

BREAKING Ground



October 2020

Solid Ground

Our focus on the Ten Commandments this year provides a clear picture of how our Lord intends us to live in relationship with Him and our neighbors. As we walk together in the Breaking Ground campaign our foundation is established in Christ alone!

You shall not covet your neighbor's house" (Exod. 20:17). This entire year we have been building upon the foundation of the Ten Commandments and now we reach the 9th and 10th commandments, we are confronted by the word covet. One of the most common citations of the word for the modern ear comes from the 1843 writing of Charles Dickens to describe his chief character Ebenezer Scrooge in The Christmas Carol, "Oh! But he was a tight-fisted hand at the grindstone, Scrooge! A squeezing, wrenching, grasping, scarping, clutching, covetous, old sinner!" That phrase comes at the front of the prose and frames the image of a misery whose cold heart blocks him from seeing the great opportunities which surround him.

To covet is to desire and want something that is not our own. In the 9th commandment the focus is on coveting a neighbor's house, seeking the possession of another even in thought. The comparison game happens so easily. In the Triangle region, we see the new sub-divisions going up and wonder... why don't I have that bathroom, that porch, a kitchen with an island or a garage with that much storage? Compare, want more and seize the moment are the phrases in the advertiser's palette to getting you to upsize your house.

In April of 1529 the Rev. Martin Luther wrote his Large Catechism, a teaching tool for pastors, to ensure they understood the basics of the Christian faith. After a tour of churches in the region of Saxony in 1528 he found too many pastors and congregation were ill-prepared to explain the basic tenets of the faith.

For some the Ten Commandments serve to demonstrate their own virtue. To the one who privately says, "I did not steal from a store, commit adultery with a neighbor's spouse or kill another human being" they might create in their mind a sense of entitlement to God's grace and favor earned by their actions. Into that trap the 9th commandment speaks and warns us that not only the physical action of taking another's possession is sinful it is also the thoughts to gain possession of that property in an illicit manner.

Listen to how Rev. Luther describes this commandment aims not at the enemy at the gate rather it is focused upon the enemy we see in the mirror. *[The] commandment therefore is given not for rogues in the eyes of the world, but just for*

the most pious, who wish to be praised and be called honest and upright people, since they have not offended against the former commandments (Luther, Martin. Large Catechism 9th Commandment)

Do not permit the covetous old sinner within you to steal you from the power of Christ which covers over you each and every day. We who are united with Christ into his death are also united into his resurrection through our baptisms.

The Lord has given to you a unique set of gifts and opportunities. In a world where you can shop for homes online via websites the chase for the better home has never been easier or more alluring. Rather our Lord beckons to us to be grateful for what we have today. You have been richly blessed by your creator and made whole in the blood of the lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

Life is more than where we live. Our life finds its definition and worth in the life which was lived and given on our behalf. May the Holy Spirit ever keep your heart and mind focused on the cross of Christ from which our identity is forged. As we move into the season of fall may we not fall into the snares and traps of the deceiver, Satan himself, who seeks to have you forget all that God has done for you each day. We are made whole in the completed work of Jesus not because of the house we live or any physical possessions we obtain.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

in Christ,

Pastor Mike

GROWING



SPROUTS

Memory Work for October:

Ninth Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What Does This Mean?

We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

Breaking Ground Campaign Update



Update as of September 30, 2020

Ways to Donate

- **Mail donations to the church's locked mailbox** with a Breaking Ground special designation: 1031 Pemberton Hill Rd., Suite 202, Apex, NC 27502
- Sign-up for Joyful Response® **free e-giving** through the Lutheran Church Extension Fund
- **Donate online** through the website at JordanApex.org/giving
- Direct your **IRA RMD** to Jordan tax-free if you are over 72
- Utilize **Jordan's brokerage account** to make a stock gift
- Include Jordan in your **estate planning**

Questions?

Contact office@jordanchurchnc.org or call Jordan's Office at (919) 303-1613



"The people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the LORD."

1 Chronicles 29:9 ESV

Encouraging Our Spiritual Growth

Consider the following ideas and activities as you look to break ground in your spiritual growth this year.

Know Christ

engagement in Jordan's congregational worship life

- Weekly worship service available online. Bulletin is available under the resources tab: JordanApex.org/media/sermons
- Weekly Children's Sermon at JordanApex.org/jordan-juniors
- Outdoor Worship Service - Oct. 25 at 3:30 p.m. (2600 Evans Rd. in Apex)

Grow in Christ

my commitment to study the Scriptures and be in prayer

- K-6 Sunday School lessons available online
- Sunday Morning Bible Study at 9 a.m. on Gospel of Matthew (Zoom online)
- Teen Bible Class - Sundays at 11 a.m. (Zoom online)
- Tuesday class taught by Larry Eckart at 7 p.m. (Zoom online) Gospel of Mark

Serve Christ

my active response to use the gifts entrusted to me by God

- Prepare a meal or card for a neighbor – put faith into action
- Volunteer at a Chapel Ridge workday
- Generosity toward the local church to enable present and future ministry

Go for Christ

using my vocation to share Christ with others

- Speak about God's provision in your life to a friend.
- Call a relative or sibling and share an encouraging story from your faith life.

Monthly Prayer

In Christ Jesus we are a new creation, enable us LORD to live in this world in a manner that is worthy of our heavenward calling. Guard us from earthly pursuits which cloud our view of Your glory so that we may be reconciled to You. Grant us the gift of Your Holy Spirit to calm those thoughts, concerns and fears which arise and pull us from the promise of your provision for all who by faith trust in the work of our Lord Jesus Christ from everlasting to everlasting.

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation;" (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

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