

Covet Cancer
Micah 2:1-13
Bethany Assembly of God
11.3.2024

Central Proposition: You shall not covet.

Introduction

Exodus 20 contains the famous Ten Commandments that have influenced legal systems across the world for millennia. These commandments from God, carved in stone on Mount Sinai as Moses led Israel from Egypt to the Promised Land, distill the law of God into a succinct, memorable form. The first nine commands are more than conceptual; they spell out specific actions. Many people could say that they've never committed most of these sins. But the tenth commandment is universally broken. It moves from specific actions to a wish or desire: You shall not covet (Ex. 20:17). Not only shall you not steal, commit adultery, or murder, you shouldn't even wish that you had what belongs to someone else, whether a possession, a spouse, a job, a circumstance...you shall not covet. But given our sinful inclination toward covetousness, what are we to do about it?

1. You can trust God's vindication. See Micah 2:12-13; Micah 2:2 & 9; Micah 2:3-4; Hebrews 9:15.

We read from the prophecy that God was going to judge the covetous, greedy people in Israel and that His judgment would be like an undoing of the covenant. God set up an inheritance system for the Jews that safeguarded property within families and acted as a form of social safety net when implemented properly and with generosity by family leaders. However, people began coveting what others had and wanted more for themselves and so, they disregarded God's laws and began taking advantage of the circumstances of other people, defrauding them of their rights and their well-being. As a result, God declared through Micah that He was going to reverse course on them; their punishment would fit their crime. They took other people's fields and now, God was going to drive them out and give their fields to others.

2. You can renew your mind. See Romans 12:2; Philippians 4:11-13.

We started with the end of the passage, because the renewal Micah looked forward to is the beginning of following God's command not to covet and when your soul has been renewed by faith in Jesus, you can renew your mind as well. If your soul is right with God, your thoughts can be trained to follow because your relationship with God has been restored and His Spirit now lives in you. You now live by the Spirit and not by the flesh. Covetous is just another way of saying your soul desires something more than God and His plans. When our souls are renewed through Christ, we must begin to renew our minds. This renewal happens when we submit our thinking to the Word of God and set our minds on the priorities of God over and over again.

3. You can stop cutting out voices of conviction. See 2 Timothy 4:3; Micah 2:6-7, 11.

There is a danger in the process of renewing our minds: false prophets. People want teachers who will confirm what they already think and believe. The Jews didn't want to hear Micah's warnings. They told him not to preach. God wouldn't bring judgment on them. They were His people. People prefer to hear a message condoning their actions over one condemning them, even if that message of warning could save them.

Conclusion

Christian, you have been renewed by the new covenant of God made through Jesus Christ. You have been born again. Now, you need to renew your mind after the image of Jesus and God's will revealed in His Word and avoid taking refuge in false teachers who merely want to scratch your tickling ears. This is how you overcome

coveting. If your eye is healthy—if it's free from covetousness—your whole body will be full of light. Coveting is not the minor sin of the Ten Commandments, but is a window to our soul and desires.