



A Culture of Truthfulness & Generosity

Exodus 20:15-17

07.15.18

Matt Barrios

Exodus 20:15-17

15 “You shall not steal.

16 You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

17 You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

“I do not know how, or under what circumstances the four of you found each other, but your callous indifference and utter disregard for everything that is good and decent has rocked the very foundation upon which our society is built. I can think of nothing more fitting than for the four of you to spend a year removed from society so that you can contemplate the manner in which you have conducted yourselves.”

- The Honorable Judge Arthur Vandelay from *Seinfeld*

The Ten Commandments are how God develops His people.

1. Israel is a wandering tribe of nomads who escaped slavery.
2. Israel is called to be a nation of priests.
3. Israel needs order to rebuild their collective identity.

Ephesians 4:25

“Therefore, laying aside falsehood, **speak truth each one** of you **with his neighbor**, for we are members of one another.”

Covet: to desire what someone else has, including their material possessions, relationships, and character qualities; related to envy and jealousy.

“The propensity to covet in our society is enacted through an unbridled consumerism that believes that the main activity of human life is to accumulate, use, and enjoy more and more of the available resources of the earth. An undisciplined individualism has taught us that we are entitled to whatever we may want no matter who else may be hurt. Such individualism, however, is driven by a market ideology based on an elemental assumption of scarcity. If there is a scarcity of goods needed for life, then energy and passion are generated to gather and accumulate all that one can... the ideology of scarcity, which drives our economy is, in the end, an act of theological doubt that does not believe that God’s providential generosity is finally reliable. This commandment summons the faithful to break with the practice of acquisitive individualism and to reject the ideology of scarcity upon which it is based. Thus the commandment requires a massive repentance that is theological in substance, but that is manifested economically.”

- Walter Brueggemann

Having more will do nothing for people who believe they will never have enough.

Becoming more will do nothing for people who believe they are not enough.

Romans 13:9-10

The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not covet,” and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.