

Do Not Steal or Lie



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Exodus 20:15-16

We are in the 10 commandments. Of course, you hear the word “commandments” and these are the dos and don’ts. It’s this idea of morality and the things that we should do and the things that we shouldn’t do. One of the common beliefs is that religious people are about dos and don’ts. Religious people are about lists of rules. They are the people who have the 10 commandments in their yard—here’s what you need to do and here’s what you don’t need to do. Nonreligious people don’t really worry about rules. They don’t worry about lists. They don’t worry as much about morality, the things you should do and the things you shouldn’t do. The assumption is here’s the choice, either obey the 10 commandments or just reject them and do whatever you want. Some people are moral, they follow the ten commandments, and other people aren’t. They just do whatever they want. They don’t have a list of rules or a certain morality. What I would say is that’s just not true. It’s not true that religious people are moral and nonreligious people are not moral. It’s just sometimes they have a different morality code and here’s the reason why. All of us are moral creatures. We were created by a God and part of being in his image is that we are moral creatures. We believe there are rights and there are wrongs, but depending on who you are and how far removed you are from

a relationship with God, that can vary. So, we all operate on a moral code- what we believe is right and what we believe is wrong.

I saw this played out in a restaurant recently when I was in Panera Bread. I looked up at their community sign, and I saw this sign, "The No, No List." So, as I look at that I am thinking, here's a restaurant, an amoral entity, right? Panera Bread surely isn't policing morality, but then they have their "No, No List," which is sort of like their 10 commandments posted on their board. So I began reading and it's their commitment to get rid of all artificial ingredients. So, what's going on with a "No, No List"? Why do you list up artificial ingredients and then say those are the things we won't allow in our food and you shouldn't eat? Well, it's not just a suggestion. It's their values. It's their moral code. They believe that eating artificial ingredients and using artificial ingredients is wrong. There is moral judgment going on here. We aren't going to be the people that are immoral and eat artificial food. We are going to be moral people. We are going to be upstanding citizens and eat whole, healthy food. So, here you have a restaurant that seemingly isn't worried about morality yet they have their own version of the 10 commandments on their wall. So, as a culture we cannot really escape morality. It's just what morality are you going to choose to follow. For instance, I was listening to a briefing several months ago and Dr. Mola brought up a news article about 13 schools in Seattle that made it a new rule, a new school law, that if you're a middle schooler you couldn't drink a coke or eat a candy bar on their school facilities. It was actually wrong and there would be disciplinary action if you were caught with a coke or caught with a candy bar. They removed all soda machines and vending machines, because these 13 schools declared it is morally wrong to drink coke and morally wrong to eat a Snickers bar. Yet the same school, those same middle schoolers can go into the guidance office and get an IUD or other contraceptives without parental consent. Here you have a school that says it's perfectly natural and perfectly ok for middle schoolers to be promiscuous. We celebrate that and we tax fund it. They can come in without any permission and get all the contraceptives that they want, BUT we will NOT allow them to drink a coke. THAT is sinful and we stand against that.

See, as a culture we think that culture is getting completely away from morality. They're not; it's just that we are getting a new moral code to live by. The reality is it's not do you choose to follow the 10 commandments or do you chose to do whatever you want. It's what morality will you choose? Will you choose God's revealed morality and live according to how you were created to live OR will you choose your own morality? Are you subscribed to a cultural morality that sometimes is very disconnected from the morality that God would give? So, it's not will you be moral or immoral. It's whose morality will you subscribe to and how will you live your life based on that?

So with that said, we are going to read the revealed word of God, the revealed moral code that God gives us in the 10 commandments. We are going to read two of those commandments- eight and nine. We are going to read both of those and then talk about these two commands.

Scripture:

Exodus: 20:15-16

15 You shall not steal 16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

As a moral creature, what is the goal for this sermon? I know I'm preaching to all moral creatures out here. I'm a moral creature myself. What is my goal for this sermon? What am I hoping you are going to leave doing? My goal is that you will leave obeying the eighth and ninth command. My goal is you will leave here passionately telling the truth and passionately giving and blessing rather than taking and stealing. That's the goal. But here's what I know. I know I have no power whatsoever within myself to make any of that happen. I can't do anything to cause you to obey these two commandments. And here's the other problem, in and of yourself in your flesh, you don't have the ability to obey these two commandments in the way God would want you to obey them- in a way that glorifies him and loves your neighbor as yourself. You just can't do it. So, we have a problem. I can't make you. You can't really make yourself. If we are going to go out of here obeying these two commandments, what is

that going to actually look like? So, in this sermon I hope to show you the commandments and then lead you to the cross of Christ and to lead you to the Lord Jesus because it's only in him and through him that you'll be a truth teller. It's only in him and through him that you will give and bless rather than take and steal.

So, you're going to leave here obeying these commandments, not in yourself and not because of something that happened, but because you're in the Lord Jesus Christ and because the gospel will be your foundation and motivation for wanting to obey these commands. Here's the reality. Let's just get really practical. The reality is that everyone of us will be tempting constantly to lie and to steal. Almost daily perhaps you will be tempted to lie and to steal. So these commandments are very practical. They are something you're going to deal with every single day. Some of you are thinking...*well, not really. I haven't been tempted in a really long time to go into a 7-Eleven to steal a coke and drive away in a fast getaway car. I just don't struggle with that.* Stealing, you're not going to struggle with that.

But as we talk about stealing in a broad category, we are probably going to realize you might have actually stole something today. Because you will see, it's a lot broader than we sometimes think it is. So, this deal with stealing and lying, they are broad categories and they are things we can do almost daily or at least tempted to do daily. Because it is a daily temptation, because it is something we are tempted with all of the time, here's the truth I want you to know: you are pledging your allegiance to a kingdom with the choice you make. And here's what I mean by that, when you tell a lie or when you take or steal, you are saying your allegiance is with a kingdom that is perishing, a kingdom that is passing away. It's the kingdom of this world that is all about you, self, self-preservation, self-motivation, and self-promotion. You are saying you're going to lie and steal because that is what's best for me. When you do so, you're aligning yourself with a kingdom that's passing away and a kingdom that is doomed to perish. That's your choice when you tell a lie or you steal. But when you tell the truth, when you give and you bless you're saying that I am

pledging my allegiance to a different kingdom, to a king and a kingdom that has come and is coming and will last forever. When I tell the truth, I'm saying there is an alternative way to live and that is to live under the glory of Christ because that is the true reality of the world. So, in your little decisions on lying and stealing you're doing something massive. You're participating in one kingdom or the other. You're telling the truth about one kingdom or the other.

See, the first kingdom is all about our flesh. We operate in our flesh. We want to do in our flesh. The second kingdom is all about walking in the spirit. That's why you can't leave today saying I'm going to try really hard to not lie and not steal. It's not going to work. That's flesh. No, it's leaving today saying I'm going to crucify my flesh and I'm going to live in and through the gospel because in Christ I'm a truth teller. In Christ, I give and I bless. So, I'm going to live out my new identity in Christ and in Christ, I'm going to say yes to God and no to my flesh. This is not a message on trying really hard to do these commandments. No, it's realizing that in and of yourself you can't so you need Christ. But in Christ, you can. That's the gist of really all of the 10 Commandments. It's not a flesh activity; this is a Spirit activity. So, let's just walk through these commands. Let's deal with the first one and let's talk about. It's a broad category- you shall not steal. There's the command. What exactly does this commandment mean? What is stealing?

Well, most of us probably know what stealing is, right? If you ask any kid in here, they will probably know what stealing is. It's taking something that doesn't belong to you and it belongs to somebody else. If you take it illegally, you don't pay them for it, or you know you don't have rights to it and somebody else does have rights to it and you just take it rather than giving and blessing the person who produced it or earned it for you, that's stealing; taking something that doesn't belong to you. Most of us would say...*well, I haven't done that in a long time. When I was a kid, I'm sure I stole some candy, but I haven't done that in a long time. I always pay when I go to Walmart. I'm good at not stealing.* Perhaps stealing is a little

more complicated and a little deeper than first meets the eye. So, let's just give some examples of what stealing is.

We've talked about stealing physical things like going and robbing somebody or taking something you don't pay for. That's obviously stealing. Hopefully you're not doing that. If you are, there is repentance, grace, and mercy and don't do that again. That's stealing physical things, but we live in a digital world, which makes it a whole lot more complicated when we think about stealing because you can actually steal digital things a lot easier and it doesn't really feel like stealing. I'll give you an example. So, I got to go to middle school camp this summer and I got to stay in a middle school boys room for three days. It was a great experience! The kids were great; the smells were weird, but overall it was a good experience with awesome worship. So, I'm driving the bus back with a group of middle schoolers in the van with me and we have to stop and wait on somebody. I pull out my phone and I say, "Hey, let's download one of the albums that we heard this week during worship so we can listen to the music on the way home." I pull out my phone, go to iTunes, click on the album, buy it, and it downloads in like two minutes. Digital is cool! That is awesome! You don't have to go to a store, buy a CD, and bring it home. You can just have it right then and there by a click of a button. I get it, I'm playing the first song, we are listening to it, we are all jamming out, and they are excited. Then, all of a sudden, I get a request from the back, "Hey, Kory, can you airdrop all of us this album?" Now, if you don't know what airdrop is, it means that all the kids pull out their phones, they push a button, then I push a button, and the album that I bought goes now to all of their phones. So, they'd get the album for free. I say, "no, I can't do that." "Well, why not?! Why can't you just airdrop it to me?" "Because that is stealing." "NO IT'S NOT!" "Umm.... Yes it is." "There's no way that's stealing! See, your phone does it! That's airdrop; it's not stealing. It's airdrop." "No, that's stealing." "No, it's like sharing. We are all sharing this together." "Yeah, but you don't pay for it and I did." "Yeah... but... no, it's not stealing!"

So, we had this whole moral dilemma. Is it stealing to airdrop and give all the kids this album that I purchased that they didn't? They aren't my kids. They aren't my family. It's not like I'm sharing it with Katie, I'd be sharing it with them. Then, they'd reproduce it and share it with all of their friends. See, in a digital world we have all these different issues of stealing where we don't buy something we just get the copy of our friend's. Then we get on our phone and we think it isn't stealing, but it is. In that scenario none of those kids would have bought that album and they would have been robbing the person who produced the album. He has a family. He has kids that need feeding. So, all of the kids need to buy the song for themselves. It's \$1.29 for the song. Come on, kids! You've got the money. Let's get it so that we aren't stealing from someone. It's complicated in the digital world. You can just download stuff. You can rip stuff off and say it isn't stealing, but yeah, if you take something without paying for it when there is a fee for it then it is stealing. Some of you are like... *uh oh, I'm in trouble*. There is grace and mercy and we will get to that at the end of the sermon when the altar will be full. So, there are digital things and there are physical things. So you don't steal. Period.

What about time? Did you know you can steal time? See, some of you have a job where your employer has employed you and they give you a set amount of hours that you're supposed to be working. When you're at your desk and you're on Facebook, guess what? You're robbing from your employer. *Yeah, but he's rich! She's rich! They've got a lot of money!* You're a thief...that's just plainly how it is. You are stealing. You're supposed to be working, not online shopping, not chatting; you're supposed to be doing work, right? Maybe you can work this out with your boss and have some flexibility where they know you are going to check in on things during the week. That's different. But if your boss has no idea that two hours of your time is spent working and six to eight hours of your time is spent googling then that is stealing because you're not doing what you are being paid to do. You're stealing time. You can steal time from your spouse. You can steal time from your kids. The time you're supposed to be hanging out and spending time with them that they deserve because you're their dad and you're goofing off doing something else, you're not

giving them the time they deserve. So, we can steal not just physical things, but we can steal things like time as well.

What about credit? What about stealing credit? Perhaps somebody did something that you don't do, but somebody comes up to you and says, "man, that was a great job. I just want to say that project you did was awesome!" You know that you don't do it, somebody else did, but what do you do? You say, "thanks, it was good," because you want credit for it. You want to be known for it. Maybe you were a part of it, but you don't really do much in it, but you take all of the credit. That is stealing away from somebody who worked, labored, and created and they don't get blessed for what they did. That is robbing. That is stealing. So, you can take credit for something that you don't do. That is stealing. What about withholding credit that you should give? Perhaps you have people who work under you or you're a part of a team. Somebody does something and they deserve a praise or a "great job" or a "thank you," but you just withhold it because you just don't want to give it to them. Well, that is stealing from them! They deserve by their creation and by their work the blessing of you giving them credit and acknowledging them, but you withhold it because you don't want anybody else to do better than you. You want to make sure that you stay at the top.

See, there are all of these kinds of things that you can steal like ideas. Somebody else has an idea and you use it as your own. There are all of these different things that you can steal like giving for a service that you should have gave for or not tipping at a restaurant when they've done a good job and they deserve that wage. There are all sorts of elements to this thing of stealing. Let's just deal with why is it wrong. Why is stealing wrong? Perhaps it's not! Let's deal with why it's wrong.

Well, the first reason it's wrong is because God works and creates and gives. God is a working God, a creating God, and a giving God. He created the world and he gave it to us. He created you and me and gave us life and breath. He creates us and guess what? There is a reward, there is a wage that we are supposed to give back to God. We are supposed to give

him our life, our allegiance, and our obedience. That is what his creation deserves. We are to bless him with our life because he has blessed us WITH life. So, there is this relationship between work and blessing and that is why Jesus will say in Luke 10:7, "...the laborer deserves his wages." If somebody labors, they deserve a wage. They deserve something. Why is that? Because human beings were created in the image of God. So we as image bearers were created to create, to work, to produce, and to do something. We have gifts, talents, and abilities we use to work and produce something. And because we are creating those things, there is a deserved reward for that. There is a blessing and it is called a wage. So, God created us to work, labor, and produce something and then someone else who sees that and wants that, there is a wage that is given, a blessing, so that you can now take their creation and their work for your good. That is how God set up the universe, that labor, wage, and creation would give God glory. But also get a blessing to the one who works and the one who creates.

So, what does stealing do? It robs that blessing that God created work to have. It robs that person who, in the image of God, is creating, working, and producing and you say... I don't care about that person. I don't care about God. I just care about this product. I'm going to take it and I'm going to give it to myself, and I'm not going to care about my neighbor or care about God through the process. See, it's stealing what that person has labored in the image of God and the blessing that they ultimately deserve. It robs that. So, one of the reasons that stealing is wrong is because God creates, works, and gives and a blessing is to accompany that. We are to work, labor, and give and a blessing, a wage, is supposed to accompany that so when you withhold the wage, the credit, or praise, you are robbing how God has set up the universe to operate. You are a thief.

So, the first reason is because God is a creator and a giver. But the second reason is because Satan is a thief who steals. Satan is a thief who steals and here is what Jesus said about Satan in John 10:10, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." Here's the deal. God is a giver and Satan is a taker. God

gives and he creates us to be givers and in the gift there is a blessing that we receive in that gift. But what is Satan? He is a taker. He is a thief. He takes on the system and goes around it to steal. So, why is it wrong to steal? Because you're aligning yourself with God's great enemy and you're joining our parents who first rebelled against God because they too were thieves. They stole God's good creation and design and said...*I'm not going to give you my life and my allegiance. I'm going to take what you have and do my own thing.* See, our first parents were thieves. Because of a lie they became thieves and we do the same thing when we steal from people. We don't love God and we don't love our neighbor.

What about the next commandment? What about the commandment about lying? You shall not bear false witness. What does this mean? In just the really general sense, it's the language of a court where you have a neighbor that is accused of something. Let's say your neighbor is accused of killing an ox and you're called in because you saw the whole scene. You're called in to give a witness, to say what you saw. Now, let's just say you don't like your neighbor. Maybe he bugs, he stays up late, and he plays loud music. You are thinking...*you know, maybe it would be cool if he went to jail for a little while.* So, instead of telling what you saw-your neighbor didn't do anything wrong- you say...*yeah, he just got angry, went out, and hacked up the ox. I saw it!* You are bearing a false witness about your neighbor. Why? For your benefit. For your credit because it does you good to twist the truth. See, God knows that a society, a people, can't survive if everybody bears false witness and nobody tells the truth because you can't have a society without truth going around because it is utter confusion and chaos. So God says you need to bear TRUE witness when you're in court.

Then, in a more general sense, we are talking about lying in general. We see the Bible says in Revelation 21:8 that all liars will have their portion in the lake of fire that burns with sulfur which is the second death. Lying is a big deal! So, it's this idea of bearing false witness, lying, twisting the truth, or not telling the truth.

Now, I know I did it all growing up, but I can vividly remember this one particular time. I was probably nine or ten and I was having one of the best days ever. I was out on my four-wheeler with my sister. We were riding around my granddad's farm and were about ¼ mile away from our house. There's a creek that runs through the bottoms there. It had rained a lot so the creek was MASSIVE. There were pools of water everywhere. I thought it was going to be a good idea to float my four-wheeler down the creek. It was going to be awesome! I had heard of people doing it and I thought I could do it. So, I get on my four-wheeler and I take off into about a 5-foot pool of water. I go and instead of floating safely across it I immediately flip over and the four-wheeler sinks to the bottom. Here I am, nine or ten years old, my four-wheeler is at the bottom of a creek, and it's just me and my sister. The next 30 minutes to an hour we spend pulling our four-wheeler out of the water hole. We finally get it to the bank, turn it over, and I was begging it to start. I get on it, turn the ignition on, crank it, and the whole engine was just filled with water. It was not going to crank. So, what do I do? Well, I've got to go get Dad because there was no way I could push that thing back home. We were ¼ mile away through briars, fields, and creeks. I had to go get Dad. So, I walk ¼ mile- this dreadful, misery filled walk, thinking the whole way... *what am I going to say? What am I going to do?* I get back and I go to my dad. I was walking, which was already raising some red flags because I left driving, but I go up to my dad and he says, "hey, what are you doing?" I say, "umm... my four-wheeler won't start." He says, "really? Ok, what's wrong with it? Do you know?" I say, "I have no idea. It just won't start. It just died and it won't start and I think you're going to have to come. We probably need to take the truck and pull it home." He says, "well, do you think it could just be out of gas?" I say, "Yeah! I think that's what it is. I think I ran out of gas. That's my mistake. I should have filled it up. Yep, it's out of gas. So, let's get the truck and let's go get it." He says, "We don't need to get the truck. I'll just grab a gas can and we will walk to the four-wheeler." I say, "Ok, Dad. I think that's a good idea." So, Dad grabs the gas can and five gallons of gas. The can was completely full and we begin this ¼ mile walk. We were walking through gravel, through creeks, through briars, and crossing fences. The whole time I was walking I was looking at my dad who is

sweating, holding five gallons of gas, working, and laboring and I know this is all my fault. I know it's not out of gas; it's full of water.

You know what a lie does. It starts out great. You hide it and you think you're off the hook. Then you realize you're not getting out of this you're just digging yourself deeper and deeper. So with every step my stomach was turning a little bit more. I began to sweat and I started thinking... *What am I going to do when we get there? What's going to happen? This is not going to go well. Lord Jesus, is there any way you can make my four-wheeler be out of gas right now and make it crank when I get there?* I was praying all of those things as we were walking towards the four-wheeler. We get there. There's the four-wheeler right beside the creek. I know what is wrong with it. Dad unscrews the gas can, looks in, it's half full of gas, and he says, "Kory, it's got plenty of gas." I say, "Well, I thought it was out. I don't know what happened. It must have just died. Let's just leave it. Let's just go back. I can get a new four-wheeler, Dad." So, he says, "Ok, well, let's figure out what's wrong with it." My dad gets on, cranks it, and of course it makes the same noise because it's full of something. My dad begins to investigate a little bit and he notices that there are tracks leading into the creek, but then drag marks going out of the creek. He begins piecing it all together. Then, all of a sudden, things don't work out well for me. It would have been much better for me to have said, "Hey, Dad, I sunk the four-wheeler. Can you get the truck?" Because not only does he not have the truck, but he has five gallons of gas that he marched there and now he has to take that back. So, my lie doesn't fix the problem; it brought somebody else into the problem and it incurred damage onto that person. Then, it incurred damage onto me AFTER the fact.

So, it doesn't go well and I can vividly remember that lesson. Man, you think a lie is going to cover it up and fix it because you want to look good. You don't want to get in trouble, but what do lies do? They always dig us deeper and when the truth comes out you end up hurting other people, not just yourself. That is what lies do. So, think about a lie. It's this idea of bearing false witness and there are all kinds of ways you can do that. One

of them is telling a lie. You know what you did, but you tell something different.

Another example is misrepresenting the truth. That is kind of what I did a little bit. It was true that the four-wheeler don't start. That was true, but it wasn't true the reason that I told my dad it wouldn't start. So, it is this half-truth. You're not saying false information. You're just not giving the real information. We do that a lot with all sorts of things. Maybe even in a business. You know a customer needs something and you're like...*hey, ok, I know what they need, but this is an opportunity where I can give them a whole lot more than they need.* Perhaps they need an update or a new thing a year from now, but you're like...*man, you've got to have it right now.* So, the truth is they need an update, they need a product, or they need a service, but they don't need it right now. But you pitch it as if their item is going to tank or die if they don't get it right now. It's a half-truth. You're telling them the truth that they need something, but they don't need it now. You mislead them a little bit so that it's to your advantage and your profit.

Sometimes we tell half-truths to get out of trouble. You know if you told the whole story you'd be in trouble, but if you can tell half the story then it still works, but you're not to blame and you're not guilty. There are all kinds of ways we can spin it. There is withholding information. Maybe you're looking at the bank account and your spouse is saying...*hey, how are the finances doing? Yeah, they're going great. Everything is good.* But you know you just spent all of the money. You just think maybe there is some way it is all going to work out. Maybe somebody else will put money in our account and it'll work so you play it off and withhold the truth from your spouse. You can withhold the truth from your kid, a coworker, or a friend because you don't want them to know the truth because it would hurt them and it would hurt you. But in the long run, withholding the truth actually still hurts them. It hurts them worse than if you had just told the truth in the first place.

What about exaggerating? This is one that is really hard not to do. I find myself repenting of this one all of the time. It's just a little exaggeration. Like, how big was the fish? Well, the fish was really about this big, but when you tell it, it's way bigger. Then, you tell the story again and you say it ate you, but you still won. You just exaggerate a little bit. How's the reports going? You exaggerate. How's the numbers going? You exaggerate. How's life going? You exaggerate. You exaggerate because you want to look good. You want people to think highly of you and you can't bear them just to know the truth... *How many did you have at your thing? Man, we had 100!* But really you had 50. It always has to be MORE because it always has to look better because you're scared of somebody knowing the truth about you. That is a struggle that we carry from Adam and it's something we have to fight against in Christ.

What about slandering somebody else? Or, trying to speak in a way that tarnishes someone else's reputation? You know they haven't really done much wrong, but you decide to talk amongst your coworkers or friends... *Hey, do you know what so-and-so did?* You open up a little space for there to be talk against someone else. You are bearing false witness. You know it's not really true. You're not really lying about them. You're just opening up a little window for somebody else to take it and run with that will damage their character because if their character is damaged then you look better. Looking good is our thought.

So, we use our words and lies to try and manipulate everyone around us so that we look better, so we don't get in trouble, and so we are always seen a little bit better than we really are. All of these ways that we can bend the truth or tell a lie sometimes we think are innocent, but sometimes it's clearly not. So, why is this wrong? Why is it wrong to lie? Is it wrong to lie? Is it ok to lie? Why does God say in his commandments don't bear false witness?

1. Because God is true

In John 4 Jesus says God is true. He IS true. So, part of the truth is connected to God so if you tell a lie then you are going against God,

against God's nature, and against God's character. A lie is the enemy of God because it's the enemy of the truth. So the reason we don't tell lies is because Jesus is true. Jesus says this in John 14:6, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life..." Jesus says...*I AM the truth so if you are participating in lies you are going against me because I am the truth.* Then, as the church, as believers in Christ, here is what God prays for us, here is what Jesus prays for us to his father in John 17:17, "Sanctify them in truth..." It's this idea that we would become more and more truth tellers and we would be sanctified in the truth. So, one of the reasons lying is wrong is because God is true. So when you're telling a lie you're going against God and going against the moral fabric that God has set up in the universe.

2. Because Satan is a liar

Satan is a liar so when you lie you are siding with God's great enemy. Here is what Jesus says in John 8:44, "You are of your father the devil..." He is talking to the Pharisees here. "...and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies. 45 But because I tell the truth, you don't believe me." So, what does Jesus say about God's great enemy? He is a liar and out of his very nature and character comes lies. He's looking at the Pharisees saying...you're not believing truth because you're siding with your true father. You're lying because you're connected with him and from his nature comes lies. So, when you lie you're disconnected from me and in your lying you're showing who your true father is. So, why is it wrong to tell a lie? Because God is true and so you're going against God. And Satan is a liar and lies come from his character and nature. So you're siding with a kingdom that is ultimately passing away forever.

We've talked about stealing and we've talked about lying. We have these two commandments and we've got all of these examples. Hopefully you know why they're wrong, why you shouldn't do these, and why you should strive to tell the truth and give and bless rather than steal and take.

But now the question is, how do you obey these commandments? Because the reality is they are really hard. When you really get down to it and really start looking at your life and how you misrepresent the truth and how you steal glory from others, it's a really hard thing to obey these commandments. So, how do we obey these commandments? I'm going to give two ways you can obey the commandments.

1. The foundation of obedience is the gospel.

2. Walk in love.

The thing you are going to stand on, imagine this stage right here, you're standing on the gospel if you're going to truly obey these commandments. We are going to stand on the gospel and then we are going to walk in love. We are going to deal with the gospel first. If you think about it, just in this text of the 10 Commandments, in Exodus chapter 20, God gives us the gospel right at the beginning. Here is what he says in verse 2, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." That is gospel language. What has God done? He's redeemed his people through blood, out of slavery, and into a relationship with him. That should remind you of YOUR redemption in Jesus Christ. See, here is the gospel: you used to live in Egypt. You used to live in slavery. And in Egypt, you were a liar and a thief. That's what you did and that's who you were. Life was all about yourself. It was about you misrepresenting the truth and taking whatever you wanted because you only cared about you. You don't love God and you don't love neighbor. You just wanted yourself to always be seen in a good light. You wanted yourself to be better and at the end of the day you don't care about those around you. That's what you did in Adam and in slavery. You were self-centered and living life for you. You don't care who you hurt or what happened. You were a liar and a thief. That's how you operated.

But something has happened...you're a Christian. You have been brought out of that kingdom. You've been brought out of slavery. You've been

brought out of Egypt and now you're in a new kingdom- a kingdom of the beloved Son's, a kingdom of light, a kingdom of righteousness. You now are with Christ! You now are living in freedom under God's good word and his good law. Now, you're not a liar, you're not a thief, but you're a truth teller, a giver, and a blessing, not in and of yourself, but in Christ. See, in Christ you've been made new. In Christ, your new identity is a truth teller. That's what you do. So, the foundation of you walking out of here and telling the truth, giving, and blessing rather than lying, stealing, robbing, and taking has to be this: I'VE BEEN REDEEMED! The foundation of my obedience is the gospel! Jesus has rescued me from Egypt and he's put me in a whole new kingdom, and now it's a joy to live under his word through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The foundation is the gospel. You can't do this in your flesh. You can't do this on your own. You have to do this through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That's where your obedience comes from and flows from. So, the foundation is the gospel, but what is the motivation? What is our motivation for why we do that? Our motivation is love for God and love for neighbor. So, we stand on the gospel, but we walk in love. That's how we fulfill these two commandments. Here is what Jesus says in Matthew 22. Starting in Matthew 22:36, "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" 37 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." Jesus is saying you can divide up those ten commandments and it is love God and love your neighbor. Love God. Love people. That is the motivation for obeying the 10 Commandments and obeying the law of God.

See, when you steal you're saying you don't care about God and the creation work/reward system that God has set up or that a laborer deserves his wages. *I just care about me. I don't care about my neighbor. I don't want to be a giver and a blessing. I want to be a taker because I just want to get away with the bare minimum and make myself better.* You

don't love God, you don't love neighbor, and you only love yourself when you steal. It's the same thing with lying. When you tell a lie you're saying you don't care about God, you don't care that he's the truth, you don't care about the world and how he set it up, and you don't care about your neighbor. *I don't care who gets hurt as long as I don't get hurt. As long as I protect myself and my reputation and I look good at the end of the day, I'm fine with that.* It's not loving God and not loving neighbor. But when you tell the truth and when you're a giver and a blessing rather than a stealer and a taker, you're saying I love God more than I love myself. And through my life, ultimately I want to glorify him. When situations are hard, when I know telling the truth is going to harm me and lying could save my skin, I'm going to tell the truth because I care more about the glory of God than my skin. I care more about Christ and his kingdom and I want to say I'm a part of THAT kingdom that's lasting forever, not the kingdom that is doomed to perish. When you tell the truth, you're saying you love your neighbor as yourself. You want to tell the truth because you want to be a truth teller because that is who Christ is. So, telling the truth, and giving and blessing, and saying you love God and you love your neighbor, even if it costs you sometimes greatly. I love the glory of God and I want to bless and be a neighbor who blesses other people. So, the foundation is the gospel. It is a redeemed activity. If you're in the gospel that's the only way you're going to be able to obey these commandments. If you're in the gospel that is the foundation, but then the motivation has to be that you love God and love people more and more. You're constantly loving God and loving people because that is your motivation for obedience.

Lastly, what do you do when you break the law? What happens when you break these laws? What happens when you tell a lie? What happens when you take credit for something that you shouldn't? What happens when you steal time when you should be doing something else? What happens when you take something? What happens when you break the law of God? Now there's a whole man-level where you need to make restitution. You need to go, deal with people, and make things right, but I'm talking about the God relationship. What do you do with God? You repent. You confess and repent when you break God's law. Now, for some of us, it needs to be for

the very first time. Some of us in here right now have never come to Christ and this morning you realize and are thinking...*I've lied and I've taken things so that makes me a liar and that makes me a thief. I'm a liar and a thief before God and I realize that means I'm in big trouble because God is righteous and holy.*

So, what is your response? It's to come to Christ. Repent and believe in the gospel that Jesus Christ never lied, he never took anything, and he was always a giver and always a blessing. It's coming to him because he has obeyed what you don't. When you come to him by repentance and faith, guess what? He takes your tarnished record and all of your law breaking. He died for it on the cross and he gives you his righteousness, his perfection as a gift. You, all of a sudden, become a person who has never broken the law. Why? Because you're in the righteousness of Christ. It's the gospel! It's this great exchange! You exchange your sin for his righteousness and now before God you're a person who has obeyed the law. That is the gospel! Some of you need to do that! You realize that you're doomed because you've broken the laws of God and you need grace and mercy. That is why Jesus came! To give you grace and mercy!

But some of you have come to the gospel, you are a Christian...what do you do when you tell a lie? What do you do when you steal something you know you shouldn't? You also confess and repent, not for salvation, but for sanctification. You confess and repent so that you can say...*Jesus, that is NOT who I am. That is Adam. That is old kingdom. I am IN YOU, Christ. I am a part of a new kingdom so I repent acting like who I'm not. Help me to act out who I truly am in you.* You crucify your flesh through confession and forgiveness and you walk in the Spirit. Tomorrow, you don't wake up and say...*I'm going to try really hard to tell the truth and I'm going to try really hard not to steal anything.* No, you say...*today, Lord Jesus, I need YOU. Today, I need to live through your gospel, through your death and resurrection. I need to live in the gospel because only in you will I be a truth teller. Only in you will I not steal. So, if I'm left to myself and my flesh I'm in big trouble. That's why, Jesus, I need you and your Spirit. So, YOU, walk with me today. YOU live through me today, as Paul says, so that*

I can be a person who tells the truth and gives and blesses because I want to show the world the kingdom that is coming and the kingdom that is going to last forever. That is what we do.

So, what do we do when we leave here? Hopefully we leave here wanting to obey the eighth and ninth commandment. And how do we do that? Not in our flesh trying hard, but through our crucified and resurrection with Jesus Christ. In his gospel, we walk out, we tell the truth, and we give and bless because that is who we are in Christ.

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