



QA: What's the Difference Between "Looting" and "Stealing"? by [John T Polk II](#)

*All Scriptures and comments are based on the **New King James Version**, unless otherwise noted.*

QUESTION: What's the difference between "looting" and "stealing"?

ANSWER: There is NO difference, except that 'looters' may think they are excused by being in a group doing it.

1. **Numbers Do Not Nullify Law.** "Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished" (**Proverbs 11:21**). A "mob" is simply individuals acting at the same time. Stealing is stealing, and each individual is accountable for his/her own action(s). After Paul preached the Gospel of Christ in Thessalonica (**Acts 17:1-4**),

The Jews who were not persuaded, becoming envious, took some of the evil men from the marketplace, and gathering a mob, set all the city in an uproar and attacked the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. (**Acts 17:5**)

This "mob" was comprised of "evil men" who allowed themselves to be sent against "the house of Jason." These evil individuals acting together were engaged in evil action!

2. **Need Does Not Justify Greed.**

People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving. Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold; He may have to give up all the substance of his house. (**Proverbs 6:30-31**)

Though we can sympathize with poverty, NO POVERTY EXCUSES COVETOUSNESS! God condemned all such:

Woe to those who devise iniquity, And work out evil on their beds! At morning light they practice it, Because it is in the power of their hand. They covet fields and take them by violence, Also houses, and seize them. So they oppress a man and his house, A man and his inheritance. (**Micah 2:1-2**)

Christ's Law says:

For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if there is any other commandment, are all summed

up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."
(**Romans 13:9**)

Mob "lying" doesn't excuse individuals who lie, though along with others. It is only "false prophets" and "false teachers" who,

By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber. (**2 Peter 2:3**)

Just because "many will follow their destructive ways" (**2 Peter 2:2**) their individual covetousness is not excusable.

3. **A "Good Samaritan" Doesn't Replace A Job!** The Samaritan provided assistance for immediate needs (**Luke 10:30-35**) but nothing is said supporting the victim's future concerns!

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. (**Ephesians 4:28**)

God's Command is:

If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. (**2 Thessalonians 3:10**)

— jtp11, 9/3/2023