

EVER WISH YOU HAD A DONKEY LIKE YOUR NEIGHBORS?

Deuteronomy 5:21

Introduction: There may be someplace in the world where someone might actually covet or wish he/she had a donkey like his neighbor, but in most of the world that is not a problem, however people all over the world and all through the ages have seen something somebody else had and wished they had one like it or even that particular one. Why is it that most people are never satisfied with what they have and always want more, better or bigger? God knows what all of us are like and gave us a commandment to help us control that desire and it is the one that deals with coveting or wanting things which are not ours.

I. KEEPING THIS COMMANDMENT MAKES KEEPING THE OTHERS EASIER (*James 4:2*)

1. Whenever any of the other nine commandments are broken, this commandment about not coveting is always broken first.
2. How many people do you know who are perfectly content just as they are, wanting nothing else?
3. Any time we see what others have and we don't, and then get to thinking we just can't live without it, we have broken this commandment. (Having this would sure make me happy..)
4. God is interested in what our heart is looking at as well as what our hands are grabbing for.

II. WHY IS THIS COMMANDMENT SO EASY TO BREAK? (*Psalms 19:10; 1 Corinthians 12:31*)

1. "Desire" is a basic thing God gave us all but it was given for us to use on Him, to want to be with Him, to delight in His Word, to want do something to honor Him. etc.
2. Why is it so easy for us to break this particular commandment?
 - "Me, My, Mine" syndrome. It is **what** we focus on and **why** we want it.
 - It is what we think we must have to be happy and that we deserve it more than those who have it.
 - In a sense we are deciding that God doesn't know as well as we do what we really need.
3. We want what others have because we think it will satisfy us. Believing what makes others happy would make us happy too, if we only had what they have.
 - Ever eat in a restaurant and while eating see somebody with something else and you wish you had ordered that instead of what you have?
 - Ever think that you would be more comfortable, safer, important, accepted if you only had what you saw somebody else with or was doing?
4. Adults are like children with a new toy..quickly become bored with it and toss it aside. Like children adults "cry and beg" in their own way to get what they want and how quickly interest dies once that particular thing is attained.
 - Adults are no different than their children except for the "toy" they want.

III. WHAT IS WRONG?

1. People were made for a relationship with God and real satisfaction and contentment can be found only in that relationship people were made for.
 - Look at Adam and Eve in the Garden - fellowship with God and God provided all their needs.
 - We, too, are here for the same purpose - fellowship with God and God providing all our needs.
 - Satisfaction and contentment will come when we let God do what He wants to do for us.
2. Adam and Eve chose to do things their way apart from God and immediately experienced separation, loneliness, emptiness and loss of contentment.
 - Like Adam and Eve, we also have chosen to do things our own way apart from God and therefore experience the same feelings they did and are constantly searching for satisfaction.
 - Trying to be satisfied with what the world has is why there is war, divorce, adultery, theft, lies, murder and indebtedness, etc.
 - Only God can fill the place in our lives that belong to Him.

IV. WHAT IS THE ANSWER? (*Philippians 4:11-13; Colossians 3:1-7; 15-16*)

1. Can this insatiable craving, coveting, lusting and always wanting more be stopped? **Yes and No.**
 - As long as we continue to try to find security and contentment as we are doing - **NO!**
 - By returning to the only real, original source of the Christian's satisfaction (God) - **YES!**
 - Paul learned the secret and revealed it to us. (*Philippians, Colossians*)
2. For the Christian, the feelings of emptiness, insecurity and insignificance are not true, real facts.
 - For the Christian, what is there to fear? Who is there to impress? What is there to want?
 - The Christian is forgiven, reconciled to God, free from Satan and Death, a child of God with privileges of a child of the King, eternal life and a home in heaven made by God, Himself.
 - What could the world possibly have to offer the Christian better than what God has given?
3. The Christian needs to remember that God wants to provide everything that he/she could ever possibly need and in doing so, the law of "do not covet" will not be hard to keep at all.

CONCLUSION: (*Jeremiah 2:11-13*)

1. God is the only source that will ever satisfy the hunger the Christian has for what is best for him/her.
2. Whenever God is traded for the world the "ME, MY, MINE" syndrome controls and that is nothing less than being enslaved to coveting.
3. Whenever God is allowed to do the providing, the more content and fulfilled the Christian becomes and the less he/she needs from the world to be happy.
 - The less a Christian requires, the more freedom he/she has to enjoy God and His creation.
4. When the commandment to "not covet" is broken, any of the other nine will also be broken. If you want to keep all of God's commandments, start with this one, "**...do not covet...**"