

The Eighth Commandment

Read: Exodus 20:15

Main idea: God has commanded His people, not only to avoid taking anything that doesn't belong to them, but also to be generous stewards of what does belong to them.

Key Verses: "You shall not steal" (20:15 ESV)

Key Principles:

- Scripturally speaking, stealing is simply taking anything that doesn't belong to you.
- God is the creator and owner of everything and therefore, at its core, stealing is primarily about stealing from God.
- The main reason that we steal something is because it has taken a position of priority (idolatry) in our lives over and above the moral standards that God has given to us.
- Stealing is ultimately a sign that we are deeply dissatisfied and not content with our position in life.
- God wants you to move beyond simply not being a thief to becoming a good, generous steward of what He has given you.
- The only thing that has the power to change your heart from pursuing greed to generosity is the power of the Gospel (Luke 19:1-10).
- The more you understand who Jesus is and what He has done for you, the more generous you become (Robert Murray McChesney).

Discussion:

1. What does the eighth commandment teach us about the character of God? Why is it important for us to realize that all stealing is stealing from God?
2. Do you ever remember being tempted to steal? What happened? Why do you think we choose to take something that doesn't belong to us?
3. Most people, when surveyed, believe they have never broken the 8th commandment. Why do you think they believe that? Do you agree with them?
4. Where and how does the heart of a thief change? How do you go from being greedy to generous? Read Ephesians 4:28
5. The Gospel changes you from a person who asks what you HAVE to give to a person who asks what you GET to give. How can you grow into being a generous person?
6. How could you use this topic to turn an everyday conversation into a Gospel conversation?

Prayer:

- Pray that we would remember that everything is God's and we are His stewards.
- Pray:
 - That we would not allow greed or a lack of contentment to control our actions.
 - That the Gospel would remind us daily to be a grateful and generous people.
 - That we would value people over their or our possessions.

VIII: The Sanctity of Property
Exodus 20:15

Exodus 20:15 - *You shall not steal.*

I. God is the owner of everything.

Psalm 24:1-2

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| 1. | He created the <u>heavens</u> and the <u>earth</u> . | Genesis 1:1-31 |
| 2. | He gave man <u>dominion</u> over His <u>belongings</u> . | Psalm 8:6 |
| 3. | When <u>you</u> steal, you steal from <u>God</u> . | Malachi 3:8-10 |

II. What sins are prohibited?

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| 1. | Don't <u>gain</u> at the expense of <u>others</u> . | Isaiah 5:8 |
| 2. | Don't <u>treat</u> people as <u>property</u> . | Exodus 21:16 |
| 3. | Don't <u>trick</u> or <u>manipulate</u> others. | Genesis 31:20 |
| 4. | Don't be <u>dishonest</u> in <u>business</u> . | Deut 25:13-16 |
| 5. | Don't be <u>lazy</u> . | Proverbs 6:6-11 |

III. What duties are required?

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| 1. | Be a good <u>steward</u> . | Matthew 23:23 |
| 2. | Be <u>generous</u> . | Galatians 6:10 |

NEXT WEEK:
VBS Sunday
Romans 12:1-2