

what is His. We speak of the possessions of honest persons, of course, but we would not be correct to steal from one who was dishonest! God will deal with the injustices and sins of such persons and in the meantime we must trust Him and wait to see what He will do. Our lot is to use the abilities and skills that God has given us to provide what we need. To take for ourselves what He has allowed for others is to defy the integrity of His dealings.

In the second place, the law indicates we should be content with what we have. Contentedness is not to be confused with laziness however. We may use the skills and opportunities God gives to improve ourselves and to enrich our lives. But we cannot try to do this by taking what belongs to others. In this area we must be content with what we have and with what we may legitimately obtain. There are two key concepts that help in the development of this contentedness. The first is thankfulness; being glad for what God has given, and the second is appreciation; using fully what He has allowed us to have. If one's mind is on the blessings of God, the concepts of stealing are not likely to bother one.

A third implication is the reality of sharing what we have. Some thievery is simply malicious and some is the product of worldly greed. But there are incidents of stealing that grow from a need...one which might well have been met by sharing. Learning to give is one of the Christian graces and our possessions would mean more to us if we were to share more fully. The opposite of "Thou shalt not steal" is not "Thou shalt hoard." It would seem clear that sharing helps prevent stealing that comes from need.

When we act positively on the law we condition ourselves against legal violations. It is true that we may not be able to compel others to obey the statute but obedience must always begin with us! As we obey we honor