



We Value Possessions!

Luke 19:1-10 Colossians 3:1-10 Ecclesiastes 2:17-26

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Stealing. Theft. Robbery. Cheating. Burglary. Defrauding. Shoplifting. Fraud. Pilfering. Embezzlement. Plundering. Looting. Swindling... there are many synonyms to describe ***taking something without permission.***

Stealing is a sin that strikes deeper than simply taking something that is not yours; ***stealing is taking something that God has given to someone else.*** When you steal, you are not only sinning against your neighbor, but you are sinning against God Himself! Stealing is so sinful, that God made it one of the Commandments.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God, so that we do not take our neighbor's money or goods, nor get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his goods and means of making a living.

**The problem with stealing
is that you are taking someone else's
MONEY or POSSESSIONS
*that God has given to them!***

Money and possessions are gifts from God to a person.

Your money and your possessions are gifts from God's good hand to you. He has allowed you to work, earn a living, and buy your "things". Maybe your "things" were given to you as a gift from someone else. Behind it all is the truth that everything you have – **from your shoe laces to your house, and everything in between** -- is a gift from God's good hand. No one has the right to take it from you; no one has the right to steal it from you in any way.

IN THE SAME WAY, your neighbor's **money and possessions** are God's good gifts to them, and you do not have a right to take it from them -- to steal it from them in any way.

The Seventh Commandment teaches you to VALUE MONEY AND POSSESSIONS. Not only do we VALUE our own MONEY AND POSSESSIONS, but we help our neighbor to improve and protect his/her MONEY and POSSESSIONS.

WE VALUE POSSESSIONS.... at least we are supposed to.

The Seventh Commandment exposes those times when you have not valued possessions, and you have stolen from someone in any way. **When you steal, you not only have stolen from your neighbor, but from God who gave your neighbor everything he has.**

If you have stolen in any way, then repent, turn away and renounce it, and confess your sins to God. In Christ there is forgiveness for you. His death paid for all your sins, even the times you have stolen from someone else. **His death and resurrection**

sets you free from sin --- and you become God's very own **possession!** One of the ways that the Gospel is taught to us in the Bible is that you yourself are God's possession – you belong to Him!

But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, **you are mine.** ISAIAH 43:1

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for **you were bought with a price.** So glorify God in your body. 1 CORINTHIANS 6:19-20

The price that was paid for you was the death and resurrection of the Son of God. You **belong** to God; you are His **treasured possession.**

One of the ways that the Seventh Commandment is taught to us is that when Christ forgives your sins, then you are to return whatever you have stolen. **Forgiveness of sins does not mean that you get to keep whatever you have stolen!** Repentance means that you regret that you have stolen, and you will return whatever you have taken if at all possible.

The story of Zacchaeus has a seventh commandment angle on it. As the chief tax collector, Zacchaeus stole from the people; and when he came to faith, he returned that which was stolen. You are to do the same thing --- **returning what you have stolen is a sign of repentance.**

The Seventh Commandment teaches us to **VALUE POSSESSIONS.** The Bible teaches us that money and possessions are gifts from God's good hands to us. Jesus teaches us the **proper attitude** towards money and possessions. Jesus talks a lot about money and possessions in the Gospels. Money

and possessions are tools to glorify God, to provide for your family, to support the work of the Kingdom of God, and to serve other people. The *proper understanding* about money and possessions leads to the *proper use* of them.

- You are not to let money and possessions **take over** your life;
- they are not to **consume** you;
- they are not the **driving factor** in your life;
- there is no room in your life for **greed, envy or discontent**
- they are not to **interfere** with your spiritual life.
- You are **not** to fear, love and trust in your money or possessions.
- The goal of your life is **not** to accumulate more and more things.
- The goal of your life is **not** to see how much money you can accumulate.

*King Solomon had more money and possession than all of us put together, and he called the pursuit of money and possessions **meaningless, a chasing after the wind.***

The *proper understanding* about money and possessions leads to the *proper use* of them. Money and possessions are gifts, tools, and resources from your Father in Heaven so that you can glorify God, provide for your family, support the Kingdom of God, and serve other people.

THOU SHALL NOT STEAL!

The 7th Commandment teaches us to

VALUE POSSESSIONS.

Amen!