

COMMANDMENT #10: CONTENTMENT

Written by David Feddes

Read Philippians 4:4-13

"You shall not covet ... anything that belongs to your neighbor."Exodus 20:17



Let's face it--coveting is great fuel for the economy. When having more stuff is our highest goal, we get a society where everyone is working and advertising and buying and selling at a frantic pace. As a result, most people end up having more stuff. If stuff is our greatest love and our motto is "It's the economy, stupid!", then coveting seems fine.

But if we love God and love other people, coveting is out. Coveting may grow the economy, but it wrecks relationships. When we covet, we want what our neighbor has, instead of loving him for who he is. We resent God for not giving us what we want, instead of rejoicing in the gift of his Son and the other gifts he gives us. In coveting we love things and use people; in contentment we love people and use things. In coveting we're grumpy at God; in contentment we're grateful to God.

Apart from God's law of love, coveting seems like a natural, healthy impulse. As Paul said, "I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, 'Do not covet'" (Romans 7:7). But God's law unmasks coveting for what it is: a terrible failure to love God and others. The cure? Repent of coveting. Rejoice in the Lord. Focus your thoughts and desires on becoming good, not on getting goods. Be content in every situation. Sound impossible? "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

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PRAYER--Father, save us from our love of things. Move us by your Spirit to love you and to love others. Rescue us from coveting, and fill us with contentment, through Jesus our Lord. Amen.