



## “The Economics of Enough”

Luke 12

### Small Group Plan

*“Wealth is a good servant, but a very bad mistress.”*

— Francis Bacon —

On May 18, 1986 Ivan Boesky gave the commencement address at the University of California at Berkeley's business school. *“I think greed is healthy,”* he told an enthusiastic audience. *“You can be greedy and still feel good about yourself.”* At the time Boesky was practicing what he preached by manipulating illegal stock based on insider information. A few months later he was caught, sentenced to prison, barred from dealing in securities, and ordered to pay \$100 million in penalties.

Greed doesn't always lead to prison, but it does want control, so give control to God. As John Wesley wrote, *“Make all you can, save all you can, give all you can.”*

### **OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...**

- What was your personal ambition when you were 18?
- Describe the criteria that our society uses to measure the value of a person?

### **LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...**

— **COMPETING <VS> COOPERATING** —

**Luke 12:13-15**

<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; a man’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.”

- How would you describe the relationship between these two brothers?
- What is Jesus warning about when he says, “Watch out!” (v. 15)?
- How does greed feed unhealthy competition?
- How can generosity built unity? How can it lead to joy?

— NO PURPOSE <VS> ETERNAL PURPOSE —

Luke 12:16-19

<sup>16</sup> And he told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. <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 all my grain and my goods. <sup>19</sup> 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.””

- Count the personal pronouns (“he” “I” “my”) in this man’s thought process. What conclusions can you draw?
- Look carefully at verse 16. What actually produced the successful harvest? Why is this difficult for the rich man to see?
- How does greed take away purpose and meaning?
- How can generosity provide an eternal sense of meaning and purpose?

FREEDOM LOST <VS> FREE TO TRUST

Luke 12:20-21

<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 anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”

- How can knowing that we will leave everything when we die, change the way we manage those same things while we are alive?
- How can greed lead to personal slavery?
- How can generosity provide true freedom?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- Consider the different kinds of greed:
  - **Scared Greed** – I don’t trust that God will take care of me.
  - **Scoreboard Greed** – My value as a person is based on what I have.
  - **Selfish Greed** – I’m in it for myself.Which kind of greed do you encounter the most? Which is the most dangerous? Explain.
- How did your ambition of 18, evolve and change as you got older?
- How would answer someone who asks how to be “rich toward God” (v. 21)?
- Close by asking God to help us see the difference between building “barns” and building the “Kingdom.”