

Catechesis Minute

The 10th Commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not entice or force away our neighbor's wife, workers, or animals, or turn them against him, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

The last two commandments deal with coveting. They differ in that the 9th Commandment has to do with possessions and the 10th Commandment has to do with people. Since they both deal with the same sinful desire, one that replaces God as the center of our universe, we often talk about them together in our treatments of the Ten Commandments. So, today I want to call your attention to the last question: *What does God particularly impress upon us in the last two commandments?* And look at answer "b": *God wants us to love Him and have holy desires.*

Psalm 37:4 says: *Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.* This is not a formula for getting whatever earthly thing we want. It's not a magic wand. If we are delighting ourselves in the Lord, our wants and desires will conform to His and He will gladly fulfill those desires.

Psalm 119:35-36 says: *Lead me in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it. Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!* All of **Psalm 119** is an ode to God's Word. Each verse contains "word", "commandments", "testimonies", "statutes", "precepts", or another word that identifies the Word of God. As we look to God's Word, He speaks to us and leads us down the right path and we will not be inclined to selfish gain, for we will understand how unimportant that is to God.

Philippians 4:8 says: *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.* What do you know that is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise? The only thing that fits these categories is the Word of God. We see in these verses that the remedy and prevention for coveting is immersing ourselves in the Word of God. In fact, that will help us in our struggle with all the commandments. *For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).* Let us relish in the Word of God!