

Intro:

READ WLC Q&A 142. Tonight, “neglect of duties ... theft ... man stealing ... receiving anything stolen.”

Main Point of Text: The one who used to steal must no longer wrongly take, but righteously work to begin giving.

Sermon Point: *Stop stealing.*

Move 1: Stop disrespecting the personal property of God and man.

LC: “the neglect of the duties required”. Respect the persons and property of God and man:

- LC 141: “ ... truth, faithfulness, and justice in contracts and commerce ... an endeavor, by all just and lawful means, to procure, preserve, and further the wealth and outward estate of others, as well as our own.”
- *If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?* (James 2:15-16). Nothing. The same evidence you have faith: vs. 17; faith w/o works is dead. Positive effort is the effect of inner life, and love of God there: 1 Jn. 3:17.

Move 2: Stop taking what is not yours without permission.

LC: “theft, robbery, manstealing”: taking what you have no right to by inheritance, sale, or gift:

- *Theft*: taking to keep. *Robbery*: holding up a corner store or burglarizing home. Intent/planned/force:
 - *Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery ...* (Psa 62:10)
 - Mt. 16:19-20 “thefts” of heart and defile. Rev. 9:21: trumpets judge unrepentant thieves.
- *Manstealing*: taking other people. Kidnapping, sex trafficking, forced labor, slave trade:
 - LC finished in 1648. Slavery not abolished until 1833. So anti-status quo/law of land.
 - 1 Tim. 1:9-10: Law written for disobedient, ungodly, sinners: includes “menstealers”.
 - Those who fell w/ Babylon owned many things, including slaves/souls of men. (Rev 18:13)
 - Israelites rescued from slavery, compensated by God with riches of Egyptian taskmasters.
 - Ex. 21:16: ... *he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.* (see also Deut. 24:7). Issue: personal property of one’s own person.

Move 3: Stop pretending you haven’t done so.

LC: “receiving any thing that is stolen”: Receiving stolen people/goods/services just as bad.

- *When thou sawest a thief, then thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with adulterers.* (Psa 50:18)
- *Whoso is partner with a thief hateth his own soul: he heareth cursing, and bewrayeth it not.* (Pro 29:24)
- Rom. 2:21: ... *thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?*

Conclusion:

Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. (Eph 4:28):

- Stop picking the pockets of others, and put your hands to hard work to now fill those same pockets.
- Greek, “steal”: “klepto”. Not a disorder. A sinful lifestyle leading to hell: Mt. 6:19-20, 1 Cor. 6:10.

Stop stealing.