



Message Discussion Guide Week of October 22, 2023

Message: The Ten Commandments, Part 8: Highway Robbery

Key Scriptures: [Exodus 20:15](#), [Luke 19:1-10](#)

Preacher: Tom Parkinson

Message Highlights:

“You shall not steal” is a basic lesson that we learn in preschool. It doesn’t feel like a heavy commandment that many of us will feel convicted by.

- Yet we are living in an age when prohibitions against stealing are not taken for granted. Retail theft is at an all-time high, for example.
- Society falls apart when the 8th commandment is ignored.

The Bible prohibits us from stealing:

1. People – i.e. kidnapping, or enslavement of people
2. Property – i.e. shoplifting, embezzlement, extortion, swindling, predatory lending, denying workers their wages, tax fraud/evasion
3. Non material goods – i.e. stealing someone’s reputation (slander, gossip), dignity (public humiliation), trust (deception), or intellectual property (plagiarism, piracy)

Like the other commandments, stealing arises from a condition of the heart: greed.

- Greed is “stealing with the eyes of the heart.”
- Greed arises from the mindset of scarcity – the belief that I don’t have enough and if I could have a little more I would be happy.
- Greed erodes character and can make us blind to the demands of justice and the needs of others.

The antidote to greed is generosity. A generous heart is incapable of stealing.

- God is generous – Everything belongs to God and God freely gives to us.
- The spiritual discipline of tithing is meant to soak our hearts in a posture of generosity.
- Jesus’ death on the cross is the greatest act of generosity.

Discussion Questions:

- 1.) When you hear the commandment “you shall not steal,” what comes to your mind? Do you think that this is an elementary teaching that everyone understands? Why do you think there is a rise in retail theft in our culture today?
- 2.) Pastor Tom shared that there are three categories the Bible prevents us from stealing: people, property, and non-material goods. In what ways do you see these three categories violated in our world today? Do you ever steal – even inadvertently – within any of these three categories?
- 3.) Read the story of Zacchaeus in [Luke 19:1-10](#)
 - a. How does Zacchaeus violate the 8th commandment?
 - b. Why do you think Zacchaeus is interested in seeing Jesus?
 - c. Why is Jesus interested in having a relationship with Zacchaeus?
 - d. How does Zacchaeus repent? What does he do to respond to his sin? Why does he do it?
- 4.) Pastor Tom shared that greed is the heart condition that leads to stealing. What is greed? In what ways has greed impacted your own heart? How does greed erode our character?
- 5.) How does generosity counteract greed? What does it mean to be generous? How is God generous? What practical things can we do to become more generous people?
- 6.) What is your primary takeaway from this message? What will you do this week to try to become more obedient to the eighth commandment?

Abundant Life Tip: A greedy heart will rob you of joy. When it comes to your wealth and possessions, adopt God’s heart of generosity. Look for ways you can use what you have to bless others.