

# “Thou Shalt Not Covet”

*Ex. 20:17*

## Open:

- Defining covetousness.
  - **Covet** = To desire wrongfully; to devise a plan to get something that is not lawfully yours, without regard of how ones actions will affect those around them.
- Bible examples of coveting.
  - Coveting the possessions of another. **Deu. 5:21** “Neither shalt thou desire thy neighbour’s wife, neither shalt thou covet thy neighbour’s house, his field, or his manservant, or his maidservant, his ox, or his ass, or any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”
  - Coveting that which God has said is not lawful to possess. **Joshua 7:21** “When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.”
  - Coveting to have more than God has chosen to give. **I Tim. 6:10** “For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

## Tran:

- We should recognize this command, “Thou shalt not covet”, protects all other Bible commandments.
  - Not coveting will keep one from seeking other gods in their life. (#1)
  - Not coveting will keep one from trying to lift themselves up to the same level as God. (#2)
  - Not coveting will keep one from attempting to take from God, His authority. (#3)
  - Not coveting will keep one safe from becoming too busy to rest on the seventh day. (#4)
  - Not coveting will keep one humble in life, allowing them to give honour to whom honor is due. (#5)
  - Not coveting will keep one safe from justifying the taking of another’s life. (#6)
  - Not coveting will keep one morally safe in life. (#7)
  - Not coveting will keep one from taking from another what does not belong to them. (#8)
  - Not coveting will keep justice in its rightful place in society. (#9)
  - Choosing to not covet will keep a man focused on what God has given him. (#10)
- It is important to stress that there is no place for wrongful coveting in the life of a child of God.
  - We must live by faith believing that God always has, and always will, provide for our needs.
  - We need to trust that what God has given us is what we need, and if we need more, God will give it to us when we need it.

➤ **Job 31:1** “I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?”

## I. Covetousness breeds *corruptness*.

### A. In leadership.

- i. Moses was instructed to choose men, for positions of leadership, who were not covetous.  
**Ex. 18:21** “Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them, to be rulers of thousands, and rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:”
- ii. Through the Word of God, we find Timothy being instructed that a good man of God is one who does not live his life coveting the things God has not given him. **I Tim. 3:3** “Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;”
- iii. Those who lead with a covetous heart will corrupt every institution they lead, home or business, because they only have personal gain in mind. **II Peter 2:3** “And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”

B. In personal conduct.

- i. Covetousness will cause a person to make an unholy alliance for personal gain. **Ps. 10:3** *“For the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.”*
- ii. Covetousness will produce a lazy person who is greedy and selfish. **Prov. 21:25-26** *“The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labour. [26] He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not.”* – **Lk. 6:38**
- iii. Covetousness creates habits of taking what one wants, from whomever they want, by any means necessary. **Micah 2:1-2** *“Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! when the morning is light, they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand. [2] And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.”*

## II. Covetousness breeds *carnality*.

- A. When a society is not warned about the dangers of covetousness, every moral fiber of that society will be corrupted. **Jer. 6:13** *“For from the least of them even unto the greatest of them every one is given to covetousness; and from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.”*
  - B. A society that lives covetously is a society which will be ruled by those who are covetous (a covetous society is an unprofitable society.) **Jer. 8:9-10** *“The wise men are ashamed, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the LORD; and what wisdom is in them [10] Therefore will I give their wives unto others, and their fields to them that shall inherit them: for every one from the least even unto the greatest is given to covetousness, from the prophet even unto the priest every one dealeth falsely.”*
  - C. A covetous society is a society that is cold in response to the teaching of God’s Word. (They will listen but not obey because they only want what they want.) **Ezek. 33:31** *“And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them: for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.”*
- To many Christians live their life blaming outside stimuli for their sins, when it is their heart that is the problem. **Mark 7: 20-23** *“And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. [21] For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, [22] Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: [23] All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”*

## III. Covetousness *creates* appetites that cannot be properly fulfilled.

- A. Because Achan did not guard his eyes, he coveted and attempted to satisfy his appetite for earthly wealth in a way that was not pleasing to God. **Joshua 7:21** *“When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.”*
- B. The rich man thought having more things would bring satisfaction in his life. He failed to realize that life is made up of more than money, possessions, and social status. **Lk. 12:15** *“And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.”*
- C. Learn to be content with what God has given you. When you’re tempted to covet, look back in your life and recognize that God has never let you down or forsaken you in a time of need. **Heb. 13:5** *“Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*

**Close:**

- The prayer of every Christian. **Ps. 119:33-37** *“Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight. [36] Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. [37] Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way.”*
- The Commitment of every Christian. **Ps. 101:3** *“I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.”*
- The Child of God is not to be known as a coveter. **Eph. 5:3** *“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;”*

**The 10 Commandments**

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
4. Remember the sabbath.
5. Honour thy father and thy mother.
6. Thou shalt not kill.
7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
8. Thou shalt not steal.
9. Thou shalt not bear false witness.
10. Thou shalt not covet.