

Ten to the Power of Two.



LIFE Group Notes w/b Sunday 3rd January 2010 Do Not Covet

By now you will have realised that the Christmas season is over, and be settling back into some sort of normal routine. Perhaps now would be a good time to reflect on all that has happened in the run up to, and during the festivities. Share what you most enjoyed / disliked, and why.

- 1) Which was your favourite Christmas present and why? How did this compare with what you gave the giver (if anything), in terms of ;
a) value, b) sentiment, c) Individuality?
- 2) What were your thoughts and feelings when you received / opened it? What were your thoughts or motives when you purchased / gave yours?
- 3) What (if anything) did you expect or hope for, and did you receive it? Either way, how did that make you feel?
How does 'life stage' influence this (younger / older, employed etc)?

There is a well know multi-millionaire, when asked 'how much money is enough to satisfy?' he answered, 'always just a little bit more!' This is perhaps a good time to discuss and reflect on what we have, what we need, and what we want.

Read Exodus 20:1-17

"You shall not covet" (Ex. 20:17). Jesus elaborated on this commandment by stating, "You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (Matt. 22:39). The negative and the positive work together. You do not harm people you care about.

- 4) What do the first and tenth commandments have in common? How does love fulfil the law?
- 5) Coveting is not a word that is often heard or used today, but it helps if we understand it as *to desire something which one has no right to have or possess*, or 'do not be motivated by greed'. Today's society

might be described as the 'haves', the 'have-nots' and the 'haves - but not yet paid for's'.

If we were to adopt an attitude of gratitude (be content with what we have), coveting would disappear?

See Luke 12:15 & Phil 4:11,12 to help. *Discuss.*

- 6) The New Covenant law says this; *Be content with what you have and do not lay up treasures for yourself or worry about provision.* See 1 Peter 2:1. Romans 7:7-8. Hebrews 13:5. What do these passages say about this, and what promises can you find in here?

The Bible talks of covetousness being idolatry (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5). Covetousness is an issue of greed. It is also a breach of the first commandment. Jesus warned about it in Luke 12:15-21. "This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God". This tenth commandment is an outgrowth of the first, and deals with our inward thoughts, the person we really are, that which only God can see. If our hearts are fixed on the Lord, we will have the right attitude toward others. Consequently, the desires that rise from our hearts will not cause pain or loss to others. The right motive (pleasing God who is *(should be)* first in our lives) will result in obeying the other commandments, and affect our relationship with others.

- 7) If you can be honest within the confidentiality of your group, share things that you covet. Are hopes, dreams and ambitions the same as coveting? Why / why not?
- 8) If we give away all our material possessions, we ourselves become poor, and dependant. How can we help those less fortunate than us? Be specific and real. Perhaps decide on some action you can do locally, as a group or individually.

The New Testament strongly warns believers against covetousness (Eph. 5:5; James 4:1-5). Longing for more, can lead to longing for what belongs to others, which in turn can lead to injustice as we grasp for the things we want. We are also more likely to break other commandments (*which and how?*). Pray about this (also the work of C.A.P.), and that the only thing we really covet (desire), is more of God.

Don't allow earthly things to fill a void only God can fill.