

## Romans 7; Lord's Day 44

### INNER LOVING OF GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOR

- 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.
  - B. To covet is not per se sinful, for it is a natural activity of man as a dependent creature.
  - C. After the fall into sin, coveting, like everything else, could be sinful, which it now usually is.
    1. It is wrong when my coveting is immoderate (whenever we lose contentment) - called a "lust."
    2. 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 one for them).
  - A. The seriousness of this sin is seen in the warnings Scripture gives concerning covetousness.
  - B. Further, Scripture shows this sin to be deeply offensive to God.
    1. God hates covetousness because it is worshiping earthly things rather than Him. Therefore "idolatry" (Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5).
    2. Covetousness can take over the heart of a believer for a while.
    3. Covetousness destroys relationships with jealousy, so we cannot love our neighbor.
  - C. Thus God condemns sin as it begins deep within us: a spark of desire within us begins a huge fire.
- 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. Consider Israel in the wilderness as a warning against covetousness (I Cor. 10:6).
  - D. Rejoice at your neighbor's prosperity and good, seeing God as the Giver (instead of selfishly bitterness).
  - E. Some antidotes against this sin.