

Thou shalt not steal.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

The seventh and tenth Commandments refer to the temporal goods of our neighbour, which they protect against greed and injustice. These Commandments forbid all unjust proceedings and desires, and command that at all times we give our neighbour his due.

The seventh regards exterior acts; the tenth, interior desires and all covetousness tending to the acquirement of another's goods by unjust means. This is clearly expressed in the words of the Catechism: The seventh and tenth Commandments of God forbid injustice, and every act by which we injure or seek to injure our neighbour in his temporal goods.

It is therefore forbidden to take, to retain, or to unjustly damage our neighbour's goods; to steal or to cooperate in a theft; to buy or to receive stolen goods; to defraud in business by using false weights and measures, by passing counterfeit money or offering bad goods as sound; to bring about unjust lawsuits; to pass or procure an unjust sentence; to injure the business of our neighbour; to unjustly prevent him realizing a fair profit; to appropriate what has been confided to our safe-keeping; to neglect the payment of our debts; to dissipate our property by gambling or dissipation, to the prejudice of our family and creditors; to exercise the duties of a public office without the necessary knowledge.

Judges, lawyers, doctors, etc., are held by the seventh and tenth Commandments to qualify themselves for the befitting discharge of the duties of their profession. Fly, my brethren, every form of injustice; be honest before everything. Integrity is worth more than riches.

The poorest man is respectable, provided he is honest, and can say, "I have not one cent which is not mine." An infallible means of becoming poor," said a holy priest, "is to work on Sunday, or to unjustly acquire money."

On the contrary, the just and honest man will be blessed of God.

When Jesus Christ is truly the Master of a man's heart, He not only causes him to give his neighbour what belongs to him, but also inspires him with charity and detachment from earthly goods. Witness Zacheus, who said: Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold.