

#10. Do Not Want What Others Have

(Exodus 20:17)

Introduction

Do you know what the “gimmies” are? Have you ever taken a two-year-old shopping? With outstretched fingers and whining cries, they *must have* everything they see, even if they have never even seen one before until a minute ago!

How about you when you’re home watching TV? What happens to you when the commercials come on? Do you get the “gimmies”? Did you know that the advertisers target children! They know that everyone is born with the “gimmies” – we are naturally greedy and covetous. We have to learn how to curb those appetites.

Today we’re going to learn that God wants us to be happy and content with what we have.

Opening Prayer

Dear Lord, we already have so many things, forgive us for always wanting more. Teach us to be thankful for everything you’ve given us. Help us to be aware when we get the “gimmies”. Help us to remember to be thankful for all You have given us. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

You must not covet your neighbor’s house... or anything else that belongs to your neighbor. (Exodus 20:17)

Lesson

We have been learning the Ten Commandments. Can anyone say the first nine without looking?

1. *Do not have any gods but Me* – God wants us to recognize that He is the *only* true God who created all things. He doesn’t want us to let anything or anyone become more important to us than He is.

2. *Do not worship idols* – God wants us to worship only Him. Don’t let anyone or anything steal God’s place in your life.
3. *Keep God’s Name Holy* – God doesn’t want us to ever think anything, say anything or do anything that would bring dishonor to His name.
4. *Set aside a special day for God* – God wants us to dedicate one day a week to Him. It shows others how important God is to us, plus it refreshes our spirits.
5. *Honor your father and mother* – God promises us that if we respect and obey our parents, we will live a long and happy life.
6. *Do not murder* – God wants us to honor and respect life by choosing to say *no* to violence.
7. *Do not commit adultery* – God wants you to be true to your husband or wife.
8. *You must not steal* – God wants us to be givers and not takers.
9. *You must not lie* – God want you to be truth tellers.

The first four commandments teach us to love God with all of our hearts. And the other six commandments teach us to love others with that same kind of perfect love. By learning how to honor and love God first, you learn to honor and love others.

Today we’re going to learn the tenth commandment.

Exodus 20:17

You must not covet your neighbor’s house. You must not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.”

To *covet* means to *desire* or to *take pleasure in*. Coveting becomes a problem when we want what others have. It’s wishing you had something that belongs to someone else. It goes way beyond simply admiring something that someone else has. It’s more than just thinking, “*I’d like to have one of those, too.*” It is *wanting* something

that you cannot afford to buy; that is way beyond your ability to get. Coveting includes jealousy and envy. It is feeling like you just have to *have* something and you won't be satisfied until you get it! It's resenting the fact that someone else has what you don't have and being willing to do something hurtful to get it.

James 4:1-3

What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you? (2) You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can't get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don't have what you want because you don't ask God for it. (3) And even when you ask, you don't get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.

Getting' the "Gimmies"

[Teacher, have a variety of candy bars or other yummy treats, one per child. Put each treat into a paper sack and put the sacks on a table. Have the children number off. Let #1 take a sack and pull the treat out of the bag. Then let #2 decide if he wants to take #1's treat or take a new sack. #3 may take one of the other kid's treats or take a new sack. When every child finally has a treat, the game is over.]

- How did you feel when you saw a treat you wanted?
- What do you wish you could have done to get it?

All of us at times want things that belong to someone else. This is called *coveting*. That greedy feeling of wanting what others have breaks God's tenth commandment. The Bible teaches us to be happy with what we have.

- Can you share a time when you had the "Gimmies"?

When we do not let God control our *wants*, our coveting will lead us to break other commandments, too. We need to remember that God has promised to meet *all* our needs. Happiness won't come by getting

what you *want*. Happiness comes by being *content* with what you have.

Hebrews 13:5

Don't love money; be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, "I will never fail you. I will never abandon you."

Are you thanking God for all that He has given you?

Luke 12:15

Then he [Jesus] said, "Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own."

God wants us to be happy with what we have.

- What are some things that kids want these days? [Teacher, list them on the board.]

We all think that if we could just get one of these things it would make us happy. But, sometimes the more stuff we have the unhappier we become. We become greedy, discontent, and selfish.

We are God's special people; He wants us to be happy and contented with what we have. And, He wants us to show others how to do that, too.

Colossians 3:1-2

Since you have been raised to new life with Christ, set your sights on the realities of heaven, where Christ sits in the place of honor at God's right hand. (2) Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

- What are some "*things of heaven*" that we should think about? (Heaven is a beautiful place. There will be no sorrow; no needs; streets of gold; and God has a mansion waiting for us there. God's thoughts towards us are more numerous than the grains of sand.)
- How does thinking about the things of heaven help you keep God's commandment to not want what others have?

- Which of the “*things of heaven*” do you need to set your heart on?
- How can you do that?

The secret to not wanting what others have is being happy with what you do have. Learn to count the “*things of heaven*” as some of your most prized possessions. After all, they are the only things that will last!

Green with Greed

This funny skit shows the kids how thankfulness cures greediness.

Materials: 2 copies of the “*Green with Greed*” script; green washable marker; 2 baby wipes; jar of jelly beans labeled “*Thank-Pill-Ness: This cures covetousness*”; extra jelly beans for class; optional extras, lab coat, stethoscope.

Preparation: Choose two kids to read this skit. Have one child make green marks on his or her face with washable marker.

Greenie: (Crying) Doctor, doctor, help! I’ve got a case of the greenies.

Doctor: Let’s check the symptoms. Hmm, has your neighbor gotten something new?

Greenie: Well, now that you mention it, my neighbor does have a new four-wheeler. Oh, that motor hums, and you ought to see the crazy colors it’s painted, and it goes, like, fifty miles an hour, and...

Doctor: Yes, I see. And have you been wishing you had one like it?

Greenie: You bet I Have! I’ve wanted one just like it since that first varoom...

Doctor: I see. And have you been dreaming of ways to get one yourself?

Greenie: Boy, have I! I’ve been looking in the paper for one and saving my money for one and...

Doctor: Aha! My friend, what you have is not so much a case of the greenies. You have a bad case of the greedies!

Greenie: Oh, no! Doctor, what can I do?

Doctor: (Handing Greenie the jar) This jar of “*Thank-pill-ness*” will cure the most covetousness, greediness, and downright wanting what others have.

Greenie: How often do I take them?

Doctor: Any time you feel the greedies coming on, thank God for what you do have. You will overcome the greedies by being happy with what you have.

Greenie: OK, doc.

Greenie: (Thanks God for things and people and all the blessing of God in his life. Each time he does, he pops a jelly bean into his mouth and uses the baby wipe to wipe off a spot of green marker until the spots and jelly beans are gone.)

- What was Greenie’s real problem?
- How is Greenie like you sometimes?
- How can you cure your greedies?

Ephesians 5:5

You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Don’t be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him.

If you have ever wished that you had something that belongs to someone else, you have broken the 10th Commandment; you are a lawbreaker! You’ve broken God’s law and deserve to be punished.

But thankfully God didn’t leave us in this hopeless situation! Jesus came to die on the cross. He lovingly shed His blood for you and for

me so now we can go to Him when we break any of these commandments, confess our sins and receive a full pardon. God forgives us for being lawbreakers when we trust what Jesus did for us on the cross.

Closing Prayer

[Teacher, have each child thank God for something.]

Dear Lord, You have given us so much. Besides all the wonderful things we have at home, we have a God who loves us and smiles on us. We have You, Jesus, as our best friend, and we have a home in heaven waiting for us. You are so kind! Help us to be happy with what we have. We want to obey You when You tell us that we should not want what others have. We're so glad we have You! In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Make large hearts and have the children either draw pictures of or list the things that they have that they thank God for.

Game Center

Use the following questions in a game of your choice:

Review questions:

1. What are the "gimmies"? (Wanting what others have.)
2. What does "covet" mean? (To *desire* or to *take pleasure in*.)
3. When you admire something someone has, is that coveting? (No. Coveting is resenting the fact that someone else has what you

don't have and being willing to do something hurtful or illegal to get it.)

4. What brings us true happiness? (Finding contentment with what we have. Thankfulness.)
5. What are the "*things of heaven*" that we should think about? (Heaven is a beautiful place. There will be no sorrow; no needs; streets of gold; and God has a mansion waiting for us there. God's thoughts towards us are more numerous than the grains of sand.)
6. How does thinking about the things of heaven help you keep God's commandment to not want what others have?
7. How can you cure your greedies? (By being thankful.)

[For more lessons for children, visit
<https://www.freechildrensministrylessons.com>]