

The 8th Commandment – You Shall Not Steal

November 11, 2018

Oakbrook Community Church (PCA)

Exodus 20:15

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Stealing : well defined by WLC Q 141&142 (modern English version)

- Q. 141. What does the eighth commandment require? A. The eighth commandment requires us to act truthfully, faithfully, and justly in our contractual and business relationships with our fellow human beings so that we give to all what they deserve. We are to make restitution for anything we have unlawfully acquired from its rightful owner; we should give and lend freely, according to our ability and the needs of others; we must moderate our judgment, will, and inclinations about worldly goods; we must exercise prudence in the acquisition, maintenance, use, and disposition of the things that we need and are appropriate to sustain us humanly and that match our condition in life; we should find something lawful to do in life and work hard at it; we should be frugal; and we should avoid unnecessary lawsuits and should not become liable by putting up security for others or by similar commitments. Finally, we must do our best, by all just and lawful means, to acquire, preserve, and increase our own and others' money and possessions.
- Q. 142. What particular sins does the eighth commandment forbid? A. In addition to failing to do what is required, the eighth commandment forbids: theft, robbery, kidnapping, and receiving stolen goods; fraud, dishonest scales or measures, removing boundary markers, injustice or bad faith in our contractual relationships or trust agreements; oppression, extortion, usury, bribery, harassing lawsuits, and unjust expropriation and dispossession of others' land; hoarding goods to increase their price, illegal work or activities, and all other unjust or sinful ways of taking, withholding, or enriching ourselves from what belongs to others; avarice; excessive attachment to or display of our worldly goods; allowing ourselves to become distracted from trusting God in the way that we acquire, maintain, and use worldly goods; envying the prosperity of others; and also laziness, extravagance, wasteful gambling, and all the other ways that needlessly jeopardize our money and possessions and defraud ourselves of the use and comfort of the things God has given us.

A Sin Against God

- Stealing has deep spiritual significance - we sin against God & neighbor
- Failure on our part to trust God for His provision
- An assault on God's providence for others

The 8th Command: You Shall Not Steal

- Assumes "Right of Ownership" as steward
- God entrusts things to His people - Gen 2:15
- We are stewards for God: Mt 25:14-30; 1 Cor 4:2; 1 Tim 6:17-19
- Everything belongs to God Psa 24:1
- God is the source of our resources - 1 Chr 29:14
- We are warned to not forget this: Deut 8:17-18

Implications for Living

- Treat everything as if you will give an account –you will Rom 14:12
- We are called to work hard, not be lazy Prov 6:10-11
- We are called to live generously for God's glory
- Beware: most debt is stealing from the future

Achan: A Vivid Lesson on Stealing

- The Instructions to God's people: Josh 6:16-19
- Holy War: destroy all except precious metals for Lord's treasury
- Jericho fell as God promised: Josh 6:20-21 People obeyed
- Achan stole items thinking no one would know...
- Cost was great, Israel defeated at Ai. Josh 7:1-10
- God revealed Achan's sin - Josh 7:10-26

Are you like Achan?

- Use your money for self, not for God (think steward)
- Beware of robbing God : Malachi 3:8-10
- Israelite Tithes: Levitical (Lev 27:30-32) 10%; Festival (Dt 14:22-27) 10%; Tri-annual Poor tithe (Dt 14:28-29) 10% every 3 years
- New Covenant – no longer under law, but grace... would that be more or less?
- If you can't afford to give better look at your priorities
- Time & Talents also count - Col 3:23
- Disobedience to God's Law is stealing: idolatry=stealing worship, etc.

The Hope of the Gospel

- YOU are a thief! Just count the ways that you are guilty
- Remember Jesus was crucified between 2 thieves as a thief: hung on a tree
- Jesus was punished as a thief for YOU!
- Which thief crucified next to Jesus will you choose to be like? The humble or the belligerent one? Luke 23:39-42
- When we cry out for mercy, Jesus has paid our debt and offers forgiveness! 2 Cor 5:21; Psalm 51:1

Think & Discuss:

- **Do you see yourself as a thief? Why or why not?**
- **Why is stealing almost an 'acceptable' crime?**
- **Discuss stealing & stewardship.**
- **Review the WLC Q 141 & 142 with Scripture proofs (google it)**
- **Which cross will you choose? How does that explain the Gospel?**

