

**The Tenth Commandment - "Do NOT Covet"**  
**Message Title: The Transformed Thought Life**  
**November 5, 2023**  
**Mesa Church**  
**NOTES**

**Welcome**

I have been slated with the job of interpreting and teaching the 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment and I am excited to share with you what I believe the Lord has laid on my heart. I have named this morning's message, "The Transformed Thought Life"

**But first – Quiz time!** Pastor Jordan promised a final quiz on the 10 Commandments. I am going to ask a few trivia questions before we quiz on the 10 Commandments.

**Trivia questions** – (\$5 HHC gift card for each correct answer)

1. What is the name of the mountain where God gave Moses the 10 Commandments?
2. How many times did God give Moses the 10 Commandments on stone tablets?
  - a. Moses broke the first set – he had a bit of an anger issue. The next set he had to chisel out himself. Even people who love God have issues to work out. Be encouraged!
3. What was the original language that the 10 Commandments were written in?

**Did you know that we have several people in our congregation who speak Hebrew?** That is language of the Old Testament along with portions of Daniel and Ezra written in Aramaic. Moses spoke and wrote in Hebrew – the 10 Commandments were written in Hebrew.

**Eric Oleson** – one of our elders and small group leaders here at Mesa Church. He is a student of Hebrew and an excellent Bible teacher. He is going to come up and share a little bit about the context of the 10 Commandments and then he is going to read them in Hebrew for us!

**Prayer** – God, open our hearts and minds to the hearing and teaching of your Word this morning. Prepare our hearts to hear your voice. Use me to convey truth and life to those who hear this message. Your amazing words bring health if we will simply be obedient to your voice. Speak to us this morning through the reading and interpretation of your Scripture.

I was sharing with the *Women's Rooted Group* that God often speaks to me through the reading and study of His Word. These are God's Words to us. Sometimes we think God is not speaking to us – oh yes, He is! Every time we read Scripture, He is speaking. That is why we say that we all need to be in God's Word every single day. Those disciplines of reading God's Word and prayer are essential to hearing God's voice.

**Commandment #10** (in plain English please)

“You must not covet your neighbor’s house. You must not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.” Exodus 20:17 NLT

I know some of you are looking over your neighbor’s fence and coveting their donkey! That is one nice donkey! The ancient world’s version of a Porsche 911 or a Rivian R1S.

**STORY:** I know some of you are thinking of the King James Version of the word for donkey – don’t whisper it to your neighbor or call your brother by that name like I did once. My Dad did not appreciate the humor or the fact that my argument was that God had put it in the King James Version!

### **What does it mean to “Covet”?**

**Definition of Covet** – Hebrew word “Lachmod” to desire something that belongs to someone else in such an unhealthy way that if you continue this type of thought it will lead you into breaking one of the previous five commandments – Honor your Mom and Dad, Murder, Steal, Commit Adultery, and Bear False Witness or Lie.

**STORY:** Coveted Levi jeans – got Lee jeans. STATUS – Coveted Peggy’s status. Forgotten that God had made me to be Sharon who was just as popular to HIM as Peggy. (I was mad at my parents for not getting me Levis – didn’t they know how much I needed them?) Coveting lead me to discontentment with my circumstances and as a result I couldn’t see what God had given me. What other commandment was I breaking in my heart? #5 – Honor your Mom and Dad. I had the best parents in the world – they didn’t have a lot of money but I allowed my heart to place money and status above the gift of my parents.

Cool Mom who could take my jeans and add a piece of fabric to increase the bell on my jeans and lengthen them as well. God surprises us when we trust Him. Mom taught me to sew and even though we had a limited budget I sewed most of my own clothes in Jhigh/HS – except for those Lee jeans! I wore a lot of what I wanted because of that skill.

**This is the ONLY Commandment to prohibit thought.** The rest are focused on action – one could argue thought is a part of it but in the ancient world – your thoughts were FREE. No one legislated those. Thus no one had to control their thought life or take responsibility. Only actions were legislated and here God is introducing the commandment that addresses our thought life – the source of all that is evil in word and deed.

I could walk through my checklist of commandments and say ...Yup – done it!

- No other gods – yup!
- Don’t make any idols – yup!
- Don’t misuse God’s name – yup!
- Keep the Sabbath holy – yup – I have done that one!

- Honor Mom and Dad – yup!
- Do not murder – yup!
- Do not commit adultery – yup!
- Do not steal – yup!
- Do not bear false witness or lie – yup!
- Do not covet or think about anyone else’s stuff at all – ugh, this one is tough! I just violated this one 10 mins ago!

Just when we thought that we could live by the 10 commandments perfectly – God throws one in about thought. What?! How can I ever be obedient to God’s Laws?

**Jesus said – Matthew 5:28**

“But I say, anyone who even looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart”.

**Paul said – 2 Corinthians 10:5**

“...we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ...”

We live in a society that wants you to go with your “heart”; speak your “truth” and live your “truth”. Can a healthy society exist when people are living their own truth? What if my truth is to have your car or your spouse or your donkey? Often what our culture presents as truth are people’s OPINIONS **not** TRUTH.

**TRUTH is found in God’s Word – the Bible.**

**STORY:** Masters program studying cultures around the world – found the essence of the 10 Commandments in the fabric of their tribal belief system of many remote tribal cultures. Dennis Prager says that the 10 Commandments have been the best recipe for a moral, sustainable society for thousands of years.

We must place our trust in what God says and if our culture contradicts it – go with the TRUTH found in God’s Word. Knowing God’s Word is so very important – it acts as a blueprint for this life!

**Paul also said - Romans 12:2**

“Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by **changing the way you think**. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

How do we change the way we think? If we are drawn to coveting – desiring what someone else has, then how do we CHANGE the way we think?

If we meditate on the desire for someone else's belongings, girlfriend or boyfriend, status, car, job, house, spouse, etc. Then those thoughts will lead to destructive actions.

**STORY: Rocking Lennon to sleep and my daughter can see me but I didn't realize it!**

**A thought life that goes unchecked will eventually NOT go unseen.**

**Desire, Want, Ambition – are these things wrong?**

Wanting can be destructive or it can be constructive and spur you on to work hard for those things.

Def of Ambition - a strong desire to do or to achieve something, typically requiring determination and hard work. It does not necessarily include coveting.

**STORY:** Kobe Bryant – wouldn't we all agree that Kobe was one of the best basketball players that has ever lived? He had an insane work ethic. He outworked most of the other NBA players.

**He would not be outworked**

Recalling his time playing against the Lakers, Jay Williams, knowing that Kobe Bryant was on the team, decided to train earlier than his teammates to get a head start. When he arrived at the court he found Kobe, by himself, hard at work and drenched in sweat from training. He looked like he had been there for over an hour. Jay watched him for another 30 minutes giving his all.

The Lakers won the game that night and Kobe scored 40 points alone. When the game was over, Jay asked Kobe why he was training so hard, "Because I saw you there," replied Kobe. "I saw you come in and wanted you to know that it doesn't matter how hard you work, I'm willing to work harder than you."

**2 Corinthians 9:24 (NLT)** "Don't you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win!"

**In Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)**, Paul says this: "Do nothing out of **selfish** ambition or vain conceit, but **in humility consider others better than yourselves**. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus..." Does that sound like the second commandment given by Jesus – Love others as you love yourself?

Could it be as simple as always putting God **FIRST** and Others **SECOND** is the recipe for **CHANGING** the **WAY WE THINK**?

**Matthew 22:36-40 (NLT)** Jesus replied, “‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.”

**How do we CHANGE our thought life when it is not healthy ambition but coveting – desiring what someone else has?**

1. **Recognize when you are desiring something that belongs to another person.** RESIST the temptation and confess it to the Lord. 1 John 1:9 “But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.”
2. **Cultivate a heart of gratitude and contentment.** The Apostle Paul wrote, “I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content” (Philippians 4:11, NKJV). We can practice gratitude by thanking God for the blessings He has provided and focusing on the good things in our lives.

**STORY:** The Lord showed me that during my cancer treatment – I began to focus on what I was thankful for instead of what I was losing. Near the end of my cancer treatment, I was in the hospital for one month getting high dose chemo and a stem cell replacement. They basically kill all of your blood cells and then give you the stem cells right before you die and the stem cells rejuvenate your blood stream – amazing! I was so sick and highly susceptible to germs so I couldn’t see my children. One night, Matt called and the kids are fighting in the background so he says – let me call you back and I said, “No, just lay the phone down – I want to hear them fight.” I really was sick! I had learned to be thankful for my children even when they were fighting.

3. **Prayer.** Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil” (Matthew 6:13, NKJV). When we humbly ask for God’s guidance and strength, He will help us overcome our desires for things that do not belong to us.
4. **Know God’s Word** – Ephesians 6:17 (NLT), “Put on salvation as your helmet, and take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” You are doing battle with the prince of darkness! Philippians 4:8-9, “
5. **Find a small group and confess your struggles to them.** Small Groups are designed to help us find Freedom from the things that enslave us by standing with each other in prayer and accountability. We were not meant to do life alone! We need a community of believers.

**STORY:** That cancer journey earlier – our small group walked us through that year of treatment, surgery, a new baby, long hospital stays, four other young children and a lot of emotions! We have reflected on that experience hundreds of times and I am not exaggerating. Those people

gave us courage to continue. They **encouraged** us. A community of believers is vital in supporting us during tough times, holding us accountable to God's Law and just having fun in life with. I love to think of the families that washed our clothing for 10 months! They are obviously still close friends after washing our families' underwear for that long – we are bonded for life!

### **Finally, Philippians 4:8-9, Paul encourages all of us...**

“And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. <sup>9</sup>Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me— everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.”

Let's follow Paul's advice to CHANGE our thoughts by fixing them on what is true and honorable and right. Let's recite the 10 Commandments together as we close our series “Written in Stone.”

### **RECITE THE 10 COMMANDMENTS together**

#### **PRAYER**

#### RESOURCES

Don Carson, *For the Love of God* <https://www.thespiritlife.net/facets/spirit/89-corporate/corporate-publications/4020-for-the-love-of-god-don-carson-july-18>

Dennis Prager *Ten Commandments: What you should know.* <https://www.prageru.com/video/the-ten-commandments-what-you-should-know?playlist=the-ten-commandments>

Dennis Prager *The Tenth Commandment* <https://www.prageru.com/video/do-not-covet?playlist=the-ten-commandments>

Exodus 20:17, *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers & Pulpit Commentary* <https://biblehub.com/exodus/20-17.htm#commentary>

Paul Gwamanda, Kobe Bryant and his Insane Work Ethic <https://paul-gwamanda.medium.com/kobe-bryant-and-his-insane-work-ethic-7c3e92094bc6#:~:text=%E2%80%9C%20I%20saw%20you%20come%20in,to%20work%20harder%20than%20you.%E2%80%9D&text=Bryant%20would%20show%20up%20for,on%20Done%20to%20100%20points>

PursueGod Kids, *The Ten Commandments* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OaClq4q9Xuc>

How to pronounce "Covetousness" [https://www.google.com/search?q=how+do+you+pronounce+covetousness&oq=how+do+you+pro&gs\\_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUqBggAEEUYOzIGCAAQRrg7MgYIARBFgDkyBwgCEAAyGAQyDQgDEAAygwEYsQMYigUyBwgEEAAyGAQyBwgFEAAyGAQyBwgGEAAyGAQyBwgHEAAyGAQyBwgIEAAyGAQyBwgJEAAYgATSAQg2OTU2ajBqN6gCALACAA&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:f222aff7,vid:\\_A9TWaQ9UAw,st:0](https://www.google.com/search?q=how+do+you+pronounce+covetousness&oq=how+do+you+pro&gs_lcrp=EgZjaHJvbWUqBggAEEUYOzIGCAAQRrg7MgYIARBFgDkyBwgCEAAyGAQyDQgDEAAygwEYsQMYigUyBwgEEAAyGAQyBwgFEAAyGAQyBwgGEAAyGAQyBwgHEAAyGAQyBwgIEAAyGAQyBwgJEAAYgATSAQg2OTU2ajBqN6gCALACAA&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#fpstate=ive&vld=cid:f222aff7,vid:_A9TWaQ9UAw,st:0)