

Consumerism

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Definition

- The process of Consuming
- The utilization of economic goods in the satisfaction of wants or in the process of production resulting chiefly in their destruction, deterioration, or transformation.

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/consumption>. Accessed March 31, 2014.

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Worldview Definition

- Starts with a relative good – CONSUMPTION – and makes it the absolute good.
 - Finding fulfillment by accumulating wealth
 - Our needs can be satisfied by what we consume
 - The more we use, the more we are satisfied
 - Consumerism is a secular religion (Wilkins & Sanford, 55)

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Key Convictional Beliefs on Consumerism

- “Accumulating and using things brings fulfillment” (45)
 - “We attach meaning to objects we own” (46).
- Money is power
- John D. Rockefeller
 - When asked how much money is enough...”Just a little bit more” (48).

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Key Conventional Beliefs on Consumerism

- Both rich and poor can play the consumerism game

The Good in Consumerism

- “Human beings have needs that are directly addressed by consumption” (51).
- “I determine how to use my resources”
- “Consumerism promotes competition and new ideas” (52).

Problems with Consumerism

- Money is Deceptive: “If all you own is a hammer, everything starts to look like a nail.” Abraham Maslow (53).
- Suppression: “It is hard to avoid the conclusion that inequalities in wealth create situations where people are reduced to commodities” (54).

Problems with Consumerism

- Bad theology: God does not equal Money
- Perverts Values: “If those who once valued the spiritual power available from God can eventually exchange it for monetary power, we should understand the process by which this occurs” (55).

Problems with Consumerism

- We want to be in the driver seat:
 - “Consumerism is unrealistic about the extent of our power” (56).
 - “Consumerism’s drive to control things forgets that we are not the ultimate source or owners of what we have” (56).
 - Forgets the ultimate reality of death.

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Works Cited

- <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/consumption>. Accessed March 31, 2014.
- Wilkens, Steve and Mark Sanford. *Hidden Worldviews: Eight Cultural Stories that Shape Our Lives*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2009.

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