

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

STORY

In an article on a robbery (*Selma Times Journal*, December 24, 2003), we learn that two days before Christmas, a thief broke into the walk-in freezer of a soup kitchen at the Bosco Center in Selma, Alabama, and stole a thirty-pound ham. Not only did the stolen ham mean people would go hungry, but the thief also caused over \$2,000 damage to the freezer. Money needed to buy food had to go to repairing the freezer instead.

The Bosco Center feeds over one hundred people a day, 365 days a year, including seniors, children, and the homeless. Staff members annually work extra hours to prepare a Christmas feast because they want to make people feel worthwhile at Christmas.

But the break-in caused hurt feelings. “All we are trying to do is provide a good hot meal and kindness to anyone who walks in our door,” said Bosco cook Mary Gayle. “We don’t ask anything of anyone who comes here. To have this happen—it’s very discouraging.” Mrs. Gayle didn’t feel discouraged for long. “I could cry, but I won’t start. I have Christmas dinner to prepare, a job I love, and people who are hungry.”

The community responded to the news of the break-in by donating extra hams and money to fix the freezer.

Discuss one-on-one or in small groups the following questions.

1. Why did the community respond so quickly? *It was Christmas, a season for giving to the poor, and because it is clearly wrong to steal, especially from the poor.*
2. Would the community have responded as quickly if it wasn’t Christmas? Why or why not? *Answers will vary. Stress that because we have God’s Law in our hearts, giving makes people, even unbelievers, feel good. Only giving motivated by a love for Jesus is a good work in the sight of God.*
3. How can you share the love of Jesus according to the Seventh Commandment? *We help our neighbor to preserve and protect his or her possessions and income. What could you do to help others in your community? Possibilities might include leaf raking and painting for those who are unable to do these things for themselves, working as a volunteer at a free food store, and so on.*