

Lesson 23 – The 9th & 10th Commandments

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help, and be of service to him in keeping it.

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

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(Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21)

These two commandments cover more than just a desire to have something that someone else has. They also include a command against trying to get stuff through unethical ways that, although may be legal, are still not the right thing to do. These two commandments are also concerned with giving aid to our neighbors so that we help them to keep what they have, and what they have worked for. We should look for ways to help people live a comfortable life, holding on to those things they have earned through their work and time.

See handout, “How to Break all Ten Commandment for \$2.43.”

Suppose you go to your friends house and they have the latest and greatest car with all the bells and whistles. It has every new feature and option: Self-driving, self-parking, top end Audio/Video system and more. When you drive the car it is like floating on air. It is smooth and the temperature controlled seats are more comfortable than your living room chairs.

Is it wrong to wish that you had a car like that? _____

What if your desire becomes something that is always part of your thoughts. You think about it at church, at home and on vacation. The only thing you can think about is how much you want that car.

Is it wrong to have desires that strong for something that is not yours? _____

Why? _____

Commandments 1-3 deal with our relationship between us and God. Commandments 4-8 deal with our relationship between ourselves and others. Commandments 9 & 10, when broken, can lead to breaking any or all of the other commandments.

List some things that you covet:

How can you control your heart and mind against breaking this commandments? _____

If you really want something, what should you do to get it? _____

If you are willing to work hard at honest labor, and spend the time, is it okay to save up for something that you want?

What if that work takes you away from your church, friends, family and neighbors? What if your work becomes an obsession? Is it still good?

So how do you get what you want? _____

Read Question 89 (p. 116) in the Catechism.
How would you define coveting?

Although we group the last two commandments together what is the difference between them?

Ninth: Do not covet your neighbor's stuff

Tenth: Do not covet your neighbor's relationships

It can be a fine line between wanting and coveting.
Look at questions 90 & 91 (p. 117) in the Catechism and explain the difference.
