

# WHAT SHALL I DO?

DAN OWEN // Luke 12:13-21

We all fall into patterns of activity in life. Periodically, we are made to stop and assess those patterns, and hopefully, we make needed adjustments and move forward in positive ways. Paul commanded the Corinthians, saying, “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith!” It seems we do that best when we reach some kind of crossroad in our lives. Then, we are forced to assess and ask the question, “What shall I do?”

The rich fool had fallen into a pattern of selfish indulgence. His crops were so great one year that he had no more space to store goods. He was forced to ask, “What shall I do?” He could have decided to benefit the poor, to share his goods with people who needed them, but he decided to continue his selfish patterns and just keep storing up things for himself. God took his life and called him a fool for the decisions he had made!

The prodigal was also self-centered. Against all advice he took his inheritance early and left home. He squandered the fruits of his father’s work as he spent his inheritance on wild living. He found himself alone in a far off land, slopping hogs, and hungry. He was forced to ask the question, “What shall I do?” He decided that he had been better off at home. He decided to return to his father, admit his sin and foolish choices freely, and to cast himself on his father’s mercy. He got up and went home and his life was infinitely better for it!

Young Joseph was brutally mistreated by his jealous brothers. He was kidnapped, held prisoner, and sold by them as a slave. He suffered terrible trauma as he was taken from his home to Egypt and sold to an Egyptian master. Because of his moral principles, he was imprisoned for two years unjustly. He was blessed by God, and rose in the ranks of the Egyptians until he was second in command. Years after his trauma, his brothers came to Egypt during a famine and he found them bowing before him. He was hurt, angry, and bitter about what they had done to him, and he was forced to ask, “What shall I do?” Eventually, he chose to forgive his brothers and move on with his life, and his family.

David made many mistakes in his life, including mistakes with his family. He alienated his son, Absalom, and many others. Eventually, his own son led a rebellion and threatened to take over the kingdom of Israel. Forced into a war to crush the rebellion, David’s faithful men, with God’s help, defeated Absalom and his army. Absalom was killed and David was trapped in grief and self-pity. Joab told David that unless he showed support for his men and encouraged them, they would leave him. David had to ask himself, “What shall I do?” He decided to do the right thing, to thank and praise his loyal men, and move forward with his life!

At the close of each year, it is appropriate for all of us to assess the patterns and situations of our lives, and to ask ourselves, “What shall I do?” Will we continue in patterns of selfishness? Will we continue in a direction that takes us away from God instead of deciding to go home to our Father? Will we hold tightly to grudges and ill will, or will we decide to forgive and move forward? Will we wallow in self-pity and negative thinking, or will we decide to do something different and productive with the coming year? “What shall I do?”



# TALKING POINTS

The \_\_\_\_\_ asked the question!

The \_\_\_\_\_ asked the question!

\_\_\_\_\_ asked the question!

\_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_ to ask the question!

