## Che (10)



## THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

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This, the eighth of the Biblical commandments, has been
calling through the ages, addressed exclusively to the moral ind religious nature of men. It is not an appea
am religious nature of men. It is not an appeal to man
oxder that he may avoid technical violation of these statutes
and so keep out of jail, as some people seem to think. Its
uthor never intended that this command is to be given any
narrow or technical meaning such as the civil law gives to narrow or technical meaning such as the civil aw gives to
the word "teal." It is intended as a rule of conduct, a guide
of life for every man in his relations and dealings with others, of irespective of the limitations of human laws or the customs cake and appropriate to his own use what is his neighbor's It is in the class with the tenth and last of these com-
mandments which commands man not to covet his neighor's goods, "nor anything that is his neighbor's." Indee
he sin or crime of stealing or taking and appropriating an other's goods, is but the outward, active, visible manifestation of covetousness, against which the tenth commandmen
inveighs. Too many otherwise respectable people seem totall inveighs. Too many otherwise respectable people seem totally
indifferent to their violation of these two commandments, provided they escape the entanglements of the civil law and ceep out of the hands of the sheriff. In our complicated
modern society, too, the distinction between what is proper ours and what is our neighbor's if often quite shadowy in many of our minds, and we are often guilty of stealing, in mitted this sin.
The man who by his "tricks of trade" or other dishones
means deceives and cheats his neighbor out of his money or neans deceives and cheats his neighbor out of his money o
his property is just as truly a thief in the sight of his God as the man who has Been convicted of grand larceny and is filling a felon's cell; and he should be generally so regarded.
While the highwayman who holds you up at night at the point of a gun and forcibly takes your money is a manly and honest fellow in comparison with the man who skilfully goes
about getting your friendship and confidence in order that he may legally and safely cheat you out of your substance. Such
a man is the meanest kind of thief. And if there ever be a man is the meanest kind of thief. And if there ever be
divine forgiveness for such a scoundrel, it must be only after a long period of repentance and suffering.

- In other words, the soul of this command, "Thou shalt not another's without making adequate return therefor. That
is what its author doubtless intended it to men it does mean thor doubtless intended it to mean; that is what indoes mean to every honest man. It is addressed to the
individual conscience. It expresses the divine law or order and like all such needs no supplementing by the laws of men violation its observance obligatory and binding. More, its
vits ultimate punishment, as all sins do This punishment is not to be escaped by subterfuge or tech-
nicaities. Every normal, enlightened, moral and honest man nicaities. Every normal, enlightened, moral and honest man
knows this, and he is not seeking to despoil his neighbor in knows this, and he is not seeking to despoil his neighbor in
some sly and evasive way. He is not consulting his lawyer
to find just how far he can legally and safely go in cheating to find just how far he can legally and safely go in cheating
his brother. Instead, he consults his own conscience and he his brother. Instead, he consults his own conscience and he
squares his conduct by its standards in his dealings with others. He does not desire to take from another what is nonestly that other's without giving just, fair and adequate
compensation. Should he do so Every truly hould he do so, he would feel like a thief he would, in the true sense of the word, be a thief. Our business standards are generally much higher than
they were fifty even twenty-five-years ago, but they are still too low. The old legal maxim, "Let the purchaser be
ware," is still much too generally prevalent. For every ware, is still much to generally prevalent. For every
merchant who takes advantage of the necessities or th ignorance of his customer and compels him to pay more than



## in good conscience the merchant should feel like a thief, because he

 The employer who insists upon readucing the wages ofemploye to the lowest limit-away below the point where th


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