

## Day One – Recap of Ten Commandments: Lesson 10

This is like my fourth draft. I only mention that so you'll know how important you are to me.

When it comes to potential exceptions, I think the Ninth Commandment takes the cake. I mean, you wouldn't tend to make a lot of excuses or exceptions when you're talking about, say...adultery...or idolatry...or murder; they're pretty straightforward. Lying, on the other hand, is a lot less black and white.

This is a genuine problem, and not just one generated because I'm a good problem generator. Think of the myriad of issues which might potentially be impacted by our interpretation of this commandment. Is it okay to participate in competitive sporting events, which obviously depend heavily upon a certain level of deception? What about board games or card games, where the object is also to trick one's opponent? Should we support international espionage, for how can we justify national security when it requires deception?

Is it a lie to knowingly withhold information, even in a situation where it seems like the right thing to do? Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny come to mind. What about simple social pleasantries? Is it permissible to tell someone that you enjoyed talking to them, even if you didn't? Can you sign "yours truly" if you are really not truly their's?

The issue is compounded further by the fact that the Bible doesn't seem to take a hardline stance on these potential loopholes. Scripture is clear that God is a truthful God, that His promises are sure and that His children should imitate Him in truthfulness. There are numerous instances in Scripture, however, where God accepts or sanctions deception. We might even make a case that God himself deceives unbelievers, as in 2 Thessalonians 2, where we are told that God will send a spirit of delusion among them. And, if we understand lying as simply withholding the truth, would it not be lying for God to show some the truth, when He leaves others in the dark?

The point of this is not to confuse, but I think it is critical that we understand the line between honesty and deception is a shifty one. These aren't issues that we can solve by looking up the original meaning of a word or reading a commentary. Knowing the difference between a lie and the truth is a matter of wisdom, carefully cultivated through time in the Word, prayer, and walking through this world as a Christian. There's not an "answer."

I think we have to be committed to truth no matter the cost, even if it means our very lives. We must be ready to defend the "faith once for all delivered to the saints," for there is much about Christianity which is simple and straightforward. *We must also be committed enough to truth to be willing to admit that we don't always know what the truth even is*, and that coming to the truth is a process.

We break the Ninth Commandment ourselves when we are too arrogant or close-minded to admit that we do not have the final truth. It would go a long way in the world if more Christians would embrace tension as a consequence of a fallen world.

I think we're pretty safe to say that there is no tension in the mind of God, but it would be an bald-faced lie to say there's none in yours.

## **Day Two – Read Colossians 3:1-6**

What do these verses tell us to desire?

What would fill our thoughts as well as our hearts?

Why should the things of God fill our hearts and minds? What does verse 3 mean?

What does “put to death” mean? How can we put these things to death?

How serious do you think these “earthly” things are?

## **Day Three – Read Luke 12:13-21**

What was the heart attitude of “someone in the crowd”? How do his actions reveal his heart attitude? Do you think Jesus saw this person’s heart attitude?

What does “one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions” mean? What was Jesus saying to this person about what was important to this man?

What was the heart attitude of the rich man? How do you know this?

How does what the rich man did with his wealthy compare to what we learned in Lesson 9 in Ephesians 4:28?

What was the rich man trusting in? How do you know that?

What does God think of the heart of the rich man? Why?

What does it mean to be “rich toward God”?

## **Day Four – Read 1 Timothy 6:7; Proverbs 11:6; Proverbs 11:4; Mark 8:36**

What do these verses say about wealth?

What does that tell you about the wisdom of trusting in riches?

What does it mean to “gain the world” and “forfeit his life”? what is this verse telling you?

### **READ: 1 John 2:15-17**

What do these verses say about coveting?

What do they say about what is most important?

## **Day Five – Read Psalm 73**

What does this Psalm say about God?

What danger did the writer see in his own heart? What was he coveting? (Help your child see that he was coveting lack of problems and suffering, along with rich food, luxurious living, pleasure, fun, health, an easy life. He was coveting good things given to the wicked.)

What did he say about his own life (verse 13)?

Why was his soul in a dangerous place?

How did he get the right view of the wicked? What did God show him about the wicked?

What does verse 23 tell you about God's heart for His children when their souls are in danger? When God's children seek ask Him for wisdom, how is God faithful? (See verse 24)

What did the psalmist realize was his great treasure? How great is this treasure to him? (See verse 25.)

What is the heart attitude of the psalmist at the end of the psalm? (See verse 28.) How did he gain that contentment?

## **Day Six – Read Matthew 13:44-46**

What do these verses tell you about the worth of God and His kingdom?

What does discovering the greatness of God cause in our hearts?

### **READ: Ps 42:1 and John 6:35**

How much does the writer of Psalm 42:1 want God? Would you say that he sees God as the great treasure?

What is Jesus saying will be the result of our seeking for God? The person who covets the things of this world is never satisfied (Ecclesiastes 5:8), but what does Jesus say of the person who seeks after God?

### **READ: Ephesians 1:3**

What does the Christian have for his "riches"? (Wow, what great wealth is ours!) Why then should we never covet anything? Why do we?