

*“The Pilgrims Progress”  
The Silent Sin*

**Introduction:**

1. The Essence Of The Tenth Commandment:
    - That We Touched On Even This Morning:
      - Is This:
        - “Thou Shalt Not Covet!”
    - And This Law:
      - Is, Perhaps, One Of The Most Powerful Commandments:
        - Because It Moves From:
          - What Goes On:
            - On The Outside:
              - Of Man!
            - To - What Goes On:
              - On The Inside:
                - Of Man!
    - And So - The Focus Of This Commandment:
      - Is Not Just On:
        - Your Duty:
          - As A Person!
        - It's Focus Is On:
          - Your Desire:
            - As A Person!
2. And - By This Commandment:
    - God Reveals That He Knows You:
      - The “True You!”
        - Better Than Others - And:
          - Even More Than You Do Yourself!
    - And - It Is The Tenth Commandment:
      - That Proves What We Find:
        - In Hebrews 4:13 - That Tells Us:
          - “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do!”
    - And This Is True:
      - Even Though The Sin Of Covetousness:
        - Lies Silently & Even Secretly:
          - In Our Hearts!
3. Well - It Is To Address This:
    - Silent Sin:
      - That John Bunyan Describes:
        - The Next Three Encounters:
          - That Our Pilgrims Will Face:
            - On Their Journey!
4. And So - As We Turn Back To:
    - Page 65 - We Will Meet Again:
      - The Characters That We Were Introduced To Last Time:
        - Mr. By-Ends, Mr. Hold-The-World, Mr. Money-Love, And Mr. Save-All!
          - Who - If You Recall - Were Quite Gratified With Their Answer To Their Own Questions:
            - About Whether It Was OK For Both A Minister & A Tradesman:
              - To Use Religion To Get Ahead In This World!
      - And - Of Course:
        - They All Agreed That:
          - It Was Not Only OK:
            - It Was Also Commendable!
    - And Since They Thought Their Reasoning:
      - Was So Logical & Even Spiritual:

- They Wanted To Catch Back Up:
  - To Christian & Hopeful:
    - In Order To Bring Them To Shame:
      - Even As They Had Done To Mr. By-Ends!

5. So - We Will Begin Reading:

- On Page 65, Paragraph 1:
  - *“So they came up to each other, and after a short salutation, Mr. Hold-the-world propounded the question to Christian and his fellow, and bid them to answer it if they could!”*
  - Read Through Page 68, Paragraph 3:
    - *“This ministereth occasion to us to thank God, to fear before him, and always to remember Lot’s wife!”*
- The Sin Of Covetousness:
  - Was Such A Secret But Serious Sin:
    - That Bunyan Devotes 3 Encounters To It:
      - As We Just Read:
        - And Makes 3 Important Points About This Silent Sin:
          - Which I Would Like For Us To Look At Tonight!

\* First - From The Pilgrims’ Encounter With Mr. Hold-The-World - We See:

**1. The Reasons For Covetousness!**

- Especially When It Comes To:
  - Using Heavenly Means:
    - Like Religion:
      - To Achieve Earthly Gains:
        - Like Power & Prestige & Prosperity!
- When Mr. Hold-The-World Posed His Questions:
  - To Christian & Hopeful:
    - They Saw Right Through Them:
      - And Confronted Them:
        - About Using Religion:
          - As A “Stalking-Horse!”
        - **IE:** Hunters Would Often Walk Alongside Their Horses In Order To Get Closer To Their Prey! Sometimes, They Would Even Use Horse Decoys To Mask Their Approach!
  - And So - Mr. Hold-The-World & His Friends:
    - Were Trying To Use Religion:
      - Not For The Sake Of Heaven:
        - But In Order “To Get And Enjoy The World!”
        - And That’s It!
  - So - For Them:
    - Religion Became A Mask:
      - To Cover Up Their Covetous Hearts!
        - But Why?
      - Well - Christian Makes His Point Clearly:
        - When He Says That “Noone Has This Opinion Of Theirs – Except Heathens, Hypocrites, Devils, And Witches!”
        - And Then - He Gives Them Biblical Examples Of Each!
  - He Declares That The Reason For Covetousness Is:
    - That There Is:
- No Change:
  - In Their Hearts!
    - It’s The Same Heart That:
      - Hamor & Shechem & The Pharisees & Judas & Simon Magus Had!
        - They May Seem Religious:
          - But There Has Never Been A Relationship With God That Changed Their Hearts!
      - But Also - The Reason For Their Covetousness Is:
  - No Contentment!
    - Because - If Their Religion:

- Doesn't Get Them What They Want:
  - They Will Quickly Move On:
    - To Something Else:
      - That Might!
- And So - As Christian Said:
  - "That Man That Takes Up Religion For The World, Will Throw Away Religion For The World!"
- And With Those Words:
  - Christian Caused Mr. Hold-The-World & His Companions:
    - To Stop & To Stand & To Stare:
      - And To Be Put To Silence!
        - Fulfilling What Peter Wrote In 1 Peter 2:15 - "For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men!"
- But - If That Was The Case:
  - For Them - What Is The Case:
    - For Us?
      - Why Do You Follow After The Religion You Do?
        - Why Do You Claim To Trust In Christ & Testify About Christ?
  - Jesus Himself Posed This Question:
    - To The Multitude Of 5,000 + Who Tried To Follow Him After He Fed Them With The 5 Barley Loaves & 2 Small Fishes:
      - In John 6:26-27 - "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. / Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed!"
- We Need To Remember That:
  - The Gospel Does Not Ensure:
    - The Physical Welfare & Prosperity:
      - Of Those Who Believe In & Follow Christ!
  - And If That Is The Reason You Are Following Him:
    - Then It Is But A Cloak For Your Own:
      - Covetous Heart!
        - And - You Need To Examine Your Heart:
          - To See If You Are Truly Content With Christ - Or - If You've Ever Truly Been Changed By Christ!
  - And - Beware Of The Reasons:
    - Behind The Silent Sin:
      - Of Covetousness!

\* But Then - Christian & Hopeful Encounter Another Character With A Biblical Name - Demas! And In This Encounter - We See:

## 2. ***The Risks Of Covetousness!***

- Whereas The Covetousness Of Mr. Hold-The-World & The Others:
  - Was Disguised - The Covetousness Of Demas:
    - Is On Full Display!
      - Because - He Is The One Calling To Pilgrims Like Ours To:
        - "Come And See" What Is Going On At The "Silver Mine" That Is On And In The "Little Hill Called Lucre!"
  - Of Course - Demas Is The One:
    - Who For A Time Was A Faithful Companion Of The Apostle Paul!
      - Paul Even Called Him In Philemon 24:
        - His "Fellowlaborer!"
    - But - Over Time - Paul Wrote These Heart-Breaking Words About Demas To Timothy:
      - In 2 Timothy 4:10 - "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica!"
- And This Encounter With Demas:
  - Reveals To Us:
    - Some Of The Risks Of Covetousness!
      - Like The Risk Of:

- The Summons Of The World!
  - For Demas:
    - It Started To Seem Like The World Offered:
      - What Was “Wiser & Richer!” And Those Who Lived In The World Were:
        - “More In Favor, Lived Merrier, And Fared Better!”
  - And This Continued Until:
    - As Jesus Described In His Parable Of The Sower:
      - In Mark 4:19 - “The cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful!”
  - But - It Wasn’t Just Demas:
    - Who Was Summoned By Covetousness!
      - It Was One Of Our Pilgrims As Well!
        - Hopeful Himself - In A “Moment Of Weakness” Wanted To Go And See The Silver Mine For Himself!
  - And We Need To Guard Our Hearts:
    - From The Silent Sin Of Covetousness As Well:
      - Because Of The Constant Risk:
        - Of Being Summoned By The Same “Deceitfulness Of Riches!”
          - But Also Because Of The Risk Of:
- The Snare Of The World!
  - As Christian Put It:
    - “Treasure Is A Snare To Those Who Seek It!”
      - Treasure Itself Is No Sin, And Money Itself Is Not The Root Of All Evil:
        - But The Love Of It & The Pursuit Of It Is - And Will Prove A Snare:
          - That Will Turn You Into A Demas If You Are Careless!
    - In Proverbs 11:28 We Are Told:
      - “He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch!”
        - But The Greatest Risk Of Covetousness Is:
  - The Senselessness Of The World!
    - Bunyan Described The Hill Of Lucre:
      - As A “Little Hill!”
        - But - Covetousness Is Never Satisfied:
          - With Just A Little!
    - The Hill May Be Small:
      - But The Mine Goes Deep!
        - And The Deeper You Go:
          - The Further You Are:
            - From The Light & Sense Of The Day!
    - During The Great California Gold Rush:
      - Thousands Upon Thousands Flocked To Stake Their Claims:
        - In Order To Make It Rich!
          - Only To Find That Any Gold They Obtained:
            - Left As Quickly As It Came!
      - Even Demas Left The Silver Mine:
        - In Order To Call On Other Works:
          - To Dig & Fill His Pockets:
            - With Their Riches!
      - And Yet - Those ‘49ers Kept On Digging!
        - Hoping That With The Next Shovel-Full Or Pan-Full:
          - They Would Find The Rare Nugget That Would Get Them The Easy Life!
      - But - As We Find In Proverbs 27:20:
        - “Hell and destruction are never full; so the eyes of man are never satisfied!”
      - In Bunyan’s Work Titled “The Plain Man’s Pathway”:
        - He Wrote - “When men have swinked and sweat, carked and cared, moiled and turmoiled, drudged and droiled, by night and by day, by sea and by land, with much care and sorrow, much labour and grief, to rake together the things of this life; yet at last all will away again, and we must end where we began!”
    - These Are The Risks:
      - Of The Silent Sin:

- Of Covetousness!
  - And We Need To Beware & To Guard Our Hearts!
- But - What Is Your Treasure Tonight?
  - Is It The Silver Of The World?
    - Or - Is It The Savior Of The World?
  - Apply These Words Of Paul:
    - Philippians 3:7-8 - "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. / Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ!"

\* Well - After Mr. By-Ends & His Friends Heeded The Summons Of Demas To Enter The Silver Mine - And Were Never Seen Again - In The Third Encounter By Christian & Hopeful - We See:

**3. The Reminder Of Covetousness!**

- And That Reminder Was In The Form Of:
  - A Pillar Of Salt - Lot's Wife:
    - That We Read About In Genesis 19:26!
    - It Is A Biblical Reminder About:
  - Glancing!
    - That's All It Took For Lot's Wife:
      - As They Were Being Rescued From Sodom!
        - A Glance - Genesis 19:24-26 - "Then the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven; / And he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground. / But his wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt!"
    - We Need To Guard:
      - Even The Glances Of Our Hearts:
        - Toward Those Things That:
          - Can Distract Us From Our Greatest Treasure Of Christ!
          - Lot's Wife Is Also A Reminder Of:
  - Grace!
    - Even Hopeful Recognized:
      - The Danger He Was In At The Silver Mine:
        - When He Had "A Desire To Go And See!"
          - And Yet - All Lot's Wife Did:
            - Was Look Behind Her!
      - And So - It Was & Is God's Grace:
        - That Keeps Us From The Punishment & Judgment:
          - We Deserve For Our Covetous Hearts!
            - So - As In The Words Of Hopeful:
              - "Let Grace Be Adored, And Let Us Be Ashamed!"
        - Lot's Wife Is Also A Reminder Of:
      - Guarding!
        - In Luke 17:32 Jesus Himself Uses Lot's Wife:
          - To Warn His People Against Covetousness:
            - Even When The World Itself:
              - Is About To Be Engulfed In Fire!
                - "Remember Lot's Wife!"
        - But Its Not Just Lot's Wife:
          - That We Need To Remember!
            - As Ken Puls Puts It - "All Of God's Judgments . . . Are Warnings To Us To Take The Wrath Of God Seriously. Every Display Of God's Wrath Is A Call To Us To Turn Away From Sin, And Come To Christ For Mercy, Forgiveness, Wisdom, And Righteousness!"

**Conclusion:**

1. And So - Through These Three Encounters:
  - We Have Vividly Displayed For Us - Some Of:
    - The Reasons For Covetousness!
    - The Risks Of Covetousness! And:

- The Reminder Of Covetousness!
- 2. But - What Is The Cure For Covetousness?
  - In Matthew 6:19-21 - Jesus Says To Us:
    - “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: / But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: / For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also!”
  - When Your Treasure:
    - Is In Heaven:
      - Instead Of On Earth! And:
  - When Your Treasure:
    - Is A Savior:
      - Instead Of Silver!
  - Then That Silent Sin:
    - Can Be Silenced:
      - As You “Set Your Affection On Things Above, Not On Things On The Earth!” (Colossians 3:2)
- 3. I Would Like To Close With These Words:
  - From Ken Puls - “We must flee sin at all cost. We must flee sin in our hearts and with our eyes and ears, as well as with our hands and feet. We must not assume that because we are fleeing the consequences of sin, we are safely beyond the reach of sin. Let us run from sin with no looking back. And, as Hopeful instructs, let us thank God, fear Him, and always remember Lot's wife!”

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