

Dear Friends,

This week we come to the end of the Ten Commandments as we investigate coveting. This last commandment is definitely not the least. As we come to understand the ramifications of our participation of wanting what we do not have, our heart is revealed. One of the properties of this sin is lack of contentment, not being satisfied and definitely not being thankful for what God has provided. This lack of contentment in what we have comes in our earthly desire to gain more on our own power. This self-serving attitude comes to light in the simplest of ways and yet can be so complex. Power, greed and recognition are just a few of the driving forces that cause us to look across the fence.

Paul tells in Romans 7 the struggles he contends with, just like us.

Romans 7:14-20

¹⁴ We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. ¹⁵ I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. ¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

If Paul struggles with himself in this way, even though he has great faith in his Lord, no wonder we also deal with same coveting problem. Paul on his own could not battle sin. He came to God and confessed, repented and prayed for a time of renewal and contentment. To live through God's strength, through God's provision. Look at what Paul says in Philippians:

Philippians 4:11-13

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.

Contentment with all God has blessed us with far outweighs what the world has to offer. Our worth and value in the eyes of our Heavenly Father is revealed in His grace. He draws us to Jesus so that we might choose Him over the world.

The Ten Commandments are not just a bunch of rules to limit our lives but instead add a more-than-this-world dimension to it. As I have said before, we are to think kingdom thoughts, eternal thoughts. When we concentrate on these truths revealed in the Ten Commandments, we know that there is a God who loves us so much that He has told us how to live in right relationship with Him and those around us, for our own benefit! Comparably, what the world has to offer falls way short.

God lovingly gave the Israelites and us the commandments to make us aware of how far we were from a relationship with Him, and how much we need a Savior.

Romans 7:4-6

⁴ So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God. ⁵ For when we were in the realm of the flesh, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in us, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶ But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.

The law given in love by God proved to us we were dead; the law brought to light that we could not save ourselves. The time of priests and sacrifices prepared us for the ultimate sacrifice, Jesus, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. God lives in this house, our bodies, cleansed by His Son.

This sin of coveting has started all wars, arguments and disagreements because someone was discontent with what they had and wanted more. This last commandment, if applied in our lives, will make it easier for us to keep the other commandments.

Your Brother in Christ, Archie

