

# THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

## “We Are His Workmanship”

Date: 2-2-25 Lesson: 36

Pastor David Nehrenz

Trinity Lutheran Church Norman, OK

### THE TEXT (Ephesians 6:5-9)

(5) **Slaves**, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would **Christ**, (6) not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as servants **of Christ**, doing **the will of God** from the heart, (7) rendering service with a good will as **to the Lord** and not to man, (8) knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from **the Lord**, whether he is a slave or free.



1 Cor 3:8; 7:22; 12:13; 2 Cor 5:10; 11:3;  
Gal 1:10; 3:28; Php 2:12; Col 3:11,22-24; 1 Tim 6:1; Titus 2:9,10; 1 Pet 2:18)

(9) **Masters**, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that **he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.**

(Lev 25:43; Dt 10:17; Job 31:13-15; Jn 13:13;  
Ac 10:34,35; Rom 2:9-13; Col 4:11; 1 Pet 1:17)

### STUDY HELPS

#### Luther's Large Catechism - THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

[222] You shall not steal.

[223] ...the commandment about temporal property. **God also wants property protected.** He has commanded that no one shall take away from, or diminish, his neighbor's possessions.

[233] Therefore, let everyone know his duty, at **the risk of God's displeasure:** he must do no harm to his neighbor nor deprive him of profit nor commit any act of unfaithfulness or hatred in any bargain or trade. But he must also faithfully preserve his property for him, secure and promote his advantage. This is especially true when one accepts money, wages, and one's livelihood for such service.

[249] It is necessary for us to do no more than to teach and to warn **with God's Word.** But to check such open greediness **there is need for the princes and government.** They themselves should take note and have the courage to establish and maintain order in all kinds of trade and commerce. They must do this, lest the poor be burdened and oppressed and the leaders themselves be burdened with other people's sins.

[250] Briefly, in summary (as in the former **commandments**) this is what is forbidden: (a) To do our neighbor any injury or wrong (in any conceivable manner, by impeding, hindering, and withholding his possessions and property), or even to consent or allow such injury. Instead, we should interfere and prevent it.

[251] (b) It is commanded that we advance and improve his possessions. When they suffer lack, we should help, share, and lend both to friends and foes.

[252] Whoever now seeks and desires good works will find here more than enough to do that are heartily **acceptable and pleasing to God.** In addition, they are favored and crowned with excellent blessings. So we

are to be richly compensated for all that we do for our neighbor's good and from friendship. King Solomon also teaches this in Proverbs 19 [17], "Whoever is generous to the poor lends **to the LORD**, and He will repay him for his deed."

[253] Here, then, **you have a rich Lord**. He is certainly enough for you. He will not allow you to come up short in anything or to lack. So you can with a joyful conscience enjoy a hundred times more than you could scrape together with unfaithfulness and wrong.

### **Luther's Large Catechism - THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT - HONESTY AND WORK**

*By Ricardo Willy Rieth*

Work, property, money, and material goods occupy a central place in the lives of individuals, families, and communities. According **to the Gospel**, is all this directly related **to the Christian faith** and the practice of love...

The Seventh Commandment, more than anything, is a guideline for **how Christians** can actively help others to protect and promote what they possess. Luther's readiness to help others materially is described by the term "liberality," which is synonymous with "generosity." The practice of liberality is a clear expression of love, which is born of faith. The real meaning of this commandment relates to a poverty of spirit (Matthew 5: 3), which is only fulfilled by **the grace of God**. This is proclaimed by **the example of Christ**, who became poor in consequence **of His love** for humanity (cf. Philippians 2: 6– 7).

Beginning with the Seventh Commandment, work and honesty are presented as a fundamental part of **Christian life in the domestic economy**...work and honesty in economic relations cannot be dissociated from **the Christian life**...The commandment requires active fulfillment and positive behavior. In other words, the love generated by faith leads **Christians** to dedicate themselves to do everything possible so that their neighbors preserve their property and are able to use it for their benefit. The content of the Seventh Commandment forbids harming others, doing injustice against them in any way in labor, commercial, and financial relations.

**Professions, or vocations, correspond to the spheres in which God places His creatures**, giving them intelligence, energy, skills, abilities, and attitudes to serve others in love, to do good, and to be the salt of the earth and light of the world (Matthew 5: 13– 14). It is remarkable how Luther's explanation of the Seventh Commandment is closely related to his interpretation of **the First Commandment**, for him the most important commandment of all because it is fulfilled through the work of faith, **given by the Holy Spirit**.

*Luther's Large Catechism with Annotations and Contemporary Applications (pp. 378-383).*

*Concordia Publishing House. Kindle Edition.*

#### **LIFE APPLICATION**

Every Christian has a vocation = calling (vocatio)

We walk in faith toward God and love for our neighbor.

- 1<sup>st</sup> Table of the Law – Commandments 1-3
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Table of the Law – Commandments 4-10

How do you balance the living out of these Six Daily Callings?:

1. Disciple of Christ Jesus our Lord
2. If married – Spouse; If single - Son / Daughter
3. If married – Parent; If single - Brother / Sister Uncle / Aunt
4. Occupation and Employment
5. Congregation Member
6. Citizen of your Community