

Title: *Do Not Steal*

Scripture: *Exodus 20:15 – “You shall not steal.”*

Main Idea:

God doesn't just prohibit theft—He calls us to be people of contentment, purpose, and generosity so that both we and our neighbors may live in peace and provision.

1. What God Prohibits

- God affirms our ability to own and steward property. Theft is taking anything—by force, deception, or manipulation—without consent.
 - This includes dishonest systems, unfair practices, and fraudulent schemes.
 - *Leviticus 19:35–36* expands this command to include accurate measures and honest dealings.
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2. Why Do People Steal?

- **Survival** – Some steal out of desperation. We'll discuss God's solution to this later.
 - **Entitlement** – “They owe me.” This mindset justifies theft in the name of fairness.
 - **Laziness** – Some steal because it's easier than working. But Scripture calls us to work with our hands and be generous. (*Ephesians 4:28*)
 - **Greed** – A heart that always wants more will never be satisfied. (*Ecclesiastes 5:10*)
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3. Virtues That Push Us in the Right Direction

- **Contentment** – *Luke 12:15*: Life isn't found in the abundance of possessions. A grateful heart keeps entitlement and greed in check.
 - **Kingdom Purpose** – Focusing on God's work gives us purpose and counters laziness. There is always something to do in God's kingdom.
 - **Radical Generosity** – You can't be greedy and generous at the same time. When you view yourself as a steward and not an owner, you live open-handedly. (*Matthew 6:19–21*)
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Reflection:

We must be careful—entitlement, laziness, and greed often start small, but they can grow and lead us into sin. Let's ask God to shape our hearts toward contentment, mission, and generosity.

God not only calls us not to steal, but also to live in such a way that others won't have to steal.

Leviticus 19:9–11 reminds us to leave margin in our lives and resources for those in need. That's what living out the heart of the 8th commandment looks like.

Devotion 1: When Want Becomes a Justification

Scripture: *“You shall not steal.” – Exodus 20:15 “Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless.” – Ecclesiastes 5:10*

Reflection: We often think of stealing as a clear-cut, criminal act. But theft can begin with something much quieter: entitlement. When we convince ourselves that “they owe me,” or “I deserve this,” we begin walking down a dangerous path. The heart behind entitlement mixes pride, selfishness, and a loss of gratitude. And in the right (or wrong) moment, those ingredients can lead us to justify actions we once would’ve called sin. Scripture doesn’t just confront our hands, it confronts our motives.

Challenge: Ask yourself today: *Do I carry a sense of entitlement anywhere in my life?* Work? Marriage? Finances? Confess it to the Lord and ask Him to grow a heart of thankfulness and humility in its place.

Devotion 2: A Heart that Works and Shares

Scripture: *“Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.” – Ephesians 4:28*

Reflection: The Apostle Paul doesn’t just say “don’t steal”, he gives a vision of what to do instead. Work. Not for selfish gain, but so that we can become contributors in the kingdom of God. Laziness isn’t just a productivity issue, it’s a spiritual one. When we embrace the value of honest work, we reflect God’s character and create margin to bless others. In contrast, theft is often the fruit of short-term thinking and self-focus. Paul calls believers to step out of that and into meaningful, generous living.

Challenge: What does “doing something useful with your hands” look like in your season? Whether in your job, your home, or your church, work with purpose and look for someone you can bless with what God has given you.

Devotion 3: When Generosity Becomes Protection

Scripture: *“When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges... Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the Lord your God. Do not steal.” – Leviticus 19:9–11*

“Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” – Matthew 6:21

Reflection: It’s no accident that God ties generosity and the command not to steal in the same breath. He isn’t just trying to prevent crime, He’s forming a people who think of others, who live open-handedly, and who leave space in their lives for those in need. Generosity becomes a safeguard not only against greed but against allowing others to fall through the cracks. When we live with a Kingdom mindset—stewarding our resources rather than clutching them—we become part of God’s answer to poverty, need, and isolation.

Challenge: Is there someone in your life who is struggling? Don’t wait for a program. You be the margin. Ask God how you can live with open hands this week. Is there a need you can meet?