

Day One – Recap of Ten Commandments: Lesson 11

If there's one immutable truth we've been able to discern about the Ten Commandments through our study, it might be that they are much bigger than they initially seem. The tenth and final command is no different.

When God commands the Israelites "Do not covet," he might as well be saying something like "Formulate a comprehensive Christian worldview which teaches you to perfectly balance your current position in this world with your citizenship in heaven" or, perhaps, "Please start thinking about how your allegiance to Me will effect economics, politics, science, architecture, sports, art, law, agriculture, technology, war, plumbing, transportation, interest rates, and pretty much anything else you can think of...". There are big issues at stake here when we really start to peel back the layers of the onion (to say nothing of the tears!). Sorry...I had to.

Any discussion of coveting must necessarily turn into a discussion about contentment and any discussion of contentment is a tough one. We don't need to covet because we should be contented with God's provision; this much is fairly obvious. What is not so obvious, however, is what it really means to be content.

Contentment can be a hard balance to strike. In one sense, we know that God is gracious to us all and we trust in His good providence. We are told in the Psalms to "cease striving." Part of being a Christian is not only exercising faith in Christ as Savior, but also as the one who will take care of His children. We are different from the world because we do not fear the future. Contentment stems from our trust in God to control the circumstances surrounding our lives.

The problem arises, as usual, when we try to live this. Contentment works when we're talking about your rich neighbors down the street, but what about some harder issues? I am surely glad that some McBrides were, at some point, discontent with starving to death on potatoes and decided to immigrate to the United States. I am also glad that Martin Luther was not content with remaining Roman Catholic when his convictions drew him elsewhere. Actually, if you were to think about it, pretty much everything that is good about our world (from a human perspective) has come about from discontentment.

So where does the balance come? When we want what we do not have, we covet and therefore sin. When we do not want anything more than we have now, we are lazy and therefore sin. Have fun with that.

I don't know what the answer is and I certainly don't think it's an issue to solve in 600 words. Perhaps one solution is to ask yourself whose kingdom you are building. Are you laboring diligently because work is an important way to serve God and express our God-given abilities or because you want a larger home? Are you reading because you want to bring others into a greater knowledge of the Bible's treasures or do you read to make yourself look spiritual? Are you inviting others to church because you want Christ Community Church to look legitimate or because you are concerned about souls?

I guess we need to...be content...to work hard...for the Lord...

Day Two – Read Romans 3:19-20

What does this passage say that the law does for us? If you don't know the law, can you be a lawbreaker anyway?

What does knowing the law do for you? (Help your child see that the law doesn't cause him to be a lawbreaker—he is a lawbreaker because of the condition of his heart and the offenses he has committed. The law just helps him to see that he is a lawbreaker.)

Why is “every mouth stopped”? What is it stopped from doing?

What does “the whole world may be held accountable to God” mean?

Can anyone be saved by keeping the law?

Day Three – Read James 2:10-11

What does this verse tell us is the standard of law-keeping that God accepts? (How many times can you break the law? How many of the laws must you keep?)

What happens if you break the law just one time? What happens if you break only one law?

Have you broken God's law? What does that make you?

Do you think that if you tried really hard to keep the law for the rest of your life, you would meet God's standard for law-keeping? If you could keep the law perfectly from today through the rest of your life, would that make you acceptable to God? (Help your child see that it is already too late for him to gain heaven by perfect law-keeping.)

Day Four – Read Psalm 52:2-3

Does God see you and the condition of your heart? Does God know which laws you have broken and how many times you have sinned?

What does verse 3 say? How many times does it say that all have sinned? Why is this repeated?

What does the use of the words “all”, “none” and “not even one” tell you?

What does this tell you about the nature of man’s heart? Will you seek God on your own? Why not? (Help your child to see that there is nothing in his heart that would cause him to look to God. Help him to see man’s need for God to help him, and that man cannot work out his own salvation. Help him to see that God must take the initiative—God must cause him to seek for God.)

Day Five – Read Romans 7:12-16

What does verse 12 tell us about God’s law?

What condemns us (causes our eternal death)?

What does the law do?

What is our problem? (See verse 14.)

Does Paul want to sin? Then why does he?

What does this show you about the nature of man’s heart?

Does Paul agree that the law is good and God’s ways are perfect? Then what is the problem? (Help your child to see that the problem is not in agreeing with the rightness of the law—we can know what is good and right. Knowing is not enough. The problem is that our sinful hearts cause us to sin even though we know what is right and want to do what is right.)

Day Six – Read Romans 1:28 - 2:5

What sins does Paul list in this passage? Do you see breaking of the Ten Commandments in this list?

Is ignorance of the law the problem (not knowing the law)?

Why is death deserved? Why does God's judgment "rightly fall on those who do such things"?

Will any law breaker escape punishment?

Is it right to assume that God will just excuse sin because He is kind? God is kind. Because God is kind and patient, He does not punish sinners immediately but He gives us time to repent.

What does "storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath" mean?