Dear Reader,

I am new to producing reading sermons. So, if you have any suggestions as to how I might improve my format or what I include – please email me at cdanielwilson@gmail.com. **I will warn you, that I do not use short sentences**. I will endeavor to work on this over time, but I don’t naturally write that way. However, you can easily break most of my longer sentences into 2 or 3 smaller ones where I have “…” or “–“ or commas. If you do the work on making it into smaller sentences – feel free to email it to me, and I am happy to share your work with others. I do have some of these available which people have sent me. I will eventually make them available as part of the normal manuscripts.

I have left my sermon manuscript formatted the way I normally write and read my sermons. They are colourful and written in conversational English. If you are a grammar nazi – then you will be frustrated with my punctuation and phrasing. However, once you read it out loud, you will normally be able to tell what I meant to say. SERIOUSLY, READ IT OUTLOUD. You will also see that I use a good bit of bold, italics, underlining and different colours to signal what are the most important things to say, and also to make it easier for my eye to pick up my place in the middle of paragraphs. I would recommend that you keep as many of those things as possible to help you keep your place. However, you will probably want to increase the spacing between lines. I highly encourage you to commit as much of the introduction or children’s illustrations to memory as you can, so that these can be delivered to the congregation with maximum eye contact.

**Where possible, I highly recommend that you listen to the sermon as I preached it at either the Nelson website or the website of North Shore.** I recommend that because that will also help hear the places where I added or skipped over material in the manuscript, and the places where I clarified my meaning. I have edited bits and pieces which I thought most important, but I have not sought to include all the additional material that comes to me while in the pulpit. I would practically have to use a transcription service for that. However, I hope and pray that this sermon will be a blessing to you and to your congregation. To God be the Glory!

Blessings in our Lord, Pastor Daniel Wilson

**My Suggestions for the Order of Service**

Song before the service: #127

Brothers and Sisters: ***Our help is in the name of the Lord … Doesn’t forsake wks of His hands***  Grace be yours in abundance, with Mercy and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Let us respond to God’s call to worship Him **Song #147 “O Sing Ye Hallelujah” vs.1-3, 6**

***We will profess our faith using Nicene Creed***

***{please be seated} – Continue to read Heidelberg Catechism LD#42***

***Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:17-28, 5:15-16***

**Song of continued worship and Praise #136 “O Thank the Lord for He is Good” vs.1-3, 6**

We come now to our time of Congregational Prayer:

**Reading: Malachi 3**

**That serves as a good preparation reading for our giving to the Lord! *Let us be generous toward our Lord as we give to Him* His Tithes and our Freewill offerings:** ***As the Deacons come ...***

*Let’s cont. to worship as we sing* **Our Song of Prep: Psalm #34 vs1, 4-6 “The Lord I will at all times bless”**

***Sermon Text: Deut. 5:19 + Exodus 22:1-9 Sermon Title: “****What have you NOT stolen?!”*

***Let us now sing a* song of Response *–* Psalm #501 “Take my life and let it be”**

***May God the Father*** *bless you & keep you,* ***May God the Son*** *turn His face toward you & be gracious to you,* ***May the Holy Spirit*** *lift up his countenance upon you & give you peace!* ***Amen***

***Doxology*: #530**

# Evening Sermon: “What have you NOT stolen?” Heidelberg #51 – LAW #12

Text: Deut. 5:19 – 8th Com. You shall not steal. Reading: LD 42, ***Exodus 22:1-9***

**Introduction:** Children, tonight we are going to talk about stealing! You steal when you take something that doesn’t belong to you, or you take more than you are allowed. For example, perhaps you walk into the kitchen one day and you see chocolate brownies sitting on the bench. If you take one and eat it without asking for permission, you have stolen that brownie! Or, perhaps another more common example: If you are playing with your brother/sister, and they have the car/ball you want – you may ask to play with it, but if they say No, then you must find something else to play with. If you just say, “I want it” and take it from them, then you have stolen that toy!

Tonight, we will explore a variety of ways we break this commandment!

(**Review**) Two weeks ago, we looked at the 7th commandment: “you shall not commit adultery.” There we saw that God calls us to be pure in our desires, thoughts, looks, talk and actions. We are never to fulfill sexual desire outside of marriage, rather we are to delight in Sexual pleasure only within the Covenant of Marriage. ***THIS WEEK…***

***As we look at the 8th commandment we will see that beyond simply not taking things from others:***

***Thesis: God requires that we earn and develop our gifts/resources without harming our neighbor’s ability to do the same.***

*Instead of dividing the commandment into its positive and negative aspects – this time we will divide our time by the objects or elements people steal.* ***\_\_LIST\_\_\_******We’ll use 3 headings this evening:***

1. **Protect the Objects/Possessions of Others**
2. **Use Time to the Glory of God**
3. **Trust God in your use of Money**

*We begin with the most obvious type of thing which is stolen:* ***OBJECTS/Possessions, The corresponding principle is this:***

# Protect the Objects/Possessions of Others (REPEAT)

* 1. **Here we see “The Positive Command”**

When God tells us not to steal; He is, in fact, commanding us to protect the possessions of others. Since our government condemns theft/stealing, our culture understands this basic concept pretty well. We are disgusted by all forms of theft, especially looting during times of crisis! *Stealing someone else’s stereo because their house is damaged is recognized as being wrong!* We also, easily recognize that this commandment requires us to respect other people’s property and doing our best to make sure nothing happens to it. If you saw your neighbor’s dog loose, it is simply understood as the good thing to do to catch it and bring it back to them. If you saw a thief breaking a window of your neighbor’s house, you would call 111 and do whatever you could to stop them. That is all a part of protecting your neighbor’s property and possessions.

* 1. **But What *should* we do to people who actually steal and take other people’s things?**

The Bible is very clear on this question. We don’t simply lock up a person for stealing. They actually have to repay what they stole ***PLUS some!*** That is what we read about in Exodus 22!

 Now of course, that passage describes rules for OT Israel. ***These are not rules for the church or even for our society…*** HOWEVER, we can take the general principles of these rules as a guide for what God requires.

There we see a very clear principle: If you steal and are caught, you must pay back double: which means you give back the stolen goods and then 100% of that value again. One sheep stolen: you pay back that sheep PLUS another one! If you stole one bar of gold, you had to pay back two. ***Now the idea here is two-fold:***

***1) The main principle behind paying back double is that the thief has to suffer the very loss he had sought to inflict on his victim.*** He wanted to steal a sheep or a bar of gold, well then he doesn’t keep what he stole and since he pays back double – he is now in the position of victim = with one sheep less or one bar of gold less!

 ***2) The restitution is making the victim secure again – or making him whole.*** *Have you ever had anything stolen? It is easy to be anxious and very upset after being robbed… and buying another stereo (or sheep) is not the same as the one you had already. So, the thief actually had to pay back what was lost and then more to pay for trouble caused!* ***If the specific goods stolen had been sold or destroyed, the restitution was greater (4-5x the value), because it was impossible to EXACTLY replace what had been stolen – Again, the principle was to make the victim whole and to make the thief experience the loss he had intended to cause his victim.***

***So Parents,*** *How could we use these principles to teach our children God’s justice? If David takes a car from Benjamin while they are playing, I can stop them from arguing and explain, that since David tried to make Benjamin play with one car less – that he will have to play with one car less – so he has to give the disputed car/truck back as well as another one just as nice!* ***This is a fundamental part to teaching our children to do unto others as they would have them do unto you – and they learn God’s view of Justice as well!***

*Now Secondly, we turn from objects to Time:*

# Use Time to the Glory of God (REPEAT)

* 1. You might be thinking: ***Wait a second… How can someone steal time?***

**The principle here is not wasting time! As Paul says in Ephesians 5, make the best use of time and every opportunity for the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the will of God is!** *And that is to be faithful in your use of time!*

*I bring this up, because this is one of the most stolen and squandered commodities in the world.* Millions of companies pay their employees to work, but instead they play video games, check personal email, and surf facebook/youtube and other frivolous websites! Now, I am not talking about something during a lunch break. **I am talking about the time wasted *when something else is supposed to be done…***

When you are hired for a job – you are selling your time and effort in exchange for your salary/pay. Time taken for personal communication/recreation while at work is stealing minutes back from your employer! This is a serious problem – in the UK alone, it is estimated that 233 MILLION hours are wasted on the internet **every MONTH** (not year, MONTH!) – ***a combined value of over 2Billion dollars. Just to break that down to the individual level, this means that the average employee wastes 2-3 months of worktime EVERY Year! (63 8hr workdays wasted)***

Is this an area where you have stolen from your employer? Is this an area where you have stolen from your children or family? Have you spent time “connecting” with others when you should have been cleaning, cooking, teaching, reading or **spending time truly connecting with loved ones who are present in the same house or room?** Have you spent time watching television (news or sports) instead of connecting with your own family?

Not all time spent on line, or watching television is stolen – ***but MUCH of it is…*** for at the end of the week we look back and we say – Hmm it would have been good to get that done, but what can you do “We can’t do everything right?” **When in reality, if you were honest, you weren’t able to do the things you needed to do because you stole hours each day wasting time with digital distractions! *And ultimately you are stealing that time from God – for He is the one who has called you to make the most of the time, for the days are evil!***

So, How do we pay that time back? Quite frankly, the best thing we can do is to follow the advice we read from Matthew 5 *two weeks ago* – if your eye or hand causes you to sin, gouge it out, cut it off and throw it away – Radical Amputation of sin and the causes of sin. If you are wasting huge amounts of time with TV and internet – then take 1, 3 or even 6 months and cancel your internet and television subscriptions for that time. Use dial-up to check email, and arrange to use internet at a friend’s house if you need to download a large file or something. *If you do this at work,* then ask your IT or network admin to help you block certain websites on your PC. ***The Goal is to Glorify God with your use of time!***

*Thirdly, we turn to perhaps the most stolen/abused element – Money!*

# Trust God in your use of Money (REPEAT)

* 1. ***Perhaps you are thinking, “Why word it like that? Don’t you mean don’t steal it, abuse it etc?”***

No… Because why do people steal money? Why do people keep money back on their taxes? Why do they defraud or cheat others? **Because they trust money to provide for their needs!**

We steal money from others (or don’t pay them fairly/accurately) because we believe that the money itself is what we need to buy food, shelter, clothes etc… When in reality, it is our Father in heaven who provides for those needs, and He does so through the agency of money. **I encourage you to trust God because He can’t be lost; He can’t be stolen from you! And, He is the one who is actually in control of whatsoever comes to pass in this world!**

If you cheat on your taxes or on a business deal, then you are telling God that He isn’t good enough – that you need to make a little deal on the side in order to help Him out! When I say it like that, we all recognize that saying such things would be foolish … but that is what you are doing when you try to hold money back which is rightly owed to another – you are not trusting God!

Perhaps the most difficult one for us to admit in the church is the way we rob God: which we see from **Malachi 3:6-12.**

*There are a couple of things that God is pointing out here:*

***First,*** He is explaining that it is only because the LORD God doesn’t change that we are not all destroyed! God ALONE provides and saves!

***Second,*** Keeping money rightly owed to God is stealing from Him! Now, many people argue about whether tithing is still required in the New Testament because it isn’t mentioned explicitly. Paul called the Corinthians to give according to their income (meaning a percentage of their income), and tithing and offering things to God began long before the nation of Israel – Abraham tithed to Melchizedek the priest of God. **We are to still tithe**, and when we refuse to tithe we are robbing God.

BUT HERE IS THE REAL Point… Notice God didn’t only mention TITHES!!! God even says that the people were robbing Him in ***TITHES AND OFFERINGS!*** The people were not bringing additional gifts to the temple and that showed that they were not worshipping God with their whole heart! ***Are you bringing God tithes and offerings?*** Or, are you trusting that by keeping your money, you will be able to afford your bills!

In Haggai, God told the people that they stored up money in purses with holes in them – cheating God doesn’t pay! You cannot benefit from what you withhold from God! For Israel, He simply cursed the land or made sure the money slipped away another way… **Furthermore, here God promises that if you commit to serving Him with your tithes and offerings then He will make sure that you don’t go hungry!** He promises to provide for those who faithfully serve Him. And this is the only place where we are called to TEST GOD – as in Test God by obeying and see if He doesn’t prove faithful! Are you trusting Him as you should?!

 *In Ephesians 4:27-28 the Apostle Paul clarifies the NT principle for thieves: HE who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands that he may have something to share with those in need!* Here Paul is explaining that it isn’t good enough simply to stop stealing from God and others, but we are to work hard enough that we might be able to give to those in need! If you have selfishly been stealing from God by not bring His Tithes and additional offerings, Repent, confess that sin before the Lord, and then obey: Bring His Tithes and offerings to support the Church, THEN work hard so that you might be able to give to other worthy causes too!

**Final Application:**

This commandment calls us to Protect the Objects/Possessions of others, To Use Time to the Glory of God, and to Trust God in Our use of Money… **When we consider our own lives, we cannot help but see that we are thieves** – We have to ask: What have we NOT Stolen?

Everything from the stolen cookies to the Thousands of dollars worth of *Time wasted, Money squandered, and debts left unpaid (either to God or man).* **What Hope do we have as convicted thieves?**

**As with the whole LAW, *WE SEE OUR NEED FOR CHRIST!***

**We are worthless sinners in need of a Savior!**  *We can’t obey! We can’t do what is necessary to earn our way to heaven! But God in HIS MERCY… Sent one who could!* **Jesus Christ was the perfect Son who honoured His Father! Jesus Christ was the one willing to be murdered so that murderers like us could be forgiven! Jesus Christ is the Faithful Husband to the adulterous Church of sinners like us! Jesus Christ worked for 33 years to create a life of perfection to give to sinners like you and me, so that HE might cover our thieving ways!!** All the burdens of the Law of God – the condemnations of the rebellious, the adulterous and the thief – ***THEY ALL fall at the foot of the Cross!*** HAVE YOU Turned to Jesus!? Put your Faith in Him, and you can be forgiven for your sin!

*FOR those of us who do believe, let us turn in gratitude to live for this Jesus, who lived, died & rose again to save us!* **Amen**