

### Taking it Home

- Carefully read Proverbs 1:19 and ask the Lord for counsel regarding the implications of the line, “it takes away the life of its possessors.” Discuss this proverb with those around you, and see in what ways greed might snuff out real life in your personal world.
- Take some time and ask the Lord to search your heart and mind to see if greed is something that defines who you are. If you discern that greed in fact does define you, acknowledge your sin to God, repent of it, and invite God to redirect how you think and feel about those things that might fuel your greed. 1 John 1:9, James 4:10, and Colossians 3:1-10 will prove very helpful here.
- Greed is often the product of discontentedness with life, and, particularly, with the Lord. Evaluate Psalm 23:1 and Psalm 62:1, with a special view toward what it means to be satisfied with God alone. How can this mitigate a greedy spirit?
- Look carefully at the realm in which you live your life. Are there ways in which you have unwittingly conditioned those around you to be greedy? How might you redirect them toward something better?
- Perhaps you cannot extract yourself from an environment (family or work or team, etc.) dominated by a culture of greed. How will you choose to not become a product of that culture?

For a restatement of Pastor Matthew’s sermon points, visit [pastormatthew.net](http://pastormatthew.net) and click on the “Write This Down” tab.

7 Deadly Sins  
Greed  
1 Samuel 8

Dr. Matthew R. St. John  
Bethel Church  
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## GREED

Notes:

For more information about Growth Groups, Growth Group homework, and a podcast of sermons with homework, visit [www.bethelc.com](http://www.bethelc.com)

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of October 10, 2010

1 Samuel 8

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**Quick Review:** A desire to gather stuff and status, either directly or vicariously, leads greedy people to give up freedoms that could have brought greater joy. Thus is the reality of the people of Israel who, despite the blessings poured out by God, and despite the various warnings offered them by the prophet Samuel, rose up and demanded that a king be appointed to rule over them. And the reason for this: they wanted to be “like all the nations” that surrounded them (1 Samuel 8:5).

## My Story

- Have you had a season in your life when greed, either your own or another’s, got the best of you? What were the circumstances that fed into that season? How did you feel during this whole experience? In what way did you move past that season, presuming you did at all?
- Personal experiences aside, all of us have likely witnessed others consumed with greed. What is it that can be so unattractive about such people and their greed, and what are the take-a-ways for you as you reflect on your concerns?
- What ways of thinking, feeling or living could you employ to prevent greed from hijacking your life and/or the life of your loved ones?

## Growing Deeper

- Pastor Matthew indicated that greed was *the unyielding pursuit of status and stuff, no matter the real cost, so that one may look and feel before the eyes of men and the eyes in the mirror.* Unpack this definition just a bit and ask yourself if it is adequate. What would be *your* definition of greed?
- In the classic movie *Wall Street*, the infamous Gordon Gekko declares, “Greed, for lack of a better word, is good. Greed is right. Greed works. Greed clarifies, cuts through, and captures, the essence of the evolutionary spirit. Greed, in all of its forms; greed for life, for money, for love, knowledge, has marked the upward surge of mankind. . . .” Evaluate this statement in light of Proverbs 1:19. What other passages from the Bible might you consider to refute Gordon Gekko’s claim?
- Read through 1 Samuel 8:10-18 carefully. Evaluate the ways in which having a king would prove traumatic for the people of Israel. In what way would the people’s lives be disrupted or hindered? And with these things in mind, why would the people continue to insist upon it? Are there ways in which you persist on getting something in your life, despite what you know to be the risks? Discuss.
- Verse 5 and verse 20 of 1 Samuel 8 give us a glimpse at what was motivating the hearts and minds of the Israelite elders in their pursuit of a king. Evaluate their thinking, and ask yourself in what ways their thinking may or may not reflect yours?
- According to verse 7, who or what is really being rejected in the face of Israel’s greed? What are the implications of this for the people of Israel (cp. verse 18)?