Harvest-Harvest violate God’s principles and what are the consequences, both on a personal level and on a larger scale?
- The Apostles gave guidelines to the church on the subject of economics. Read II Thessalonians 3:6-10 and Ephesians 4:28 and discuss the principles to be learned from them.
- What if you are deceived in your economic beliefs but don’t know it? Do you have faith and pray like a theist, but handle life like an atheist? If so, God is powerless in your life. PK showed a news clip of a man going through airport security stealing a watch that had been left behind by another traveler to drive home the idea of self-deception in the way we honor God. You say you would never steal like that man did, but are you honoring God with your tithe? You say you would never steal money from the company, but are you cheating the clock by showing up late and ducking out early? In short, are you taking short cuts; are you an economic atheist?

**Wrap-Up/Close:**

PK challenged us in closing to use this series to come inside the fence of God’s favor in the arena of economics. Take a few minutes in closing to examine your heart and see if God is nudging you to make a change. Close in prayer, confessing areas in which you are taking short cuts to get ahead, repent of those habits, and ask God to change how you think and how you do life economically.

**Throughout the Week: (Optional)**

(Leaders: Share these optional exercises for further study and growth with your group.)

To memorize:

“You must obey my laws and be careful to follow my decrees. I am the Lord your God. Keep my decrees and laws, for the man who obeys them will live by them. I am the Lord.”  
Leviticus 18:4-5 (NIV)

Looking for more from the Bible on God's view of work? Do a study by looking up the word *work* in the concordance, reading the listed verses, and jotting down new insights you find.