

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Lesson Sixteen

The Eighth Commandment (1): You Shall Not Steal

Burden to Impart:

Because God is love we should not steal. We should respect the property of others, and in so doing, show respect to others. We can be saved from temptation to steal by working to earn money to buy the things we need. We can be saved from stealing by not allowing greed and covetousness to fill our heart. We should be thankful and content in whatever circumstances we are (Phil. 4:11).

Memory Verse: You shall not steal.

Exodus 20:15

Facts to Teach:

1. Definition: to wrongfully take for yourself what rightfully belongs to another (whether a person or otherwise, such as a school, a store, etc.)

2. God gave this commandment to His people to teach them that they must respect other's property. If we do not respect other's property we do not respect others themselves. Our God is righteous and our God is love. If we do not respect other's property we not only sin because we are unrighteous, we sin by failing to love our neighbor as ourself. Would you like to live with a people who had no respect for other's property?

3. There are two causes of stealing: laziness and greed (covetousness).

a) Before man sinned and fell he freely gathered his food from the earth. After man's fall God cursed the earth FOR MAN'S SAKE (Gen. 3:17-19), so he would have to work hard to survive. This would keep man busy so he would not just live in sin.

b) Some people are lazy and do not want to work hard enough to support themselves, they would rather take an "easy" way, steal. If a person works hard he will have enough money to buy what he needs. We enjoy and appreciate things we work for. It makes us feel good inside when we pay the price.

c) The other cause of stealing is greed and covetousness. We desire something we don't need, or we covet what someone else has and we want. When someone is not satisfied with either what they have or the amount of what they have, they will be easily tempted to steal. Prayer and thanksgiving kills covetousness.

4. God desires His people to work for their food and possessions. Work is good for man. Not only should we work for ourselves and for our own family, we should also give an offering to the Lord (Prov. 3:9). The Lord gives us strength and health so we can work and not steal.

5. We should work to give to needy people, as Paul did (Acts 20:33-35). To steal is a shame. To give is more blessed than to receive.