

## THE LARGER AND SHORTER CATECHISMS.

HAVING SEEN WHAT THE SCRIPTURES PRINCIPALLY TEACH US CONCERNING GOD, IT  
FOLLOWS TO CONSIDER WHAT THEY REQUIRE AS THE DUTY OF MAN

QUESTIONS # 147 & 80.

*(Larger Catechism)*

Q #147. *What are the duties required in the tenth commandment?*

A. The duties required in the tenth commandment are, such a full contentment with our own condition,<sup>1</sup> and such a charitable frame of the whole soul toward our neighbour, as that all our inward motions and affections touching him, tend unto, and further all that good which is his.<sup>2</sup>

*(Shorter Catechism)*

Q #80. *What is required in the tenth commandment?*

A. The tenth commandment requireth full contentment with our own condition,<sup>3</sup> with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbour, and all that is his.<sup>4</sup>

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Question 1—*What is the first duty of the tenth commandment?*

*Answer*—The first duty of the tenth commandment respects ourselves, for we are the ones forbidden to covet, Ex. 20:17. A full contentment, being the opposite of coveting, Ezek. 33:31; appears in two things:

*First*, we are forbidden to covet, or lust, after the things which we have, 1 Tim. 6:16. Thus we are to study a weanedness from and indifferency from all those things which we have, in which we are too prone to place our desires outside of true religion, Ps. 119:36. Yet, we must recognize that there are things pertaining to true religion, whether doctrinal or practical, which we cannot desire too much, Gal. 5:17. There are many things lawful, pertaining to this life, wherein we are too careful and after which we seek too eagerly and inordinately, instead of cultivating that holy indifference with which we should learn to possess all things of this life, Ps. 131:2. This is done by: 1.) Keeping your heart's desire loosed from them, so that they are not so joined to it so that you resent it when God should be pleased to separate you from them, Luke 12:15-21. All things of this present life should be held with that disposition which Jesus called hating of them, Luke 14:26. 2.) There needs to be great care that the heart seek no more in these things than God has placed in them, whether for refreshment, rest or other comfort, lest we displace with inordinate desire that place reserved for God alone, Ps. 4:6. The corrupt judgment of man magnifies earthly things, and tries to discover substance in what is merely shadow, and the corrupt affections grasp at them and, even after numberless disappointments, they lust still, Isa. 57:10. 3.) The soul should draw its strength and support from God as its fountain, not the things of this world, Ps. 18:46. The good things of this world are not to be the portion of God's children, Luke 16:25. 4.) There should be a using of them with a holy carelessness, not filling our appetites in this world, 1 Cor. 7:29-31. A greedy appetite

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<sup>1</sup> Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:6.

<sup>2</sup> Job 31:29; Rom. 12:15; Ps. 122:7-9; 1 Tim. 1:5; Est. 10:3; 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

<sup>3</sup> Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:6.

<sup>4</sup> Job 31:29; Rom. 12:15; 1 Tim. 1:5; 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

for the things of this world is the sign of an unweaned soul, the sign of one longing for and setting oneself inordinately upon a world that is passing away, Matt. 24:38.

*Second*, we are forbidden to covet, or lust, after the things we do not have, Heb. 13:5. There is to be a full contentment, without even a discontented glancing of the eye, which requires: 1.) A renunciation of our will, saying as we are taught to pray, not my will, Matt. 26:39. We must cease to concern ourselves with choosing our lot in this world, Ps. 47:4. We are not to seek to choose the comfort, though the desire be lawful, wherein the first man failed, Gen. 3:6. Likewise, Rachel, though she had an husband, must have children with inordinate desire, Gen. 30:1. So, too, Orpah must have an husband with inordinate desire, and departs from Naomi, Ruth 1:14, 15. Ruth, on the other hand, sought both from God's hand and was blessed, Ruth 4:13. We must seek to be no determiner of what is fitting for our own estate, 1 Tim. 6:8. We must take care to avoid willfulness in anything pertaining to this life, 1 Tim. 6:9; lest we tempt God to give us up to our own desire, Ps. 78:29-31. 2.) An absolute resignation to the will of the Lord, Matt. 16:24. 3.) An entire submission to the will of God, 1 Sam. 3:18. We must be content to bring our mind down to our lot, Phil. 4:11, 12.

Question 2—*Wherein does this command respect our neighbor?*

*Answer*—This command concerns the possession of a right and charitable frame towards our neighbor, 1 Cor. 13:4-7; even toward those that are accounted our enemies, Job 31:29. This is the end of all the commandment, that we attain this frame of spirit, 1 Tim. 1:5. This also moves us to seek all that tends to his good and furtherance in this life, Est. 10:3; as well as in the life to come, Ps. 122:7-9.

We take up this frame of spirit when we: 1.) Have love toward our neighbor's person, as to ourselves, Rom. 13:9. Herein, in the keeping of this commandment aright we keep the whole of the second table in its proper spirit, Matt. 22:39. 2.) Have an upright respect for what is his, for his own sake, for he is your brother, Deut. 22:1. It argues our worldliness and lack of charity when we show so little concern for others, Phil 2:4. 3.) Have a hearty desire for the welfare and prosperity of our neighbor in all things consistent with the glory of God and his own spiritual good, Gal. 5:13; including that of those accounted our enemies, Rom. 12:20. 4.) Have a real complacency, or self-satisfaction, in the welfare of all that is our neighbor's, Rom. 12:15. 5.) A sympathy for our neighbor in any evil that befalls him, though he be our enemy, Ex. 23:4, 5. A hard heart toward those who are afflicted argues an uncharitable frame, Ps. 35:13-15.

Question 3—*Wherein does this command reach?*

*Answer*—This commandment reaches to what is the root of all other sin, covetousness, Rom. 7:7-13. Herein we should note that covetousness is: 1.) A subtle sin, because it hides all kinds of other sins under the cloak of frugality and prudence, 1 Thess. 2:5. 2.) It is a dangerous sin, for it hinders our ability to profit in hearing the Word of God and is a great cause why men find so little profit and comfort in the true religion, Matt. 13:7, 22. 3.) It is a mother sin and radical vice which, if a man drive it not from him, will drive a man from the true religion, 1 Tim. 6:10. 4.) It is a sin disgraceful for those who profess to have their hopes set above, wherein they show themselves buried in the earth, Col. 1:5. 5.) It exposes us to God's abhorrence, Ps. 10:3. 6.) It shuts men out of heaven, Eph. 5:3, 6.