

Week Nine

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

Commandments are statements which direct us to do or, not to do something. Martin Luther tries to help us look at The Ten Commandments using positive language, as this is how we are to come to know the loving nature of God.

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

Do not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

We are to fear and love God, so that we do not try to trick our neighbors out of their inheritance or property or try to get it for ourselves by claiming to have a legal right to it and the like, but instead be of help and service to them in keeping what is theirs.

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

Do not covet your neighbor's spouse, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

What does this mean?

We are to fear and love God, so that we do not entice, force, or steal from our neighbors their spouses, household workers or livestock, but instead urge them to stay and fulfill their responsibilities to your neighbor

What Scripture has to say

1 Samuel 16:7 - 7 But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for the LORD does not see as mortals see; they look on the outward appearance, but the LORD looks on the heart."

Matthew 5:28- [Jesus said] But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

Romans 1:28-32- 28 And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind and to things that should not be done. ²⁹They were filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, craftiness, they are gossips, ³⁰slanderers, God-haters,^[f] insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, rebellious toward parents, ³¹foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. ³²They know God's decree, that those who practice such things deserve to die—yet they not only do them but even applaud others who practice them.

James 1:12-16 - Blessed is anyone who endures temptation. Such a one has stood the test and will receive the crown of life that the Lord^[d] has promised to those who love him. ¹³No one, when tempted, should say, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil and he himself tempts no one. ¹⁴But one is tempted by one's own desire, being lured and enticed by it; ¹⁵then, when that desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and that sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death. ¹⁶Do not be deceived, my beloved.

Hebrews 13:5 - Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have; for he has said, "I will never leave you or forsake you."

Philippians 4:11b-12 - I have learned to be content with whatever I have. ¹²I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need.

Pastor's Commentary

1- The definition of covet is "to wish to obtain something that we have no right to have."

2- In these commandments, Luther is first and foremost concerned with the rightness of one's heart with God. Luther, along with Augustine, believe that the evil lusts of one's heart is the root of all evil, **Original Sin**. In Luther's teaching on these commandments, Luther is teaching us that we will be tempted, but our joy and happiness in life is dependent upon the condition of our heart.

3- In Luther's teaching, the Ten Commandments have a form and a function. In the first commandment, God establishes that God is "God alone, there is no other god." In Commandments 2-8, God teaches us what life with God will look like and how we are to live as God's people in blessing the world. The last two commandments, the reality of life sets in, and God gives us a glimpse of life when we try to eclipse the first commandment. The ugliness and mean-spiritedness of only caring about oneself (sin) sets us, and those around us, up for misery and strife.

4- Luther's teaching on the commandments seek to place us squarely in the place where "the human will" finds that it cannot accomplish through fear what God seeks to do through love. In his explanation on each commandment, "we are to fear **and** love God so that..." Luther puts each of us between "fear" and "love", and teaches us the loving way to honor God's desire, (God's will) for our lives.

Ponder This...

1- Look at #1 above. What does this definition mean to you? Where does it find a place in your story?

2- Why would God prohibit coveting? What does that say about what we think about what God provides, what God is giving us?

3- "We are slaves to what we wish for." How does that relate to these last two commandments? How does your heart relate to what you wish for?

4- How do commercials and advertisements relate to these two commandments?

5- Why do you think Pastor Chris included in the Bible section above, the Hebrews 13 and Philippians 4 Scriptures about contentment?

6- How do the contentment passages relate to your relationship with God?

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Luther's 4 Strands of Prayer

1- What is God trying to teach me here? 2- What does this passage make me thankful for?

3- Where have I fallen short and need God to help and guide me? 4- Pray.