



Lecture # 16 Part 1

The Ten Commandments, The Laws Governing Man's Duty To Others (Part 10):

Commandment Ten Concerns Man's Desires and Security— Never Covet, Exodus 20:17

2. (Exodus 20:17) Commandments, The Ten— Covetousness— Desire— Lust— Sin— Security: What is forbidden by this commandment.

Exodus 20:17 (BHS)

¹⁷ “לֹא תַחְמֹד בֵּית רֵעֶךָ לְאִי־תַחְמֹד אִשְׁת־רֵעֶךָ וְעַבְדֹךָ וְאִמְתֹךָ וְשׂוֹרְךָ וְחִמְרֹךָ וְכָל אֲשֶׁר פִּי רֵעֶךָ: פ”

“Lo tahmod bet re'ekha lo tahmod eshet re'ekha veavdo vaam-atoveshoro vahamoro vekhol asher lere'ekha”

Exodus 20:17 (KJV)

¹⁷ “**Thou shalt not covet** thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.”

Exodus 20:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ “**You shall not covet** your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

Thought 2. Matthew Henry has a very graphic application:

“O that such a man's house were mine! Such a man's wife mine! Such a man's estate mine!” This is certainly the language of discontent at our own lot, and envy at our neighbour's; and these are the sins principally forbidden here.”

Thought 3. The covetous life has been described as follows by an unnamed author:

“The passion to possess is an ugly sin no matter how we look at it. But when the object of our passion belongs to someone else, as the Tenth Commandment says “**thy neighbor**”, this sin takes on an even uglier hue. When we covet something “**out there**”, something that is available and waiting to be claimed, we limit most of the destruction to ourselves. But, when we covet that which belongs to others, we bring those people into the situation, and jeopardize our attitudes toward them and our relationships with them.

“Someone may covet a starting position on a sports team or another individual's job. This person, consumed with envy, may scheme and wish for his nemesis to be hurt, or miss a deadline, or lose an account, in order



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to claim his position. Or, what about coveting someone else's spouse? This person berates their own mate, feeds discontent with insensitive comparisons, and undermines another's marriage with subtle (or, not-so-subtle) advances. Some selfish siblings count the days to their parents' death as they covet the inheritance money."

"Coveting what belongs to another person is a serious offense on two counts. **First**, it indicates our lack of love for our neighbor, our relative, our friend, or whoever owns what we desire. The first and great commandment has to do with love; but, covetousness stands in direct opposition to love.

When we place our affections on an inheritance, we remove our love from the person who's bequeathing it to us.

When we see our neighbor's wife as the object of our desire, we begin to view our neighbor as the object of our disdain.

When we scheme to get someone else's job, we reveal our calloused, insensitive heart.

When we wish another person illness, injury, or bad fortune, we make it clear that the **ONLY** person we care about is "NUMBER ONE", ourselves.

When we covet what belongs to someone else, we displace the owner. In our minds, we kick him out of the game, or out of the job, or out of the marriage."

3. (Exodus 20:17) Commandments, The Ten— Covetousness— Decision— Desire— Lust: What is the decision required by this commandment?

Exodus 20:17 (BHS)

¹⁷ “לֹא תַחֲמֹד בֵּית רֵעֶךָ לֹא־תַחֲמֹד אִשֶּׁת רֵעֶךָ וְעַבְדּוֹ וְאִמָּתוֹ וְשׁוֹרָו וְחֲמֹרָו וְכָל אֲשֶׁר פִּ”

“Lo tahmod bet re'ekha lo tahmod eshet re'ekha veavdo vaam-ato veshoro vahamoro vekhol asher lere'ekha”

Exodus 20:17 (KJV)

¹⁷ “**Thou shalt not covet** thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.”

Exodus 20:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ “**You shall not covet** your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”



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Note that covetousness is not a material or physical thing. We cannot see nor touch covetousness—only the results of it. Covetousness is an arousal, a passion that arises within our hearts and minds: **it involves thoughts, desires, cravings, attitudes, longings, lusts.**

And these inward feelings and thoughts are far more difficult to control than outward acts. Nevertheless, this is exactly what God demands.

He expects a strong decision, a clear cut decision: that we *never covet*. This is the tenth and final great commandment of God: **“You shall not covet” (Exodus 20:17).**

Exodus 20:17 (NASB)

¹⁷**“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”**

1. We must stamp out the very first thought or urge to covet (**desire or lust**). The excellent commentator **Arthur Pink** says this:

“[Covetousness] is the first film or shadow of an evil thought, the imperfect embryo of a sin before it is shaped in us or has any lineaments or features. This is what the Scripture refers to as **“every imagination of the thoughts”** of the human heart. Such imaginations are expressly declared to be **“evil” (Genesis 6:5).**

Genesis 6:5 (NASB)

⁵**“Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”**

Such are the first risings of our corrupt nature toward those sins which are pleasing to our sensual inclinations. They are to be steadfastly watched, hated, and resisted. They are to be stamped upon as the sparks of a dangerous fire, for as soon as they begin to stir within us they pollute our souls. Just as the breathing upon a mirror sullies it, leaving a dimness there, so the very first breathings of an evil desire or thought within one’s breast defile the soul.”

2. We must not covet (**desire, lust**) the things of this world.

Exodus 20:17 (NASB)

¹⁷**“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”**

Deuteronomy 5:21 (NASB)

²¹**“You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, and you shall not desire your neighbor’s house, his field or his male servant or his female servant, his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”**



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1 Corinthians 10:6 (NASB)

⁶“Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved.”

1 John 2:15-16 (NASB)

¹⁵“Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

¹⁶For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”

3. We must beware and guard against the very first urging and thought of covetousness.

Luke 12:15 (NASB)

¹⁵“Then He said to them, “Beware, and be on your guard against **every form of greed**; for not *even* when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.”

2 Corinthians 10:5 (NASB)

⁵“*We are* destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and *we are* taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”

4. We must put to death the arousal and growth of covetousness (desires, lusts) in our hearts.

Colossians 3:5 (NASB)

⁵“Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.”

5. We must not covet (**lust, crave**) after women.

Proverbs 6:25 (NASB)

²⁵“Do not desire her beauty in your heart, Nor let her capture you with her eyelids.”

Matthew 5:28 (NASB)

²⁸“But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

6. We must not fellowship with a covetous person.

1 Corinthians 5:11 (NASB)

¹¹“But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or **covetous**, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one.”



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7. We must not envy sinners, no matter who they are or what they have.

Proverbs 23:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ **“Do not let your heart envy sinners, But *live* in the fear of the LORD always.”**

Proverbs 24:1 (NASB)

¹ **“Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them.”**

8. We must covet (desire, long for) only the good things of life.

1 Corinthians 12:31 (NASB)

³¹ **“But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.”**

1 Corinthians 14:39 (NASB)

³⁹ **“Therefore, my brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak in tongues.”**

9. We must not seek first the things of this earth, but rather seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Matthew 6:33 (NASB)

³³ **“But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”**