



The eighth commandment takes us beyond the basic human rights addressed in the previous two commands by addressing the first of three basic social obligations: “You shall not steal” (Exodus 20:15). This commandment prohibits both the secret or open seizure of something that belongs to another person. But it really goes further. It includes injury or damage done to it as well as fraudulent retention of it.

Barclay says that “it is not only a necessary part of the Christian Ethic; it is a necessary part of any agreement to live together. It is part of the foundations of any society, and without obedience to it any society would be impossible.” Stealing ultimately *betrays* our trust in God and *denies* our love and concern for others.

There is a dual consequence of this simple command: *condemnation* of “getting something for nothing,” and *affirmation* of the “right of possession.” The implications of this law extend to the protection of both the wealthy and the poor. The antidotes for stealing are likewise dealt with as part of this universal human responsibility: *trust* in God, *work*, and *give* to those in need.

1. What does this commandment say about the “right of possession?” (Exodus 20:15; Psalm 24:1; Also, Malachi 3:8-10)
2. This commandment follows those forbidding murder and adultery. What are the implications?
3. What is the just penalty for violation of this command? (Exodus 22:1-4, Leviticus 6:1-7; Joshua 7)
4. What about debts (Romans 13:8)? Interest (Exodus 22:25-27) Bribes (Exodus 23:8)?
5. What then should be the attitude of the wealthy? (1 Timothy 6:6-11, 17-19; Mark 10:17-22)
6. What should be *our* attitude about wealth and possessions? (Proverbs 30:8-9; Philippians 4:10-13, 19)
7. How should one’s needs be met? (Genesis 2:15, Matthew 6:11, 19-21; Colossians 3:23; 2 Thessalonians 3:10; Ephesians 4:28)

*“He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.”*

*Ephesians 4:28*

Ps 24:1 “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it”

Don’t steal because it all belongs to God.

We are stewards of what belongs to God, even our neighbor’s property

What is lost in stealing?

1. the thief loses reputation & relationship with God
2. God loses, since all is God’s
3. Victim has lost property
4. Victim has lost opportunity to be steward

Don’t steal time from employer- honest day’s work for honest day’s wage

Don’t steal from employees (make them do your work)

Stealing betrays our trust in God Mat 6:31-33

Stealing denies our love and concern for others

Malachi 3:8-10 Steal from God

Matthew 6:19-21 Treasures in heaven

Eph 4:28 Don’t steal, work, share

2 Thes 3:10 Don’t work? Don’t eat!

Luke 23:39-43 Last person to receive forgiveness from Jesus was a thief!

Steal= take by cunning or force that which belongs to another, withholding what we ought to give

Lev 21:33, 22:13, 23:4-5; Deut 22:1-4