

OCF Small Groups: *passionately pursuing God, healthy relationships with each other, and people who don't know Jesus, as part of a Gospel Community.*

Exodus 20:17

(Sunday, November 26)

You Shall Not Covet Your....

1. What "if onlys" have floated through your mind in the past? (Ex. If only I was...If only I had...If only they...)
2. What does it mean to covet? What do people seem to covet the most? If you dare, share what you have coveted in the past and why.
3. When asked about the 10th commandment Christopher Hitchens, a famous atheist, said, "That is a particularly horrible crime of dictatorship, namely the crime of thought. It says you can't even think about this. To say you're not allowed to steal your neighbor's possessions—including his wife—that's one thing. But to say you're not allowed to envy your neighbor is absurd. It's impossible. And the spirit of envy can lead to ambition and innovation and initiative. I would say that's an immoral commandment."

Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

What is the problem with coveting if it doesn't hurt anybody (after all it is not stealing)?

What damage does coveting do to a person?

4. How does modern advertising influence the temptation to covet? How do we fight against giving into this pressure?

5. It is interesting that when Jesus spoke to a rich young man who asked him what he must do 'to have eternal life' (Matt 19:16f.), Jesus quoted the fifth to the ninth Commandment (Matt 19:18). Jesus' omission of the Tenth Commandment, 'You shall not covet' is a surprise. The rich young man was able to say that he had kept the commands Jesus had quoted, but when Jesus challenged him to give away his wealth, he was unable to take the step, and went away saddened.

It is uncertain of course, but it appears that Jesus' challenge to the rich young man was precisely about whether he was covetous in his heart towards his wealth; and indeed, he could not do without it. His desire to keep wealth was greater than his desire to follow Jesus. Just like His challenges about the other Commandments, Jesus went to the heart of the problem. The covetousness that damages a relationship with God is a desire for the things of this world that is greater than a desire for God (see Luke 12:13-21).

How do we "take care, and be on guard against all covetousness" (Luke 12:15) and even put it to death (Col. 3:6)?

What is our life supposed to consist in (Luke 12:15; 21)?

How do we be rich toward God (Luke 12:21)?

6. Read 1 Timothy 6:6–10. What is the "great gain" in "godliness with contentment" (v 6)?

In what ways is covetousness like the "many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction (v 9)?

7. Read Philippians 4:10-13. What does this passage teach us about finding contentment in our current situation?

How do we learn to be content in "whatever situation" (v 11)?