

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

DEALING WITH OUR DESIRES

Today we are considering the 10th Commandment: You shall not covet. (Exodus 20:17)

We are right in the middle of the Christmas season which, around the world is an unparalleled time of marketing and advertising to ramp up desire and encourage people to shop till they drop and get what is trending and popular – this is an incredibly relevant, but also challenging and a counter culture topic.

It is important to remember the context of these commandments in the deliverance of Israel from slavery in Egypt as they are given a foundation for a great life as they are to now live as the people of God. God was not being a kill joy. He was giving them commands for their good. How much more, as delivered people through Jesus Christ are we to live lives that show forth the love of God in our world.

A. Defining and Understanding the 10th Commandment

The basic definition is: a strong desire to have what belongs to another. In this commandment we are facing the problem of our desires, and longings and what is motivating us.

Related to covetousness is greed, materialism, its close cousin envy, and the unbridled pursuit of more. It is the false belief that we can find happiness in stuff.

Let us reflect on Jesus' words: Luke 12:15-21; Matthew 16:26

Let us reflect on the Apostle Paul's teaching: Colossians 3:5

B. Is all desire bad?

St. Augustine wrote about "disordered affections".

We must discern healthy desire from unhealthy desire.

The problem is that covetousness and greed destroy or weaken our relationship with God and others.

C. How do we live in a world consumed with consuming?

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

1. Pursue our first love (Matthew 22:37,38;
2. Seek His Kingdom (Matthew 6:33)
3. Battle the sinful nature. (Col 3:5)
4. Learn contentment (Phil 4:12,13)

D. Final word: Let us confess our sin of covetousness and greed and invite a fresh work of God's Spirit in us to enable us to be strong in this culture filled with temptation as we seek to live out our calling as the people of God, His Church.