

Series: Striving Together as a Family

# THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

EXODUS 20:15

Text: Exodus 20:15

## ***Exodus 20:15***

<sup>15</sup> *Thou shalt not steal.*

Introduction:

A Sunday School teacher was teaching her class about the difference between right and wrong. "All right children, let's take another example," she said. "If I were to get into a man's pocket and take his wallet and remove all his money, what would I be?" Little Johnny's hand went up. "I know, I know," he said. "All right Johnny," the teacher said, "What would I be?" With a confident smile Johnny says, "You'd be his wife."

It's interesting that just this past week there were and continues to be demonstrations in St. Louis over a man who was shot and killed by a police officer.

Though the news has pretty much silent regarding some of the facts the incident all started with a robbery.

That act cost him his life.

Today we will consider three thoughts regarding stealing.

Note:

## **1. STEALING IS A VIOLATION OF THE LAW**

Billions of dollars are lost every year in this country over the theft of goods and services. One estimate says that 1 out of every 52 shoppers carries something out of the supermarket for which they haven't paid. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, 4 million people are caught shoplifting every year. But for every one caught, 35 others get away with it. This means that there are over 140 million incidents of shoplifting every year in America!

What's shocking is that only 10% of all shoplifters come from low incomes. 70% are middle class and 20% are classified as wealthy.

America is a country of thieves. One new hotel reported that in their first ten months of operation they lost 38,000 spoons, 18,000 towels, 355 silver coffee pots, 1500 finger bowls and 100 Bibles.

Regardless of the reason, stealing is wrong! God declares it to be a sin.

Note:

## A. The Correct means of Getting Gain

God has authorized three primary methods by which people can legitimately increase their possessions.

- By the Recompense For Work

### **Luke 10:7**

*<sup>7</sup> And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the labourer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.*

### **2 Thessalonians 3:10**

*<sup>10</sup> For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.*

### **Proverbs 13:4**

*<sup>4</sup> The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.*

### **Proverbs 20:4**

*<sup>4</sup> The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing.*

Not only do we get gain By the Recompense for Work” but also:

- By the Reception of a Gift

All of us receive gifts from family and friends. This is as it should be. I'm thankful that the Government is beginning to remove estate taxes from gifts that we leave behind. The early church was characterized by giving to meet needs of the less fortunate.

### **Acts 2:44-47**

<sup>44</sup> *And all that believed were together, and had all things common;* <sup>45</sup> **And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.** <sup>46</sup> *And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,* <sup>47</sup> *Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*

Not only do we get gain “By the Recompense for Work,” and “The Reception of a Gift” but also:

- As a Response to Prayer

### **Matthew 21:22**

<sup>22</sup> *And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.*

### **John 14:14**

<sup>14</sup> *If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.*

Give Illustrations of Answered Prayers

Note not only is “Stealing Is a Violation of the Law” but also:

## **2. STEALING IS A VIOLATION OF LOYALTY**

### **A. As an Employee**

USA Today reported that 48% of all American workers took something from an employer last year.

Illustration:

A preacher by the name of F.E. Marsh preached on this subject. A young man came to see him and said,

“Pastor, you have put me into a bad fix.

I’ve stolen from my employer, and I’m ashamed to tell him about it. You see, I’m a boat builder and the man I work for is lost. I have talked with him about Christ, but he only laughs at me.

In my work, expensive copper nails are used because they won’t rust in water. I’ve been taking some of them for a boat I’m building in my backyard.

I’m afraid if I tell my boss what I’ve done and offer to pay for them, he’ll think I’m a hypocrite, and I’ll never

be able to reach him for Christ.” When the preacher saw him again the man was excited. He said. “Pastor,

‘I’ve settled that matter and I’m so relieved.” What happened?” asked the preacher. “Oh, he looked at me intently and said, ‘George, I’ve always thought you were a hypocrite, but now I’m not so sure. Maybe there’s something to your Christianity after all.

Any religion that makes a man admit he’s been stealing must be worth having.”

If we are being paid to work then we should be working, not doing things not pertaining to work.

## B. As an Employer

### ***Colossians 4:1***

*<sup>1</sup> Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.*

If you are under paying, overworking and mistreating your employees you are stealing.

## C. In our Ethics

Borrowing something and not bringing it back (tools, books).

Honoring our debts

Illustration:

A man who had cheated the IRS out of hundreds of dollars developed a guilty conscience. He wrote a check for \$500 dollars and enclosed a note that said, "I underpaid my taxes last year and I'm feeling guilty. Please accept the enclosed payment I owe you. And, if I don't feel any better after this, I'll send you the rest that I owe you."

Note not only is "Stealing Is a Violation of the Law and Loyalty" but also:

### **3. STEALING IS A VIOLATION OF LOVE**

The love of God should restrain us from stealing and constrain us to give.

How is that we violate God's love?

#### **A. Stealing of the Tithe**

##### ***Malachi 3:8-10***

<sup>8</sup> Will a man **rob God**? Yet ye have **robbed me**. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. <sup>9</sup> Ye are cursed with a curse: **for ye have robbed me**, even this whole nation. <sup>10</sup> Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in

*mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.*

Not only do we violate God's love in Stealing His Tithe but also:

### B. Stealing of Time

How much time do you give God who gave Jesus for you?

Illustration:

Someone has illustrated time in this way. Suppose every day there was deposited in your bank account in the amount of \$86,400.

There is this catch to it, what you don't use during the day, you lose. There is no forwarding balance carried to the next day. Each day you begin with \$86,400. What would you do with it? Go on a spending spree every day?

We are given 86,400 seconds each day. Once the day is complete, it's history. You can't save it, it's forever gone.



It's foolish to squander and waste \$86,400, and it is much more foolish to squander and waste 86,400 seconds. Not everyone would agree.

Many people would say, money is more important than time. Many would say wasting money is foolish, but wasting time doesn't matter.

How about if you were given just a few months to live?

What amount of money would a person give to have more time to live?

***Psalm 90:12***

*<sup>12</sup> So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

Because our life is as a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away we need to:

- Recognize the Time

***Psalm 90:10***

*<sup>10</sup> The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.*

- Redeem the Time

### ***Ephesians 5:15-17***

*<sup>15</sup> See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, <sup>16</sup> Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

Recognizing the time should cause us to wisely redeem the time.

That is accomplished by understanding and doing God Will

- Rejoice Through Time

### ***Psalms 90:14***

*<sup>14</sup> O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.*

By redeeming the time wisely we will be able to rejoice throughout our life.

Not only do we violate God's love in "Stealing His Tithe" and "Time" but also:

#### C. Stealing of Titles

Jesus is Lord and has been given a name above every name.

We should follow His example when He prayed to God, “Not my will but Thy will be done.” By the way we live we are saying to God, Not Thy will but my will be done.”

Not only do we violate God’s love in “Stealing His Tithe, Time, and Title” but also:

#### D. Stealing of Talents

God gives each Christian certain spiritual gifts.

These are to be used in the body of Christ, the church.

#### ***Ephesians 4:11-16***

<sup>11</sup> *And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;*

<sup>12</sup> *For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: <sup>13</sup> Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the*

*measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: <sup>14</sup> That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro,*

*and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love,*

*may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: <sup>16</sup> From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the*

*measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

Are you using the gifts he gave you? If not you are stealing from God.

Close:

Illustration:

Danny Sampson robbed a bank in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. He used a hand-me-down Colt 45 and stole \$6000. When the Royal Canadian Mounted Police caught him and confiscated the gun they sent the gun to the lab.

The laboratory recognized the gun as a collector's item. It was worth over \$100,000. Danny didn't have to rob a bank; he was wealthy and didn't know it.

Stealing for Christians is like that. We have all the blessings of God but aren't appropriating them.

Instead we stoop to the world's level and steal, cheat and bargain away our integrity.

The Bible says:

***Ephesians 4:28***

<sup>28</sup> *Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him*

*labour, working with his hands the thing which is good,  
that he may have to give to him that needeth.*

***Ephesians 4:30***

<sup>30</sup> *And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

As we relate this to the family – we need to be honest as parents, set a good example, and teach our children to do the same.

There is nothing wrong in giving work to you children and seeing to it that they complete it correctly.