

Colossians 3; Lord's Day 44

THE NEED FOR RIGHT DESIRES

- I. The concept.
 - A. To "covet" is to judge something to be desirable; then it is to long for it in order to possess it.
 1. To covet is not per se sinful, for it is a natural activity of man as a dependent creature.
 2. Man was created with a conscious desire for God, both communion with Him as the highest good (Ps. 73:25).
 - B. After the fall into sin, coveting, like everything else, could be sinful, which it now usually is.
 1. It is right if the thing desired is a good thing and the desire is moderate.
 2. It is wrong when my coveting is immoderate, ungoverned, and selfish (whenever we lose contentment) - called a "lust."
 3. And coveting is wrong when the good thing I desire belongs to my neighbor.
- II. God justly condemns such desires as sins (while the state cannot punish it).
 - A. Covetousness can take over the heart of a believer for a while.
 - B. The seriousness of this sin is seen in the three warnings Scripture gives concerning covetousness.
 - C. And it destroys relationships: taking our attention away from God, and destroying relationships and friendships.
 1. It destroys our relationship with God for it is worshiping earthly things rather than Him. Thus "idolatry" (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5).
 2. Covetousness destroys relationships with others with jealousy, so we cannot love our neighbor.
- III. God calls us to fight against this sin and to put on the positive virtues of godly contentment with God's way.
 - A. Confess our sins of coveting, and admit constantly the covetousness of our natures.
 - B. God forgives us in Jesus of all of our coveting **and** He gives us the freedom from having to covet.
 - C. Some antidotes against this sin.