

Thou Shall Not Covet

At times it is possible to analyze a situation and miss the most simple of concepts. How often do we find ourselves trying to dig ourselves out of a pit without truly understand how we got into it? We spend a lot of time questioning ourselves, and others, when the solution is often right before our eyes.

Can God bless disobedience? Is it possible for God to put his stamp of approval upon something that he told us not to do? Is it possible that sometimes the problems that we see around us really do have a simple solution even though the problem is massive? Do large problems really begin as small ones?

When is the last sermon you heard in your church on coveting? Correct me if I am wrong but wasn't the admonition against coveting one of the things that God carved into the stones that He gave to Moses? Could it be that one of the reasons that we Americans find ourselves in a financial pit is as simple as our disobedience to a basic principle of life?

Thou Shall Not Covet. Read it right there in [Exodus 20](#). Oh, I know it is only number 10 on the list, but what a foolish people we have become because of our desire to ignore it. In fact, the command is very specific.

Exodus 20: 17 "Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his neighbor's."

That is a pretty exhaustive list. I wonder why we don't hear more about coveting in our churches. Permit me to share a story with you.

I was out on a public playground with my grandchildren the other day and, as often happens, they began to play with the

other children on the playground. Soon, some trouble reared its head as they began to argue over a toy with another child on the playground. I moved in to scold my grandchildren for not sharing, but the other child's father beat me to the punch.

"Nathan," this total stranger firmly said to his son. "What have I said to you about coveting? Your new friend's toy does not belong to you and you have no right to it. Stop expecting to play with something that does not belong to you."

This young father then turned to me.

"I apologize for our son. We teach him not covet. Please forgive us for causing a disturbance."

I stood there with my mouth agape as the man and his young son walked hand in hand towards their car.

Think of the condition that America would be in today if we had all simply been taught that to covet was just as wrong as to steal. In fact, all thieveries begin as coveting. I thought about that brief exchange on the playground all of the way home.

As parents and grandparents we regularly find ourselves teaching our little ones to share, which is a noble thing to do. Yet how many of us take the time to point out the destructive nature of coveting? It was important enough to God that it made His Top Ten list, but not important enough to teach it to our children. Most of America's problems have, at the very root, the sin of covetousness.

Sadly, our American government encourages coveting. What do you think taxation and social programs are all about? Is it not wrong to take from one and give to another simply because they "need" it? Isn't "charity" something that comes from the heart and is nothing more than an expression of love toward one who is in need? Isn't that battle between the rich and

the poor nothing more than jealousy over coveting what someone else has accumulated? Is it possible to counter greed through coveting? Don't government handouts reinforce the sin of coveting?

Why are millions of illegal aliens storming our borders? Is it not because they desire to have a better life by taking from Americans' things that do not belong to them? Aren't all of these "social justice" churches reinforcing the sin of coveting to those who are illegally streaming across our borders? Isn't the Government rewarding their sin? Aren't those bleeding heart liberals contributing to the sin by guilt-tripping the rest of us for not giving in to the border-jumpers' covetousness?

Help me here. Isn't covetousness just as sinful as theft? Don't the two go hand in hand? Would we have the economic disparity that we have in this nation if we taught people that it is wrong to desire to have what someone else has earned? If I am taught that it is wrong not to share then why are others not taught that it is wrong to expect to take from me what they have no right to?

Thou Shall Not Covet. With all of the moral issues that we are dealing with isn't it amazing that at the heart of every one of them is the desire to have what does not belong to you.

The Bible's Truths are often harsh. Living a true Christian life is not an easy task. The Bible calls us to be cheerful in our giving and it is hard to be cheerful when one is coerced. The wickedness of the American government (and most if not all of the world's governments) can be seen in its policies. Stealing from the Haves and giving to the Have-nots is not a Biblical principle. It is a violation of at least two of the Ten Commandments.

Try on this Christian admonition from the Apostle Paul in [2 Thessalonians](#).

“7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: Not because we have not power, ***but to make ourselves an ensample*** unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, ***that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*** For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, **and eat their own bread.**

Perhaps it is time we quit pointing our fingers at those who don’t want to give and focus on those who simply want to take. Sadly, the Word of God is a double-edged sword.

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