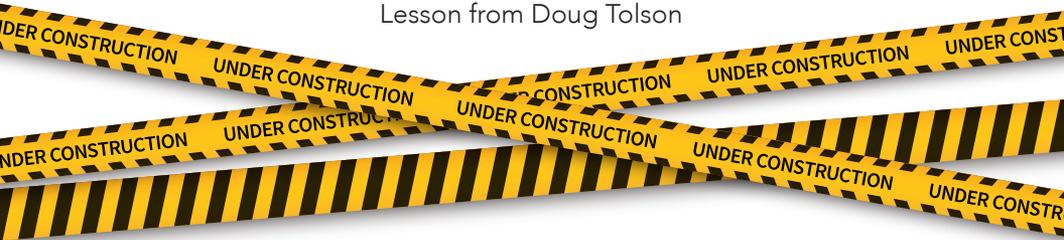


Week 6: Slaying Selfishness

Lesson from Doug Tolson



**Let no one seek his own good,
but the good of his neighbor.
– 1 Corinthians 10:24 ESV**

Introduction

We live in a world where it's all about serving/focusing on "me." Social media has put a massive magnifying glass on this fact. It's all about getting as much attention and putting as much focus on "me" as we can. Or, we get so wrapped up in what we want, we miss the needs of those around us. Our own selfishness hurts those closest to us and we are so often blind to it.

Maybe we spend so much time on Facebook that we don't notice someone who really needs us whether it's a family member or a friend. Perhaps we're so consumed with watching that football game we've been looking forward to all week that we miss the fact that our spouse is trying to clean the house and could really use some help. Any husbands out there?

You don't have to read very far into any of the gospels before you realize this was the opposite of how Jesus lived and what he taught. We are so consumed with "self." Jesus did so much to show us and teach us that we are to put our focus on others.



Questions to Think About

Can you think of a time when your selfishness let someone down or hurt someone? Why do you think you were being that way?



Read Luke 10:25-37 NIV

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus.

“Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

²⁶ “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

²⁷ He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

²⁸ “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” ²⁹ But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

³⁰ In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹ A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. ³² So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. ³⁴ He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

³⁶ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” ³⁷ The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”



Watch the video “Adjusting Attitudes”



Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think the expert in the law was trying to “justify himself?” What was he trying to justify?
2. Why do you think the priest and the Levite avoided the man in need?
3. What are some reasons we avoid those in need or don’t help others?
4. What are some of the short-term/long-term consequences of a selfish attitude?
5. What are some ways we can shift our focus from ourselves to others?
6. How can we avoid slipping back into our old mindset once we’ve started to shift that focus?



Next Steps

Find someone who has a need and meet that need. Whether it is a family member, friend, or complete stranger, serve them in some way. This is a strange time, so you may not be comfortable getting involved in a mission opportunity; that is okay. You can write a letter or reach out to someone who may not get regular contact with people, do a contactless delivery of a meal for someone who can't leave the house, or take a responsibility off of the hands of someone in your house. It can be an emotional need, a physical need, etc. The next step is simply to put yourself aside by thinking of someone else and helping them in some way.



Closing Prayer

Father,

Thank you so much for your love. Thank you for the love you showed us when Jesus committed the ultimate selfless act of taking on our sin and dying on the cross. Thank you for Jesus' perfect example. Lord, please open our eyes to any selfishness within our hearts and then help us shed it. Your word calls us to not have the same mindset as the world, but to be like Jesus who came to serve, not to be served. Give us the mindset of Christ and the desire to live it out. In Jesus' name. Amen.



Daily Prayer Plan

- Day 1 Read **Philippians 2:3-5**
Pray for a change in perspective.
- Day 2 Read **Mark 12:29-31**
Pray for a greater love for God and for people.
- Day 3 Read **Matthew 20:25-28**
Pray for the mindset of a servant.
- Day 4 Read **John 15:12-13**
Pray for clarity on how you can “lay your life down” for someone else.
- Day 5 Read **James 2:14-17**
Pray for God to give you the strength to step forward and act on your faith.