

stealing what is not theirs. All of us are condemned before God as thieves. Only Jesus never stole a single thing in his entire life. Instead of stealing what wasn't his, he gave his life for us so that we, thieves, could be forgiven and live.

#### Discussion Questions

- Do you have any stories of stealing what wasn't yours. Can you share how God forgave you for stealing and led you to make restitution?
- How does Jesus offer hope to thieves?

#### **Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse**

Why do we steal? There are people called kleptomaniacs who steal constantly wherever they go. People will often ask, "why do they keep stealing?" While this comes down to a mental disorder, most of us don't have the same excuse when we are caught stealing. Why do you steal? The Bible gives a few hints at the matters of the heart that lead to stealing. The first clue comes from the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment *You shall not covet*. Before the thief ever reaches out to steal he begins by coveting in his heart that which he does not have. A second clue comes from the Apostle Paul. In discussing his own response to circumstances in which he might be tempted to covet he responds instead with contentment. Philippians 4:11 *I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content*. Paul is content in all situations because he realizes that God is the one who has provided in the past and God will provide in the future. If God hasn't given you everything you want now, he has given you everything you need. Romans 8:28 *And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose*.

#### Discussion Questions

- If you are considering stealing what sin is a work in your heart?
- How can you grow in contentment?

# Baptist Catechism

## Family Worship Guide



### West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025)

#### Baptist Catechism Question #78

**Q:** Which is the eighth commandment?

**A:** *The eighth commandment is, Thou shalt not steal.*

#### Suggested Memory Verse

*Psalms 115:16 The heavens are the Lord's heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man.*

### Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Most any young child knows it is wrong to steal. However, if you ask many children, and even many adults, why it is wrong to steal you will run into confusion. You might hear, “just because?” or, “it’s not nice.” Some would answer, “I don’t want people to steal from me.” Others might start talking about personal autonomy and rights. While there is some truth to these answers they miss the core truth of the eighth commandment. The commandment *You shall not steal* has to come back to the person and authority of God. He is the creator of everything. As creator, God actually owns everything he has created. Psalm 24:1-2 The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers. Since God owns everything then the question we must ask is not, “what can I take for myself?” This is the question those of the world ask. Instead we must ask, “what has God given to me?” We are responsible before God for how we use everything He has placed in our hands. If God hasn’t given us what we want we are to be content with His provision even as we wait on Him for all that we need.

#### Discussion Questions

- What’s the problem with saying we shouldn’t steal is only based on human rights or modern convention?
- How does the fact God owns everything change our perspective on the command not to steal?

### Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Yesterday we began looking at the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment *You shall not steal*. We saw that the foundation of the commandment rests on God’s ownership of everything. While the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment is most often considered with regard to how we treat our neighbor we have a hint here that it start before that. How do we treat God himself? While we must consider how we steal from our neighbors, have you thought much about how you can steal from God? If God owns everything then he owns you. This means everything you do belongs to him and ought to be lived out for him. We steal from God when we break the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment and start living for ourselves or other idols. The prophet Malachi says we can also steal from God when we refuse to give him our tithes. Malachi 3:8-10 Will man rob God? *Yet you are robbing me. But you say, ‘How have we robbed you?’ In your tithes and contributions. You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing me, the whole nation of you. Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house.* We can also steal from God when we refuse to give him our Sabbath days but do our own things on those days. God owns us and deserves the entirety of our lives lived out for him.

#### Discussion Questions

- What are some things that we might steal from God? Can you think of anything you have been holding back from him?
- How might you live differently if you consider that God owns you?

### Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

God made the heavens and the earth. He made all things and to him all things belong. As all things belong to God, we ought not to steal from him. We should instead give him all the glory and honor that is his due. We should worship him as he instructed. We should give him our Sundays especially, as well as the first fruits of our income. Yet, if God owns everything, does that mean that we don’t own anything? Some have tried to argue against private ownership by saying that it all belongs to God and not us. This is not actually a biblical way of thinking. The 8<sup>th</sup> commandment itself demands the reality of private ownership. How can you steal from your neighbor if he owns nothing? The bible teaches that God owns everything and he gives a portion of his creation to people. Psalm 115:16 *The heavens are the Lord’s heavens, but the earth he has given to the children of man.* While he never gives up ownership he actually sets up man as a sort of steward to care for and make use of his property for him. Each of us have a portion of God’s creation that is ours to care for. Some have more and some have less but we are all responsible for how we steward what God has given us.

#### Discussion Questions

- How does the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment demand private property?
- How does thinking of yourself as a steward change the way you think about your money and possessions?

### Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

When you think of a thief what picture comes to mind? A bank robber driving away with a tommy gun and bags full of dollar bills? A child sneaking a candy bar off the shelf? Maybe you think of two guys in sky masks breaking into a house while the owners are away. The Bible also describes a horrific sort of thievery called manstealing. Slavers steal and sell human beings. While these are all thieves of different sorts, thieves can come in much more mundane apparel. Often we ourselves are thieves. Stealing is when you take something that doesn’t belong to you. This can happen when we slip something that isn’t ours into our pockets and take it home. That can be in the grocery store or when a man takes office supplies from his job that aren’t given to him. We can steal more than money or possessions. Have you ever taken credit for someone else’s work? That was stealing. Have you ever borrowed an item and carelessly lost it or damaged it? If you didn’t replace what you borrowed that too was stealing. Other commandments can overlap with the 8<sup>th</sup> commandment as well. The 10<sup>th</sup> commandment forbids the coveting that often preceeds our attempts to steal. When people break the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment and commit adultery they are