



Message Discussion Guide Week of November 5, 2023

Message: The Ten Commandments, Part 10: The Invisible Sin

Key Scriptures: [Exodus 20:17](#), [James 4:1-10](#)

Preacher: Tom Parkinson

Message Highlights:

Fill in the blank: “If I could just have _____, my life would be so much better.”

- It can be fun to daydream about things that would be nice to have, but if we aren’t careful, we can fall into the trap of believing that the “grass is greener on the other side of the fence.”
- What starts as innocent daydreaming can lead to feelings of jealousy, envy, and discontentment.

“You shall not covet.” The 10th commandment is unique because it does not govern our actions, but the attitude of our hearts.

- We can see murder, stealing, lying, etc., but you cannot see someone covet.
- Coveting is the invisible sin.

Coveting means having a strong and disordered desire for something (or someone) that belongs to another.

- Having desires is not wrong. But when we desire the wrong things, or we desire the right things in the wrong way, then our hearts become covetous.
- Coveting places too much value, weight, and meaning on material things. It assumes that the quality of our lives is measured by what we do or do not have.

In our culture, coveting often arises from playing the comparison game. We compare and contrast what we have with others. The result is that we often feel like we got the raw end of the deal and feel less than grateful for what we have.

The antidote to a covetous heart:

- Gratitude – being thankful and appreciative for what we have.
- Contentment – being satisfied with our current circumstances.

When we consider the amazing grace God has shown us, we can always be grateful and content. What more do we need? There is no greener grass than the grass I am standing on.

Discussion Questions:

- 1.) Do you ever daydream about what you would buy if you won the lottery? What's on your list? What's the difference between daydreaming about these things and coveting?
- 2.) Have you ever fallen pray to thinking the "grass is greener on the other side of the fence?" Why is it so easy for us to fall into this thinking? Why is it the wrong way to think?
- 3.) Read the tenth commandment, [Exodus 20:17](#)
 - a. What's your definition of the verb "to covet?"
 - b. The commandment lists a variety of things that shouldn't be coveted. Can you see ways in which we would covet these things today?
 - c. Can you think of a time in your life when you coveted something? How did it affect you?
- 4.) Have you ever played the comparison game? Why is there so much pressure to "keep up with the Joneses?" Why is the comparison game so harmful? What does it take to be able to stop comparing yourself to others?
- 5.) [Read James 4:1-10:](#)
 - a. Why does James say coveting is so dangerous? How does it damage our relationship with others? How does it damage our relationship with God?
 - b. What is the relationship between humility and avoiding the sin of coveting?
- 6.) Pastor Tom said that the key to overcoming the temptation to covet is to cultivate gratitude and contentment. How does showing gratitude combat coveting? What about contentment? What are some practical things you can do to become more grateful and content?
- 7.) What is your primary takeaway from this message? What will you do this week to try to become more obedient to the tenth commandment?

Abundant Life Tip: There are no winners in the comparison game. There will always be someone who has something newer and nicer than you. The key to having joy is to be grateful for what you have and content with the lavish grace God has given you.