



# The Righteous Shall Live By Faith

## *A Study of the Ten Commandments*

### Lesson 9

### Stealing

#### *Understanding the Commandments*

##### **Luke 18:18–27 (ESV)**

<sup>18</sup> And a ruler asked him, “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>19</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. <sup>20</sup> You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery, Do not murder, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.’” <sup>21</sup> And he said, “All these I have kept from my youth.” <sup>22</sup> When Jesus heard this, he said to him, “One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.” <sup>23</sup> But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich. <sup>24</sup> Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, “How difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.” <sup>26</sup> Those who heard it said, “Then who can be saved?” <sup>27</sup> But he said, “What is impossible with man is possible with God.”

##### **Thinking about the text**

How was the young ruler’s understanding of keeping the commandments different than Jesus’?  
According to Jesus, what was the heart problem of the young ruler? Is this breaking a commandment?  
How is it difficult to keep the other commandments if you can’t keep the First Commandment  
Why is it difficult for the rich to enter heaven?

The rich young ruler’s possessions—his things, his money—were more important to him than God was. He loved his possessions more than he loved God. He had an idol in his heart—the love of money. So he really didn’t keep the commandments.

**Exodus 20:15 (ESV)** <sup>15</sup> “You shall not steal.

##### **Thinking about the text**

What is the positive command understood in this commandment?  
Why do people steal? Give me some examples of stealing.

While many of us think that it is easy to keep the Eighth Commandment, we need to be sure that we understand it. To help us understand the commandment, we are going to use a New Testament story and the Old Testament law.



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#### *Examples of Stealing*

#### **CHEATING A PERSON**

##### **Luke 19:1–10 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> He entered Jericho and was passing through. <sup>2</sup> And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. <sup>3</sup> And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. <sup>4</sup> So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him, for he was about to pass that way. <sup>5</sup> And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today.” <sup>6</sup> So he hurried and came down and received him joyfully. <sup>7</sup> And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.” <sup>8</sup> And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, “**Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.**” <sup>9</sup> And Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

#### Thinking about the text

What was a tax collector? Why weren't the tax collectors liked by Jews?

What attitudes and affections in the heart cause a person to take money that doesn't belong to him?

Did Zacchaeus break into people's homes and steal their money? How did he steal their money?

Zacchaeus was a Jew. He knew the Old Testament. So when Zacchaeus said that he would return four times what he cheated a person, he was following the Old Testament law of repaying more than what was stolen.

##### **Exodus 22:1 (ESV)**

<sup>1</sup> “If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.”

#### Thinking about the text

According to this verse, how serious is stealing? How do you know that?

If a person steals one ox, does he return one ox? If a person steals one sheep, does he return one sheep?

Why do you think the law tells the person to repay so many animals?

##### **Zacchaeus...**

Do you think that Zacchaeus was just following the law out of duty? How do you know that?

What is shown about Zacchaeus when he said, “Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor”?



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#### *Examples of Stealing (Continued)*

#### **GIVING A PERSON LESS THAN WHAT HE PAID**

##### **Deuteronomy 25:13–16 (ESV)**

<sup>13</sup> “You shall not have in your bag two kinds of weights, a large and a small. <sup>14</sup> You shall not have in your house two kinds of measures, a large and a small. <sup>15</sup> A full and fair weight you shall have, a full and fair measure you shall have, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. <sup>16</sup> For all who do such things, all who act dishonestly, are an abomination to the LORD your God.

#### **Thinking about the text**

What is prohibited in these instructions? Why?

What do we learn about how we should live from these instructions?

Is there a promise living this way? Is there a warning against living dishonestly?

#### **BORROWING AND NOT PAYING BACK**

##### **Psalm 37:21 (ESV)**

<sup>21</sup> The wicked borrows but does not pay back, but the righteous is generous and gives;

##### **Ephesians 4:28 (ESV)**

<sup>28</sup> Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

#### **Thinking about the text**

How is borrowing and not paying back stealing? How are the wicked and the righteous different?

What attitudes are encouraged in these two verses?

Stealing is not just an action—it comes from attitudes of the heart.

Stealing reveals greed, pride, laziness, ingratitude or even unbelief in God.

#### **NOT TRUSTING IN GOD**

##### **2 Peter 1:3 (ESV)**

<sup>3</sup> His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence,

*Stealing comes from a darkened heart. A darkened heart can be changed through Jesus!*