

May 28th of 2023

Proverbs

Sayings of the Wise



9th & 10th Commandments?

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments are about coveting. Simply stated, coveting is scheming to get our neighbor's inheritance, house, wife, donkey, or anything that belongs to our neighbor in a way that appears to be right.

Perhaps it is necessary to expound on this a bit more. Coveting is looking to get what God did not give you. In other words, don't let your eyes grow hands. That's what we do when we covet. We are saying that we are not content with what God has given us, so we look to our neighbor's things, blessings, or reputation... "if only I could get my hands on some of that." It has been said before that coveting is the sinful desire - the unholy hurry in our holely hearts to get what God has not given. For example, when we long for honor, wealth, happy life, or what seems to be the ease of the lives of others, we are coveting. When we become stingy and self-indulgent with our money so that we can try to keep up with the Jones, we are coveting. When we live with grudges and a fist full of discontentment about what we should've got and what we supposedly deserve, and how others shouldn't deserve their gifts, we are coveting.

STUDY 10

9TH & 10TH
COMMANDMENTS?

PROVERBS & COVETING?

THE RUSH OF COVETING

GLUTTONY OF COVETING

COVETING ERODS
CONTENTMENT

COVETING & MARKETING

COVETING & HAPPINESS

What Does the Book of Proverbs Say About Coveting?

Proverbs has much to say about coveting. The language of Proverbs that speak of coveting are the following words: craving (10:3); expectation (10:28); lust (11:6); searching (11:27); envy (23:17); jealousy (27:4); never satisfied (30:15-16); etc. In other words, coveting is indeed discontentment. It is ingratitude for the gifts that we have already received. Coveting comes from the sinful hole in our soul that longs to be filled.

The Rush of Coveting

Coveting is always in a hurry. It wants right now what God has not given. And so consider when you are in a hurry to 'get something.' Are you in a hurry because it is an emergency? Are you in a hurry because you need to obtain something to alleviate a problem? Or, are you in a hurry simply because you are in a hurry? Proverbs speaks of hastiness - being in a hurry. And typically, being haste goes the way of destruction, foolishness, and poverty (See 19:2 and 21:5). And so, a good way to expose coveting is this question - what happens if I do not immediately obtain XYZ? What changes in my life if I do not obtain XYZ? The majority of the time, the answer is - nothing.

The Gluttonous Nature of Coveting

It is important to note that coveting has an unending gluttonous nature to it. Like an emotional teenage girl who only loves the pursuit of a boy (not wanting a relationship but loving the chase), covetousness functions the same way. Once a coveting eye and heart obtain that which it covets, the coveting eye and heart move on to something else. Coveting is like a black hole - always consuming and never satisfied, always longing and never resting.

Coveting Erodes Contentment

Covetous thoughts are like hot embers. They are hot embers that are fanned by the Evil One in order that they catch fire. When they catch fire, the flame attacks other people through robbery, theft, and getting things in dishonest ways, thus leading us to break the Seventh Commandment.

Coveting and Marketers

Some marketers exploit coveting. They create discontentment in their marketing strategies. Then they show a solution to the discontentment, "If you buy our product, you will be content." However, once their product is purchased, they will introduce a new and improved product a year later and repeat the cycle all over again.

Coveting and Happiness

According to Proverbs 10:3, the Lord will reject the craving of the wicked. However, he will not allow the righteous to hunger. In other words, happiness through coveting is fleeting. It is here one moment and gone the next. However, the Lord longs to grant His children 'joy.' Joy is different from happiness. Joy is contentment and satisfaction from the gifts received from God. Happiness is typically squeezed out of covetous tactics. Joy is from good gifts received; happiness is temporary satisfaction from things forced.

Let Us Pray

Heavenly Father, You open Your hand and satisfy the desires of every living creature. Cause us to fear and love You above all things, that our hearts would not covet that which You have given to our neighbors. Rather, lead us to trust in Your provision of daily bread, be content with what You provide, and reject every evil scheme or enticement that would secure for ourselves that which You have given to others. Enable us to serve our neighbors by helping them keep and guard all that You have given to them; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.