



Earthly values – eternal values

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Objective The confirmands learn to appreciate what God provides for their earthly life. First however, they strive for that which has spiritual value.

Contents Material and spiritual values.
The Devil wants to steal our spiritual riches.
It is more blessed to give than to receive.
The Seventh Commandment.

1 Lead-in

A student reads aloud You shall not steal.

Workbook exercise A

The confirmands do exercise A in their workbook. They consider what it would be like if all people were to keep this commandment. The teacher gives them time for this and asks them to write down their thoughts in their workbook using key words.

Listen to answers and supplement

- Much work and great expenditure associated with securing property could be saved (e.g. locking doors, security systems, police, insurance, law courts).
- All conjecture concerning alleged offenders and all suspicion would become unnecessary. These would no longer strain human relations.
- There would be less fear. We would therefore have happier lives.

Explain

The Commandments are a blessing

These examples demonstrate that God did not give the Ten Commandments in order to restrict us, but in order that we may coexist without distrust and fear. Keeping the commandments allows us to lead God-pleasing lives and assures us of His blessing.

We know that conditions on this earth today do not yet live up to the will of God. Not all people obey His commandments.

Ask

Why do people steal?

Elaborate

There are people who either do not heed the commandments given by God or are ignorant of them. People do not always succeed in resisting the temptations of the Devil when the thought comes: "I would like to possess this or that". Instead they acquire the possessions of others in an unlawful manner.





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2 God's children must be examples

Hint

Let us elaborate on the reasons why we as God's children keep the divine commandments. The confirmands are therefore to imagine themselves in the following two situations.

- A boy in your neighbourhood has stolen something and has been caught. Your father hears about this theft. How might he react?
- You have stolen something and have been caught. Now the police telephone your home to inform your father. How might your father react in this case?

Listen to answers and supplement

Do not grieve God

A father will be more affected and sad when he finds out that his own children have stolen something. After all he probably went to great pains to explain the Seventh Commandment to them and to lay it into their hearts. A father loves his children and is proud of them. That is why he is disappointed and sad when his children are dishonest. So it is also with our heavenly Father. We keep His commandments because we love Him.

As God's children we also know that God's commandments are right and that they are a blessing for us.

3 Riches for the earthly life, riches for eternal life

Tell

The story of the rich man and Lazarus

"There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, full of sores, who was laid at his gate, desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. So it was that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who want to pass from here to you cannot, nor can those from there pass to us'" (Luke 16: 19–26).

Explain

The essential difference between the two becomes clear to us when we look at the beginning of what the Lord Jesus related:

- "There was a certain rich man ...", and
- "But there was a certain beggar named Lazarus ..."



**Earthly values – eternal values****16****Ask****What happened to Lazarus after his death?****Listen to answers and summarise**

The angels carried him to the bosom of Abraham. This means that he was in a place of nearness to God.

Ask**What everlasting values would the Lord like to impart to us?****Listen to answers and supplement**

- knowledge
- peace
- joy
- fellowship with God
- salvation
- truth
- the righteousness valid before God
- love

When we recognise the importance of these values then earthly riches such as cars, fashionable clothes, good food, sport equipment, and all other earthly desires lose much of their lustre.

4 You shall not steal**Workbook exercise B**

The confirmands now do exercise B in their workbook. They answer the following question which is discussed afterwards:

Ask**What are the implications for us if we steal?****Listen to answers and supplement**

Advantages:

- We possess what we stole (perhaps only temporarily).

Disadvantages:

- We grieve our heavenly Father.
- We lose our good conscience.
- We lose our peace.
- We undermine the relationship of trust with our fellow human beings.
- We inflict harm.
- We have to expect punishment.

Explain*Do not allow yourself to be misled*

When we steal we sin. Each sin separates us from our heavenly Father. Let us heed the divine commandment and not allow ourselves to be misled into acting against the will of God.





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5 It is more blessed to give than to receive

Workbook exercise C

The confirmands now do exercise C in their workbook. They answer the following question which will be discussed afterwards:

Ask

What happens when we give someone a gift?

Listen to answers and supplement

Advantages:

- The recipient is pleased.
- We are also pleased.
- The recipient's gratitude is the basis for a pleasant relationship with us.
- We are happy.
- Our Lord Jesus is also happy.
- What we have done will not be forgotten (cf. Matthew 25: 35–40).

Disadvantages:

- We forfeited some material things.

Explain

This comparison makes us recognise the wisdom embodied in Jesus' reminder: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20: 35). It also shows us that giving increases our spiritual values.

The main points

I also want to be spiritually enriched!

Homework

The confirmands learn the Seventh Commandment by heart. They do exercise B of lesson 17 in their workbook.

