

# CAMPUS LIFE

## What Would Jesus Buy?

Christa Riley, Staff Writer

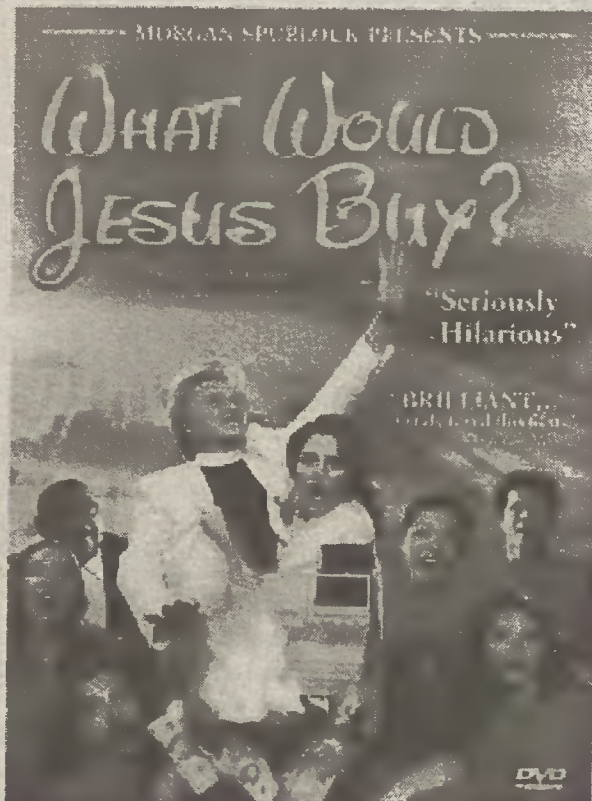


image via amazon.com

What were the holidays about before all of the shopping and consumption started? The documentary *What Would Jesus Buy* was recently shown at Meredith to help educate students about exactly how much money we are spending over the holidays. The film, produced by Morgan Spurlock, creator of *Super Size Me*, followed an organization called the Church of Stop Shopping and their leader, Reverend Billy, as they used parody services and a gospel choir to spread their message about the

evils behind big corporations.

The gospel choir and their reverend toured America, going into shopping malls and big corporate stores such as Wal-Mart and Target, to sing their edited carols and to create awareness about the issues behind massive spending every year. The group addresses issues such as shopping addiction, credit card debt, media exposure, and the craziness of events such as Black Friday.

*What Would Jesus Buy* included examples of typical scenarios that most people encounter around the holidays. Carrie, a young mother, wanted her children to have all of the new video games and toys because she wanted to give them more than her parents had given her. She felt like she had missed out on Christmas because she did not receive many gifts when she was a child. In relation to the actual name of the film, a bishop was asked, "What would Jesus buy if he were here?" The bishop replied that Jesus would buy only the necessities – food, water, and shelter. Americans aren't buying just the necessities for Christmas. Why do people feel the need to buy random electronics and knickknacks for family and friends?

While we might not stop buying presents for family members and friends altogether, what could Meredith students do to stop spending, not just during the holidays but any time? Laura Fieselman, Meredith's sustainability coordinator, says that people should begin to think critically about what they are buying. Where are items coming from? Who is getting paid for them? Instead of buying a new notebook, Fieselman advises

students to see if there are any gently used notebooks around the house or at places like the Daisy Trade on campus.

In *What Would Jesus Buy*, Reverend Billy goes to shopping malls and asks shoppers if they know if the person who actually made a shirt was receiving a reasonable portion of the profits. A young girl who manufactures clothes for Wal-Mart overseas says that she is paid 13 cents an hour and feels like she is dying from the amount of work she is doing. Many products made for larger companies are created by workers who live on the streets and can barely feed themselves because they are paid so little for their work. Locally owned businesses, however, usually divide wages and profits equally among the employees. Fieselman recommends visiting [shoplocalraleigh.org](http://shoplocalraleigh.org) to see a list of all of the local businesses in the Raleigh area.

It may be difficult to reduce consumption around the holidays when others are buying so much, but Fieselman says that it is better to compromise and do something. Consumers could spend less than last year and, if shopping at stores like Wal-Mart is a necessity, try to find environmentally friendly products. Fieselman believes that "every consumer choice is a responsible or irresponsible decision" and that as long as consumers are aware of the impact of their choices, then we are moving towards a more environmentally friendly society.

## Campus Calendar: 10/5-10/17

collected by Kristen Gallagher

Oct 5 – midterm  
Oct 6-10 – fall break  
Oct 11 – leadership circle in traditions conference room  
Oct 11 – freshman and junior class meetings  
Oct 14 – study abroad application due (spring)  
Oct 15 – senior parent night  
Oct 17-21 junior class ring week  
Oct 18 – "beyond belief" film - jones  
Oct 18- sophomore/senior class meeting

Study Smarter: Math, Lara Dick  
Mon 10/10/11, 10-10:50 am, ACP resource room, Cate-Park 2nd floor

Study Smarter: Foreign Languages, Dr Kevin Hunt  
Fri 10/14/11, 10-10:50 am, Martin 100

Study Smarter: Social Sciences, Drs. Amie Hess and Jeff Martinson  
Mon 10/17/11, 10-10:50 am, ACP resource room, Cate-Park 2nd floor

Free Solar Photovoltaic Course  
October 10 - 14, 2011  
9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
Wake Technical Community College, Northern Campus