

Others say that *pride* is also a reason people steal. For example, getting a thrill after conning someone out of something, and then feeling smarter than the other person. Do you agree with this? Why or why not?

4. Pastor John told the story of his grandfather asking his mother to read **Psalm 73** when she was discouraged. Read it now. How was the author of the Psalm feeling toward those who were prospering unjustly (vv. 4-12)?

What does the Psalmist almost do (vv. 2-3, 13-14)?

What did God help him realize about the wicked (vv. 18-20)?

What did God help him realize about himself (vv. 23-28)?

BRINGING IT HOME

5. In what ways can you relate to Psalm 73? How does this Psalm encourage you?
6. Looking over your sermon notes and the homework, what steps do you need to take to develop honesty with your money and possessions?

PROSPERING WITH INTEGRITY

"You shall not steal." Exodus 20:15

FIVE WAYS WE STEAL

When BUYING, when we take advantage of people's errors

Definition of stealing: "to take items without permission of the owner."

When SELLING, when we take advantage of people's ignorance

"Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. Use honest scales and honest weights...I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt." Leviticus 19:35-36

When EMPLOYING, when we take advantage of people's powerlessness

"Do not hold back the wages of a hired man overnight." Leviticus 19:13b

When OWING, when we take advantage of people's loans

"The wicked borrow and do not repay..." Psalm 37:21

"This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing." Romans 13:6

When GIVING to God, when we take advantage of God's goodness

"Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me." But you ask, "How do we rob you?" "In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—the whole nation of you—because you are robbing me." Malachi 3:8-9

WHY BE HONEST?

1. YOU _____ TO GOD

2. YOU _____ WHAT YOU _____

"Like a partridge that hatches eggs she has not laid, so are those who get their wealth by unjust means. At midlife they will lose their riches; in the end, they will become poor old fools." Jeremiah 17:11, NLT

"People reap what they sow." Galatians 6:7b, TNIV

Growth Group Homework

For the Week of November 29, 2009

3. HONESTY REPAIRS YOUR _____

"Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive." Titus 2:9–10

4. GOD _____ YOUR HONESTY

"Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."
Matthew 6:4b

STEPS TO HONESTY

1. BEGIN WITH A CHANGE OF _____

"Don't trust in money you have taken from others. Don't be proud of things you have stolen. Even if your riches grow, don't put your trust in them."
Psalm 62:10, NIV

2. _____ FOR WHAT YOU ACQUIRE

"Laziness leads to poverty; hard work makes you rich." Proverbs 10:4, CEV

3. GIVE GOD YOUR FULL _____

"Bring the whole tithe ... Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." Malachi 3:10

4. _____ WHEN POSSIBLE

(Zacchaeus) *"If I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."* Luke 19:8

5. TRUST THAT GOD SEES YOUR HONESTY AND WILL REWARD YOU

"If you suffer, it should not be as a murderer or thief or any other kind of criminal, or even as a meddler. However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name." 1 Peter 4:15–16

WARMING UP

1. What are some reasons why people steal?
2. Read over your message notes from Sunday (read through the message notes aloud in your group). What points caught your attention?

Do you have questions from your notes you would like to discuss in your group?

INTO THE BIBLE

3. There are really two basic driving forces behind stealing: greed and laziness. Read the following passages and summarize what each of them says.

Greed:

1 Timothy 6:9-10

Proverbs 15:27

Ecclesiastes 5:10

Laziness:

Proverbs 6:6-11

Proverbs 20:4

Proverbs 21:25

Proverbs 24:30-34

Ephesians 4:28