

TRUST GOD'S PROVISION

Small Group Study Guide | June 30, 2024

GRACE
FELLOWSHIP

Thursday, July 4 is Independence Day! Take a few moments to share with your group what you are thankful for about the United States of America.

Discuss: Have you ever been stolen from? How did it make you feel?

Key Text: *"You shall not steal."* (Deuteronomy 5:19)

In Commandment #8, God prohibits stealing, which is taking anything that is not one's own, without the permission of the person who owns it.

1. Revelation – What is God teaching us about Himself in Commandment #8?

In Commandment #8, God is teaching us that:

- He enables and permits human beings to privately own property.

Commandment #8 *"You shall not steal"* assumes private ownership of property—something is owned by someone else, and you should not steal it.

Discuss: How does Exodus 21:28-36 honor and protect property rights?

Discuss: How does Deuteronomy 19:14 protect property boundaries?

Discuss: How do these New Testament verses show that individuals have the right of ownership of money and possessions: Romans 13:9, Ephesians 4:28?

- He intends that His system of private ownership of property be used wisely and generously to glorify Him.

Discuss: According to these verses, how does God expect us to use the possessions He has entrusted to us: Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 9:7; 1 John 3:17?

Discuss: What is the connection between our generosity and God's promise to meet all our needs in Philippians 4:14-19?

- He intends that the possessions we own bring us joy and result in giving thanks to Him.

Discuss: How does 1 Timothy 6:17-18 highlight the joy and gratitude God wants our possessions to bring us?

- He intends that His system of private ownership of property be a continual test of our hearts.

Discuss: How do these verses show that our possessions are to provide a continual test of what is on our hearts: Psalm 62:10; 73:25-26; Matthew 6:21, 24?

Discuss: How do you both enjoy your property and also enjoy your relationship with Christ even more?

2. Introspection – What is God teaching us about ourselves in Commandment #8?

In Commandment #8, God is teaching us that:

- We are to view the possessions, private property, etc. that God allows us to own as a stewardship to Him.

Discuss: How does Genesis 1:26-28 address our stewardship toward God?

- Our hearts have a tendency to love material things too much; so, we must beware of materialism, which is loving things more than we love God.

Discuss: How do these verses warn us of materialism: 1 Timothy 3:3; 6:9-10?

- We must beware of the false “Health-and-Wealth Gospel” which claims it is God’s will that every believer in this lifetime have good health and material prosperity. The Old Testament emphasizes God’s *material* blessings for Israel, but the New Testament emphasizes God’s *spiritual* blessings for believing Jews and Gentiles in Christ (Eph.1:3). While the Bible promises that God will provide for His people’s needs (Php.4:19), there are no New Testament promises of wealth for believers, no New Testament miracles that make people wealthy, and no New Testament commands for us to seek prosperity. God promises to reward our generous giving by generously supplying our needs so that we can continue giving (God gives to us so He can give *through* us), but He does not promise that we will necessarily become wealthy in terms of earthly possessions.

Discuss: How do 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 and Philippians 4:11-12 refute the false “Health-and-Wealth Gospel”?

Discuss: While God does not call us to asceticism (the false teaching that opposes and criticizes the enjoyment of material things God has blessed us with), how does He commend people who are materially poor but rich in faith in these verses: Matthew 8:20; Luke 21:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8:2-5; James 2:5?

3. Transformation – How does God want us to live per Commandment #8?

We are to trust God to be faithful to meet our needs by our asking, not by our demands that He give us whatever we supposedly visualize and claim. We are to recognize that spiritually mature people might experience poverty, adequacy, or prosperity (Php.4:12-13), not that prosperity is the only sign of spiritual maturity and strong faith. We are to understand that if we give generously, God will provide for our needs, but this does not obligate Him to give us health and prosperity.

Discuss: Why is the false “Health-and-Wealth Gospel” so deceptive?

Discuss: How do you balance the attitude of contentment (being free from the love of money) with the attitude of working hard at your job (thereby earning more money)?

For Further Study:

Free online study tools (commentaries, dictionaries, etc.) at blueletterbible.org

Ten Secrets of Successful Living: A Perfect 10 for Families That Win by Adrian Rogers

Our Unmet Needs by Charles Stanley