



### *Ninth and Tenth Commandments*

Due to the similar nature of these final two commandments, we will consider them both together. At their core, these two commandments speak to the contentment that we ought to seek to have with regard to the blessings that God has so richly provided to us. Yet, it is often not all that simple to maintain this contentment. Daily we are bombarded with messages that seek to instill in us some level of discontent in order to motivate our purchase of some product that we previously had no knowledge of, but now just cannot live without.

**You shall not covet your neighbor's house.**

**You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.**

The author of Hebrews notes that we should “Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you.’ So we can confidently say, “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?” (Hebrews 13:5-6) Money is not the issue, but that love of it. Similarly, wealth in and of itself is not the issue, rather how our wealth or the lack thereof impacts our satisfaction.

In Philippians 2:4, Paul instructs us to “Let each of you look not only to his own interests but also to the interests of others.” Looking out for your own interests makes sense to our sinful nature. However, when left unbalanced by a corresponding emphasis on the interests of others, the pursuit of our own can take on a shape that turns our enjoyment of God’s rich blessings into the greedy, covetous pursuit of more. We lose a grip on our contentment and begin to see the blessings of others as somehow taking away from our own. In the end, left to indulge these thoughts, we do end up giving up the joy that could and rightly should be ours through that which God has in His wisdom chosen to bless us with.

There is joy in witnessing the joy of others. We can cultivate in ourselves a true joy in seeing the enjoyment that the blessings of God bring to our neighbors, which helps our development of deep and abiding contentment.

### *Thoughts for Reflection*

In what ways do you struggle with contentment? How can you focus on the interest of others to increase your own contentment?