

## 10th.Application

Preserving and Promoting Good Desires in Ourselves and Others  
Full contentment with our own condition and furthering our neighbor's (Q 147)

WLC 148: **What are the sins forbidden in the tenth commandment? A. The sins forbidden in the tenth commandment are, discontentment with our own estate; envying and grieving at the good of our neighbour, together with all inordinate motions and affections to any thing that is his** [that tend to work against furthering the good of our neighbor, cf. 147]

Key text: **But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice. 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace** (James 3.14-18).

Q: Clearly the main emphasis made by the formulators is on the virtue of contentment. If we are content, how will we show it toward God? What makes discontentment so wrong? [It shows you are unthankful, not satisfied with God's provision, not happy with God, and not trusting in His wisdom and love for you.

Watson (*Ten*) on the 3fold cure for covetousness: faith, wisdom, heavenly mindedness

### I. Faith

Faith overcomes the world (1 Jn 5.4). The root of covetousness is distrust of God's providence. Faith believes that God will provide; that he who feeds the birds will feed his children. Faith, by a divine chemistry, extracts comfort out of God. A little with God is sweet. Faith overcomes both the fear and the love of the world (179).

The best remedy for covetousness is contentment. Basic fact: if we are content with our own, we shall not covet that which is another's. So focus on contentment, which we must learn through trial like Paul regarding whatever state I am in...to be content (Phil 4.11). What then is the key to contentment? It is to trust what God by providence carves out for you. Believing that estate to be best which God appoints us, makes us content & being contented, we shall not covet.

### II. Wisdom

Judicious considerations: 1) what poor things these things below are that we should covet them! There are far below the worth of the soul. 2) We covet that which will not satisfy us. **He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity** (Ecc 5.10). 3) Worldly things cannot remove trouble of mind; crown jewels do not comfort a king. Things can no more ease a troubled spirit than a gold hat can cure a headache. 4) Things are fleeting: they either go from us, or we from them. 5) We have intellectual and immortal souls for better purpose than to covet earthly things only. Our souls are made for a higher end: to aspire after the enjoyment of God in glory.

### III. Heavenly mindedness

Remedy for covetousness: covet spiritual things more, if we covet heaven more we will covet earth less. Set your mind on things above. Note: an aid here is to absorb prophetic and historical-redemptive perspectives and thus recognize that you died when Christ died and were raised with Him in His resurrection, so, **If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth** (Col 3.1). Participate in heavenly glorious worship of His Majesty now. Remember where you have come, to the heavenly Zion, Heb 12.22f.

Take a turn in heaven every day: walk with God as Enoch did (Gen 5.24). If our hearts were more fixed upon the Jerusalem above, all worldly things would disappear, would diminish, and be as nothing in our eyes. O covet after heavenly things! Thus, pray for a heavenly mind: Lord, teach me how to possess the world, and not love it; how to hold it in my hand, and not let it get hold of my heart (180).

