

COMMANDMENT 08

Introduction: We tend to hear “Do not steal” and think shoplifting or grand larceny. But Scripture pushes deeper: stealing isn’t only taking; it’s withholding when it’s in our power to help. God rescues us, then teaches us to live openhanded, building margin so that needs get met and the gaps between us and those less fortunate get closed.

ICE BREAKERS

- ☐ When have you been on the receiving end of unexpected generosity? How did it shape you?
- ☐ What’s something you have more of than the average person? A collectible? Random materials for work? Something else?

EXPLORE

These passages trace a single thread: the God who rescues also reorders how we receive and release our resources. Deuteronomy and Leviticus call us to a “margin for mercy”. Micah and Proverbs tell us that “robbing God” is not just about stealing, but withholding help that we could offer. And John the Baptist and the early church make it these ideas practical. Take a look at these passages together.

- ☐ Read Exodus 20:15; Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 8:17–18; 14:28–29; 15:1; 15:7–8; Leviticus 19:9–10; 25:35–37; Malachi 3:7–10; Proverbs 3:27; Isaiah 1:15–17; Luke 3:10–11; Acts 4:34–35; and 2 Corinthians 8:1–4.
 - Read Leviticus 19:9–10. What would “not harvesting to the edges” look like in **your** week (time, budget, energy, pantry, calendar)?
 - What would it take for our church to be known for “no needy persons among them,” as in Acts 4:34–35? What’s one system or habit we could pilot together?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- ☐ Where does pride most subtly creep in for you: earning, saving, or giving? How might gratitude reframe it?
- ☐ What keeps our open hands closed? Fear, past experiences, not knowing who to trust? How could we, as a group, help each other move past that?
- ☐ In your context, who are the people in need, and where do you currently have “power to act”?
- ☐ Identify a concrete “two vs. none” you see locally (coats, meals, rides, childcare, rent gap, car repair). What’s one wise way to share this week?
- ☐ How do joy and generosity coexist in hardship? Share a time you gave from scarcity and what God formed in you.

PRAYER & PRACTICE

Challenge: Close the gap with someone by meeting their need and giving generously to them something you have in surplus.

Close in prayer. Invite 1–2 minutes of silent reflection asking, “Lord, where am I withholding?” Then pray: gratitude for God’s rescue, courage for open hands, and provision for the specific needs named.

