

# LESSON 10

## DO NOT COVET



### BEFORE YOU TEACH

#### The Meaning

Coveting is not just seeing something that belongs to someone else and admiring it, or even wishing that you had something like it. Rather, coveting is allowing that desire to invade and pervade your heart. It's letting that desire govern your thoughts and guide your actions.

Our English word "covet" comes from a Greek word meaning "grasping for more." Dictionaries define "covet" as "grasping, greedy, greed of wealth with a view of hoarding it." Covetousness springs from a selfish nature. Because a man is greedy, he covets. Because he covets, he steals, lies, commits adultery, and murders. Jesus said, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Lk 12:15).

#### Covetousness Is a Form of Idolatry

"Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience" (Col 3:5-6).

When we see someone with more than we have, we must beware. The hunger to steal our way into what is theirs may harm us spiritually.

#### God Is Concerned with Our Heart's Desires

All other commandments forbid overt sin, but this one reaches to the inner motives. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (Jer 17:9). What we covet, whether good or bad, always becomes our goal in life. If we covet the wrong things, we will have the wrong goals, and we may even sacrifice things of great value in our effort to attain what has little eternal value.

#### How Do We Keep from Covetousness?

Here are some suggestions. First, we must recognize it in our hearts and confess it to the Lord through the power of prayer, asking for cleansing and renewal. Second, we must focus on all that God has given us, allowing gratitude to fill our hearts. Third, we must discover freedom in God's word. Remember, the beginning of contentment starts and ends in God (Ps 119:33-48). Fourth, we must be content with what we have and choose not to nurture desires that lead to coveting. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can ask God to empower us and let the Spirit of God take up residence in our hearts. We will then learn to say "no" to our fleshly desires. As we grow in our faith, we learn to be satisfied more and more in the Lord and in His word, and to let God fill our heart completely.

### BIBLE TEXT

Matthew 26:1-25, 36-50; 27:1-10  
John 12:1-8; 13:21-30

### BIBLE TRUTH

It is a sin to covet.

### LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that it is a sin to covet.
2. To realize the importance of guarding our hearts from greed and covetousness.
3. To understand the importance of having a content and thankful heart.

### MEMORY VERSE

"You shall not covet."

(Exodus 20:17a)

### PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus, we pray. Lord Jesus, You are an almighty God. You see and know everything. Yet sometimes we do things in secret, thinking that no one will know. That is our weakness. We need to remember that You are always with us. During times when we feel weak, we should pray to You and ask for help and guidance. Please help us to keep Your commandments. We praise Your holy name. Hallelujah! Amen.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Covetousness is not simply the act of saying, "I would like one of those, too!" Sometimes, it can be a good thing if it encourages people to work harder through honest means to reach their goals. Unfortunately, that is not always the case. Greed is a part of everyone. People always want more than they have. Covetousness does not just happen overnight. It usually begins with envy or jealousy and may involve hatred or anger.

This commandment is a little different from the others because it involves something that cannot necessarily be seen. Remind your students that sinning can begin in the heart. That is why this commandment was given. God

knows that inner envy, jealousy, or anger can lead to even greater sins.

There will always be something that your students don't have that someone else does. By the same token, they have been blessed with much more when compared to others. Remind them that material possessions are worldly and temporary. God will supply all their needs. Whenever they feel resentment or envy, encourage them to pray to God, to ask God for a heart of contentment, and to count their blessings. When they can develop such an attitude, it will help them control their feelings as they grow up.

### VOCABULARY

**covet:** to desire something that belongs to another; to be greedy

**betray:** to deliver to an enemy or to be disloyal

### REVIEW

Last week, we learned about the ninth commandment, which is, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." We learned how Queen Jezebel came up with a plan to kill Naboth so that King Ahab could have his vineyard. She told two bad men to bear false witness against Naboth, and as a result, Naboth was stoned to death. This act displeased God greatly. Later, King Ahab and Queen Jezebel were punished with death.

God does not want us to follow their example. We learned that it is important to always tell the truth. Telling only part of the story or twisting the facts is also considered lying and will hurt God, others, and ourselves.

## BIBLE STORY

### The Tenth Commandment

The last commandment that God gave Moses on Mount Sinai is about being greedy. God knows that it is natural for people to want things that they don't have. They always want more because they are unhappy with what they already own. That is the reason why God gave the commandment "You shall not covet." This commandment teaches us not to desire or want things that don't belong to us. In God's eyes, desiring things that don't belong to us is a sin. When we desire something that is not ours, or when we are greedy for more, we are breaking the last commandment. God knows that when someone covets something, it can lead him to commit more sins. Today, we are going to learn about a man called Judas Iscariot who fell due to his love of money.

### Judas Iscariot, a Disciple of Christ

When Jesus was in the world, He came to preach the good news of the kingdom of God to the people. To help in this important work, Jesus chose twelve men who were called disciples. Do you remember the names of the twelve

disciples? [Give students time to recall.] These men came from different backgrounds and had different kinds of jobs. When the Lord called them, they left their families and their jobs to follow the Lord and spread the good news.

It was a great honor to be chosen by the Lord. The disciples stayed with Jesus for three years. Every day they heard many wonderful teachings about God and they witnessed Jesus performing amazing miracles, casting out demons and healing the sick. The disciples were also given the power to do great things, too. They healed the sick, cast out demons and preached the word of God to the people. But best of all, by knowing the Lord Jesus, they had a chance to go to heaven.

Among the twelve was a disciple called Judas Iscariot, whom Jesus chose to have the important job of taking care of the money box. Jesus and the disciples kept the money used for the ministry in the money box. The money was for their daily needs such as food, lodging, and other expenses. Judas had to safeguard the money. He must have been a responsible and wise person to be chosen for

this important job.

As time went by, however, Judas began to desire the money for himself. His desire grew so strong that eventually he would often take the money that was put into the money box. He thought that no one would find out but Jesus knew that Judas often stole from the money box.

Over time, Judas began to love money more than anything or anyone. Judas coveted money. Do you know what it means to covet? It means to want something that does not belong to us.

He coveted money so badly that he was willing to do anything for it. This gave Satan an opportunity to work in his heart. Judas came up with a very evil plan. It was a plan that would bring harm upon Jesus, the person who loved him the most.

### Judas Makes a Deal with the Leaders

In Jesus' time, the chief priests were the leaders of the people who worked in the temple. These leaders did not like Jesus at all. They were jealous of Jesus because He could perform many miracles and cast out demons. They were envious of Jesus because the people liked Him and believed that He was a prophet of God. The leaders feared that they would lose their power and popularity and that the people would follow Jesus instead of them. So, they looked for a chance to have Jesus captured and killed. They knew they had to do it in such a way that no one would notice.

One day, Judas came to see these leaders. The leaders were surprised by Judas' visit. What could Judas want? Wasn't Judas one of Jesus' disciples?

"How much money will you give me if I hand Jesus over to you?" Judas asked the leaders.

"We will pay you thirty pieces of silver," they replied.

In those days, thirty silver coins was how much it cost to buy a slave (Ex 21:32). Judas was happy with the offer, so he agreed to help capture Jesus. From then on, Judas began to look for a chance to betray Jesus and turn Him over to the enemies.

### Judas Betrays the Lord

One night, Jesus and all His disciples were eating dinner

together. It was a special meal called the Passover. During the meal, Judas quietly left the group to see the leaders of the town. Judas knew that this was his opportunity to capture Jesus. He went to tell the leaders that the time had come. The leaders quickly ordered many soldiers to follow Judas. In their hands, they carried swords and clubs. Judas told them, "I will give you a sign. You will know which one is Jesus when I go over and greet Him with a kiss. He is the One you are to arrest."

When they arrived at the garden of Gethsemane, they found Jesus and some of His disciples there. Jesus had gone there to pray after dinner. Judas went up to the Lord and said, "Greetings, Master," then gave Him a kiss. Immediately, the soldiers arrested and captured Jesus. When He was taken away into the night by the enemies, the disciples were so afraid that they ran away. For the entire night, Jesus was questioned, and later He was charged with committing a crime and nailed to the cross. We know that Jesus did not do anything wrong. In fact, He gave Himself up willingly. He did this for a special reason—to save us! Jesus knew that we could not go to heaven because of our sins. So, He willingly died on the cross to make a way for us to go to heaven.

When Judas saw how Jesus had been charged with death after His arrest, he was extremely sorry for what he had done. He had betrayed his Master, his Lord, the One who loved him the most. He realized that he had committed an unforgivable sin. He wanted to make things right again, so he hurried back to the leaders with the thirty silver coins.

"I have sinned. I have sold a man for thirty pieces of silver. A man who has done no wrong," Judas cried.

The leaders did not care.

"That is your responsibility. You take care of it yourself!" they said.

They refused to take back the money. Judas knew it was too late. He had sold his Lord because of his greed for money. He took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them onto the floor of the temple. He then ran out and hung himself. In the end, Judas' covetousness not only hurt Jesus, but it hurt him as well. For this reason, God does not want us to covet. Instead, He wants us to learn to be happy with all that we have.

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. In the tenth commandment, God told us not to \_\_\_\_\_ (covet).
2. When Judas was in charge of the money box, he often \_\_\_\_\_ (stole) money from it.
3. Judas betrayed the Lord Jesus because he was \_\_\_\_\_ (greedy).
4. Judas was one of Jesus' twelve \_\_\_\_\_ (disciples).
5. We should be happy with what we have. True.
6. Judas received 35 silver coins from the leaders for betraying the Lord. False; he received 30.
7. When Judas realized that he had betrayed an innocent Man, he did not feel at all sorry. False; he was remorseful.
8. Jesus willingly gave Himself up into the hands of the enemies to die on the cross for our sins. True.



## MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.  
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

**“You shall not covet.” (Exodus 20:17a)**

## SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

What happened to Judas was very tragic. He did not guard his heart from the love of money. He allowed his greed to grow until he committed a great evil. Eventually, he lost both his life and salvation. Of course, none of us betrayed the Lord like Judas did. But perhaps we have similar weaknesses as Judas. He wanted things that did not belong to him. Do we want more and more of things, even though we already have plenty?

**For Teachers:** Pass out a paper bag and packing peanuts to each student. You may wish to substitute the packing peanuts with cotton balls, socks, ping-pong balls, etc.

I will read aloud a few scenarios. If you think that you would do as the character in the scenario would, take a handful of peanuts and put them into the paper bag.

### Scenarios

1. Your best friend has forgotten to take her toy home. It is a toy you have wanted for a long time. You decide to keep it and play with it for a while. You will return it to her when she asks for it.

2. An advertisement on TV shows a game that all of your friends at school have been talking about. You beg your parents to buy it for you.
3. Mom and Dad give you \$1 a week for allowance. Your older sibling gets \$5. You think it's unfair, so you ask Mom and Dad to give you \$5, too.
4. Dad just bought a watch for your sibling. You don't have a watch of your own. You complain to him that it is unfair and that you want one, too.
5. You have a whole row of dolls/toys that you have collected sitting on your bedroom shelf. However, you pass by the toy store and see the latest doll/toy on display. Even though you already have so many dolls/toys, you still want the newest one badly.

Now, take a look at your paper bag. How does it look? Is it empty or is it almost overflowing? All the examples we have just heard are about coveting and being greedy. The paper bag is like our heart. When we covet, our heart is filled with greed and desire.

### It is a sin to covet.

Why is it a sin for us to covet? Why is it wrong for us to desire for more things? The Bible refers to covetousness as “idolatry” (Col 3:5). As we have discussed earlier in this quarter, worshipping idols means to set our minds on things that distract us from God. When we want something so badly, not only can our desires lead us to sin, but they can also distract us from God. Take one of the earlier scenarios as an example. Your best friend has forgotten to take her toy home. It is a toy you have wanted for a long time. You decide to keep it and play with it for a while. You will return it to her when she asks for it. While wanting something is not always wrong, we must be careful not to set our minds on our desires. What happens when we do? In this case, you decided to keep your friend's toy without her permission. Even though you plan on giving it back, this is still an act of stealing in God's eyes. From this example, we can learn that when our desires become too strong, they can lead us to disobey God. How do we know when our desires have become too strong? It is when we choose to pursue after them rather

than obeying God. In this particular example, it is not wrong for you to want a toy that your friend has. However, by keeping your friend's toy while knowing that it is a sin to keep your friend's toy in secret, you have allowed your desires to distract you from the word of God.

Luke 12:15 says, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” Today, we live in a world of material abundance. We all want to live a better life with all the latest and greatest things, whether it be clothes, cars, or electronics. We hate to be bored and not have the things we want. However, the Bible teaches us that our material wealth has nothing to do with how good our lives can be. What does that mean? Clearly, there are two kinds of “riches” here. One is a measure of how much we have in this world, and the other is a measure of how much we have in the eyes of God. One requires us to pursue after the physical things we want, and the other requires us to lay up treasures in heaven and be pleasing to God!

Students, which one sounds more important to you? [Pause for students to think.] Again, to covet is a sin in God's eyes. That is to say, our worldly desires cannot help us enter the heavenly kingdom. We should not set our

minds on such temporary things. Rather, we should set our minds on the truth of the God, since we already know that God will always provide for those who love and obey His commandments.

### Guard our hearts from greed and covetousness.

As we just discussed, our desires can lead us to sin against God. So, how can we avoid greed and covetousness from growing within us? Let's look at what the Bible teaches us. Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" All sins begin from our heart. It is our inner feelings that make us want to sin. Why did Judas betray Jesus? It was because of the love of money in his heart. Being a disciple of Jesus, he should have known that money is the root of all evil and that he shouldn't have been greedy for it. However, he did nothing to prevent his love for money from growing in his heart. He only regretted his actions after he had committed a huge sin. Today, we must guard our hearts from greed and covetousness. Yes, it is very natural for us to have desires for things that we don't have. However, if we do nothing to control them, our desires can also lead us to commit serious sins. As you have probably experienced before, desires don't just grow, they also increase in

number. When they grow strong enough, they can easily rule our heart and defy our body, which is the temple of God.

Today, God has sent His Spirit to live in our hearts and guide us in the truth. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, we will naturally want to pursue after a more godly life rather than other worldly desires. And when we have less of these worldly desires, we will also naturally have less greed in our hearts. It is very important for us to always pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit, our Helper and Counselor. We live in a world where temptations are all around us, and it can be very difficult for us to resist them. Our power alone will not be enough for us to guard our hearts from greed and covetousness. Only with the power of the Holy Spirit we will be able to fill our hearts with joy and contentment.

### Have a content and thankful heart.

It is so easy for us to want newer, bigger, and better things, especially when we see that our friends have them. When we think of what we don't have or of what others have, we can easily become discontent. We will always desire for more, even though we do not need those things. The more desires we have, the more we are tempted to sin against God.

God does not want our hearts to be filled with desires for things we don't have. God has provided us with what we need most. He has given us food, clothes, a wonderful home, and a loving family. These are the most important. They are things that we often overlook and take for granted. If you really think about it, we already have a lot. We tend to compare with people who have more than we do. In fact, there are many people right now who don't even know when their next meal is, what it feels like to have a family or to go to school, or whether or not they will live to the next day. Compared to them, we are very blessed. Let's not be deceived by the world around us. We should always remember that God knows our needs and that He has given us everything to live a happy life. Don't agonize over things that we don't have, because if we do that, we will never live a happy life. We should always be content and have a thankful heart.

Now that we know we should have a content and thankful heart, let's talk about what we can do to achieve one. How can we prevent greed from filling our hearts? [Write the

following points on the board.] Next time we find ourselves getting the "coveting bug," let's try doing the following:

- Think of the things that we already have.
- Thank God for what He has given us.
- Pray and ask God to give us a heart of contentment.
- Think about the people who may not be as blessed as we are.
- Think of how we can share what we have with others.

Let me share with you a story of someone who is able to do all these things.

This was Jenna's first time visiting her best friend Yvonne's house. Yvonne's family is very wealthy; their house looks like a castle on the outside and a hotel on the inside. When Jenna first got there, Yvonne took her on a tour around her house. After seeing everything, Jenna began to get a strange feeling in her heart. It felt like a combination of jealousy, bitterness, and dissatisfaction. She thought to herself, "How nice! Yvonne's got her own bedroom, toy room, and her family has their own swimming pool! My house is so small compared to her house. Our backyard doesn't even have space for a kiddie pool. And I have to share my bedroom and bathroom with my little sister! I wish I had a house like Yvonne's!"

After that time, Jenna began to think more about how small her house is. She began to have more and more complaints. One time, her little sister had to stay up late at night to study, so she had to keep the light on in their bedroom when Jenna was already in bed. Jenna got very mad as she thought to herself how it'd be so much better if she didn't have to share a room, and she took her anger out on her little sister, saying, "Our house is too small. We have to share the same bedroom. Don't you know that I'm trying to sleep and shouldn't you be more considerate? I wish we had a much bigger house. Now turn off the lights!"

But soon after this had happened, Jenna went to church one Saturday and she learned about the tenth commandment. In that class, she realized that she didn't have a content and thankful heart. She was very ashamed that, all this time, she didn't realize how much she already had from God and that she had compared her life with Yvonne's. From then on, Jenna was determined to offer a prayer of thanksgiving every day to God. She wanted to stay away from greed and covetousness. Below is a prayer she said one night:

"Dear God, thank You for everything that You have given me: my loving family, a local church, friends, food to eat, a beautiful home, a school to go to, and so on. These are all things that I didn't even have to ask for, because You blessed me with them. You really love me. For that, thank You very much! Lord, please help me always be content with what I have. There are so many people in this world who don't have half of what I have. Many people in third world countries suffer from hunger every day, and many of them don't even have shelter. On the way to school, I always see homeless people on the streets, too. They are also very poor and needy. Compared to them, I am really, really blessed. I should be helping others. God, please give me a content heart so that I won't be greedy and reluctant to help others. Please make me a channel of blessings for others as I have been blessed with so much. Thank You again. May all the glory be unto Your name. Amen!"

Students, to covet is a serious sin in God's eyes. The more love we have for things in this world, the further away we are from God's presence. The Bible says, "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life" (Jn 12:25). Again, things in this world are temporary. There's nothing we can bring with us when we leave this world. Therefore, we should choose to pursue after the truth of God in this life, always obeying His commandments and doing good. That way, we will lay up treasures in heaven, which are eternal. Students, do we lay up treasures in heaven with our good deeds?

### Reflection Questions

- 1. Why did Jenna have a strange feeling when she first saw Yvonne's house?** Because she was comparing her house with Yvonne's and she saw that Yvonne had many more things than she did. She wished she had a house just like Yvonne's.
- 2. What made Jenna change at the end?** Jenna changed because she learned about the tenth commandment and finally understood that she should have been more content and thankful for what she already had. She also began to offer a prayer of thanksgiving every day so that she could stay away from greed and covetousness.

ACTIVITY

**1 Ten Commandments Crossword**

**Objective:** To review the Ten Commandments.

**Instructions:** Fill in the crossword puzzle using the words in the word box. Read each clue carefully.

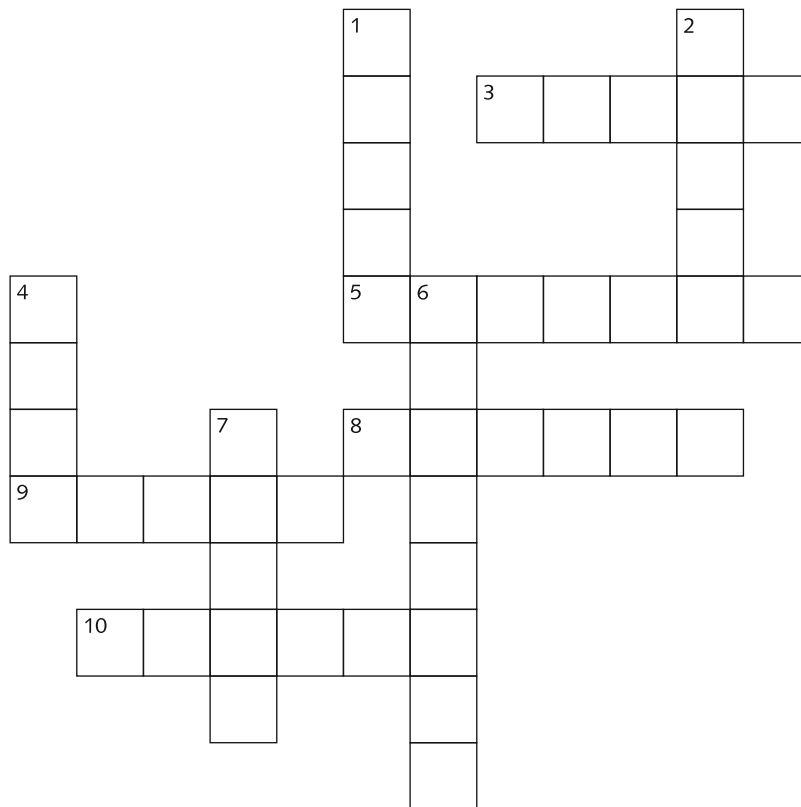
adultery    idols    covet    misuse    false    murder    gods    Sabbath    honor    steal

**Across**

- 3. God's fifth commandment tells us to \_\_\_\_\_ our parents (Ex 20:12).
- 5. The Israelites were commanded to keep the \_\_\_\_\_ day holy (Ex 20:8).
- 8. Cain did this to his brother, Abel. God commanded us not to \_\_\_\_\_ (Ex 20:13).
- 9. Taking something that does not belong to us is breaking the commandment that tells us not to \_\_\_\_\_ (Ex 20:15).
- 10. God does not want us to \_\_\_\_\_ His name (Ex 20:7).

**Down**

- 1. We should not worship \_\_\_\_\_ because that would be unfaithful to God (Ex 20:4-5).
- 2. We should not \_\_\_\_\_ things that belong to other people. This is God's last commandment (Ex 20:17).
- 4. We should not have any other \_\_\_\_\_ besides God Himself. He is the only true God in the universe (Ex 20:3).
- 6. Husbands and wives should be faithful to each other. They should not commit \_\_\_\_\_ (Ex 20:14).
- 7. God told us not to bear \_\_\_\_\_ witness (Ex 20:16).



## 2

**Remember the Commandments / Optional**

**Objective:** To use classroom decorations to remind the students of the commandments they have learned.

**Instructions**

Since this quarter's lessons focus on the Ten Commandments, it would be nice to decorate the classroom with each commandment. These decorations will also serve to remind the students how to obey God.

Have the students write out the commandment that they learned in this lesson on a piece of construction paper and decorate it to make it meaningful. After the students are done, the teacher can put the commandment on a classroom wall for all the students to see.

This lesson's commandment is: "**10. You shall not covet.**"

**HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY**

1. C
2. A
3. B
4. B
5. True
6. False; he was remorseful.
7. True
8. He coveted money and let Satan have a foothold in his heart.
9. Answers may vary.
10. Guard your heart, be content, and give thanks to God for all the blessings He has given you.



E1 Year 1 Book 3 Lesson 10—Do Not Covet

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truth:** It is a sin to covet.

- Lesson Objectives:**
1. To understand that it is a sin to covet.
  2. To realize the importance of guarding our hearts from greed and covetousness.
  3. To understand the importance of having a content and thankful heart.

**Bible Reading:** Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

**Prayer:** Please put a check mark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(Exodus 20:17a)

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## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Homework Assignment

*Understanding What You Have Learned*

## Multiple Choice

1. \_\_\_\_\_ : When Judas was in charge of the money box, he often \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Gave the money away to the poor
  - b. Lost the money
  - c. Stole the money for himself
2. \_\_\_\_\_ : What did Judas do after he regretted betraying the Lord?
  - a. He returned the money to the leaders and then went out and hung himself.
  - b. He tried to find Jesus to say sorry.
  - c. He brought the other disciples to try to rescue Jesus.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ : Judas received \_\_\_\_\_ silver coins from the leaders for betraying the Lord.
  - a. 25
  - b. 30
  - c. 35
4. \_\_\_\_\_ : In the tenth commandment, God says that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. We should honor our parents
  - b. We should not covet
  - c. We should not bear false witness against our neighbors

## True or False

5. Judas betrayed the Lord with a kiss. \_\_\_\_\_
6. When Judas realized that he had betrayed an innocent Man, he did not feel at all sorry. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Jesus willingly gave Himself up into the hands of the enemies and died on the cross for our sins. \_\_\_\_\_

## Short Answer

8. Why did Judas betray the Lord Jesus?  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Write the things or people in your life that are very special to you at this time. Do you love these things or people more than Jesus?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. The next time you find yourself wanting what others have or being greedy, what should you do?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_