

# The 8th Commandment: You Shall Not Steal

Exodus 20:15

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## Overview

- The eighth commandment forbids stealing
- The eighth commandment mitigates the abuse of power and assures property rights
- Christians should be workers and givers
- The prohibition of stealing applies to employers and workers
- Stealing results from greed
- The worst stealing is stealing from God
- God's law and America

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## The Eighth Commandment

- **Exodus 20:15**  
You shall not steal.

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### Implications of The Eighth Commandment

- Property rights are given by God
- Property rights were protected by law in Israel (boundaries, inheritances, etc.)
- When law does not protect property rights, the result is the rule of might ("might is right")
- Socialism is inimical to the nature of humans and the well-being of society

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### When raw power rules unchecked

#### ■ Micah 2:1, 2

Woe to those who scheme iniquity, Who work out evil on their beds! When morning comes, they do it, For it is in the power of their hands. They covet fields and then seize them, And houses, and take them away. They rob a man and his house, A man and his inheritance.

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### Charles Hodge 1872

"In these days, when so many are disposed to throw off the authority of God, and regard marriage and property as mere creatures of the law, which may be regulated or ignored at the caprice or will of the people, it is well to remind them that there is a law higher than any law of man, enforced by the authority of God, which no man and no community can violate with impunity."

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## The antidote to stealing is working and giving

### ■ Ephesians 4:28

He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.

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## Stealing from workers

### ■ James 5:4, 5

Behold, the pay of the laborers who mowed your fields, and which has been withheld by you, cries out against you; and the outcry of those who did the harvesting has reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. You have lived luxuriously on the earth and led a life of wanton pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter.

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## Stealing from employers

### ■ Ephesians 6:7, 8

With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

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## Stealing from employers

### ■ Colossians 3:23, 24

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

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## Stealing is a symptom of greed

### ■ Colossians 3:5

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.

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## Stealing from God's ordained rulers

### ■ Romans 13:6, 7

For because of this you also pay taxes, for rulers are servants of God, devoting themselves to this very thing. Render to all what is due them: tax to whom tax is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.

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## Stealing from God

### ■ Malachi 1:6

A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?' says the Lord of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, "How have we despised Your name?"

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## God's Law and America

- Pagans are those with no special revelation (The Bible)
- Inasmuch as America's citizens and system of law have been influenced by the Bible, we have been more "Christian" and less pagan
- The 8<sup>th</sup> Commandment protects property rights which have been fundamental in America
- When the Bible is not taught in churches, the citizens become increasingly pagan

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## Charles Hodge 1872

It is, therefore, the united testimony of Scripture and of history that the Bible, the Word of God, is the great means of promoting the sanctification and salvation of men, that is, of securing their temporal and eternal well being. Those consequently who are opposed to religion; who desire the reign of indifferentism, or the return of heathen doctrines and heathen morality, are consistent and wise in their generation, in endeavouring to undermine the authority of the Bible; to discourage its circulation; to discountenance attendance on its preaching; and especially to oppose its being effectually taught to the young.

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### God's Law and America

- In a democracy, pagan citizens vote for pagan representatives
- Pagan representatives vote for pagan laws
- Pagan laws represent a pagan value system
- A pagan value system is antithetical to a Christian value system
- Christians in a pagan society are vexed, rejected, ridiculed and persecuted

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### America is not Israel

#### ■ **Deuteronomy 32:8, 9** (ESV)

When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

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Israel, the land and the people, were Yahweh's allotment; if they persisted in rebellion they were kicked out of the land and turned over to the "host of heaven" the allotment of the pagans

#### ■ **Acts 7:42**

But God turned away and delivered them up to serve the host of heaven; as it is written in the book of the prophets, "It was not to Me that you offered victims and sacrifices forty years in the wilderness, was it, O house of Israel?"

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### America is not Israel

- God can and does institute covenants
- Israel is the only nation God has instituted a covenant with
- Man cannot unilaterally obligate God to a man-made covenant
- America has no special covenant status with God
- A nation might specify a state religion, but doing so would not make it Christian

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### Christians in a Pagan America

- God calls us to pray for our leaders (1Tim. 2:1, 2)
- God calls us to submit to civil authorities (1Peter 2:13 -15; Rom. 13:1-4)
- If civil authorities forbid preaching the truth, we must obey God and not man (Acts 4:18-20)
- We must continually have our minds renewed by God's word (Rom. 12:2; Ephesians 4:21-24)

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### Christians in a Pagan America

- We must train our children to have a Christian worldview
- We must realize that our role is to be salt and light in the midst of darkness
- We must evangelize the lost, including the lost in churches
- We must not allow the darkness to corrupt us, harden us, or discourage us
- The remnant must be courageous in battle

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## Applications and Implications

If you do not have citizenship in heaven,  
apply for it immediately!

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If you do not have citizenship in heaven,  
apply for it immediately!

### ■ **Philippians 3:20**

For our citizenship is in heaven, from which  
also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord  
Jesus Christ;

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