



“You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods” (Ex 20:17)

A spiritual guide to purifying the heart in today’s world

1. The most interior commandment... and the most forgotten

The **Tenth Commandment** is probably one of the most ignored and misunderstood. Many people think it “doesn’t really harm anyone,” that it remains only in the realm of thoughts, or that it is impossible not to fall into it. However, the **Tradition of the Church** considers it **essential**, because it touches the deepest core of sin: **the disordered desire of the heart**.

While other commandments regulate external actions, the tenth points directly to the interior of man. And that is where the hardest spiritual battle is fought.

“For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Mt 6:21)

This commandment does not forbid progress, work, or the legitimate desire for a dignified life. **It forbids covetousness**, that is, the selfish, disordered, and possessive desire that turns material goods into idols and robs us of interior freedom.

2. What does the Church really teach about this commandment?

The **Catechism of the Catholic Church (nos. 2534-2557)** teaches that the Tenth Commandment:

- Forbids **greed** and **disordered covetousness**
- Calls us to **poverty of spirit**
- Fights against **envy**
- Demands **trust in Divine Providence**
- Invites us to **temperance of desire**

It is not only about “not stealing” (which is already forbidden by the Seventh



Commandment), but about **not desiring what does not belong to you in an unjust way**, about **not living in constant comparison**, about **not measuring your worth by what you possess**.

3. An extremely relevant commandment today

We live in a society that **systematically feeds covetousness**:

- Constant advertising
- Social media built on comparison
- Success measured by money, status, and possessions
- Anxiety to “have more,” even when we no longer know how to enjoy what we already have

The Tenth Commandment is profoundly countercultural. It reminds us that:

*Not everything I desire is good for me.
Not everything I can have should I want.*

4. Spiritual roots of sin against the Tenth Commandment

Behind covetousness there are often hidden:

- Lack of trust in God
- Personal insecurity
- Pride (wanting to be worth more than others)
- Ingratitude
- Forgetfulness of eternal life

That is why this commandment is intimately linked to **faith, hope, and charity**.



5. Extensive and detailed list of sins against the Tenth Commandment

(A practical guide for examination of conscience)

A. Sins of covetousness and interior greed

1. Desiring riches solely to feel superior to others
2. Never being satisfied with what one has
3. Living obsessed with earning more money, even at the expense of moral duties
4. Placing economic profit above justice
5. Hoarding goods with no intention of sharing
6. Feeling constant anxiety about money
7. Measuring personal success solely by material means
8. Desiring inheritances, goods, or properties belonging to others
9. Taking interior pleasure in the possible financial ruin of another
10. Living with excessive fear of losing money or possessions

B. Sins of envy (a grave form of the Tenth Commandment)

11. Feeling sadness over another's good fortune
12. Rejoicing in the financial failure of others
13. Constantly comparing oneself with others
14. Desiring that another lose what he has
15. Feeling resentment toward the success of others
16. Criticizing or discrediting those who prosper
17. Secretly desiring to "be in their place"
18. Feeling hatred or rejection toward those who possess more
19. Being unable to tolerate that others are recognized or rewarded
20. Desiring that God not bless others



C. Sins against poverty of spirit

21. Believing that security depends only on money
22. Failing to trust in Divine Providence
23. Living in constant anxiety about one's financial future
24. Refusing to help out of fear of losing
25. Clinging to possessions as if they were eternal
26. Living as if this life were the ultimate end
27. Despising simplicity and sobriety
28. Considering an austere life useless
29. Mocking those who live with little
30. Interiorly rejecting the cross of scarcity

D. Sins related to modern consumerism and materialism

31. Compulsive buying without necessity
32. Spending money to impress others
33. Going into debt out of vanity
34. Living obsessed with brands and status
35. Desiring what others display on social media
36. Feeling inferior for not having the latest things
37. Working only in order to consume more
38. Replacing useful items merely out of caprice
39. Seeking identity in what one owns
40. Sacrificing time with God or family for money

E. Sins of unjust intention and desire

41. Secretly desiring what belongs to another
42. Fantasizing about appropriating another's goods
43. Interiorly justifying covetousness
44. Feeding thoughts of unjust possession
45. Failing to combat disordered desires
46. Consenting to greed without repentance
47. Rejecting the interior correction of conscience



48. Considering a covetous lifestyle “normal”
49. Refusing to fight against envy
50. Refusing to ask forgiveness for unjust desires

6. When can these sins be mortal?

A sin against the Tenth Commandment can be **mortal** when:

- The desire is **grave** (hatred, deep envy, extreme greed)
- It is **fully consented to**
- It becomes a **habitual attitude**
- It leads to other grave sins (injustices, theft, hatred)

Not every disordered desire is mortal, but **it must be confessed** if it has been consented to.

7. Virtues that heal the covetous heart

To live this commandment, the Church proposes:

- **Poverty of spirit**
- **Gratitude**
- **Trust in God**
- **Generosity**
- **Temperance**
- **Charity**

“But if we have food and clothing, with these we shall be content”
(1 Tim 6:8)



8. Conclusion: interior freedom or slavery to desire

The Tenth Commandment is not a burden, but a **gateway to freedom**.

He who does not covet, **rests**.

He who trusts in God, **lives in peace**.

Before confession, sincerely ask yourself:

Does my heart belong to God... or to what I have and desire?