

Mark 10:17ff; Lord's Day 42

LOVING THE NEIGHBOR CONCERNING HIS GOODS

1. The right perspective.
 1. This commandment shows God to be the Owner of all, Who distributes as He will, and Who demands an accounting.
1. God distributes earthly things in three orderly and proper ways: through work, inheritance, and gifts.
2. God distributes earthly things without His giving them up, for they remain His and He requires an accounting and returns.
- Man is but a steward, accountable to God for the care of that which God puts under him for a while.
1. The parable of the talents teaches that God entrusts us with some of His wealth, in order to increase His wealth.
2. The purpose of man's dominion of earthly creation was to subdue it and rule it by cultivating and not by exploiting it.
- This is especially the case with those adopted into God's family.
- The failure to use God's gifts to His glory is identified as a sin (I Cor. 10:31), specifically, the sin of stealing.
1. The fallen world in which we live emphasizes rights rather than responsibilities.
1. God emphasizes what we owe our neighbor, not what we might expect from them.
2. The problem is traced to our corrupt heart (not to poverty or lack of education and of opportunity).
- We steal from God in many ways.
- We steal from our neighbor when we take advantage of him so he has a loss.
- There are right motivations for keeping this commandment.
1. Follow the example of Jesus Who was/is the perfect steward.

2. Only those united to Christ by faith can live by faith as true stewards.
3. Obedience expresses our loving gratitude for God's unspeakable Gift and for all His gifts to us.
4. Let us be ever grateful for God's unspeakable Gift, and His many other gifts.