

## **The Decalogue of Love**

### **Commandment #10: Do Not Covet**

#### **A. The heart of covetousness**

##### *1. The meaning of covetousness*

Covetousness is an intense and discredited desire to influence other persons or things to our benefit.

Ps 119:36 - We must turn our heart toward the Lord's statutes and not toward selfish gains.

##### *2. Covetousness in the biblical context*

Rule for holy living: Put sin to death (Col. 3:5).

The 10<sup>th</sup> commandment addresses our heart and prohibits an inner behaviour.

God warns his people not to covet delightful things wrongly.

Freedom is the ability to find a balance.

Rightful desires:

- The desire to succeed
- The desire to produce
- The desire to progress

Our life purpose = to desire God above all

#### **B. What God allows today and what He doesn't**

##### *1. Covetousness versus rightful desires – A closer look*

The commandment against covetousness is against all kinds of greed.

The opposite of greed is contentment.

Luke 12:13 – Seek first the kingdom of God.

##### *2. God given things*

What God gives us is delightful. Only God can satisfy.

Psalm 16:11 talks of a heart full of joy. To the woman at the well, Jesus says: I'm the river of life.

We obey God's commandment by having communion with Him.

##### *3. God's denials*

We have a natural inclination to disobey because we want our way.

What God denies us:

- Wanting excessively
- Wanting illegitimately
- Wanting exclusively

If we are absorbed by a lot of things, we simply move from nothing to something and back to nothing. Christian ought to have another standard of measurement.

4. *The consequences of covetousness*

Covetousness leads to dishonesty and injustice.

The roots of our problems are not found in our present circumstance. The blessings of God are the results of our fellowship with Him.

**C. Fulfilling God's law**

1. *The antidote – What is our response?*

God requires a right attitude.

Colossians 3 – Consider putting to death evil desires which amount to idolatry. Be fully content with our present condition.

2. *Some practical suggestions*

Hate sin: to long to be holy.

Trust: to commit oneself to Jesus Christ.

Bible: to read the word of the beloved.

Pray: to be in the presence of God.

Fellowship: to enjoy the company of other believers

3. *Coveting God's promise and possessions*

We need to have a holy reaction. Learn to see through Christ's eyes.

Colossians 2:10 – We have union with Christ, free justification, His grace and righteousness.

Martin Luther: He who has Christ has all things.

Not coveting = Serving the Lord with all your heart.

4. *Fulfilling God's law*

Love (Christ) is the fulfilment of the Law.

Matthew 5:17 – I have come to fulfil the Law. The law was given to make us aware of sin. The Law defines love.

Our ultimate goal: **Love and serve God with all your heart.**