

# ***Economics: A Christian Worldview – Human Nature in Action***

## **(TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY)**

### **Purpose**

To help students see that most human actions involve self-interest—even when others benefit.

### **Time**

10-15 minutes

### **Instructions**

- Print this instructions/key page and a Page 2 for all students.
- Hand out Page 2 to students and read instructions together.
- Give students 6-8 minutes to finish, and discuss in pairs/groups first (if time), then as a class.

### **Instructions**

**Important:** Some answers could reasonably be “C.” The goal is not to eliminate compassion; it’s to recognize how self-interest operates in real life.

1. **Baker wakes early.** Correct Emphasis: **A** or **C**

**Why:** The baker wants income. He benefits financially. Others benefit too, from his baked goods, but the motivation is earning a living

2. **Student studies.** Correct Emphasis: **A**

**Why:** The student wants good grades, success, approval, opportunity.

3. **Company lowers prices.** Correct Emphasis: **A**

**Why:** Lower prices attract customers → more profit → self-benefit.

4. **Neighbor brings soup.** Correct Emphasis: **C**

**Why:** Genuine care may be involved. But even here:

- The giver feels satisfaction.
- The giver may desire to obey God.
- The giver may want a good relationship.
- Even benevolence includes personal motivation.

5. **Worker seeks a raise.** Correct Emphasis: **A**

**Why:** Seeking improved personal income.

6. **Beggar trades clothes for food.** Correct Emphasis: **A**

**Why:** Direct self preservation. (Adam Smith pointed out that even a beggar participates in exchange.)

7. **Teen volunteers.** Correct Emphasis: **C**

**Why:** Reasons could include these:

- Desire to help
- Resume building
- Enjoyment
- Social belonging

8. **Farmer sells crops.** Correct Emphasis: **A**  
**Why:** Income motivation; others benefit as well.

9. **Donates to charity.** Correct Emphasis: **C**  
**Why:** Reasons could include these:

- Compassion
- Obedience to Scripture
- Tax deduction
- Personal satisfaction

Self-interest and benevolence can coexist!

10. **Salesman promotes product.** Correct Emphasis: **A**  
**Why:** Commission, income, career advancement.

## Wrap-Up

- Did anyone choose “B only” for any scenario?
- Is it possible to act with *zero* self-interest?
- Does recognizing self-interest mean we approve of selfishness?
- Why would God command us to love others as ourselves?

Tie back to:

- **Matthew 22:39** – Assumes strong self-love.
- **Philippians 2:4** – Commands looking to others because it does not happen naturally.
- **Ephesians 5:29** – No one hates his own flesh.
- **Adam Smith** – Voluntary exchange economies work because people act in self-interest. They want to benefit themselves, and the way to do it in a free economy is to please others and provide goods/services they want.

## ***Economics: A Christian Worldview – Human Nature in Action***

For each scenario, choose what best represents it:

- **A = Primarily self-interest**
- **B = Primarily concern for others**
- **C = Both self-interest and concern for others**

Be ready to defend your choices!

1. A baker wakes up at 4:00 a.m. to make bread for the town.
2. A student studies hard for an economics test.
3. A company lowers its prices to attract more customers.
4. A neighbor brings soup to someone who is sick.
5. A worker asks for a raise.
6. A beggar trades old clothes for food.
7. A teenager volunteers at an animal shelter.
8. A farmer grows crops and sells them at market.
9. A person donates money to a charity.
10. A salesman explains how his product can improve a customer's life.

