

### 3 The Problem of Sin and Its Disordered and Destructive Impact On Family, Life, and Marriage

*Ephesians 4:29—5:1-7*

*4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary <sup>[a]</sup>edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. <sup>32</sup> And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

*5:1 Therefore imitators of God as dear children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.*

*<sup>3</sup> But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; <sup>4</sup> neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. <sup>5</sup> For <sup>[a]</sup>this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. <sup>7</sup> Therefore do not be partakers with them.*

1. Faith in God's sacrificial love in Christ is foundational for a happy, well-adjusted, and fulfilled life in marriage and family because such love is self-giving and sacrificial rather than self-centered and possessive. (Ephesians 4:29-32; 5:1)
2. Rejection of God's sacrificial love in Christ leads to disorder and destruction in marriage and family because it is based upon covetousness. (Ephesians 5:3-7)
3. To covet is to idolize your desires to be and to have those things that God has not given you or to satisfy your selfish, sinful nature. (Eph. 4:31; Eph 5:5-7)
4. Covetousness is idolatry because it rejects who God is (the Triune God of love) and what God gives (in creation, salvation, and sanctification) in favor of satisfying the self-centered will. (Ephesians 4:30; Ephesians 5:5-6)
5. To be a disciple of covetousness leads to a loss of one's "inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God." (Ephesians 4:30; Ephesians 5:5-6)
6. The Ninth and Tenth Commandments identify covetousness as central to the problem of sin which leads to the disorder and destruction of family, life, and marriage. (Small Catechism, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Commandments)

**Ninth Commandment:** *(God desires to protect the affections of the heart.)*

**You shall not covet your neighbor's house.**

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God

so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house,  
or get it in a way which only appears right,  
but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

**Tenth Commandment:** *(God desires to guard and protect the relationships He has given.)*

**You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant,  
his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.**

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God

so that we do not entice or force away our neighbor's wife, workers, or animals,  
or turn them against him,  
but urge them to stay and do their duty.

7. Thinking about mental, physical, and spiritual health and well-being, consider the following topics based on the Ninth and Tenth Commandments and these theses:

- Cohabitation before marriage
- Abortion
- "Same-sex marriage"
- Gender re-identification and/or reassignment therapies and surgeries
- A family without faith in Christ
- Members of a "Christian family" who harbor resentment.