

Lesson 21 – The 7th 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 possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

(Exodus 20:15; Deuteronomy 5:19)

This commandment is about far more than taking something that does not belong to you. It is also about helping others keep what they have; helping others remain honest, honorable; helping others operate and maintain a successful, profitable life, home or business.

Let's look at the following Bible passages and answer some questions.

Joshua 7:1-26

What was stolen? _____

Why was it stolen? _____

What was the result? _____

John 12:4-6

What was stolen? _____

Why was it stolen? _____

What was the result? _____

2 Kings 5:20-27

What was stolen? _____

Why was it stolen? _____

What was the result? _____

What are some bad ways to get the stuff you want, or get the money to buy the stuff you want?

What are some positive ways to get the stuff you want, or get the money to buy the stuff you want?

In each of the following examples, is this stealing?

If your friend has a music recording and you make a copy of it instead of buying your own? _____

Purposefully misleading someone, or giving them false information? _____

Keeping another person waiting by being late to a meeting? _____

Spreading gossip about someone that hurts their reputation? _____

Being wasteful? _____

Buying something from someone when you know the item is stolen? _____

America is a very wealthy nation. No one in the world lives like we do. We have more resources, wealth and opportunities than any other country in the world. Is it wrong to live in such wealth while other people in the world have little or nothing?

Is it our fault that there are poor people in the world? _____

If God says our profit should come from our work, are we doing good if we just give people lots of money and stuff for free?

There is a saying, "Give a man a fish, and he'll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he'll eat for life."

What is the best way to help people who do not have a life as good as our own? _____

A person was discovered to have made many thousands of dollars by investing in \$2 stocks. After purchasing the stocks he would, using many different names, enter several "Social Media" tools on the Internet, and encourage others to buy the same stocks. He would have fake conversation between all the different names he was using. In those conversation he would make it look like lots of people were interested in the stock, and the price was sure go up quickly. Then he would sell his stock when others, following his advice, bought the stock thus raising the value of it. Do you think that person was guilty of breaking the commandment? Why or why not?

Many years ago a college student took an ad out in several, big city, news papers. It read:

I am a poor college. I have no money to buy books, and barely have enough money for food. Could you please send me a dollar.

He made many thousands of dollars because many thousands of people, from all over the country, sent him a dollar. Was he stealing? Why or why not?

If someone offers you a gift, then you are getting something for nothing. You are getting something for which you did not work. Is that stealing?

What if a person, institution or government constantly gives you free stuff. Is it stealing to take it rather than earning your own way?

In the old part of the city of Milwaukee, WI there are many old brick roads. These road were built by people during the Great Depression of the 1930's. At that time many people were starving because they did not have money to buy food. The government tried to give them free food and money, but the people refused to take it. They said they would rather starve to death then take free stuff. So the government built brick factories to put people to work, and then put more people to work laying the brick as roads. The people were willing to work for the food and money. Why do you think people acted that way then?

Do you think people would act that way now?

(From AoR)

God's gives the gift of a good reputation.
Can this be stolen?

Bearing false witness means more than just spreading lies about our neighbor. Look up the following passages write down how the Bible God's intent in this Commandment.

Telling _____ about our neighbor: Proverbs 12:17-18
Proverbs 19:5
Ephesians 4:25

Revealing _____ about our neighbor: Proverbs 11:11-13
Proverbs 20:19

Slandering or _____ another's reputation: Matthew 12:36-17
Proverbs 10:18
(What is "slander?" _____) James 3:1-12; 4:11

_____ others when they are defamed: Proverbs 31:8-9
Ephesians 4:29

_____11 of others, putting the best construction on things: Ephesians 4:29
Psalm 82:3-4
Psalm 10:13-15

Read Matthew 15:17-19.

What is the solution?

From where does the problem with the tongue originate?

What are the dangers when we minimize or justify our sin?

1 John 1:8-10

Luke 5:32

How does God deal with our sins of the tongue?

1 John 1:9

Psalm 23:5

Acts 3:19-20

How would you answer someone who says, “I confess my sin and receive God’s forgiveness. But where will I find the strength and wisdom to do what God commands? Am I truly forgive?”

1 Peter 2:24

Philippians 4:13

Ephesians 3:14-19

2 Corinthians 5:14, 17

All the words we speak originate in the heart. *[Matthew 15:10-11]* For a person to bear the fruit of faith, a life characterized by kindness and generosity, the heart must be clean. A clean heart is one that in all humility confesses sin and clings to Christ for pardon and peace. Such a heart will bear good fruit. *[Matthew 7:15-20]*

What does Psalm 51:10 teach us?