

STEALING WHAT BELONGS TO OTHERS

In our last study, we covered Grieving the Spirit by giving the devil an opportunity to disrupt the believer's walk of faith (Eph.4:26-27). We learned how the devil is making a big push against the Church of Jesus Christ in America. He thinks he has the Christian Church on the ropes in 2020 and is going for the knock-out punch; just like with Adam and Eve in garden (Gen.2:17; 3:1-7; Rom.5:12-21).

In our lesson text, Paul introduced another way the believer can Grieve the Indwelling Holy Spirit by - Stealing What Belongs to Others.

1. We will begin by examine Eph.4:28 by dividing it into three parts with two imperatives (commands).

- **Spirit Grieved:** “He who steals (ho klepto/ p.a.ptc.nsm) [private ownership] **must steal (klepto/ p.a. impv.3ps) no longer (meketi) – STOP IT!**
- **Supply Grace:** “But rather (de mallon) he **must labor (kopiao/ p.a. impv.3ps) [employment as a divine institution]**, performing (ergaomai/ p.m.ptc.nsm) with his own hands what is good (to agathos) [supply side logistical grace],
- **Surplus Grace:** “So that (hina) [divine purpose] he (the employed) will have something (echo/ p.a.subj.3ps) [**surplus**] to share (metadidomi/ p.a.infin) [**supply**] with one who has (to echo/ p.a.ptc.dsm) need (chreia) [necessities of life].”

2. (Eph.4:28) points out two things that grieves the Indwelling Holy Spirit:

Stealing and neglecting to share surplus goodness with others in need of grace salvation as well as the necessities of life.

It is often **the needs** of others that bring us into contact with people whose greatest need in life is grace salvation as well as the necessities of life.

This was shown by Peter and John's ministry to a man crippled from birth who was begging alms at gate called Beautiful of the temple in **Acts 3:1-4:4**.

Peter - “I do not possess silver and gold, but what I have I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene - walk!” (Acts 3:6) (messianic healing) (Luke 4:16-21) (Isa.61:1-2)

This drew a large crowd (Acts 3:1-10) and Peter preached the gospel of salvation to them (Acts 3:11-4:4)

(Acts 4:4) “and about 5,000 believed”

3. The 8th of the 10 commandments of the Mosaic Law deals with stealing - “You shall not steal.”

- The God side to first 4 commandments
- The man side to the last 6 commandments

The last 6 commandments have:

- One positive (DO) Family life
- Five negatives (DO NOT) Community life

In my elementary school, the last 6 commands were on the classroom wall as school rules, I never knew personally that they were biblical until I was a grown man.

The purpose of the Mosaic Law was to show man is sinner and needs a Savior (Jas.2:10; Gal.5:3).

(Gal.3:24) “Therefore the Law has become our tutor **to lead us to Christ**, so that (Divine Purpose) we may be justified by faith.”

(Rom.10:4) “For Christ is the **end of the Law** for righteousness to everyone who believes.” (Matt.5:17); (Luke 24:44).

The Church Age Believer operates under a higher law than the Mosaic Law (Rom.8:1-4).

(Rom.8:2) “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.”

(Rom.8:4) “So that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, **but according to the Spirit.**”

The **Church Age Believer** approaches the subject of stealing differently than by the Law. The **Church Age Believer** approaches it by the Love of God (Gal.5:22-23, 25).

(Rom.13:8-10) “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; **for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the Law.** For this, ‘You shall **not** commit adultery, you shall **not** murder, you shall not steal, you shall **not** covet,’ and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this saying, ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’” (Rom.8:9; Matt.22:37-40; Gal.5:14)

NOTE: Count the number of the (not) commands that Paul lists: **FOUR**

But, in (Ex.20:3-16) there are **FIVE** listed??

Which one did Paul intentionally leave out to make his point? (Ex.20:16) “**You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor!**”

4. Let us take a look at some ways one could steal what belongs to others but might not consider it stealing.

- Taking items such as pens and paper (they have plenty) or tools or time on job or wages or boss changing job description without telling or taking from retirement funds or not living up to contractual agreements.
 - **Stealing is taking something that does not belong to you but, does belong to someone else.**
- **My grandfather’s lesson** to me as a young boy on stealing was when it might appear as not stealing “finders-keepers” (it is just a dollar!) and (now what do I do?).
- **My second lesson** of stealing came a week ago at a drive thru restaurant. One of those experiences you might think, your loss is my gain, or your mistake is your lost and my gain, but in fact - it would be stealing. A common mindset might be: “now what do I do? I don’t have time to deal with it now”.