

RULES TO LIVE BY!



11. Do Not Covet

Introduction

We have finally come to the last commandment! Do you know what it is? Although this is the tenth command, it is no less important than the others.

Scripture Reading: **Deuteronomy 5:21**

- 1 What does it mean to covet?

(It means to 'wish for' or 'to desire what belongs to another'.)

- 2 It was covetousness that caused the Children of Israel to be defeated when they attacked the City of Ai, not long after they had entered the Promised Land. Read Achan's confession in Joshua 7:19-23. What steps had led to this sin, and what can we learn from this?

(Achan made the mistake of looking at the things that he found in the rubble of the city of Jericho, instead of quickly destroying them as God had said. As he looked his heart began to desire them for himself, and so he was tempted to keep them. We need to be careful what we allow our eyes to focus on!)

- 3 What did covetousness lure people to do in the time of Micah? How did God respond to this? Read Micah 2:1-3

(Covetousness lured the people into taking what belonged to others and defrauding them of their inheritance.)

- 4 What other sinful actions stem from covetousness or greed in the following verses? Leviticus 25:14, 17, Proverbs 22:16, James 4:2

(It can lead to: people taking advantage of others, people oppressing others or giving gifts to the wealthy to gain their favor, and to quarreling, fighting and even murder.)

- 5 Sadly we see the result of covetousness all around us. How has covetousness affected our society today?

Covetousness comes from our heart. Although we may not have oppressed or taken advantage of others, we may still have a struggle with covetousness in our hearts. One day when Jesus was asked about an inheritance, Jesus went on to speak to the crowd about greed. Read Luke 12:13-21

- 6 Jesus warned about all kinds of greed in Luke 12:15. What different kinds of greed are there?

- 7 What lessons can we learn from this story, and why does Jesus call the rich man foolish?

(There are many possible answers to this question:

- *The rich man was foolish because he had not given time and thought to prepare for the next life.*
- *The things the rich man had gathered in this life could not be taken to the next!*
- *He was only thinking of his own enjoyment, but he had missed the true meaning of life.*

- ⑥ How can we guard ourselves against greed? Look at the following verses: Psalm 119:36-37, Colossians 3:5, James 4:2-3, Matthew 6:33

Conclusion

We see the result of man's greed and covetousness all around us. Let's guard our hearts against this sin, whether it's covetousness of someone else's possessions or money, position or fame, or even their abilities and talents. The answer to covetousness is contentment. Let's read 1Timothy 6:6-9, 11 together.

(Spend a few moments in silent prayer so members can allow the Holy Spirit to examine their hearts. Then ask someone to close in prayer.)