

**GNLCC**

Life-Sharing Bible Study

**Set Free**  
**Free To Worship**  
**Free To Love**  
**Free To Serve**

## Lesson 1 Set Free To Worship 2 Samuel 24:1-25

1. If someone were to ask you, how do I worship God what would you tell them?

***I would tell them you worship God by the way you live your life. Worship is something we strive to be more than something we do. We worship God by making sure that which we are doing is glorifying to God. We come to the church in order to do worship as a corporate body. The way we sing is a part of worship just as much as the way we give is a part of worship. Worship is the giving God first place in your life in all that you do, and refusing to share that honor shown to God with any other created thing.***

2. What are some of the kind of things that will hinder our worship of God?

***Sin will hinder our worship of God. Pride will hinder our worship of God. Wanting to be accepted by others will hinder our worship. Having our hearts captured by someone else or something else will hinder our worship of God. The love of money will hinder our worship of God. Anything that keeps us from giving God first place in our lives and priorities will hinder our worship of God.***

David had insisted on numbering the amount of troops that he had at his disposal. He was not suppose to put his trust in the number of troops, but in the Lord. When others tried to persuade him not to number the troops, he insisted on doing it anyways. Once the census of the troops was taken, David immediately realized what he had done was wrong. It kept him from being able to fully worship the Lord.

2 Samuel 24:10 (New International Version, ©2011)

<sup>10</sup> David was conscience-stricken after he had counted the fighting men, and he said to the LORD, “I have sinned greatly in what I have done. Now, LORD, I beg you, take away the guilt of your servant. I have done a very foolish thing.”

3. What did David need to be set free from in order to worship the Lord?

**David needed to be set free from his sin of pride. His counting the troops had a lot to do with wanting to boast of the size of his army and his military accomplishments. He needed to be set free from his guilt. He knew he had done wrong, but he had not felt God's forgiveness. He knew he was out of connection with God.**

**Psalm 32 reveals what its like when we have done wrong but have not made a full confession of it. Psalm 32:1-5 (NIV)**

**<sup>1</sup> Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.**

**<sup>2</sup> Blessed is the one whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.**

**<sup>3</sup> When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.**

**<sup>4</sup> For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Selah**

**<sup>5</sup> Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"-- and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah**

4. When we do not feel like worshipping God, where should our examination begin to discover the problem?

**We should begin with our own hearts. The psalmist put it this way in Psalm 139:23-24 (KJV) <sup>23</sup> Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: <sup>24</sup> And see if *there be any* wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting. We worship God because God is worthy to be worshipped, not because we feel like worshipping the Lord. Our worship of God should not be confused with something that only takes place in the context of a church service. We should ask ourselves the question, where has our fellowship connection with God been broken. Our goal is to worship the Lord in all the circumstances we find ourselves in life. Job put it this way. "Though He slay me, yet will I put my trust in Him." Job 13:15**

## 2 Samuel 24:11-25 (New International Version, ©2011)

<sup>11</sup> Before David got up the next morning, the word of the LORD had come to Gad the prophet, David's seer: <sup>12</sup> "Go and tell David, 'This is what the LORD says: I am giving you three options. Choose one of them for me to carry out against you.'" <sup>13</sup> So Gad went to David and said to him, "Shall there come on you three<sup>[a]</sup> years of famine in your land? Or three months of fleeing from your enemies while they pursue you? Or three days of plague in your land? Now then, think it over and decide how I should answer the one who sent me."

<sup>14</sup> David said to Gad, "I am in deep distress. Let us fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is great; but do not let me fall into human hands." <sup>15</sup> So the LORD sent a plague on Israel from that morning until the end of the time designated, and seventy thousand of the people from Dan to Beersheba died. <sup>16</sup> When the angel stretched out his hand to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD relented concerning the disaster and said to the angel who was afflicting the people, "Enough! Withdraw your hand." The angel of the LORD was then at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

<sup>17</sup> When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the LORD, "I have sinned; I, the shepherd,<sup>[b]</sup> have done wrong. These are but sheep. What have they done? Let your hand fall on me and my family."

<sup>18</sup> On that day Gad went to David and said to him, "Go up and build an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite." <sup>19</sup> So David went up, as the LORD had commanded through Gad. <sup>20</sup> When Araunah looked and saw the king and his officials coming toward him, he went out and bowed down before the king with his face to the ground. <sup>21</sup> Araunah said, "Why has my lord the king come to his servant?" "To buy your threshing floor," David answered, "so I can build an altar to the LORD, that the plague on the people may be stopped."

5. How is David's act of worship in building an altar, tied to him and his people being set free?

**David is moving back into the realm of obedience to God. He has humbled himself and is fully following the word of the prophet Gad. His only hope to end the destruction and to set him and his people free is to offer worship to the Lord, recognizing that God is the source of all power. David sees how feeble his attempt was to put his trust in the size of his army which could be wiped out in no time by just a single angel of the Lord. David understood the key to his deliverance was tied to his worship of the Lord, and giving God the first place once again in his life.**

6. How is God being exalted in the midst of all that is taking place with the plague and the altar?

**We see that God is active in the affairs of human beings. We also see that when God puts us in high places, we cannot simply ignore the word of God and think that there will be no consequences to us and to others. We see that God is supreme in that God controls nature (the famine), worldly rulers (the enemies) and the spiritual realm (the angel). The building of the altar serves as proof that these things did not happen by chance. When the focus turned back to the worship of God, the plague completely came to an end. One had to recognize the judgment, the mercy, the love and the power of God through what had taken place in this story.**

7. How does the worship of God set us free in giving our very all?  
**When we offer God our very best, we are set free to offer God our best even in our giving. True worship of God is always going to involve giving. Our desire is to please the Lord, by giving him that first place spot in our lives. We do not hold back anything in true worship.**

<sup>22</sup> Araunah said to David, "Let my lord the king take whatever he wishes and offer it up. Here are oxen for the burnt offering, and here are threshing

sledges and ox yokes for the wood. <sup>23</sup> Your Majesty, Araunah<sup>[c]</sup> gives all this to the king.” Araunah also said to him, “May the LORD your God accept you.” <sup>24</sup> But the king replied to Araunah, “No, I insist on paying you for it. I will not sacrifice to the LORD my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing.”

8. Why is it so important for David to pay from his own money for his worship of the Lord?

***David is not looking for a cheap version of worship. It was his sin that had caused this problem. He didn't want someone else covering the price for what he had done. David also wanted his worship to be a genuine sacrifice to the Lord. If he had offered Araunah's stuff, it would have been Araunah's sacrifice. David's heart would not have been in it.***

9. Worship involves putting our total being into our service of God. We find this passage in Scriptures, Isaiah 29:13 (New International Version, ©2011)

<sup>13</sup> The Lord says: “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught.”

How do we become guilty today of what's going on in this passage? How do we try to offer the Lord sacrifices that cost us nothing?

***We can be so concerned with doing things by memory as something that was taught, that we fail to engage our hearts in what we are doing. We confuse going through the motions with worship, and forget that if our hearts are not in what we are doing, we are not worshipping God. Our songs and our testimonies do not complete our worship, it's the living out of the songs and testimonies that make our worship complete. Doing what's right in church is just the starting place for our worship. It is not the end.***

So David bought the threshing floor and the oxen and paid fifty shekels<sup>[d]</sup> of silver for them.<sup>25</sup> David built an altar to the LORD there and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. Then the LORD answered his prayer in behalf of the land, and the plague on Israel was stopped.

10. Why does worship involve putting ourselves into what it is that we are offering?

***When it comes to worshipping the Lord, if we do not give our best, then we have dishonored the name of our God. We find this passage in Malachi Malachi 1:6-14 (NIV)***

***6 "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. "But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?'***

***7 "You place defiled food on my altar. "But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' "By saying that the LORD's table is contemptible.***

***8 "When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty.***

***9 "Now implore God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?"--says the LORD Almighty.***

***10 "Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD Almighty, "and I will accept no offering from your hands.***

***11 My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations," says the LORD Almighty.***

***12 "But you profane it by saying of the Lord's table, 'It is defiled,' and of its food, 'It is contemptible.'***

***13 And you say, 'What a burden!' and you sniff at it contemptuously," says the LORD Almighty. "When you bring injured, crippled or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices, should I accept them from your hands?" says the LORD.***

***14 "Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king," says the LORD Almighty, "and my name is to be feared among the nations.***

11. Is our worship complete if we give less than a tithe?

***When we people are argue that tithing is under the Old Testament, remind them of two things. 1) Jesus said we ought to have tithed, Luke 11:42 (NIV) <sup>42</sup> "Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. 2) The New Testament emphasizes being a generous giver in which we see people bringing in all they had and leaving it at the apostles feet. 2 Corinthians 9:6-9 (NIV) <sup>6</sup> Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. <sup>7</sup> Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. <sup>8</sup> And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. <sup>9</sup> As it is written: "He has scattered abroad his gifts to the poor; his righteousness endures forever."***

***There is a connection between how we give and what the Lord sends back to us with the sowing and reaping principle.***

12. People will often say, "I don't want the praise and worship songs. I just want the word." Look at the following verses: Psalm 95 & Psalm 96

<sup>1</sup> Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. <sup>2</sup> Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. <sup>6</sup> Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;

<sup>1</sup> Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. <sup>2</sup> Sing to the LORD, praise his name; proclaim his salvation day after day.

What is the purpose of praise and worship songs?

***Praise and worship songs are our opportunities to offer thanksgiving corporately to the Lord. It is our way of showing our affection for God. It's a physical way to offer our bodies in worship to God. God created us to show affection when we are excited about something which has***



***happened. Nothing should cause more excitement within us than the Lord.***

13. Who is to benefit from using music and song in the worship service?

***The Lord and the congregation. We are obeying the Scriptures when we use music and song.***

14. On a scale of 1 to 10 with 1 being nonexistent and 10 being superb, how pleased is God with the amount of praise and worship you offer to the Lord.

Lesson 2 Set Free To Love Luke 10:25-37

1. Has there ever been a time when a total stranger did something significant for you without expecting anything in return. If so share it with the group?

***Yes. A lady came to my law office years ago and invited Toby and I over to her home for dinner. She served us a wonderful dinner. We never saw her again after that meal. Each time I pass her apartment complex, I remember her act of love.***

2. When you hear the word neighbor, who comes to your mind?

***I usually think of people who live next door to me or at least people on the same street.***

3. Is Love something we have to wait to feel before we can act upon it, or is love more of a choice regardless of how we feel?

***Love is a choice that we act upon regardless of how we feel. Sometimes love has nothing to do with feelings. We are called to love our enemies. If we had to wait until we felt something for them, we never would get around to loving them. Sometimes we are called to love people who can make it very difficult for us to feel anything positive for them. The bible never commands us to get our feelings right before we do the right thing. We are to do the right thing of loving first.***

**Luke 10:25-29 (New International Version, ©2011) The Parable of the Good Samaritan** <sup>25</sup> On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup> “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?” <sup>27</sup> He answered, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul

and with all your strength and with all your mind'<sup>[a]</sup>; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'<sup>[b]</sup>" <sup>28</sup> "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live." <sup>29</sup> But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

*On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"<sup>NIV</sup> Apparently this question came in a teaching setting, for when this man addressed Jesus, he stood up. He was an expert in the law, a man who had made it his business to know and understand the details of the Jewish religion. He had studied the Scriptures (the Old Testament—the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets). He also knew all the traditions. The fact that this man wanted to test Jesus does not necessarily indicate hostility; in fact, he did not so much want information as he wanted to find out what kind of answer the teacher would give. He wanted to know what he had to do to inherit eternal life. For this legal expert, "eternal life" meant life in God's kingdom, although he would not have understood it as a spiritual kingdom. For him, acceptance into that kingdom meant that he had to "do" something in order to receive it. He would not have understood divine grace.*

**10:26-28** *He said to him, "What is written in the law? What do you read there?" He answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself."<sup>NRSV</sup> This expert in the law obviously would have known what was written in the law. In his answer, he quoted from [Deuteronomy 6:5](#) and [Leviticus 19:18](#). He correctly understood that the law demanded total devotion to God and love for one's neighbor. To "love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind" means that every area of a person's life should be focused on God. Nothing must be held back. The word for love is *agapao*, referring to totally unselfish love, a love of which human beings are capable only with the help of the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit helps us love him as we ought. While God wants his people to obey him, he also wants their love. The heart (*kardia*) is the center of emotions, desires, and affections; the soul (*psuche*) is a person's "being" and uniqueness; the strength (*ischus*) refers to the drive or will; the mind (*dianoia*) is the center of the intellect. These words are not used to divide up the human personality, but to show that love must be complete—the whole person must do the loving. To love God in this way is to fulfill completely all the commandments regarding one's "vertical" relationship.*

*But there's more, for another command from the law says to love your neighbor as yourself. This refers to "horizontal" relationships—among people. A person cannot maintain a good vertical relationship with God without also caring for his or her neighbor. The word "neighbor" refers to fellow human beings in general. The love a person has for himself or herself (in the sense of looking out for oneself, caring about one's safety, etc.) should be continued, but it should also be directed toward others. (See also [Matthew 22:34-40](#) and [Mark 12:28-34](#).)*

*The expert in the law had it right. And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."<sup>NKJV</sup> Jesus explained that people only needed to obey these commands; in doing so, they would fulfill all the rest of them. But with these abrupt words, Jesus was subtly making the point that no one can obey these commands. Do this and you will live sounds simple—in reality, however, those commands are impossible to keep in our human strength alone. This would be the lifestyle of kingdom people—but they would not have to "do" it in order to be saved. Instead, they would be saved and then enabled by the Holy Spirit to obey these impossible demands. Jesus would show this to the man in the following story.*

**10:29** *But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"<sup>NRSV</sup> Jesus had answered the expert's question—in fact, the expert had answered it himself. But the expert in the law would not leave the encounter there. He wanted to justify himself. It is unclear if he wanted to justify the question he had asked by asking the teacher to delve deeper into the topic, or whether he wanted Jesus to give an answer that he could then say he had fulfilled. He may have been attempting to pin down and limit the law's demand, thereby limiting his responsibility. So he pressed Jesus further, "And who is my neighbor?"*

Life Application Bible Commentary - Life Application Bible Commentary – Luke.

4. What do you think it means to be set free to love the Lord with all your heart and all your soul?

*It means to throw everything you have into the service of the Lord. You give God your priority, your possessions, your will, your future, your fears, your failures, your successes and you say, "Here I am Lord, please use me."*

5. Do you think the expert wanted to love as much as possible or as little as possible? Why

I think he wanted to love just enough to get by on. He could have defined the word neighbor as broadly or as narrowly as he wanted to. To ask Jesus who was his neighbor, was probably an attempt to get Jesus to justify what the expert was already doing. It's interesting that at the end of the parable, the expert does not say the Samaritan was a neighbor but rather he said, 'the one who helped him.' The expert was seeking to do just enough to obtain eternal life. Jesus' answer was probably a disappointment to him.

6. Do you make it your business to love as much as possible at church or as little as possible? What about at home or at work?

### **Luke 10:30-37 (New International Version, ©2011)**

<sup>30</sup> In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup> A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup> So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup> But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. <sup>34</sup> He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. <sup>35</sup> The next day he took out two denarii<sup>[a]</sup> and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he

said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

<sup>36</sup> "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" <sup>37</sup> The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

*Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead."<sup>NRSV</sup> Jesus answered this legal expert by telling a story. The rest of his listeners could easily picture this man (obviously Jewish, but that is not mentioned here) who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho. The distance was about seventeen miles on a road that descended over three thousand feet (thus he was going "down"). This road was notoriously dangerous because it curved through rocky and desolate terrain with many hiding places for robbers. As the listeners may have anticipated, the man in this story, who was traveling alone, fell into the hands of robbers. These robbers did more than just take his money, however; they stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. This man would surely die if he received no help.*

**10:31-32** *"A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side."<sup>NIV</sup> Jesus told a story about three different people, also traveling alone on this road. This priest served in the temple and probably offered sacrifices. That he was also "going down" means that he was traveling away from Jerusalem, presumably having finished his duties. The same goes for the Levite, another person who served in the temple.*

*Priests and Levites had to have come from the tribe of Levi. **Exodus 28-29** gives some details about priests. The priests not only had to be Levites, but they also had to be in the line of Aaron, Israel's first high priest (**Exodus 28:1-3**). Priests and Levites had different jobs in and around the temple. Priests were authorized to perform the sacrifices. Levites were set apart to help the priests. They did the work of elders, deacons, custodians, assistants, musicians, movers, and repairmen. Priests and Levites were supported by Israel's tithes and by revenues from certain cities that had been given to them. Worship in the temple could not have taken place without the combined efforts of the priests and Levites. The Old Testament law demanded good deeds and caring for those who were hurt. Jesus' story highlights the shortcomings of the priest and the Levite because they were especially required to provide care.*

*Perhaps it was concern over defilement, for a Jew would become "unclean" if he came into contact with a dead body. This would render him unable to worship. The man on the road may have appeared dead, so they did not want to*



*risk defilement if there were nothing they could do. Some argue, however, that these men would not have been so concerned about defilement because they were going away from Jerusalem and had already fulfilled their duties. Whatever their reasons, these two respected men who aided the nation in its worship saw the man and then passed by on the other side. They deliberately refused to help.*

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## **LIFE APPLICATION**

### **GENEROSITY**

*In this story, the Samaritan was extremely generous, and Jesus highlighted his helpful actions. Generosity inspired by God does more than*

*I cook the meal; it lights the candles.*

*I say grace; it prays God's blessing on each one present.*

*I pass the food; it draws people into convivial conversation.*

*I clear the table; it washes the dishes.*

*Extend yourself. When you see a job to do, go overboard. Do it to show just an ounce of what God's care for you is like. Do it with all the joy God has put in your heart.*

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**10:33-34** *"But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him."<sup>NIV</sup> The audience listening to this story would surely have expected that the priest or the Levite would come to the aid of the helpless man. But that was not the case. Yet Jesus was not engaging in a "religious-leader-bashing" piece of propaganda, because the next person to come along was not a poor, common Jew who reached out to help the man. Instead, it was a hated Samaritan. Again, the question as to why a Samaritan would even be on this road takes away from the point of Jesus' story. Jews and Samaritans hated each other deeply (see **9:52-53**). The Jews saw themselves as pure descendants of Abraham, while they saw the Samaritans as half-breeds because they descended from Jews from the northern kingdom who had intermarried with other peoples after Israel's exile. Jews hated Samaritans, so when Jesus introduced this Samaritan man into the story, the Jewish listeners would not have expected him to help a Jewish man. Even more, Samaritans were the main ones who beat and robbed Jews when they traveled through Samaria. But in great detail, Jesus described all that the Samaritan did for this man. He took pity, bandaged his wounds (perhaps with strips of cloth from his own clothing), put the man on his own donkey (meaning that he had to walk), took him to an inn*

*and took care of him. The wine would have been used as a disinfectant and the oil as a soothing lotion. Apparently this Samaritan understood what it meant to help someone in need, to be a neighbor, regardless of racial tensions.*

**10:35** *"The next day he handed the innkeeper two pieces of silver and told him to take care of the man. 'If his bill runs higher than that,' he said, 'I'll pay the difference the next time I am here.'"<sup>NLT</sup> The Samaritan looked after the wounded man through the night. The next day he had to be on his way, but the wounded man was still in poor shape. So the Samaritan handed the innkeeper two pieces of silver. Other translations say "two denarii" (about two days' wages for a laborer), which probably purchased a few weeks' lodging for the wounded man. Even beyond that, the Samaritan agreed to pay any expenses that might run beyond the two silver pieces. He wanted the wounded man to have no worries and to be looked after carefully.*

**10:36-37** *"Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked. The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said, "Yes, now go and do the same."<sup>NLT</sup> Having finished the story, Jesus questioned the expert in the law, asking him who had been a neighbor to the wounded man—in essence, forcing the legal expert to answer his own question, "Who is my neighbor?" (**10:29**). Which of these three—that is, the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan—had kept the law? The priest and Levite were obliged by the law to help the victim, but the law also told them not to touch a dead body. Perhaps they chose religious purity over service to a man in desperate need. They loved themselves more than their neighbor; they loved keeping the letter of the law over loving a person in need. In so doing, they broke the law. The Samaritan, unhampered by concerns over religious purity, was free to serve and did so. The legal expert had no choice but to answer that the man who was a neighbor to the wounded man was the one who showed him mercy—the Samaritan. The Samaritan traveler and the Jewish man were far apart in distance and spiritual heritage, but the Samaritan had loved his neighbor far better than the hurt man's own religious leaders. Jesus said that the legal expert had answered correctly and should go and do the same. Jesus taught that love is shown by action, that it must not be limited by its object, and that at times it is costly.*

*Life Application Bible Commentary - Life Application Bible Commentary – Luke.*

7. Why was it important for Jesus to say the man was stripped of his clothing in the story?



*It made it much more difficult to determine the man's standing in society. There were no clues as to whether or not others thought he might have been someone worthy of special attention and care. It probably also helped to see the extent of the man's injuries. That should have evoked more sympathy from any passerby.*

8. What do you think the priest and the Levite saw when they saw the man on the road? What did they need to be set free from?

***I think they saw the potential for trouble and a huge change in their scheduled plans if they chose to get involved. There was the fear of the robbers still being nearby. There was the fear of being possibly falling into a trap. There was the fear that they would have to change their plans in order to help this guy. There was the fear that the guy might already be dead, and they would have defiled themselves needlessly.***

9. What keeps us from being set free to help others in their time of need?

***Sometimes we are afraid to extend ourselves to others because it might put us in physical danger. Sometimes we do not want to get involve because of an inconvenience to our schedule. Sometimes we really do need to get somewhere else. Sometimes we say that's not my problem. Sometimes we do not have the financial resources necessary to help out. Sometimes we do not think we have anything to offer to assist.***

10. What did the Samaritan see when he came to the man? What had the Samaritan been set free from?

***He saw a person in need of help. He probably thought, "that could have been me if I had arrived a little earlier." The Samaritan had been set free from thinking of his own best interest as the determining factor of whether or not to get involved. He was set free from a cold heart.***

11. What were the costs involved for the Samaritan to make a difference in this man's life?

**He had to change his schedule for his life that day. He had to be willing to get dirty to help this man. He had to risk getting a disease. He had to be willing to give up his own provisions for bandages, for wine and oil. He had to be willing to walk since he put the man on his donkey. He had to part with his money to put the guy in a room. He had to pledge to give more if more was going to be needed. He had to change his schedule on the way back from wherever he was returning to in order to check on the guy. He had to act as though this guy was a family member whom he deeply loved. He had to act with no thought of getting paid back.**

12. What is the cost involved for you to make a difference in your church and in the lives of those around you?

***My time schedule. My money. My talents. A Change in my Priorities for a given day. A willingness to listen more and do less.***

13. Does God expect us to risk our lives and our possessions for people we do not know today? Why or Why not?

***Yes. The message of the gospel has not changed. The Samaritan was in just as much danger then as we are helping someone on the highway, on St. Clair, or anywhere else. The most we can lose is our lives. That was the choice the Samaritan faced. Fear of what might happen to us is the same fear that has always been with the human race, and it always will be there.***

14. Do you want to be set free to love others? If so, what's one step you can take toward your freedom. (In other words, what will you give up, to love others?)

***Sometimes, but sometimes I want to keep things as they are.***

Lesson 3 Set Free To Serve: Luke 12:13-21, Ecclesiastes 4:7-12

1. If you were to win a 26 million dollar jackpot, what do you think would be your greatest loss?

***I think I would probably lose friends and family members who would have wanted me to use the money differently than what they would have liked. They probably would have wanted more than I would have wanted to give them.***

2. What would a 26 million dollar jackpot winner need to be set from?

***S/He would need to be set free from starting to trust in the money more than in trusting in God. 26 million dollars can very easily turn you into a little god who can make things happen for yourself and for others. The person may also need to be set free from a fear of trusting people and always questioning other people's motives.***

Ecclesiastes 4:7-8 (New International Version, ©2011)

<sup>7</sup> Again I saw something meaningless under the sun: <sup>8</sup> There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless— a miserable business!

3. What keeps the person in the passage above from being content? What did he need to be set free from?

The reality that he could obtain more kept the person from being content with what he had. He needed to be set free from the false belief, that if he had just a little bit more or even a lot more, all of a sudden he would be happy and could enjoy his life. He was in love with money and didn't know it. Yet the bible teaches in Ecclesiastes 5:10 (NIV)

<sup>10</sup>Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

4. How does a lack of contentment, lead us into bondage?

***Lack of contentment cause us to go into debt for things we cannot afford. Debt brings on a bondage all of its own. We are now paying for things, that no longer exists and we are adding to that debt by buying the new things that we cannot afford, but we continue to pile on the amount of debt we have. That spending out of control can put severe strains on our marriages and on our families. We spend so much time trying to accumulate, that we do not have time left to build relationships. Lack of contentment cause us to also engage in wasteful spending. Just because we have the money to buy something, does not mean we should buy it. God may have another use for us to use that money.***

5. What's something you got, that you were convinced you needed it, but now that you have it, it rarely ever gets used?

***I purchased a computer program on manipulating images that I thought I really needed. I've only used it about 3 times in two years. I purchased a power washer for my car and house. I used it once and no longer no where the parts are. I bought a hydraulic jack for changing tires on my car. I never used it for a car. We purchased a Jacuzzi for our bathroom in building our home. It is used for storage more than anything else.***

6. How does a lack of contentment destroy our relationships with those we love?

***We have to spend a lot of time working to pay for the things we just thought we had to have. When we do not invest in our relationships because of a lack of time, those relationships begin to fall apart. Instead of working on the relationship, it becomes easier to look for someone else to be happy with, not realizing the jewel we already have if we would spend time polishing it.***

Luke 12:13-21 (New International Version, ©2011) The Parable of the Rich Fool

<sup>13</sup> Someone in the crowd said to him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” <sup>14</sup> Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?” <sup>15</sup> Then he said to them, “Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

<sup>16</sup> And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. <sup>17</sup> He thought to himself, ‘What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.’ <sup>18</sup> “Then he said, ‘This is what I’ll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. <sup>19</sup> And I’ll say to myself, “You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” <sup>20</sup> “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’ <sup>21</sup> “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me."<sup>NRSV</sup> The focus returned to *the crowd* ([12:1](#)). Then a person in the crowd appealed to Jesus as an authority. He wanted Jesus to settle a dispute over his *family inheritance*. The Old Testament laws covered most cases (see, for example, [Numbers 26–27](#); [33:54](#); [36](#); [Deuteronomy 21:17](#)). But sometimes an issue would arise that needed intervention in order to make a decision. Problems like this were often brought to rabbis for them to settle (see [10:38-42](#)).

This man apparently wanted Jesus to side with him in this dispute with his brother. Jesus' response, though not directly to the topic, was not a change of subject. Rather, Jesus was pointing to a higher issue—a correct attitude toward the accumulation of wealth. Life is more than material goods. Jesus put his finger on this questioner's heart. When we bring problems to God in prayer, he often does the same—showing us how we need to change and grow in our attitude toward the problem. This answer is often not the one we were looking for, but it is more effective in helping us trace God's hand in our lives.

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### LIFE APPLICATION

#### GREED

Jesus warned against greed for possessions. Greed keeps track of every tool lent, every dime shared, every overtime minute worked, every check to charity grudgingly written.

Jesus leads the way to generosity, a rare trait today. As God opens heaven to you, clutch less what you own and share more what you have been given.

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[12:14-15](#) Jesus replied, "Friend, who made me a judge over you to decide such things as that?" Then he said, "Beware! Don't be greedy for what you don't have. Real life is not measured by how much we own."<sup>NLT</sup> The word "friend" here is not used in the same sense as when Jesus spoke to his disciples in [12:4](#). Other translations use the informal "man." Jesus refused to intervene in this man's predicament. Perhaps the man had come with his problem, perceiving that Jesus had power and authority and that his decision could carry much weight. Jesus did not want to deal with inheritance issues—he had far more important work to do. Instead, he used the man's request as an opportunity to teach his listeners about the pitfalls of being *greedy*. "Greed" is the excessive and consuming desire to have more possessions or wealth. He explained that the good life has nothing to do with being wealthy; *real life is not measured by how much we own*. This is the exact opposite of what present-day society says. Advertisers spend

millions of dollars to entice people to think that if they buy more and more products, they will be happier, more fulfilled, and more comfortable. This man apparently thought that the division of the inheritance would solve his problems. But Jesus wanted him to deal with deeper issues.

[12:16-18](#) And he gave an illustration: "A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. In fact, his barns were full to overflowing. So he said, 'I know! I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll have room enough to store everything.'"<sup>NLT</sup> Jesus proceeded to illustrate his point that life consists of more than wealth and possessions. This story includes a man, already *rich*, who had a productive year on his farm. So huge was this bumper crop that *his barns were full to overflowing*. Wise businessman that he was, the man simply tore down his barns and built *bigger ones* so that he could *store everything*. While there was nothing wrong with the man's rejoicing in his crop or building to make storage, his basic flaw was in focusing completely on his wealth and on his own enjoyment. In Greek, this story includes the word "my" four times and the word "I" eight times. As this story reveals, the man's joy came from his things—but things do not last forever.

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### LIFE APPLICATION

#### MORE

The rich man in Jesus' story died before he could begin to use what was stored in his big barns. Planning for retirement—preparing for life *before* death—is wise, but neglecting life *after* death is disastrous. If you accumulate wealth only to enrich yourself, with no concern for helping others, you will enter eternity empty-handed. Jesus challenges his people to think beyond earthbound goals and to use what they have been given for God's kingdom. Faith, service, and obedience are the way to become rich toward God.

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[12:19-20](#) "And I'll say to myself, 'You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'"<sup>NIV</sup> The rich man lived as though he had many years to live (see [James 4:13-17](#) for a similar thought). He had laid up *good things* for himself; then he proceeded to spend it all on himself. He was concerned for no one else, and he had no care for God. With no eternal perspective, the man's life was completely focused on the temporal. His goal to *take life easy* and to *eat, drink and be merry* reveals his desire for mere self-indulgence. He thought that, with his barns storing up mountains of wealth for the future, he had everything completely under control. The future was his, so he



thought. "But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?'"<sup>NIV</sup> The rich man had made a fatal flaw: he had forgotten to put God at the center of his life. Concerned for no one but himself, when the time came for him to stand before God, he was nothing more than a *fool*. He had counted on material wealth to sustain him. But God would take his life, and then who would get all his wealth? In addition, he would not have prepared himself for eternity, and that would be his most foolish mistake.

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### **LIFE APPLICATION**

#### **FOR THE FUTURE**

Fully vested pension plans and adequate life insurance are practically synonymous with wise stewardship. Everyone should provide for older age and family survivors.

At the same time and with the same resolve because life is more than money, God wants you to share generously today with those who are poor. And, should wealth accumulate, never, never put your hope and pride in real estate, insurance, or mutual funds. God should be your security and joy.

Evaluate your financial plan. Ground it in active faith. Seek advice from growing Christians on matters of financial stewardship.

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[12:21](#) "So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God."<sup>NRSV</sup> The moral of the story: fools spend all their time storing up *treasures for themselves* but neglect to become *rich toward God*. The turning point is for whom the treasures are being accumulated. If for oneself, then the evils of wealth will be turned loose. Hoarding money without compassionate giving, regarding property as one's own not God's, or basing security on possessions rather than God's provisions are all examples of spiritual poverty (not being rich toward God). Being rich toward God means using wealth as he provides it to fulfill his priorities. (See also [12:33-34](#) where giving to the poor is the key to understanding God's kind of treasure.) People who are "rich" in this way love God and are filled with a passion to obey and serve him and to give to others. In this way, the "treasures" a person may gain in this life can be gladly handed back over to God for his use in furthering his kingdom. In [Matthew 6:19-21](#), Jesus says, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (NIV). (See also [1 Timothy 6:17-19](#) for more on generosity.)

7. What is your definition of greed?

***Greed is when you have more than enough, but you keep holding on thinking one day I might not have enough or I've got to think about myself. Greed is refusing to admit you have enough and refusing to let go of some of what you have.***

8. What did the rich man need to be set free from in this parable?

***He needed to be set free from the false belief that he was in charge of the wealth in his life and that he was in charge of the length of his life.***

9. When Jesus says, "life does not consist of an abundance of possessions," what does Jesus mean by the word "life."

***Jesus is speaking of being in state of contentment of peace and enjoyment that is truly satisfying. There is no urge to collect one more thing. One's meaning is found in God and not in things. Life should be dependent upon God, not on the things we have received.***

Why do we disagree with Jesus' statement about possessions? What do we mean by "life."

***We allow the Advertisers to convince us that having this one new thing is going to give us that extra in life that will make us happy. We confuse "life" with being happy in a moment. We would rather believe that the more possessions we have, the more joy they are going to***

***bring to us. We have 200 channels on the tv which means we are rejecting 199 programs to watch one, as though that one program is capable of fulfilling us in a way that the other 199 can't. We forget, its not the amount of decorations in a house that makes a home. It's the amount of love that's demonstrated in a house that makes us want to go home.***

10. What are some of the bigger barns that we are constantly building personally today on a smaller scale in our lives?

***We build bigger barns with houses (you should start with a starter home), bigger barns with cars, with cell phones, with computers, with suits, with shoes, with jewelry, with clothing, and with things we collect. We build bigger barns with our hobbies of flowering, gardening, golf, tennis, coin collecting and more.***

11. How does death put possessions in perspective?

***Death reminds us that all of this stuff is going to be left behind. Death shows us how foolish it is to spend a lifetime going after that stuff which does not satisfy and will ultimately have little meaning. Things we took a lifetime to obtain, will be disposed of in a matter of weeks after we die. Noone will value our treasures like we did. Death reminds us of what is important in life and just how brief life truly is. Death reminds us of a judgment day in which we will stand before God and give an account for what we have done with our lives.***

12. King Solomon spent a lifetime gaining great wealth and riches. His son King Rehoboam was disobedient to God and lost all of his father's wealth to King Shishak of Egypt. Should we be concerned about how the wealth we spend our life time gaining is used by those who come after us?

***Yes. How we dispose of our wealth at our death will either help the kingdom of God or it will not. God leaves that choice totally up to us. When we turn our wealth over to others, they are free to use it as they please. Our wealth we leave behind will be either a testimony in our favor at the judgment or it will be a witness against us in what we claimed to profess.***

13. What can we do to insure that some of our wealth goes to building the kingdom of God?

***We can give it while we are living. This shows the greatest trust in God. We can leave it in a will for a specific ministry. This allows us to be a blessing to others, even after we have departed from this life.***

14. What area of your life do you need to learn to have more contentment?

***Answers will vary.***