

You Shall Not Covet

Exodus 20:17

I. Covet – The Definition

- It is the concept of wanting what is not ours to have.
- Different from lust. Lust is general desire. Greed is a lust for money and possessions
- Coveting is a specific, focused desire, a desire to have a particular thing which belongs to a particular person

- Modern life is gripped by covetousness.
- We want what other people have.
- Coveting is when I desire what belongs to someone else.
- Coveting is when my desire for a thing so controls me that I disregard God's will in pursuit of it.

- People desire all sort of things that are important to survival
- Molded by the world we believe that the fulfillment of those things can only be found in material things.
- Yet, the more we have, the more we want and we are not satisfied
- Four letter obscenity – ‘MORE’
- To satisfy craving – “SHOPPING!”

II. The Meaning Of This Commandment

- A. It means you shall not desire what rightfully belongs to someone else
 - Exodus 20:17
- B. It also means you shall not desire something excessively
 - Deuteronomy 5:21
 - Excessive longing takes place when we desire things that are wrong in themselves to the exclusion of God.

III. Focus Of This Commandment

A. Because of our fallen nature

- James 4:1-2
- The heart of the human problem is simply the problem of the human heart

B. Because of our desires

- Jeremiah 17:9, 10

IV. Prohibitions Of The Commandment

- A. Love of money is one way we break this commandment – I Timothy 6:10,
 - Proverbs 23:4-5, Matthew 6:19-21, 24

- B. Greed for more – Luke 12:13-15
 - “there are two ways to get enough: one is to continue to accumulate more and more. The other is to desire less.” Greed for more breaks the command not to covet.

C. Envyng others

- Psalms 73:1-3, Proverbs 14:30, Ecclesiastes 4:4-6

D. Lustful desires

- Proverbs 6:25, Matthew 5:28

E. Selfishness

- Luke 12:16-21, Acts 20:33-35,
Romans 13:9-10

F. Pride

- I John 2:15-17
- Coveting all comes down to loving the world more than loving God

V. Solution To This Commandment

- A. Know the characteristics of a covetous person
 - 1. When you are constantly craving for more – Ecclesiastes 5:10
 - 2. When you are dissatisfied with life
 - Psalms 112:10, Ecclesiastes 4:7-8

3. When you start acting out your wrong desires
 - Jos. 7:20-21, I Kings 21:4, Matthew 26:15-16

4. When you are an idolator because covetousness is a deified desire – idolatry
 - Ephesians 5:3 - 6

5. When you live an unfruitful life for God
 - Mark 4:18-19, James 4:1-3

B. The Solution

1. Be content with the Lord

- Ps. 73:25-26, Heb. 13:5

2. Be content with righteousness

- Ps. 37:1-4

3. Be content with your possessions

- Ps. 37:16, Pro.30:8-9. Phil.4:11-13

4. Be content with your position

- I Cor. 7:20-21

5. Be content with God's good gift of life

- Eccl. 3:12-13

Conclusion

- Covetousness seems the least deadly of all the Ten Commandments
- It seems the most soft centered, the one that we can most easily lived with. Yet, perilous.
- Be aware of its danger
- Why covet when you can enjoy what God had already given you?
- Be content with God's good gift of life!