

## Galatians 5; Lord's Day 44

### THE EVIL OF SIN WITHIN

#### I. The description.

- A. To "covet" is to judge something to be desirable, and then to long for it in order to possess it.
- B. To covet is a natural activity of man as a creature, and it is not per se sinful.
- C. After the fall into sin, coveting can be either right or wrong.
  - 1. It is right if the thing desired is a good thing and the desire is moderate.
  - 2. It is wrong when the good thing we desire belongs to my neighbor.
  - 3. It is wrong when my coveting is immoderate (too much so we are not content) - called a "lust."

#### II. While the state and the church cannot and do not punish for violations of the tenth commandment God does.

- A. Scripture contains serious warnings concerning this sin.
  - 1. Scripture speaks of it as "idolatry" (Col. 3:5) and says it leads to hell (I Tim. 6:9).
  - 2. It is a deceitful sin, for it is called a "cloke" (I Thess. 2:5).
  - 3. And it is a mother sin, giving rise to many other evils within and without (a "root of evil" I Tim. 6:10).
- B. This sin is deeply offensive to God.
  - 1. Covetousness damages love for God, as we become filled with love for ourselves rather than God.
  - 2. God hates covetousness because it is the act of worshiping earthly things rather than Him.
  - 3. Covetousness destroys relationships with jealousy, so we cannot love our neighbor.
- C. Thus God condemns sin as it begins deep within us: in the imagination of the thoughts of our heart (Gen. 6:5).

#### III. The positive calling.

- A. Salvation in Jesus Christ means forgiveness for all of our coveting **and** also freedom from having to covet.
- B. Rejoice at your neighbor's prosperity and good, seeing God as the Giver (instead of selfishly bitterness).
- C. Consider the antidotes against this sin.