

GOD'S GUIDE TO A GREAT LIFE
Sermon Series on the Ten Commandments

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO FIND CONTENTMENT

Exodus 20:17

The Tenth Commandment is unique because it does not address an overt action but one's intention. Yet coveting is the root of all disobedience, and this command logically precedes the rest of the Ten. The desires of the heart always precede overt behaviors (Mark 7:20–23).

The degree of compliance to the Tenth Commandment is a defining gauge of the level of maturity of one's personal relationship with God. The Tenth Commandment could therefore be viewed as the interpreting clause of all the Ten Commandments. Let's understand from the passage and related verses how to battle this root of many other sins in all of us:

1. The Command against wrong desires: "You shall not covet."

What is coveting? It refers to a selfish desire that is contrary to God's will (Deut 12:20; 14:26; 2 Sam 23:15; Ps 10:17; Prov 13:12; Amos 5:18; Mic 7:1). Coveting is when you don't want what God wants for you.

2. The Concern about our neighbors. ". . . your neighbor's house. . . wife. . . manservant or maidservant. . . ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

The main objects of coveting mentioned in the Tenth Commandment are "house" and "wife" - in other words, property and family - the core of man's existence.

3. The Connection with the other Commandments.

Desire is the root from which every sin springs. Before someone murders, or commits adultery, or steals, or bears false witness (1 King 21), he first covets or longs for a different sort of circumstance.

4. The Cure for Coveting: The Basics! Just the basics.

1) **Desire God more (Mat. 6:33). How? Know God more.** Don't desire anything in a way that would express lack of contentment in God. Covetousness is a desire that is increasing because the desire for God is decreasing. Anything that you desire, where the desire is becoming stronger because the desire for God is getting weaker, is covetousness. [John Piper]

2) **Trust God (Phil. 4:6-7).**

3) **The Attitude of Gratitude: Start wanting what you have, instead of trying to have what you want.** Contentment is wanting what God wants. Crush coveting with contentment (Phil. 4:11-13, 19).

4) **Love your neighbor.** If you are loving your neighbor, you do not have an agenda against him and covet what he has (Mat. 5:43-44; Mark 12:31; Rom 13:9).

Final Thoughts:

Covetousness is a basic source of social disorder and trouble in interpersonal relationships. The Tenth Commandment is to be a restraint upon evil desires before they prevail. Although covetousness is by nature covert, the Tenth Commandment is a catchall to prevent overt crimes. Crush coveting with contentment!