



LIFEgroup Study Guide

January 9 - January 23

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This study guide follows along with LBF Church's current Sunday message series, and is intended to be a supplement in your daily passionate pursuit of Jesus.

• *Watch last Sunday's message video:*
www.lbf.church/messages

Those Who Are Rich

1 Timothy 6:17-19 • Pg. 4-5 • January 9

A Rebuilding Season

Romans 12:3-8 • Pg. 6-7 • January 16

Following God into the Unknown

Genesis 13:1-18 • Pg. 8-9 • January 23

Is your group stumped? Did you come to a question that you feel needs clarification? Our church isn't too big. Contact Pastor Dan with your questions.

• *Contact Pastor Dan:*
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Those Who Are Rich

January 9 • by Dan Franklin

Main Point

Being rich brings a unique danger and a unique opportunity.

Introduction

Most of us have spent at least a little bit of time daydreaming about what it would be like to be rich. I mean really rich! What would it be like to have so much money that bills didn't stress us out, that we could go out to a nice dinner without worrying about our budget? We could take extravagant vacations without a second thought? It's okay to admit that this all sounds pretty great. Most of us would like to be rich.

Yet in 1 Timothy 6:9 the Apostle Paul says, "Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction." Notice that he gives this warning not to those who are rich, but to those who want to get rich. The very thing that we often think will improve our lives is the very thing that God—through Paul—warns us against.

But does this mean that it is a sin to be rich? No, it isn't. This is partly the case because being rich is somewhat relative. By the world's standards everyone in the United States is rich, but very few of us view ourselves as rich. But we have more resources and luxuries than the vast majority of people who have ever lived! By both historical and current standards, we are rich.

Those of us in the U.S., then, should pay close attention to the words of the passage that accompany this lesson. As rich people we are told that we face a unique danger, and we are also told that we have a unique opportunity. Our riches can lead us into

destruction and can estrange us from God. But our riches can also be used for eternal purposes if we embrace Jesus and follow him on the narrow road.

Getting Started

1. Do you consider yourself to be rich? If not, how much would you need to have in order to consider yourself to be rich?
2. If you had huge amounts of money that you didn't need, what would be some good things you would want to do with it?

Digging In

Read 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

17 Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. **18** Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing

to share. 19 In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.

3. What stood out to you in this passage? If you listened to the sermon, feel free to share something significant that you remember.

4. In verse 17, Paul gives some negative ways that rich people might be tempted to respond to their wealth. Which one most stands out to you, and why?

5. Paul zeroes in on hope in verse 17. What do you see as the connection between hope and wealth?

6. Paul instructs rich people to be “generous and willing to share” (verse 18). What are some specific ways that people can be generous toward others?

7. Compare verse 19 with what Jesus says in Matthew 6:19-21. How do you think a person can “lay up treasures” in the way that Paul is instructing?

Wrestling With Big Ideas

8. Paul says in verse 17 that God “richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.” How do you think believers in Jesus can enjoy good gifts while still avoiding the dangers of greed?

Connecting To The Gospel

9. In Luke 14:33 Jesus said, “In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.” What does this mean about how our perspective toward our money and possessions is connected to following Jesus?

Taking It To Heart

10. Paul says that we should be more interested in being “rich in good deeds” (verse 18) than to be “rich in this present world” (verse 17). We all know practical ways to try to get rich in this present world. What are some practical ways to look to be rich in good deeds?

11. What is one practical way that God is calling you to apply the calling to “be generous and willing to share”?



A Rebuilding Season

January 16 • by Dan Franklin

Main Point

Serving in the church flows out of God's grace to us.

Introduction

"We're in a rebuilding season." You'll hear this sentence in the sports world when a team recognizes that they aren't currently a competitive threat to win any titles, but that they are, slowly and steadily, looking to put the pieces together that will allow them to become great.

As we begin 2022 together at Life Bible Fellowship Church, we like to think of ourselves as being in a rebuilding season. It is not that we are competing with other churches the way that a sports team competes. It is that we realize that we have some work to do if we are going to be who God has called us to be. In some ways this is always happening. In a certain sense, we will never be out of a rebuilding season until the Lord Jesus returns.

With that said, one area where we need to rebuild is in serving. For many, the months when COVID caused certain ministries to pause resulted in a new normal that did not involve serving the church. It is time to rebuild. If we ever want to experience the impact that Jesus wants to make through us, we need everyone pulling in the same direction.

In the passage that accompanies this lesson, we get a reminder of why we serve. It is not because of guilt and it is not out of a desire for self-discovery. It is the outflow of our response to the grace that God has given to us and the gifts that accompany this grace.

Getting Started

1. In what ways are you currently serving and using your gifts at LBF Church?
2. Name three factors that motivate you to serve in the church, and name three factors that make it hard for you to serve in the church.

Digging In

Read Romans 12:3-8.

3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. **4** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; **7** if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8** if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it

is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

3. What stood out to you in this passage? If you listened to the sermon, feel free to share something significant that you remember.

4. This is a passage about each of us having gifts from God, and yet Paul begins the passage by telling believers not to think too highly of themselves. Why do you think he does this?

5. Look closely at verses 4-5. What part of these verses most stands out to you, and why?

6. The spiritual gifts listed in verses 6-8 are not exhaustive. That being said, which of these gifts are ones that you think you might have?

7. In verses 6-8 Paul names several gifts and then tells believers how to use these gifts. How would you summarize, in one sentence, Paul's message about what we should do with our gifts?

Wrestling With Big Ideas

8. Christians are meant to maintain individuality ("I say to every one of you") while also seeing ourselves as part of a group ("each member belongs to all the others"). For you personally, do you see more danger in neglecting your individual identity or your group identity?

Connecting To The Gospel

9. Paul says in verse 6 that "we have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us." How does seeing spiritual gifts as part of God's grace impact your attitude toward using these gifts?

Taking It To Heart

10. Take a few moments to think about your church family. What needs do you see that you can bring your gift to?

11. When you serve, what can you do to foster serving as a response to God's grace to you, instead of serving out of guilt or pride?



Following God into the Unknown

January 23 • by Dan Franklin

Main Point

God's challenging path is always better than any path we create for ourselves.

Introduction

"I know what God says, but . . ."

This is what many of us say in many situations. "I know what God says about harsh words, but she deserved it." "I know what God says about dishonesty, but I was cornered." "I know what God says about sex outside of marriage, but we really love each other." These are the things we say when we find God's path for us to be too challenging, and we want to forge a path of our own.

This is also what many women say when they choose to get an abortion. "I know what God says about this, but I simply can't have a baby right now." This statement is not about a woman's right to choose, nor is it a medical statement about when life begins. It is a statement that relates to faith. It relates to whether we think we can trust God when his path becomes extremely challenging for us.

The passage that accompanies this lesson is not specifically about abortion. But each year when we celebrate the sanctity of human life, we also grieve the reality of abortion in our country. We do this not to heap guilt on women who have had abortions (or men who have facilitated them), but to recognize the value that each human being has. We lift our voices to advocate for protecting the unborn babies who bear God's image.

What the passage that accompanies this lesson does, however, is walk us through a story when Abraham—still named Abram during the time of this story—faced

a choice between grabbing control of his destiny or trusting that God's path—though more difficult in the short-term—would be better than any path that he could create for himself.

Getting Started

1. What would you say to a woman who says, "I think abortion is usually wrong, but if I have a baby right now it will ruin my life"?
2. Name a part in your life that is difficult for you to trust God for?

Digging In

Read Genesis 13:1-18.

- 1 So Abram went up from Egypt to the Negev, with his wife and everything he had, and Lot went with him. 2 Abram had become very wealthy in livestock and in silver and gold.
- 3 From the Negev he went from place to place until he came to Bethel, to the place between Bethel and

Ai where his tent had been earlier 4 and where he had first built an altar. There Abram called on the name of the Lord.

5 Now Lot, who was moving about with Abram, also had flocks and herds and tents. 6 But the land could not support them while they stayed together, for their possessions were so great that they were not able to stay together. 7 And quarreling arose between Abram's herders and Lot's. The Canaanites and Perizzites were also living in the land at that time.

8 So Abram said to Lot, "Let's not have any quarreling between you and me, or between your herders and mine, for we are close relatives. 9 Is not the whole land before you? Let's part company. If you go to the left, I'll go to the right; if you go to the right, I'll go to the left."

10 Lot looked around and saw that the whole plain of the Jordan toward Zoar was well watered, like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.)

11 So Lot chose for himself the whole plain of the Jordan and set out toward the east. The two men parted company: 12 Abram lived in the land of Canaan, while Lot lived among the cities of the plain and pitched his tents near Sodom. 13 Now the people of Sodom were wicked and were sinning greatly against the Lord.

14 The Lord said to Abram after Lot had parted from him, "Look around from where you are, to the north and south, to the east and west. 15 All the land that you see I will give to you and your offspring forever. 16 I will make your offspring like the dust of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust, then your offspring could be counted. 17 Go, walk through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you."

18 So Abram went to live near the great trees of Mamre at Hebron, where he pitched his tents. There he built an altar to the Lord.

3. What stood out to you in this passage? If you listened to the sermon, feel free to share something significant that you remember.

4. Focus on verses 1-7. What problem arises in this story? How might that problem have been solved?

5. Look at Abraham's words in verses 8-9. Why are his words here significant?

6. What factors led Lot to make his choice in verses 10-11?

7. In light of how Abram ended up in Canaan, what stands out to you about the Lord's words in verses 14-17?

Wrestling With Big Ideas

8. What do you think is the difference between trusting God and simply being passive?

Connecting To The Gospel

9. Sometimes we treat abortion as either a political or a medical issue. What are some ways in which abortion can be addressed as a gospel issue?

Taking It To Heart

10. Name at least one way that you can provide help to women who feel so cornered by their circumstances that they are contemplating abortion.

11. What scary step of faith do you sense that God is calling you to take in order to trust his path more than your own path?