

Pentecost Day – The Ten Commandments – Part 6

Exodus 20

15 Thou shalt not steal.

This Eighth Commandment, like all the others, has both a physical and a spiritual aspect to it. And it is because of the spiritual that the physical sin is manifested. So, in order to refrain from doing the sin physically, we must clean our heart of the spiritual sin that causes the physical manifestation of the sin. That's why Rom 7:14 says *the law is spiritual*. It's because, the only way to truly keep God's laws, is to obey them *from the heart*. So, people who study God's Word thinking it only applies to our actions are really missing the entire point. Jesus told us that God wants us to love Him with *all our heart, and all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength* (Mark 12:30) and the only way we can do this is to sincerely strive to obey His Laws *from the heart*, repent when we fall short and learn how to do better. This is essentially what 'walking in the Spirit' is about (Gal 5). Gal 5:18 tells us that, *if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law*. This doesn't mean we don't have to obey God's law but rather, when we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us in our daily life (and help us clean and keep our mind and heart clean) then we won't break God's Laws physically. *Only those who allow their carnal mind to control them (who walk in the flesh) break God's physical laws*. Now, we will fall short from time to time because we are in a flesh body (Rom 7 speaks of this), but those who try sincerely to obey God's Law *from their heart* will try hard (and honestly and sincerely) to cut the sin off at the roots (cutting the evil thought and desires out of their mind before they conceive in their heart – James 1:13-15) so it does not manifest into physical sin. This is why Paul tells us in 2 Cor 10:5 that we should strive to keep *every thought* in obedience with God's Laws. Consider what thoughts you have. Do you ever fantasize about doing something that breaks God's Law? Then you are indeed sinning.

Stealing has, at its roots, a desire to have something that is someone else's and thus to deprive someone of something. So, essentially, covetousness is at the roots of theft. And within this we see how intertwined God's Ten Commandments are for 'thou shalt not covet' is the Tenth Commandment. And, like many sins, lust is a driving factor. 1 John 2:17 tells us that *all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world* and we know that the world is of Satan (John 16:11, Eph 2:2). So, lust and pride are two driving factors for most, if not all, sin. But what we must realize that **there are many forms of theft**. Theft is not confined to the physical realm: there's also identity theft, information thief, good name theft, truth theft, theft of property, theft of opportunity and even theft of life (murder). We'll look at many of these different aspects of theft as we analyze this commandment but, to begin with, what does it mean to steal? We can learn a lot from the Hebrew word...

'Steal' in the Hebrew is #1589, a primitive root meaning: **to thief** (literally or figuratively); by implication, **to deceive**. This definition is revealing. And it has also been translated in the KJV as

- carry away, indeed, secretly bring, steal (away), get by stealth. The fact that to steal can figuratively mean *to deceive* tells us a lot about the spiritual nature of theft. But we will first look at the physical manifestation of this commandment so we will be better prepared to understand the spiritual aspect of this commandment. Let's start by noting that God's Word declares thieves will not be inheriting the Kingdom of God. In other words, there won't be any thieves in the government of Jesus Christ...

9 Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

1 Cor 6:9-11

People who do anything on the list above simply won't be in Jesus' government in the Millennium. And, if they don't change their heart during the Millennium, then they will die the second death, which is spiritual (Rev 20). But, because God doesn't want any of His children to have to die (2 Pt 3:9), He is giving us opportunities to repent. That's why there will be 1000 years of teaching even after Jesus Christ returns. And, during that time, there will be no Satanic influence. So, hopefully, most of God's children will be saved. People will be spiritually disciplined by the servants of Jesus Christ so they hopefully learn how to discipline their heart to change it from evil to good.

Now, *most* people instinctively know that stealing is bad, at least on the most basic level. After all, no one likes being stolen from and that's a good indicator they know it's wrong. But many still steal from others. What does our Heavenly Father have to say about stealing and how should it be punished?

1 If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

2 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.

3 If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.

4 If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.

Ex 22:1-4

For theft, restitution is the punishment. And, God even allows them to be killed if they are found in the process of stealing (this in of itself is a great deterrent). However, a person does not have a right to go out looking for the thief and to kill him because justice is easily flawed when the

perpetrator is not caught in the act. That's why we have police who are supposed to do investigations to find the thief; so hopefully no innocent people are not hurt. And if the thief is found, they had to restore from two to five times that which he stole, depending on what it was and if he still had the goods safely in his possession. This is a very good deterrent for it makes stealing very unprofitable and benefits the victim. Moreover, if they could not pay restitution *and* the original cost of the item(s) stolen, they were required (by law) to be sold into slavery for their theft. This is one case where a slave could not run away; they either had to work to pay back their theft or they would be put to death because running away proves they are an incorrigible criminal. Of course, this is way different than we do things today. Today we stick people in jail for their theft and many times restitution is not made. *The citizens are thus forced to pay for the crimes of criminals*, which is contrary to God's Law. Society should not be forced to support criminals. The laws of a nation should either get rid of incorrigible criminals or cause them to change their ways, which is what restoration does. This is not mean. The criminal decided their course of life when they chose to deprive someone else of their property. *They need to be punished for harming other people*. Rewarding criminals and punishing the innocent is EVIL. It's not God's Way.

God's Law does not have many punishments that require people to be imprisoned. If we really wanted to clear our prisons up of criminals, we'd simply obey God's Laws. For, in His Law, most of the time the judgment is either to make restitution (as in the case of theft) or capital punishment (death by the government). Regarding lower crimes such as disturbing the peace and so forth, corporal punishment by public whipping was required but a maximum of 39 stripes could be given (Isa 53:5, 1 Pt 2:24). By these three punishments, nearly all crimes can be quickly taken care of. And so, with theft, the thief either had to pay restitution or be sold into forced slavery if he could not pay. The Proverbs gives us some helpful insight into this...

*30 Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry;
31 But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house.*
Prov 6:30-31

Even if a man is hungry, theft is still not approved. Why? Because a man who is truly pleasing God won't go hungry and certainly won't steal. The Psalms tells us...

*1 Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.
2 The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.
3 His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.
4 He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered: the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.
5 **He hath given meat unto them that fear him:** he will ever be mindful of his covenant.*
Ps 111:1-5

What is God's Covenant? We're reading it right now! God's Covenant was outlined in the last chapter when God said...

3 And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

*5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and **keep my covenant**, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:*

6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Ex 19:3-6

Remember, Israel agreed to this and so do all who accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior because they also accept Jesus Christ as their King, which means they agree to obey His Laws. And part of God's promise is to keep Israel (Christians) well fed IF they obey His Covenant, which are the Laws we are studying in this chapter and will be in the next few chapters. And, as Lev 26 and Deut 28 promise, being hungry is one of God's promised cursings for disobeying His Covenant (Laws). But, this was also promised in the great 'Song of Moses' in Deuteronomy 32, which is God's prophesy of what would happen to Israel. He nicknamed Israel 'Jeshurun' because it means to be 'supremely happy', and when Israel gets really blessed they get really happy and (sadly) they usually forget God to brought the blessings to them in the first place. In that 'song' God (YHVH) declared...

*15 But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; **then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation.***

16 They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger.

17 They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not.

18 Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee.

19 And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters.

20 And he said, I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very froward generation, children in whom is no faith.

21 They have moved me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked me to anger with their vanities: and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation.

22 For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains.

23 I will heap mischiefs upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them.

24 ***They shall be burnt with hunger***, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust.
25 The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs.
26 I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men:
Deut 32:15-26

Extreme hunger (starvation) is promised to those who disobey God. Even insomuch that, in Deut 28:49-58, God promises that people could resort to cannibalism (even eating their own children) because they would be so hungry. So, theft for being hungry is no excuse to steal. If you are pleasing to God (doing what's right) you won't go hungry. You might not have all you want but you won't go hungry. Even when falling on hard times (as happens to everyone on occasion), God will still help you legally require food. Someone will have compassion on you because the Holy Spirit will lead them to. This is the essence of what James 2:14-16 and Mth 25:31-46) speak of. We are duty bound (to God) to feed people both physically and spiritually. However, it takes great discernment with both for we are not to feed a sluggard (Prov 13:4, 20:4) nor cast our pearls before swine (Mth 7:6). However, God's promising to feed you when you obey Him does *not* mean He promises to fulfill *your lusts*. God promises you won't go hungry. And you should not expect a hand out spiritually or physically (unless you are truly handicapped in some way or are too old to work for a living). All too often Christians go to Church wanting their Pastor to spoon feed them instead of studying the Word of God themselves (2 Tim 2:15). A good Pastor will indeed feed the flock but each individual needs to study God's Word on their own and work to understand it themselves. 1/2 hour of teaching every Sunday (or Saturday) is not enough spiritual food to keep us nourished. Furthermore, a Pastor cannot provide the intimate relationship with God for you. That's only something that can happen between God Himself and you as an individual. When you take in His Word daily in sincerity, searching for truth, He will send His Holy Spirit to help you understand it. As James 4:8 says, *draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you*. God's Word tells us we have no right to eat if we don't work and this applies spiritually as much as it does physically...

10 *For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that **if any would not work, neither should he eat.***
11 *For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.*
12 *Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, **that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.***
2 Thess 3:10-12

We must all be willing to work for our food (spiritual and physical). Now, not all of us have the same gifts or responsibilities but, as Christians, getting material possessions in this life (including food) *should not be the object of life for us*. To reiterate: God will take care of us IF

we strive to obey Him from the heart but He never promises to fulfill our every desire. Providing for us is a promise from God that's written many places. Consider just a few Scriptures concerning this important promise...

*23 The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way.
24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.
25 I have been young, and now am old; yet **have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread.**
26 He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed.*
Ps 37:23-26

*1 A Psalm of David.
Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.
2 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:
3 Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;
4 Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;
5 **Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.***
Ps 103:1-5

*14 The LORD upholdeth all that fall, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down.
15 The eyes of all wait upon thee; and **thou givest them their meat in due season.**
16 **Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.***
Ps 145:14-16

God promises to take care of those who serve Him and (as with all His promises) we can count on Him to fulfil it. But, what should we do if we're convicted in our conscience about having stolen (even if you have not gotten in trouble with the government for it)?

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.
Eph 4:28

First off, just *stop* stealing! Secondly, work hard, *not for your own gain*, but so you'll have enough to give to others that need help. And, if possible, restore that which you stole plus restitution (Lk 9:8-10). As we'll see later in this chapter, this applies spiritually just as much as physically. But the physical application cannot be overlooked. Furthermore, the Proverbs also tells us...

Labour not to be rich: cease from thine own wisdom.
Prov 23:4

This is important because the world tells us we should work our entire lives for physical things. After all, you want to have a good retirement, don't you? You want to be able to live the good life of eating, drinking, partying, traveling the world (and so forth) in your retirement, right? This is the world's way of thinking. It's not what God wants for us. He didn't send us to this flesh body to party or fulfill our lusts. Jesus told us...

Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

John 6:27

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.

Matt 6:24-34

The words 'take no thought' are a figure of speech which means *don't worry about it*. It's not that we don't have to work for a living and go grocery shopping (or grow a garden). But we shouldn't worry about it. If we can't eat all the things our flesh lusts for, that's ok. As Christians, *our life should not be about serving our carnal lusts*. We shouldn't be worried about what we'll wear or what we'll eat. To reiterate: it's ok to think those things but not to the point of worrying about them or putting anything before God. God knows what we need and He'll provide those things so long as we do our best to serve Him and do what's right in all aspects of life. **Keep Him first and He'll provide for you. It is His promise.** Jesus also gives us another good parable about this in Luke 12:15-21. Again, the point is, being hungry is no excuse for theft. None. A thief must be

punished or else there will be more and more and more theft until you have anarchy ruling (kind of like we're seeing in many large cities around America nowadays, huh?). Moreover, theft is not contained to just personal belongings...

And he that stealeth a man, and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death.

Ex 21:16

If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; and thou shalt put evil away from among you.

Deut 24:7

Kidnapping is stealing humans. And, because the intent is NEVER good, death is the penalty. This means that there is always an evil reason people kidnap others. As with all carnal theft, kidnappers *steal to get money* and the thief does not care if the person they kidnap dies or not. And, while there are some lone kidnappers, there's also a terrible network of them, which we now call 'human trafficking' but it's been around a long time and known by many names. The book of Joel speaks of it in this manner...

*And they have cast lots for my people; and have **given a boy for an harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink.***

Joel 3:3

Human trafficking has been around a long time and the only way to stop this abomination is to execute (capital punishment) the people who are involved in doing it. But, the point to remember concerning our study on the Eighth Commandment is that, *stealing people is theft*. And, so is harvesting organs (which goes on today too) and this includes harvesting organs from aborted (murdered) babies. So, it's not just personal belongings that are being stolen, *people's bodies are being stolen too*. God views these things as abominations and our government is *supposed to be* punishing these people by death for such vile things... the government is **not** supposed to be partaking in it!

Now, the 19th chapter of Leviticus provides us additional insight into the depth and breadth of this Eighth Commandment...

9 And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not wholly reap the corners of thy field, neither shalt thou gather the gleanings of thy harvest.

10 And thou shalt not glean thy vineyard, neither shalt thou gather every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt leave them for the poor and stranger: I am the LORD your God.

*11 **Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another.***

12 And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD.

13 Thou shalt not defraud thy neighbour, neither rob him: the wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.

14 Thou shalt not curse the deaf, nor put a stumblingblock before the blind, but shalt fear thy God: I am the LORD.

15 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: **thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.**

16 **Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people:** neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the LORD.

17 **Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart:** thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.

18 Thou shalt **not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people,** but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.

Lev 19:9-18

This chapter in Leviticus is priceless. It helps us see how interconnected God's Laws are and the depth and breadth of it (Rom 11:33). God's Word helps us learn of the riches of His wisdom and this Levitical 19 is one such place where we learn from. We see that God required farmers not to be greedy. They were not to glean the corners of their field so poor people could go glean and get food. Thus, we see that not doing this was a form of theft because it stole the ability for people who were poor to survive. However, this was not a handout. Gleaning was *really hard work* because people usually had to pick up the grain *piece by piece*. It takes a lot of grain just to make one loaf of bread. But, instead of the government just giving people money, God's system requires people to work for a living. And requiring farmers to leave some grain in the field (or vineyard) so people who were poor had a way to get what they needed was part of God's divine system to care for the poor and needy. But again, *they had to work for it*. With the exception of handicap people (elderly included), God expects us all to work to care for ourselves and others. Why? Because giving people handouts actually harms them. It steals their integrity and self-worth. God's way allows people to retain their integrity and self-worth by making them work to provide for themselves and their families. This is God's Way and *it leads to life, not death*.

We also see from Leviticus 19 that God connects dealing falsely and lying to one another to theft. That's because the intent with lying or dealing falsely is to deceive. So, you either steal physically and/or spiritually through deception. He further goes on to tell us not to defraud and connects that to not adequately compensating people for their wages. In other words, *the workman is worthy of his hire* (Deut 25:4, 1 Tim 5:18, 1 Cor 9:10). However, it is also theft not to do the required work when you are hired (Eph 6:5-9). *Both the employee and the employer have a duty not to steal from one another* and feeling like you are getting ripped off is no excuse as not to hold up your end of the agreement. In the case of the employer, you have the right to fire that employee if they are not worth what you are paying them. And, in the case of the employee, you have the right to find another job if you feel you are not being adequately compensated for the job. But do not neglect to do your job just because you feel you are not getting paid enough. You accepted the job and the payment to begin with, remember? And,

employers should remember not to be greedy and take advantage of people who are willing to help out in other areas than they originally agreed on without compensating them for their efforts to go beyond what they originally agreed on. Take good care of the good employees and they'll continue to take care of you. If you don't, you'll lose the good ones and be left with only the poor-quality employees.

Lev 19:15 also tells us (vs 15) that we can steal from others when not judging properly. Having 'respect' for people in judgment means you don't judge in accordance to God's Word. This happens when you allow someone to bribe you, threaten you, or coerce you in some way so that your judgment is perverted and you therefore don't obey God's law. This can happen not only in the judicial system, but all aspects of life: with the police, with school teachers, in the medical community (how many Dr's prescribe patients based on getting kickbacks from the pharmaceutical industry instead of what medicines they truly need?), at work and even at home with one's children. ***Judgment is not something that happens only in a court of law. We all have to use discretion and 'good judgment' every day of our life. To judge is simply to make a decision and we all have to make decisions every day of our life.*** When Jesus told us not to judge others (Mth 7), He was simply saying that we should not be forming opinions about other people (or expressing those views to others) based on prejudice; we must clean our own heart out before we can be rid of prejudice and learn to *judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment* (John 7:24). Without cleaning our own heart out *first* our judgment (discernment) ***will be wrong***. And consequently, that's how gossip and slander is formed, which is very damaging because it's another form of theft.

This then takes us into the next way we can steal from others, which is through the form of gossip, which is slander. Gossip is not called gossip when it's positive information someone is passing to another. It's always negative and thus, *it robs people of their good name*. God said (in vs 16) not to *go up and down as a talebearer among thy people* because it robs people of their good name and self-worth but also, this is what leads to some sort of unjust judgment happening. Whether they lose their job or simply lose respect in the eyes of others, they are harmed. But gossip can also lead to the murder of an innocent person, as verse 16 points out. This is why the Ninth Commandment is '*thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor*'. Again, we see how interconnected God's Law is. This is why it's impossible to only break just one of God's Laws. If you are breaking one, you're breaking others as well. As James puts it...

8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

9 But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors.

10 For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.

James 2:8-10

Having 'respect to (for) persons' is committing sin because you do not treat all people according to God's Word – and treating all people (even your carnal mind) according to God's Word is

what righteousness is. That's also what true love is (Rom 13:10). But when we gossip to others, *we are stealing truth from them* as well as from the individual[s] we are gossiping about. This takes us right into the spiritual aspect of this law. While people certainly *do not* have a right to all our personal information, it's not right to lie to them because *you're stealing truth*. Again, this does not mean you have to answer every question you are asked. People don't have a right to get an answer from us. Jesus certainly didn't answer all the time. Not even when the religious hypocrites asked where He got the authority to kick out their crooked money changers from the Temple, which was His Father's House (Mk 11:27-33) – so, neither do you have to answer every question someone asks. Use discernment always. Ask for guidance from the Holy Spirit to help you remember what the Scripture says and how you should respond. Remember this always, for people often ask prying questions for evil purposes. As the Proverbs tells us...

He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction.

Prov 13:3

In all labour there is profit: but the talk of the lips tendeth only to penury.

Prov 14:23

18 He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool.

19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise.

Prov 10:18-19

He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips.

Prov 20:19

Jesus also warned...

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.

*36 But I say unto you, That **every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.***

*37 For **by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.***

Matt 12:35-37

The word 'idle' in verse 36 is #692 and means: *inactive*, i.e. *unemployed*; (by implication) *lazy*, *useless*. Any useless word we speak we'll have to give account for (that's why repentance through the blood of Jesus Christ is such a blessing). And what is the impetus for our words?

44 For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes.

*45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for **of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.***

Luke 6:44-45

The word ‘abundance’ is #4051 and means: *a surplus, or superabundance*. This means people speak most about what they think and desire the most (Mth 15:13-20, Mk 7:20-23). This is a very good discerning tool. For example: if your Pastor speaks mostly about tithing... then you know God’s Word is *not* what’s on his mind or in his heart! But this applies to everyone. We *all* speak about what’s in our heart and that’s why we must clean our heart and put God’s Word inside our heart - *so we can obey God from the heart*. In turn, our words (and actions) will reflect the wisdom God’s Word offers...

20 The tongue of the just is as choice silver: the heart of the wicked is little worth.

21 The lips of the righteous feed many: but fools die for want of wisdom.

Prov 10:18-21

In the mouth of the foolish is a rod of pride: but the lips of the wise shall preserve them.

Prov 14:3

The lips of the wise disperse knowledge: but the heart of the foolish doeth not so.

Prov 15:7

The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips.

Prov 16:23

There is gold, and a multitude of rubies: but the lips of knowledge are a precious jewel.

Prov 20:15

In short, our words should be used for good, not for evil and the only way we can make sure that happens is to clean our heart of evil thoughts and desires. Because, if we don’t clean our heart, our sin will manifest through our words and actions. And, even though *we won’t see it, others do*. And this is what motivates people to steal *spiritually*. People can steal someone’s good name through gossip but truth is also stolen when a lie is told (or even a distortion of the truth). God is quite blunt about what He wants from us...

*16 These are the things that ye shall do: **Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour;** execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:*

*17 And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for **all these are things that I hate**, saith the LORD.*

Zech 8:16-17

Did you realize God *hates*? Yes, **God hates evil** and the things outlined above are evil. He also outlines this quite bluntly in the Proverbs...

*16 These six things **doth the LORD hate**: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:
17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,
18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,
19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*
Prov 6:16-19

An abomination means it's something that God *really* hates. That's why He calls homosexuality an abomination: He *really* hates it (Lev 18:22, 20:13). Yet, what He hates even more than physical abominations is *when His Words are stolen*. Why? Because, His Word[s] IS LIFE (John 6:63, 13:50, 17:3, Rom 8:6,10). And He has told us this through the prophets...

*23 Am I a God at hand, saith the LORD, and not a God afar off?
24 Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the LORD. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the LORD.
25 I have heard what the prophets said, that prophesy lies in my name, saying, I have dreamed, I have dreamed.
26 How long shall this be in the heart of the prophets that prophesy lies? yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart;
27 **Which think to cause my people to forget my name by their dreams** which they tell every man to his neighbour, as their fathers have forgotten my name for Baal.
28 The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and **he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully**. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.
29 Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?
30 Therefore, behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that steal my words every one from his neighbour.
31 Behold, **I am against the prophets**, saith the LORD, **that use their tongues**, and say, He saith.
32 Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and **cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness**; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.*
Jer 23:23-32

God specifically tells us how He feels about those who steal HIS WORDS – **He hates it** when His Word is stolen, twisted or added to therefore He is against them. He hates it so much that the punishment for doing so is losing one's *eternal* life (if sincere repentance is not made) ...

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

*19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, **God shall take away his part out of the book of life**, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*

Rev 22:18-19

God does not take it lightly when His Word is not properly taught by those that claim to represent Him. And He has told us the punishment for doing so, as well as His feelings about it in many places throughout His Word. Jeremiah 23 and Ezekiel 34 are two chapters devoted to this subject but there are so many more. 1 Peter 4:17 also tells us that judgment begins at the house of God. So, God hates it when His Word (truth) is stolen. But this is not contained merely to Pastors. As we found out in the Third Commandment, not obeying Him when we claim to be His servants/followers *is taking His name in vain*. So, this applies to the ‘layman’ of the Church too. And taking God’s name in vain *also steals from Him by taking credibility for His Word away in the mind and heart of those who don’t yet know Him*. Thus, it’s theft to claim to be a Christian and not obey God. The world should be able to tell Christians apart from the world or else we are just pretending to be Christians (which is called hypocrisy).

An unjust man is an abomination to the just: and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked.

Prov 29:27

Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

James 4:4

The world and Christ do not get along. They are incompatible because the worldly ways *are the ways of Satan*: they are against (contrary to, Gal 5:17) the ways of our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. This is why Jesus said...

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Matt 6:24

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

John 15:18-21

Pastors and layman alike are all expected to guard God's Word from being stolen. This means from our thoughts, to our words to our actions, we must strive to obey God and make sure His Words are not perverted or stolen *out of the heart of His children*. This truly is **Our Obligation** to Him as His servants [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/249>].

But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.
Luke 11:28

The word 'keep' here is #5442 and means: **to watch**, i.e. **be on guard** (literally of figuratively); by implication, **to preserve**, obey, avoid. We must take following Jesus Christ seriously or else we will end up stealing His Word from others simply by our disobedience to Him. And this should be something we should all be very concerned with because it is the path to spiritual death. After all, it's how Satan 'fell' (spiritually) in the first earth age. In other words, not preserving God's Word is what Satan started doing in the first earth age. Instead of preserving God's Word (and His ways), Satan rebelled against them and caused 1/3 of God's children to lose faith in our Heavenly Father. **Satan stole their hearts through lies**. We have an amazing type of this written in the history of the kings. It's not identical but very close to what happened in the first earth age at Satan's rebellion, when Satan exalted *himself* above all of God's other governmental (are religious) officials inasmuch that he eventually tried to take over the very throne of God Himself [<https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/192?single>]. So, let's take a look at this vital example (1 Cor 10:11) ...

1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

2 And Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was so, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Israel.

3 And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.

4 Absalom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice!

5 And it was so, that when any man came nigh to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and took him, and kissed him.

*6 And on this manner did Absalom to all Israel that came to the king for judgment: **so Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel.***

7 And it came to pass after forty years [from David's anointing], that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.

8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Geshur in Syria, saying, If the LORD shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the LORD.

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to Hebron.

10 But Absalom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Israel, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Absalom reigneth in Hebron.

11 And with Absalom went two hundred men out of Jerusalem, that were called; and they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

*12 And Absalom sent for Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from his city, even from Giloh, while he offered sacrifices. And **the conspiracy was strong; for the people increased continually with Absalom.***

*13 And there came a messenger to David, saying, **The hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom.***

14 And David said unto all his servants that were with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not else escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.

15 And the king's servants said unto the king, Behold, thy servants are ready to do whatsoever my lord the king shall appoint.

16 And the king went forth, and all his household after him. And the king left ten women, which were concubines, to keep the house.

17 And the king went forth, and all the people after him, and tarried in a place that was far off.

2 Sam 15:1-17

Now in 2 Sam 8:16 we're told that *David reigned over all Israel; and David executed judgment and justice unto all his people*. So, how was it possible that the *hearts of the men of Israel are after Absalom* (vs 13), David's son? The history of David reveals how this came about. Back in 2 Sam 8, David was indeed *executing judgment and justice*. But in 2 Sam 11, we're told David stopped going out to war and instead 'tarried still at Jerusalem' (vs 1). So, having too much time on his hands, and likely being a bit bored, he went for a walk out on the roof of his house. It was then that he saw a beautiful woman named Bath-Sheba. It's notable that the woman was bathing *outside* where she had to have known she could be seen by the king. Satan had both of them right where he wanted them. David was taken over by lust (as was Bath-Sheba) and they both committed adultery *willingly*.

14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

15 Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

James 1:14-15

Because they didn't cut the lust out of their heart immediately, they conceived sin in their heart which manifested in physical sin resulting in a physical conception of a child. And eventually, the death of an innocent man... Bath-Sheba's husband. We can see an excellent example of what David *should have done* with Joseph, who was confronted with the very same situation: a woman enticing him to commit adultery. What did Joseph do? Gen 39:12 tells us that *he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out*. Joseph ran! He got himself out of that situation as fast as he possibly could. David should have done the same thing but did not. Why? Well, David was

the king and had everything he wanted. It was easy to forget the hard times that he went through in his youth. Joseph, however, was still a slave and well-remembered the hard times. Joseph took the right path and David did not (in this case). One cut the lust out of his heart, insomuch as he physically removed himself from the temptation while the other indulged in it. This in itself is yet another good example for us.

But the point to our study on the Eighth commandment is learning what led the hearts of Israel to lust after Absalom instead of David when David did such a good job governing them. This was likely one of the reasons. You know that David's family and household had to have found out about this, and its likely news about how he had Bath-Sheba's husband killed got out too. Things like that just don't stay quiet. People talk. This would have been something that would *shaken the faith of the people in their king*. **David misused his authority to commit adultery and then, even murder.** People don't like their government to be corrupt (unless it benefits *them*).

But even that, it likely would not have been enough to make Absalom turn on his father. However, later on, David made a judgment Absalom did not like. In 2 Sam 13 we learn that Absalom's full blood sister, Tamar, was raped by his half brother Amnon. And what did David do about it? Death was the penalty for rape. But so was adultery and murder... two things David had recently done. So, David couldn't sentence his son to death when he had done worse things, could he? Nope. While he was angry (vs 21) *he did nothing about it*. Amnon got away with rape. Two years later, Absalom threw a party and invited all his brothers to the feast. It was then he got revenge and ordered his servants *to murder his half-brother* to take vengeance upon the rape of his full blood sister. He then ran away and, after three years, came back only to stab his father in the back. It was evident that Absalom was not only corrupt to the core (and a liar at that) but he had lost confidence in his father's ability to judge righteously (or the way he wanted) and therefore, when he returned (his father was gracious enough to allow him to come back) he began to go behind his father's back and turn the hearts of the people away from his father, David. But how did he do this? ***He perverted justice and lied about his father's ability to serve as King.*** In this we see the stunning type with our Heavenly Father and Satan, who once was very high up in God's government and highly respected, even by our Heavenly Father. However, the situation with Satan was different in that **our Heavenly Father never sins; He never perverts judgment or justice. He never has and never will.** We're told that...

Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face
Ps 89:15

Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.
Ps 119:142

2 The works of the LORD are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.
3 His work is honourable and glorious: and his righteousness endureth for ever.
Ps 111:2-3

God's ways are always right; they always have been and always will be. Our Heavenly Father never sinned or was corrupted in judgment or justice. But the fact is that Satan was able to deceive God's children into thinking He is not righteous and Holy; so much so that they followed Satan into rebelling against our Heavenly Father. How did Satan accomplish this? And what caused Satan to be corrupted insomuch that he actively worked to steal the hearts of God's children away from his Heavenly Father, just as Absalom did to his earthly father, David? Of course, we can find the answer in our Heavenly Father's Word...

1 The word of the LORD came again unto me, saying,

*2 Son of man, say unto the prince of Tyrus, Thus saith the Lord GOD; **Because thine heart is lifted up,** and thou hast said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas; yet thou art a man, and not God, though **thou set thine heart as the heart of God:***

3 Behold, thou art wiser than Daniel; there is no secret that they can hide from thee:

4 With thy wisdom and with thine understanding thou hast gotten thee riches, and hast gotten gold and silver into thy treasures:

*5 By thy great wisdom and by thy **traffic** hast thou increased thy riches, and **thine heart is lifted up because of thy riches:***

6 Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God;

7 Behold, therefore I will bring strangers upon thee, the terrible of the nations: and they shall draw their swords against the beauty of thy wisdom, and they shall defile thy brightness.

8 They shall bring thee down to the pit, and thou shalt die the deaths of them that are slain in the midst of the seas.

9 Wilt thou yet say before him that slayeth thee, I am God? but thou shalt be a man, and no God, in the hand of him that slayeth thee.

10 Thou shalt die the deaths of the uncircumcised by the hand of strangers: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD.

11 Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

*12 Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; **Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.***

*13 **Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God;** every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.*

*14 **Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth;** and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.*

*15 **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created,** till iniquity was found in thee.*

*16 By the multitude of thy **merchandise** they have filled the midst of thee with **violence**, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.*

17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: *I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.*

18 *Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy **traffick**; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.*

19 *All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more.*

Ezek 28:1-19

Satan's first sin was pride: his heart was 'lifted up' in pride. He is so good looking, charming and such a good speaker that people began to praise him and (instead of remaining humble) he let it 'go to his head'. This shows us that we can sin even while not in a flesh body. So, it's not just the carnal mind that causes us to sin; the spiritual mindset (though process) of many of God's children was corrupted in the first earth age, which is why He designed the plan to send all His children (even Himself) into this flesh realm through a flesh body. This flesh life is part of God's plan of Salvation. So, God gave His children free will even in the first earth age [learn more about the 3 Word ages with this special study: <https://t.me/BibleStudyDownload/190?single>].

However, our carnal mind is definitely an instigator of sin, as Rom 8:7 (and elsewhere) tells us.

And *learning to overcome the carnal mind is what teaches us to learn to overcome sin, even in the spiritual body.* God's plan of Salvation truly is amazing. The reason He is called the 'first fruit' is that He overcame death (1 Cor 15:23). What many don't realized is that, even before Jesus overcome death of His flesh body, *He overcame the carnal mind that was in His flesh body* because He never sinned (Eph 2:15-16). Contrarily, Satan allowed his mind (even in a spiritual and/or material body) to be debased (corrupted) simply because he got praise. Indeed, Satan is intelligent, wise, charming and handsome (he's not an ugly old man with horns, a pitch fork and red long underwear). That's why people gave him praise. But *he let it affect him negatively*. He began to think about *himself* (which is a lower mindset that leads to spiritual death) instead of God and His children (the higher mindset that leads to eternal life). Consequently, Satan began to use his authority for evil. He learned how to use the economy, education, politics and religion for evil instead of using them for good. In other words, Satan learned how to weaponize institutions that were created for good and turned them into **Evil Devices** [<https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/68>].

There're a few words we need to look at in this 28th chapter of Ezekiel to get a better understanding of Satan's evil system that corrupted so many of God's children...

"Traffick" is #7404 and means: *trade (as peddled)*. It comes from #7402, a primitive root that means: *to travel for trading*.

"Merchandise" is the same as above: #7404.

“**Violence**” is #2555 and means: *violence*; by implication, *wrong*; by meton. *unjust gain*. It’s been translated in the KJV as - cruel (-ty), damage, false, injustice, oppressor, unrighteous, violence (against, done), violent (dealing), wrong.

So, Satan learned how to use trade to spiritually corrupt God’s children. He’s still doing this today, which is what God calls us to ‘come out of’ in Rev 18:4. Satan’s system oppresses and enslaves God’s children *for his own gain*, and at the *spiritual* expense of God’s children. Satan was the first individual to corrupt himself; he is the originator of sin. You can rest assured that God gave Satan many chances to repent but, *he did not* and therefore, he is sentenced to die (Ezek 28:18-19). Moreover, Satan continues to entice God’s children to join in his sin (rebellion). He even tried to entice God Himself to be corrupt while He was in the flesh body, as Jesus Christ (Mth 4). Thankfully, Jesus Christ did not fall for the temptations despite being famished from 40 days of fasting. Thus, Satan’s largest sin was not that he corrupted his own soul, but he corrupted so many of God’s children too. In other words, his greatest sin (that could not be forgiven) was in leading astray 1/3 of God’s children. If only Satan had been corrupted, God could have just put him to spiritual death and be done with it. But so many of God’s children also rebelled that He had to take a different course of action to try to save His children, which He loves (2 Pt 3:9). And it’s only through a flesh body that God could sacrifice Himself for us (as Jesus), to pay for our sins and overcome Satan’s grip on His children (Heb 2:14, John 3:16). *That is why we are here in the flesh*. It’s a way for us to learn the consequences of our sins and we have the opportunity to overcome sin by the precious blood of God Himself through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:1, 14). The ultimate expense of Satan’s rebellion was that he spiritually cut God’s children off from their only source of eternal life: our Heavenly Father, our Creator, God Almighty – YHVH is His name (often translated as LORD in all caps in the KJV). In other words, **by stealing God’s Word from God’s children, Satan stole God’s children from Him**. It was theft in every aspect. Do you see now why this is one of the great Ten Commandments? God hates it when people steal truth because you are stealing spiritual life itself...

*And **this is life eternal**, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.*

John 17:3

*It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: **the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.***

John 6:63

*Jesus saith unto him, **I am** the way, the truth, and **the life**: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.*

John 14:6

So, to cut people off from God (by teaching lies and actively encouraging and trying to get them to think with a carnal mindset instead of the higher mindset God originally gave us) is to steal

spiritual (eternal) life from them – it is truly evil. That's why it is so gross a sin to teach God's children 'traditions of man' instead of His Word (Mk 7:1-13). And that's why it's so gross a sin to take His name in vain by claiming to be a Christian yet not sincerely trying to obey Him. Both acts of hypocrisy (and self-righteousness) steal truth from God's children and lead them astray from their life source: the Word of God. So, the spiritual aspect of this Eighth Commandment is by far the most important: *we are not to steal truth (life) from anyone, which is the essence of what deception is all about.* Remember the definition of 'steal' is also deception. This is why the parable of the sower warns us that Satan seeks to literally steal God's Word out of our hearts...

14 The sower soweth the word.

*15 And these are they by the way side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, **Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.***

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

*17 And **have no root in themselves**, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.*

Mark 4:14-17

Note that it's because people have no roots in themselves (they are very shallow, only thinking about themselves – i.e., self-righteous hypocrites) that they allow God's Word to be taken (stolen) out of their heart. But *they allow it*. If we really love our Heavenly Father (and His Son, Jesus Christ) we will sink our roots (mind and heart) deeply into God's Word, and not allow Satan to steal God's truth (Word) out of our hearts. We'll put a hedge of protection around our heart (Deut 4:9, Prov 4:23) [Take Heed and Keep It - <https://t.me/BibleStudyTruth/943>] and learn to 'quench' those 'fiery darts of the wicked' (Eph 6:17).

But if we choose to reject truth in our own soul, we'll be 'rewarded' with spiritual death, which means our body, soul and spirit will be totally burnt up; we'll cease to exist in any form. It is eternal and spiritual death (Rev 20:11-15). This, of course, is what our Heavenly Father is trying to avoid: He loves His children and wants everyone to come to the knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Pt 3:9) because it is through knowing Him that we are able to live eternally...

*And without controversy **great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.***

1 Tim 3:16

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

*8 For bodily exercise profiteth little [for a little while, is temporary]: but **godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.***

1 Tim 4:7-8

3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

*4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: **that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

2 Peter 1:3-4

3 If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

4 He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings,

*5 Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, **supposing that gain is godliness** [this is Satan's way!]: from such withdraw thyself.*

*6 **But godliness with contentment is great gain.** [this is God's Way!]*

7 For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out.

8 And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

9 But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

11 But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness.

*12 **Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life**, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.*

1 Tim 6:3-12

We'll pick this up in the next part [6] of this great chapter 20 in Exodus...

AMEN.