



Commandments 1-4: Loving God.

- No other gods
- No idols
- Honouring God's name.
- Practicing Sabbath rest

Commandments 5-10: Loving Others.

- Honouring parents
- Murder
- Adultery
- Stealing
- False Testimony
- Coveting

This Week:

The Tenth Word of Grace:

“You must not covet what belongs to your neighbour.”

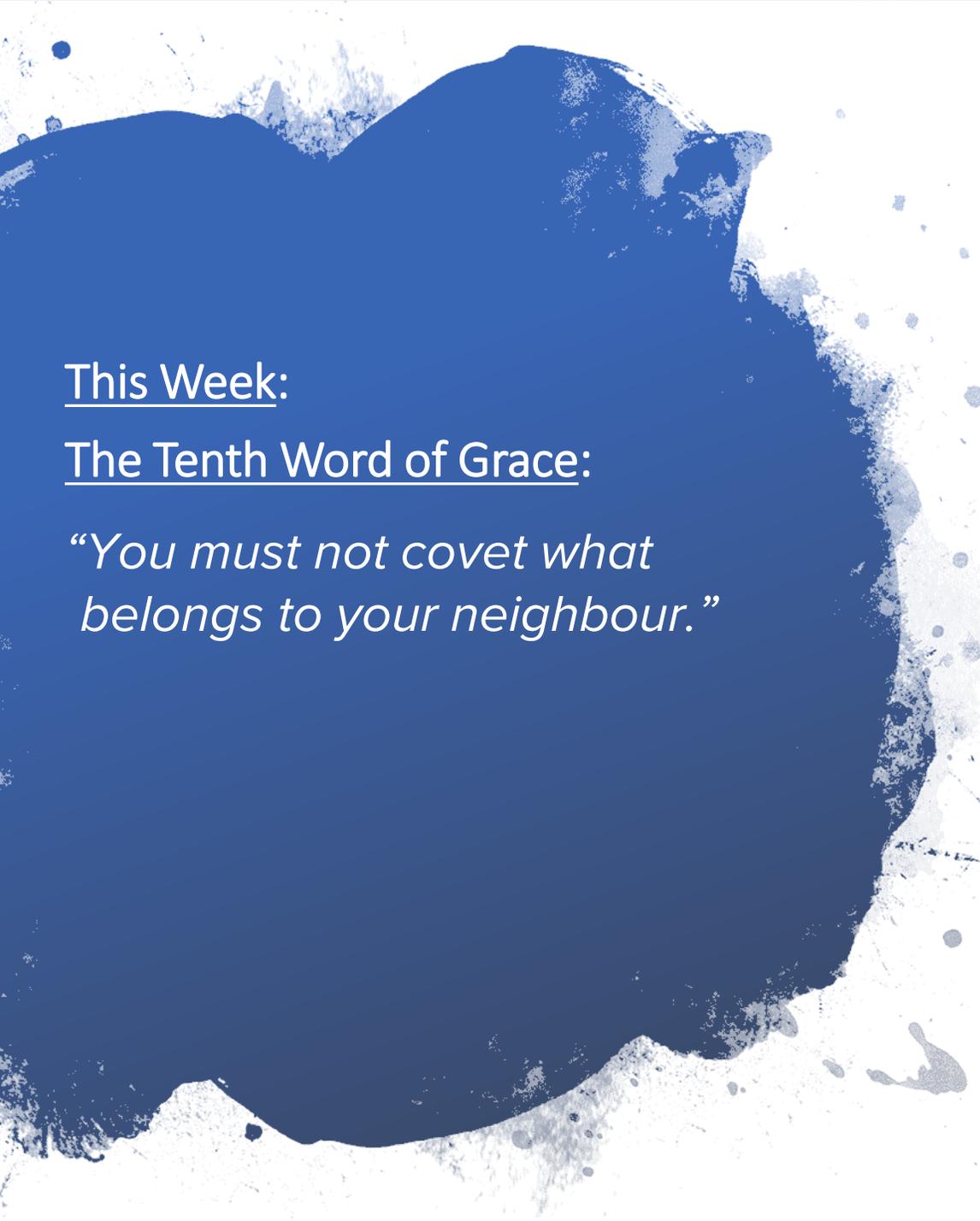
Coveting: what is it?

Webster: to desire with a greedy or obvious longing; to hanker over.

Oxford: to yearn to possess something that belongs to someone else.

Synonyms: *hunger; thirst; crave; lust after; itch for; fancy.*

Conclusion: Coveting is the uncontrolled desire to acquire.



This Week:

The Tenth Word of Grace:

“You must not covet what belongs to your neighbour.”

¹⁷ No lusting after your neighbor’s house—or wife or servant or maid or ox or donkey. Don’t set your heart on anything that is your neighbor’s.

Exodus 20 – The Message

Why do we covet?

Coveting material things to impress others is also frequently referred to as “conspicuous consumption.” Subconsciously, humans look at those around them for confirmation of their social and economic status. In our modern world, those signals come in the form of houses, cars, clothes, jewelry and material possessions.

Whereas a peacock fluffs his feathers and a lion flaunts his mane, humans flaunt their material possessions.

It makes no rational sense, but the unconscious need to keep up with the herd causes some people to acquire stuff even if they know what they’re doing is ultimately damaging their present and robbing their future.

Psychology Today

The effects of coveting: (Warren)

1. Fatigue.

- I wear myself out trying to keep up with my neighbours.

*⁴ Do not wear yourself out to get rich;
have the wisdom to show restraint.*

Proverbs 23

*⁴ And I saw that all toil and all achievement
spring from one person's envy of another. This
too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind ...*

*⁶ Better one handful with tranquillity
than two handfuls with toil and
chasing after the wind.*

Solomon – Ecclesiastes 4

The effects of coveting:

1. Fatigue.

2. Debt.

- It's not that I don't make enough ...
it's that I want too much!

The average Canadian now owes \$22,837 in consumer debt, a figure that doesn't include any mortgages. (4th Qtr. – 2017)

*¹⁰ Whoever loves money never has enough;
Whoever loves wealth is never satisfied
with their income.
And this, too, is meaningless.*

Solomon – Ecclesiastes 5

The effects of coveting:

1. Fatigue.
2. Debt.
3. Worry.
 - If I don't stop acquiring, I'll fall behind my neighbours.
 - I must protect what I've worked so hard to acquire.

¹⁸ I came to hate all my hard work here on earth, for I must leave to others everything I have earned. ¹⁹ And who can tell whether my successors will be wise or foolish? Yet they will control everything I have gained by my skill and hard work under the sun. How meaningless! ...

²² So what do people get in this life for all their hard work and anxiety? ²³ Their days of labor are filled with pain and grief; even at night their minds cannot rest.

Ecclesiastes 2

The effects of coveting:

1. Fatigue.
2. Debt.
3. Worry.
4. Conflict.
 - I fight over what I don't have, while carelessly ignoring what I do have.

4 *What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? ² You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them.*

James 4

The effects of coveting:

1. Fatigue.
2. Debt.
3. Worry.
4. Conflict.
5. Dissatisfaction.
 - Because status and stuff *does not* bring meaning & contentment.

⁴ I tried to find meaning by building huge homes for myself and by planting beautiful vineyards. ⁵ I made gardens and parks, filling them with all kinds of fruit trees. ⁶ I built reservoirs collecting the water to irrigate my many flourishing groves. ⁷ I bought slaves, both men and women, and owned large herds and flocks, more than any of the kings who before me. ⁸ I collected great sums of silver & gold, hired wonderful singers, both men & women, and had many beautiful concubines. I had everything a man could desire! ... ¹⁰ Anything I wanted, I would acquire – I denied myself nothing. ¹¹ But as I looked at everything I had worked so hard for, it was all so meaningless—like chasing the wind. There was nothing really worthwhile anywhere.

The answer to coveting:

1. I stop comparing myself with my neighbours ... and make God my identity, not my stuff.

- Father: *I am His child.*
- Master: *I am His Servant.*
- Creator: *I am His Image.*
- Redeemer: *I am His Debtor.*
- King: *I am His Loyal Citizen.*

“You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now, if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.”

Exodus 19

Question: Is God my identity?

The answer to coveting:

1. My Identity: God.
2. I am content with God's provision for me.

Question: Am I satisfied with what God has given me?

¹² I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. ¹³ For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength ...

¹⁹ And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.

Paul – Philippians 4

The answer to coveting:

1. My Identity: God.
2. My Attitude: Contentment
3. I covet what God covets, not what my neighbour covets.
 - eternal things ... people.

Question: Are people my obvious priority?

³ We were once foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other.

⁴ But, when God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, ⁵ he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. ⁶ He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior.

⁷ Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us assurance that we will inherit eternal life.

The answer to coveting:

1. My Identity: God.
2. My Attitude: Contentment.
3. My Priority: People.
4. I practice generosity, *because* I know that's how God takes care of people ... He distributes His resources through me!
 - my time & my friendship.
 - my stuff & my skills.
 - my faith & my example.

¹⁷ Teach those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which is so unreliable. Their trust should be in God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment.

¹⁸ Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and generous to those in need, always being ready to share with others. ¹⁹ By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may experience true life.

1 Timothy 6

Question: How am I redistributing God's resources?

The answer to coveting:

1. My Identity: God.
2. My Attitude: Contentment.
3. My Priority: People.
4. My Practice: Generosity
5. My Home: Heaven ... not here.

Question: Is heaven my home?

⁶ True godliness with contentment is itself great wealth. ⁷ After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. ⁸ So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.

⁹ People who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin & destruction.

¹⁰ For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the true faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows.

1 Timothy 6

Truth: I can't love my neighbours and covet my neighbours stuff at the same time ... and loving them is much richer, and way more fun!

