

15 - The Eighth Commandment - Exodus 20:15 - 2014-05-04

Call to Worship: Psalm 24:1

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:28-32

Sermon: "The Eighth Commandment" Exodus 20:15

Benediction: Psalm 115:15

I. See the basis of the commandment in creation

A. Mankind was to work, and to eat what God provided to grow by his work

*Genesis 2:15-17 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. (16) And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; (17) but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*

B. Instead of being content to work, and to eat what his work produced, man stole; he took what did not belong to him, what his work had not earned him

*Genesis 3:6 When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.*

C. So, understand this basic problem with us: ever since we sinned in Adam, stealing is a part of the fallen nature of our race;

1. as a race; mankind is guilty of stealing from God instead of being content to work;
2. each of us comes into this world guilty of stealing
3. we are tempted in many ways, throughout our lives, to take what doesn't belong to us, what we haven't worked for, what God has not said we may have
4. then, at the end, each of us will stand before the judgment seat of God, guilty of stealing from other people, and guilty of stealing from the judge who will judge us!

With that understanding in mind, of how God created things to be,

II. Consider the two sides of the commandment

A. One side, the negative: Do not steal.

*Exodus 20:15 Thou shalt not steal.*

B. The other side, the affirmative: Work or Labor

1. To supply your own needs

*2 Thessalonians 3:11-12 (11) For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. (12) Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.*

2. To supply the needs of your own family, especially your own household  
*1 Timothy 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

3. To give something to those in need  
*Ephesians 4:28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.*

- i. there are people who cannot earn their living through their work
- ii. there are people who normally earn their living through their work, but are having some sort of crisis, some temporary need

### III. Consider the heart matters of this commandment

You are tempted to think that the treasures of this world are valuable, and so you'll do anything to get them; but what is really valuable is to suffer affliction with the people of God, to share in the reproach of Christ

*Hebrews 11:24-26 By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, (25) choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, (26) esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.*

### IV. Consider the many implications of the commandment

-This is intended to convince the unbeliever of his sinfulness and need of the Savior

-This is intended to convict the believer of unrighteous thinking and conduct, that he may not conform to the patterns of this sinful world or the desires of his flesh, but be further transformed, taking on the mind of Christ, that he may obey the Lord

#### A. You steal when you withhold what you should give to the poor

1. If you have plenty, you should not consume or store up all of it yourself, but should devote some of it to the poor.

*Leviticus 19:9-10 'When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not wholly reap the corners of your field, nor shall you gather the gleanings of your harvest. (10) And you shall not glean your vineyard, nor shall you gather every grape of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and the stranger: I am the LORD your God.*

2. When you have more than you need of something, and see that someone else lacks it, you should share some of what you have.

*Luke 3:10-11 So the people asked him, saying, "What shall we do then?" (11) He answered and said to them, "He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise."*

And of course it also is stealing to give to the poor without love, only grudgingly or to make a show; stealing can be done in the heart even if you don't actually steal physically

B. You steal when you withhold what you should pay those who work for you

By not paying them at all

Jeremiah 22:13 "Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness  
And his chambers by injustice, Who uses his neighbor's service without  
wages And gives him nothing for his work,

By paying them too little

By not paying them promptly

Leviticus 19:13 'You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob him. The  
wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning.

C. You steal when you govern unjustly, so as to enrich the powerful and impoverish the weak

1. In making the laws

*Isaiah 10:1-2 "Woe to those who decree unrighteous decrees, Who write  
misfortune, Which they have prescribed (2) To rob the needy of justice, And to  
take what is right from the poor of My people, That widows may be their prey, And  
that they may rob the fatherless.*

2. In executing the laws

as a bureaucrat

Luke 3:12-13 Then tax collectors also came to be baptized, and  
said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" (13) And he said to  
them, "Collect no more than what is appointed for you."

or as a law enforcement officer

Luke 3:14 Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, "And what  
shall we do?" So he said to them, "Do not intimidate anyone or  
accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."

D. You steal when you do not work hard at your job

1. Your employer says he will pay your \$10 an hour, or some other amount, to work for him; if you do your best work for an hour, and he pays you \$10, then you have not stolen; when he hands over the \$10, it truly belongs to you; BUT if you work in a half-hearted, lazy manner, doing work about half as good as you are capable of, or doing about half as much work as you could have done, then when he hands over the \$10, only about half of it really belongs to you; you have stolen the other \$5 from your boss

2. You could make \$4,000 a month if you worked hard at your job or business. I don't mean by spending so much time at work that you neglect your family and ruin your health. I just mean by working hard, working at it with all your heart. But you don't really want to work hard. You enjoy frequent breaks, lots of days off; you prefer to come in late and take off early. As a result, you make \$3,000 a month at your job or business. You are, in effect, stealing \$1,000 each month from your family and the others who depend on you.

3. Some of you children and young adults have work at home. You work taking care of chickens or gardens or cows or goats or ducks or other critters. If you worked hard, doing your best work, picking weeds, milking, gathering eggs, planting seeds, or whatever it is, your plants and your animals would produce 10 gallons of milk or 10 dozen eggs or 10 bushels of vegetables. But you work half-heartedly, not gathering all the eggs, not picking all the weeds, etc, so you only produce 8 measures instead of 10. You have, by your laziness, stolen the other 2 measures of produce.

Of course this sin of stealing can be done in the heart, even when it is not done in the body. If you actually do work hard, but only out of compulsion. In your mind you wish that you could get away with half work, then you commit this sin in your heart.

E. You steal when you withhold what offerings you should give to God in His church

We'll see this expressed in the context of the Old Covenant, then see how essentially the same thing applies in the New Covenant church.

*Malachi 3:8-10a "Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, 'In what way have we robbed You?' In tithes and offerings. (9) You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation. (10) Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house,*

1. In Old Covenant Israel, the people were to bring farm produce to the temple; it would be stored in store-rooms; it would be used, then, to feed those classes of people who could not earn their own living

a. widows, orphans, and foreigners

Often these people were physically too old or too young, or, in the case of foreigners, had not yet been able to get good jobs or start businesses, and didn't own their own land

b. Levites; the ones who did not work at paying jobs or businesses, but worked performing the religious services in the temple

2. In the New Covenant church, obviously we do not have a temple, and the church building does not equal the temple; many a church doesn't have a building, but meets in a cave or a small room or under the shade of a tree; but the apostles teach us that the principle is the same; those who can make money by their work bring some of that money, normally on the first day of the week when the church meets to worship, and put it into the care of the church

a. then if there are true widows, orphans, foreigners, or others, who are truly in need and have no other source of livelihood, some of that money goes to care for them

*1 Timothy 5:3 Honor widows who are really widows.*

b. if the church is blessed with a man, or with men whose labor is the preaching the gospel, teaching the word, then some of that money goes to pay him for his labor in preaching and teaching, so that he and his household can have their living

*1 Corinthians 9:13-14 Do you not know that those who minister the holy things eat of the things of the temple, and those who serve at the altar partake of the offerings of the altar? (14) Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel.*

c. sometimes there is such a preacher who is sent somewhere to preach, and the church contributes to the expenses of his travel and of his living where he has been sent, as the Philippian church did several times for Paul as he travelled to preach

3. In both Old Covenant Israel and the New Covenant church, God has promised that those who do not steal from God these offerings, but indeed make these offerings, will be blessed by Him; He will see that their giving of offerings is not a loss to them, but a gain

*Malachi 3: 10b-12 And try Me now in this," Says the LORD of hosts, "If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. (11) "And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field," Says the LORD of hosts; (12) And all nations will call you blessed, For you will be a delightful land," Says the LORD of hosts.*

*Philippians 4:15-19 Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. (16) For even in Thessalonica you sent aid once and again for my necessities. (17) Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. (18) Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. (19) And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*

V. Consider the Lord Jesus Christ in relation to this commandment.

*Philippians 2:5-8 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, (6) who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, (7) but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of*

*men. (8) And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.*

A. He did not steal, since even the place as God already belonged to Him

B. Instead of stealing, He humbled Himself, worked, served, and gave

C. What did He earn by His work? He earned salvation for us!

1. He payed the price of our redemption

2. He works form our righteousness

What should I do when I realize that I have stolen?

Ezekiel 33:14-16 Again, when I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right, (15) if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. (16) None of his sins which he has committed shall be remembered against him; he has done what is lawful and right; he shall surely live.

Leviticus 6:1-5 And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying: (2) "If a person sins and commits a trespass against the LORD by lying to his neighbor about what was delivered

to him for safekeeping, or about a pledge, or about a robbery, or if he has extorted from his neighbor, (3) or if he has found what was lost and lies concerning it, and swears falsely--in any one of these things that a man may do in which he sins: (4) then it shall be, because he has sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore what he has stolen, or the thing which he has extorted, or what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or the lost thing which he found, (5) or all that about which he has sworn falsely. He shall restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it, and give it to whomever it belongs, on the day of his trespass offering.

Take care not to use poverty as a mask or excuse for stealing (Proverbs 30:7-9)

Proverbs 30:7-9 Two things I request of You (Deprive me not before I die): (8) Remove falsehood and lies far from me; Give me neither poverty nor riches-- Feed me with the food allotted to me; (9) Lest I be full and deny You, And say, "Who is the LORD?" Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.

- not oppressed, but has restored to the debtor his pledge
- has robbed no one by violence, but has given his bread to the hungry and covered the naked with clothing
- has not exacted usury nor taken any increase, but has withdrawn his hand from iniquity and executed true judgment between man and man

Ezekiel 18:7-8 If he has not oppressed anyone, But has restored to the debtor his pledge; Has robbed no one by violence, But has given his bread to the hungry And covered the naked with clothing; (8) If he has not exacted usury Nor taken any increase, But has withdrawn his hand from iniquity And executed true judgment between man and man;

Ezekiel 18:12-13 If he has oppressed the poor and needy, Robbed by violence, Not restored the pledge, Lifted his eyes to the idols, Or committed abomination; (13) If he has exacted usury Or taken increase-- Shall he then live? He shall not live! If he has done any of these abominations, He shall surely die; His blood shall be upon him.

Ezekiel 18:16-17 Has not oppressed anyone, Nor withheld a pledge, Nor robbed by violence, But has given his bread to the hungry And covered the naked with clothing; (17) Who has withdrawn his hand from the poor And not received usury or increase, But has executed My judgments And walked in My statutes He shall not die for the iniquity of his father; He shall surely live!

Exodus 22:25-26 "If you lend money to any of My people who are poor among you, you shall not be like a moneylender to him; you shall not charge him interest. (26) If you ever take your neighbor's garment as a pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down.

Deuteronomy 24:6 "No man shall take the lower or the upper millstone in pledge, for he takes one's living in pledge.

Deuteronomy 24:10-13 "When you lend your brother anything, you shall not go into his house to get his pledge. (11) You shall stand outside, and the man to whom you lend shall bring the pledge out to you. (12) And if the man is poor, you shall not keep his pledge overnight. (13) You shall in any case return the pledge to him again when the sun goes down, that he may sleep in his own garment and bless you; and it shall be righteousness to you before the LORD your God.

Deuteronomy 24:14-15 "You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether one of your brethren or one of the aliens who is in your land within your gates. (15) Each day you shall give him his wages, and not let the sun go down on it, for he is poor and has set his heart on it; lest he cry out against you to the LORD, and it be sin to you.

Deuteronomy 24:17-21 "You shall not pervert justice due the stranger or the fatherless, nor take a widow's garment as a pledge. (18) But you shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt, and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; therefore I command you to do this thing. (19) "When you reap your harvest in your field, and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, that the LORD your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. (20) When you beat your olive trees, you shall not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. (21) When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, you shall not glean it afterward; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow.

James 5:1-5 Come now, you rich, weep and howl for your miseries that are coming upon you! (2) Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten. (3) Your gold and silver are corroded, and their corrosion will be a witness against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have heaped up treasure in the last days. (4) Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. (5) You have lived on the earth in pleasure and luxury; you have fattened your hearts as in a day of slaughter.

Psalms 115:16 The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD's; But the earth He has given to the children of men.

see Jeremiah 23:30-31 counterfeiting

JRY:

-not only did He not steal, but He willingly let go of what He owned

Downs:

-considering our disobedience to the ten commandments, the obedience of Christ becomes more precious to us

-typically we mistake what is truly valuable