

The Ten Commandments

Commandment 8: you shall not steal

True story from our dim-witted criminals department:

A man walked into a convenience store, put a \$20 bill on the counter and asked for change. When the clerk opened the drawer, the man pulled a gun and asked for all the cash in the register.

The man took the cash from the clerk and fled, leaving his \$20 bill on the counter.

So how much did he get from the drawer?

Fifteen bucks.

“Strange World,” *Campus Life*

Exodus 20: 15: You shall not steal

1) The reasons for stealing

- Greed
 - People want more than they have or can afford
- Covetousness
 - This is similar to greed except that it is more specific. A person desires – covets – something that he can’t have or afford.
- Vices – drugs and alcohol
 - Drug addicts and alcoholics often aren’t in a fit state to work or they spend all their money on drugs or alcohol but need more to buy more drugs or alcohol. Some go around begging but others steal anything to get money to sustain their addiction.
- Needs
 - Proverbs 30: 8 & 9 Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.
 - Leviticus 19: 15 “Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.”
- Peer pressure
 - Someone steals because that’s what the group thinks he should do or to prove that he’s cool.
- Crime syndicates
 - Someone works for a crime syndicate and steals cars, etc. for them
 - This can start for other reasons – greed, needs, etc.
- Laziness
 - Someone is too lazy to work and finds it easier to steal.

2) The ways people steal

- House break in
- Armed robbery of businesses or banks
- Cash in transit heists
- Internet fraud
- Bribery and extortion
- Shoplifting and pick-pocketing

- Taking company property and stationary for personal use
- Pirating movies, music and software
- Kidnapping and human trafficking
 - Dignity, freedom, self-respect, rights
- Tithes
 - Malachi 3: 8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, `How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

3) The consequences of stealing

- 1 Corinthians 6: 9 – 10 “Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor **thieves** nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.”
- Besides the eternal consequence of not inheriting the kingdom of God there are temporary consequences of having a criminal record and imprisonment

4) Leaving the life of robbery

- Deal with the root issues of stealing by working in the opposite of the issue
 - Ephesians 4: 28 “He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.”
 - This deals with the issue of laziness
- Be generous
 - Psalm 112: 5 Good will come to him who is generous and lends freely, who conducts his affairs with justice.
- Restitution
 - Exodus 22: 3 “A thief must certainly make restitution, but if he has nothing, he must be sold to pay for his theft.”
 - This means that he must pay back what he has stolen.
 - Story of John Goodfellow who paid back everything he stole when he gave his life to Christ

The devil is referred to a thief who comes to steal kill and destroy (John 10: 10). When we engage in activities of stealing then we are following the footsteps of the devil. We find grace in Jesus when we turn from a life of stealing in repentance.