

DAY ONE: Covenant Read: Exodus 19:1-8

We need to think of the Ten Commandments not so much as a list of rules, but more like the vows we hear spoken at a wedding. Holding each other's hands, the bride and groom recite a list of promises each will need to keep if the relationship is to flourish. It's an exclusive relationship. In much the same way, God and Israel say to each other, "I agree to treasure you."

These commands, which God gives and the entire nation agrees to live by (Exodus 19:8), are actually a "covenant." Common in the ancient Near East, a covenant is an agreement whereby the superior (in this case God) makes specific promises to those (in this case the Israelites) who pledge loyalty. In this covenant called the Mosaic Covenant—because it's given to Moses—there are rules, boundaries, and expectations for the behavior for the Israelites.

These expectations are designed for Israel to serve in the special role God has planned for them, his chosen people. The expectations don't secure Israel's salvation or earn them this special relationship. That has already been done (Exodus 19:4). But they do show them how they're to live. As we'll see this week, one way they're to live is to keep from taking those things God has entrusted to someone else.

Today, take time to memorize this command of just four short words, *You shall not steal*. (Exodus 20:15).

DAY TWO: The First Theft Read Genesis 1:1-13

Read the passage and then choose **one verse** that seems important to you and answer one of these three questions:

1. What does it say about God?
2. What does it say about you?
3. What does it say about others?

Then talk to God about what you read/learned and respond appropriately to it.

DAY THREE: Do Something Read Ephesians 4:28

The command to not steal, and the entirety of Old Testament case law which defines the command, is about so much more than not taking something that belongs to someone else. When we really understand

what's behind this command, we see that God is trying to move us away from something (stealing and fraud) and he's moving us toward something. We see it in this short verse in Ephesians 4.

Here we see the command to stop stealing and get a job. The reason is so that *they may have something to share with those in need* (Ephesians 4:28). From thief to giver. Stealing to generosity. Essentially, we're becoming more like the Christ.

Today, begin to increase your level of generosity. It doesn't have to be something big, but make it be something practical. Find someone who needs something you have and give it to them. Your generosity moves you closer to becoming more like the Christ.

DAY FOUR: Make It Right Read Exodus 22:1-4

Read the passage and then choose **one verse** that seems important to you and answer the questions that apply:

- Is there a sin to avoid ?
- Is there a promise to claim?
- Is there a command to obey?
- Is there an application to make?
- Is there something new about God?

Then talk to God about what you read/learned and respond appropriately to it.