GETTING THINGS THE RIGHT WAY

 **DATE: 4/15/2018 am**

**TEXT: Exodus 20:15; Ephesians 4:28; Malachi 3; Genesis 2; Ecclesiastes 5; Phil. 2**

**INTRODUCTION**

We pick up again today where we left off in our study of the 10 Commandments

Which we are calling - **A Perfect Ten for a Perfect Life**

As we do … we come to the 8th Commandment in **Exodus 20:15**

***“Thou shalt not steal”***

I’d like to preach to you today about **Getting Things the Right Way**

This is a Commandment that not only has something to say to the Bonnie and Clyde’s of the world, but for us as well

It’s a Commandment that not only Condemns the Wrong way of getting things,

But also Reminds us of the Right way to obtain things

I want to also look at the 8th Commandment in light of a New Testament verse that is found in **Ephesians 4:28**

Where we read …

***“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth”***

Again, we see in this Commandment that there is both a Right and a Wrong way to obtain things

Let’s pray and see what the Bible teaches about …

**The 8th Commandment and Getting Things the Right Way**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

First, let’s look at …

**I. A “DISHONEST PROCESS”**

Again the Bible says - ***“Thou shalt not steal”*** and …

***“Let him that stole steal no more…”***

So what does it mean exactly by saying we should not steal?

These Commands are Emphasized and Repeated on several different occasions in the Bible

For example …

We read in **Deuteronomy 5:19 - *“Neither shalt thou steal”***

But in **Leviticus 19:11** we read **–** …

***“Ye shall not steal, neither deal falsely, neither lie one to another”***

So there is more to stealing than just taking something that doesn’t belong to you

The word ***“steal”*** in both our text and **Ephesians 4:28** means *to thieve*

But it also has the idea of *deceiving, or to get by stealth*

You can also take something away from someone by *defrauding* them

To **defraud** means *to deceive, cheat, trick, con or dupe*

When the Bible speaks about stealing it’s speaking about the many different ways people Steal

When it comes to the Dishonest Processes of Obtaining Things

First, let’s look at …

**A. The ‘Diversity’ of Stealing**

There are Many Ways that a person can steal

Obliviously, stealing involves things like …

**1.** Burglary

… Is the crime of illegally entering another person’s premises to commit a felony, usually theft

It is estimated that 325,000 homes and businesses are burglarized each year at a loss of over $14 Billion

Then there is …

**2.** Robbery

Again this is the theft of property but usually includes force, threats or violence

*Bank* or *Armed* Robbery falls into this category

According to another Report, a bank robbery occurred about every 52 minutes somewhere in the US

**3.** Auto Theft

According to an FBI report there were 765,484 vehicles stolen in the US in 2016 at a cost of $5.9 Billion

**4.** Shoplifting

… Is stealing something from a store while pretending to shop for goods

Shoplifting is a major problem in the US

It’s estimated that shoplifting cost US retailers $25 million a day

Studies have found that approximately 24% of shoplifters are teens between the ages of 13-17

We often refer to shoplifting as a *“five-finger discount”* or a *“victimless crime”*

However, shoplifting leads to increases in prices

It’s said that 30% of business failures are due to the cost of shoplifting

**5.** Employee Theft

This is someone stealing from their place of employment

Theft by employees totals nearly $40 billion a year

It is said that 30% of our nation’s workers will steal at some point during their career

**6.** Identity Theft

This is the newest kid on the block

Identity Theft is getting the personal info of someone else, like their SS #, Birth date and using it to open up financial accts. (Like cc) for one’s own benefit

In 2014, more than 17.6 million people were the victims of identity theft and that number is growing daily

**7.** Fraud and Embezzlement

Fraud is the crime of cheating someone out of money by deliberate deception

Phone & E-mail scams are the big thing today

Embezzlement is the crime of taking someone else’s money that you have been entrusted with and using it for your own means

Money managers using your money for themselves and not the intended propose (Ponzi Schemes)

A pastor using the churches money for private purposes

A treasurer of a not-for-profit, like a Volunteer Fire Hall

We hear this on the news all the time now

Plagiarism is a form of Stealing

**Ephesians 4:28 *– “Let him that stole steal no more:”***

While I hope you aren’t doing any of these

You still may be a Theft

You say How?

**8.** Stealing from God

Now you ask; how am I Stealing from God?

I’m glad you asked

Let’s look at **Malachi 3:8 - *“Will (Can) a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed Me …***

***… But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee?”***

Then God answers ***– “In tithes and offerings”***

God says that when you don’t give your Tithe and Offerings to God thru the Local Church

YOU ARE ROBBING GOD!

And breaking the 8th Commandment

Worse than any of those other things … is the Believer who will not Tithe and give offerings unto God

**Ill.** A report by Barna said that the proportion of households that tithe their income to their Church, that is, give at least 10% of their income to that ministry, dropped 62% from 2001 to 2002. Among those who called themselves born again, (Which is 38% of the nation’s population) only 12% tithed. The percentage dropped to only 6% in 2002. According to this study only 6% of those who profess to be saved tithed

That’s sad, no wonder churches are dying

If you want to talk about stealing, you don’t have to go any further than the Church

It would appear that the Church is full of thieves!

All stealing is a sin but robbing from God is the worst form of stealing one could do

You may steal from your employer, shoplift or plagiarize and never get caught by the law

But, you cannot steal from God and get away with it

**Malachi 3:9** says - ***“Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed Me, even this whole nation”***

**The ‘Diversity’ of Stealing**

The Many Ways People Steal

Then there is …

**B. The ‘Dishonesty’ of Stealing**

Stealing is an Act of Dishonesty …

*The use of lies or deceit to get what you want*

To steal is to obtain things by an improper method and a deceitful process

Whenever you take something that is not yours,

Something you did not buy or earn

That is obtaining something in a Dishonest way

The 8th Commandment says - ***“Thou shalt not steal”***

**Ephesians 4:28** says - ***“Let him that stole steal no more”***

Stealing is to be both Avoided and Abandoned

Whether you steal from a store or from God

We need to stop immediately! And Repent

What we get; we are to obtain in a Correct and Proper Fashion

And that leads me to the second truth that I want us to consider

Not only are we reminded by the 8th Commandment of

**A “DISHONEST PROCESS”**

But also of -

**II. A “DILIGENT PROCEDURE”**

In **Ephesians 4:28 b** we read - ***“but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good”***

**Great Principle:** The old rabbis used to say - *“He who does not teach his son a trade teaches him to steal”*

The 8th Commandment not only Condemns the Improper Method of obtaining things,

But also, Challenges us to obtain things by the Proper Method – Working!

When we study our Bible we find that Work is Ordained of God

In the very beginning God put Adam in the garden and gave him everything he needed

**Genesis 2:4, 5 - *“These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,”***

***“And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground”***

Notice carefully that the Bible says ***“there was not a man to till the ground”***

The word ***“till”*** means *to work or cultivate*

The same word is found in **v. 15 - *“And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it”***

The word ***“dress”*** is the same word

The same word is found in **Genesis 31:41** where Jacob said to Laban - ***“Thus have I been twenty years in thy house; I served thee fourteen years for thy two daughters, and six years for thy cattle: and thou hast changed my wages ten times”***

The word ***“served”*** is the same word

Jacob Worked for Laban for 20 years

Adam was to Work the garden God put him in

Again, Work is ordained of God

The Psalmist said in **Psalm 104:23 - *“Man goeth forth unto his work and to his labour until the evening”***

So when we think about Work, we are reminded of …

**A. The ‘Purpose’ of Work**

What is the Purpose of Work?

Work is God’s Method of obtaining things

**1.** Work is not easy

What we have – our possessions – are to be obtained by Working for them

We are not to obtain them by Theft but by Toil,

We are to obtain by Service, not Stealing

The words, ***“working with his hands”*** describes a trade or a job

The word ***“working”*** means *toil* and speaks of *laboring at a task or occupation*

It suggests something that is tiring

Real Work is not easy

By working a trade or a job, one earns the means whereby they can purchase food, clothing, and the others things they need and desire in life

We often use the expression - *an honest day’s work*

Whereas, those who steal are Dishonest

The problem is that people are inherently lazy

They don’t want to break a sweat

But God as ordained Work as the means to meet our needs

Not only is Work not easy, but also …

**2.** Work is a Gift

It may surprise you to know that the Bible describes Work as a Gift of God

In **Ecclesiastes 3:13** Solomon spoke of how ***“that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of his labor, it is the gift of God”***

We also read in **Ecclesiastes 5:18, 19 -** ***“Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion” “Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God”***

The word ***“gift”*** simply speaks of a present that God has given us

He also speaks of how God has given us the ability to eat and take our portion

Riches and wealth come from God

He tells us that the days of our life are a gift from God

The health and strength we have to work is a gift of God

The ability to work, to learn a trade or have a place to work is a present from God

It is a gift from our Creator so that we can have a means of earning money to buy what we need and to obtain things in this life

**The ‘Purpose’ of Work**

**B. The ‘Prosperity’ of Work**

**Ecclesiastes 5:18, 19** not only speaks about Work being a Gift from God

But it also speaks about how we can Enjoy and even Rejoice in the things we have obtained through our Work

**v. 18 - *“Behold … it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour”***

God never condemns us for having things in this life

What He does condemn is when things have us

If a man works hard and earns money to buy something …

He also has the right to enjoy the things he has

The problem is that most of the time the things come between us and God

**Psalm 128:2 - *“For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee”***

I’ve been asked if it is right or wrong to have *things*

For example, someone might ask - *“Preacher, is it wrong for me to own a boat, a pool, a RV etc.?”*

My answer is - *“No, if you can afford it and you don’t let it come between you and God”*

There are some things in life that are the reward of working

They are the reward for our labor

The word ***“labour”*** found in **Ecclesiastes 5:19** means *toil, weary effort*

You worked hard and long hours to have what you have

The Bible says we have the right to enjoy what we have obtained

You have the right to enjoy these things

The Biblical Principle is found in **Matthew 6:33 -**

***“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”***

**Mark 10:29, 30 – *“And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,” “But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life”***

A thieve might steal, but they cannot enjoy what they have

There is always the fear they will get caught or be exposed

But on the other hand, if you work hard and earn what you have, you have the right to enjoy it

Work is the diligent process that God ordains to obtain things in this life

When things are obtained properly, we can enjoy them

**A “DISHONEST PROCESS”**

**A “DILIGENT PROCEDURE”**

**III. A “DELIGHTFUL PURPOSE”**

There is one final truth that I want to point out from the **8th Commandment** and **Ephesians 4**

Notice the words ***“that he may have to give to him that needeth”***at the end of **Ephesians 4:28**

**Ephesians 4:28** speak about Honesty, Industry and Generosity

**Quote:** Someone has said there are only two kinds of people in the world, the Takers and the Givers

**Quote:** John Wesley once said - *“Make all you can, Save all you can, and Give all you can”*

One of the reasons we work is not just so we can get things,

But also to provide the means whereby we can give to others

Those that are blessed are to share their blessings with others

And there is not a person in the US who is not Blessed!

When the Bible tells us to work so that we might have to give to others …

**A. It ‘Excludes a Selfish’ Life (Phil. 2)**

In my 60 + years, I’ve found that …

Most people’s world revolves around themselves

**Ill.** A couple of years ago there was an article in a National Magazine entitled, “The Worst Generation” and it had this scathing assessment of our age: *“The Baby Boomers are the most self-centered, self-seeking, self-interested, self-absorbed, self-indulgent, self-aggrandizing generation in American history”*

I’d have to say that it is more than just the Baby Boomers

Why do you think that is?

Because we live in a very Covetous society

It’s all about me and dying with the most toys

**Quote:** It has been well said that *“they that live only for themselves are engaged in a very small business”*

The Bible says in **Philippians 2:3, 4 *– “Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves” “Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others”***

In answer to Cain’s question in **Genesis 4:9 – *“Am I my brother's keeper?”***

The answer is YES

We are to look out for the needs of others

Paul is calling us to a life of selflessness

He was exhorting Christians not to just live for themselves, but for others

Then he goes on to say in **vs. 5-8 …**

***“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:” “Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:” “But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him(self) …***

***… the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:” “And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”***

The more like Jesus we become the more selfless we become

Christ-likeness has a way of opening our eyes and our pocketbooks

As we’ve learned, Work is God’s Gift to enable us to earn a living

As Christians we also need to realize that what God enables us to have has a far greater purpose than our own enjoyment

We are to take a portion of what we are blessed with and to use it for eternal things, such as being a blessing to others

**Matthew 6:19-21 …**

**The Bible Teaches that we are not to be Selfish**

 The Bible also …

**B. ‘Encourages a Sensitive’ Life**

When **Ephesians 4:28** talks about giving ***“to him that needeth”***

The Bible is talking about being Sensitive to the needs of others …

And when a need is recognized … using what we have been blessed with to help meet that need

There are times when a kind and loving word is all a person needs

In many cases, all people need is for someone to love them

**Ill.** I think of the story of a shabbily dressed boy that trudged several miles through the snowy streets of Chicago, to attend a Bible class that was conducted by D. L. Moody. When he arrived, he was asked, *“Why did you come to Sunday school from so far away? Why didn't you go to one of the churches near your home?”* He answered simply, *“Because you love a fellow over here”*

People need a kind word and need to be loved

There are other times when that is not enough

There are times when we need to use what God has given us, to help meet a need another may have

Sometimes, we may need to carry a bag of groceries to someone

It may be that we need to help pay a light bill

You see, the Bible tells us that we are to share from what we have been blessed, with those in need …

**The Bible Encourages us to be Sensitive to the needs of others**

**CONCLUSION**

What does the 8th Commandment say to us?

It reminds us that there is a Proper and Improper way to obtain things

We are to Work for what we have and then most importantly use what we earn to Help others

**A “DISHONEST PROCESS”**

**A “DILIGENT PROCEDURE”**

**A “DELIGHTFUL PURPOSE”**