

Woeful Stewardship: “Those Who Get”

“. . . A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves” (Luke 10:30).

I was recently told to beware of a newcomer in our little community. Among several negative attributes, the final one mentioned was, “And he has been bad to steal.” I try not to allow reports like that to arouse me, but I confess that having a thief in the area somewhat concerned me. More often than not, if an item is taken, or if several objects are stolen from a car or a house, there are other things damaged or destroyed in the process.

Since Adam took the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden, thieves have been prevalent in the world. The Jericho Road, however, was known for its thieves and robbers. The man in this parable portrayed many who had been robbed and beaten at some point on the path. The thieves were not out to make a living for themselves—they chose to take advantage of others and get what they could from them.

These thieves represent that element of people in the world who do not appreciate the laws of stewardship. Instead of working to have something to give to others, they are constantly surveying people and situations and surmising how they can benefit from them. They illustrate a philosophy that says, “WHAT I POSSESS, I TAKE FROM OTHERS!” Several lessons are set forth in the text before us.

Those who live to get from others are full of deception! The thieves were not walking on some city thoroughfare. They were hiding near the long country path between Jerusalem and Jericho. From their obscure setting, they could see the man coming down the road, but he could not see them. Thus, as it is explained in the text, “he fell among thieves” (10:30). That is, “he was encompassed by robbers.” We must be careful not to be entangled with hypocrisy.

Those who live to get from others are full of determination! They did not merely take his outer covering or top garment—they “stripped him of his raiment” (10:30). The poor man was left in the ditch naked, or very sparsely clothed. No doubt, along with his raiment, they took what possessions that were found on the man. Portraying those who prey on others, they were determined to profit from him in any possible way.

Those who live to get from others are full of destruction! Certainly the thieves could have held the man and removed his clothes from his body without hurting him. But, no, they “wounded,” or beat him terribly, and left him “half-dead” (10:30). It is possible to take advantage of people in other ways and leave them naked and hurting on the roadside of life. May God save us from a “getting” attitude that makes us careless in dealing with others.