



INTEGRITY: DON'T LEAVE HOME WITHOUT IT

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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Integrity: Don't Leave Home Without It

SERMON REFERENCE: Exodus 20:15

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1862

Exodus 20:15 reveals the eighth commandment: "You shall not steal."

It seems we have forgotten the basic rules of honesty. Any time we take anything that belongs to someone else or keep from someone something we owe, we are guilty of stealing. There are three grand principles found in Ephesians 4:28 that we are to etch into the consciousness of our children.

1. Integrity: "Let him who stole steal no longer..."

Stealing isn't just burglary or embezzlement; it can also mean fraud. Lying is a form of stealing; half-hearted work is stealing. Gambling is another form of thievery; it is an attempt to get what belongs to someone else without giving him anything for it. We belong to God, whether we acknowledge it or not. When we live for ourselves and not for God, we are robbing God of what is His. When we fail to tithe we are stealing from God. Adrian Rogers explains, "It pays to serve Jesus; it pays every step of the way. You have defrauded yourself: In seeking to get, you're the one who loses."

2. Industry: "...but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good..."

Work is not a curse; it is a gift from God, and absolutely imperative in our world. When someone receives something without working for it, someone else has to work for it without receiving. We must begin instilling a good work ethic into our children early, so they grow up to become hard workers.

3. Generosity: "...that he may have something to give him who has need..."

The opposite of stealing is giving. Just as we teach our children the importance of hard work, we must teach them the importance of charity. As Christians, we labor to meet our needs and give to others. It's a sin to expect the government to care for our loved ones when we, ourselves, ought to do it.

Adrian Rogers says, "Misery comes from mirrors. Joy comes from windows when we're beginning to pour out and give to others."

Life Application

Would you like to teach your children the importance of working with honesty, vigor, and the expectation to give to others? Adrian Rogers emphasizes this powerful advice from John Wesley: "Make all you can, save all you can, and give all you can."



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) This commandment, "Thou shalt not steal," is one of God's great laws for living.
 - i) Exodus 20:15
- b) America has forgotten the basic rules of honesty.
- c) Anytime we take something that belongs to someone else or keep from someone what we owe them, we have transgressed this commandment.
 - i) It might be time.
 - ii) It might be money.
 - iii) It might be affection.
 - iv) It might be possessions.
 - v) It might be courtesy.
 - vi) It might be appreciation.
 - vii) It might be love.
- d) If we defraud someone else, then we have taken that which does not belong to us, and we are guilty of stealing.
 - i) To extort, to burglarize, to defraud, to filch, to cheat, to misappropriate, to rob, to swindle, to swipe, to embezzle.
- e) We are to teach our children the meaning of this commandment.
 - i) Deuteronomy 6:7
- f) Ephesians 4:28 is an explanation of this commandment found in Exodus 20:15.
 - i) There are three principles or characteristics within this passage that parents should emblazon upon the hearts and minds of their children.
 - (1) Integrity: "Let him that stole steal no more."
 - (2) Industry: "But rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good."
 - (3) Generosity: "That he may have to give to him that needeth."

2) INTEGRITY

- a) There are many ways to live without integrity and many forms of stealing.
 - i) Direct stealing
 - (1) Shoplifting
 - (2) Armed robbery
 - (3) Burglary
 - (4) Workplace theft; embezzlement
 - ii) Fraud; white-collar crime
 - iii) Half-hearted work
 - (1) Colossians 3:22
 - iv) Employers not paying a fair wage.
 - (1) Colossians 4:1
 - (2) James 5:4
 - v) Tax evasion
 - vi) Insurance manipulation



- vii) Taking unfair advantage of others.
- viii) Gambling
 - (1) Gambling is morally wrong.
 - (2) No one can win at gambling without someone else losing.
 - (3) Legitimate business is win-win.
 - (4) In gambling, for every winner there must be a loser.
 - (a) Gambling is profit and pleasure at someone else's pain and loss.
 - (b) Gambling is an attempt to put something in your pocket that belongs to someone else without giving him anything for it.
 - (5) Habakkuk 2:6
- ix) Withholding love and devotion.
 - (1) The Bible commands that one spouses not defraud the other of sexual love.
 - (2) Withholding love from your neighbor is defrauding them.
 - (3) Romans 13:8
 - (4) Some children defraud their parents of honor.
 - (5) Some parents defraud their children of guidance, instruction and love.
- x) Many steal from God.
 - (1) Have you given Him your life?
 - (a) We are His by creation; God made us.
 - (b) We are His by redemption; Christ died for us.
 - (c) 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
 - (2) Tithing is an emblem and symbol that everything belongs to God.
 - (a) Malachi 3:8
- xi) We also steal from ourselves when we steal from God and others.
 - (1) Jeremiah 5:25

3) INDUSTRY

- a) Work is not bad nor a curse; work is good and is a blessing.
- b) We must teach our children and young people the duties of honest work and labor.
- c) 2 Thessalonians 3:10
- d) God commands labor.
 - i) Exodus 20:9-10
 - ii) The children of Israel understood this command.
 - (1) The rabbis of old have taught that he who does not teach his son a trade teaches him to steal.
- e) Work is a gift from God.
 - i) Ecclesiastes 5:18-19
 - (1) God gives us work and the fruit of our work.
- f) Today's society and political environment takes a different view on work than the Biblical standard.
 - i) You cannot legislate the poor into freedom by legislating the industrious out of it.
 - ii) You cannot multiply wealth by dividing it.
 - iii) Government cannot give to someone something that it doesn't first take from someone else.
 - iv) When someone receives something without working for it, someone else has to work for it without receiving it.
 - v) A nation cannot thrive when half of its people believe they don't have to work because someone else will work for them, and the other half believe it does no good to work because they don't get to keep what they work for.



- vi) Rather than working for the pleasure and joy of cooperating with Almighty God and running the world that He's made for us, many today are only working in order to get enough money so that they can stop working.
- g) We need to teach our children and young people how to work.
 - i) Lamentations 3:27
 - ii) For children, their school work, music lessons, practice time, chores, paper routes, babysitting, etc., are work to them.
- h) We should never retire from serving God.
- i) The opposite of work is idleness.

4) GENEROISTY

- a) The opposite of stealing is giving.
- b) We need to teach our children to work not only to meet their needs, but to also meet the needs of others.
- c) Acts 20:33-35
 - i) Adhering to this passage frees us from selfishness.
 - ii) Someone who learns to be selfish will also be miserable.
 - (l) Misery comes from mirrors; joy comes from windows, when we begin to pour out and give to others.
- d) In addition to money, there are many more things we can give and teach our children to give.
 - i) Give children understanding and they'll learn to give understanding to others.
 - ii) Give acceptance.
 - iii) Give forgiveness - don't let bitterness poison you or your children.
 - iv) Give love - do good no matter what is done to you.
- e) John Wesley: "Make all you can, save all you can and give all you can."
- f) Teach children to help their neighbors.
- g) Teach children to bring their own allowance to church for the tithe and offering.
- h) Teach children to participate in mission projects.
- i) Teach children how to give to their brothers and sisters.
- j) You teach them by precept and by example and do it consistently.

5) CONCLUSION

- a) We belong to God; have you given your life to Him?
 - i) Jeremiah 5:25
- b) All we accumulate in this life we will one day leave.
 - i) Mark 8:35
 - ii) John 10:10
- c) Don't let Satan, the biggest thief, steal from you the abundant life that Jesus wants to give you.
- d) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Be finding the book of Exodus chapter 20. Our verse for today is verse 15, and you don't have to have a doctorate to understand it. It can't be much plainer. "Thou shalt not steal." If there were ever a verse that is needed, this one is. We're talking about, "A Perfect 10 for Homes that Win," and this is one of God's great laws for living, rules for righteousness and encouragements to have the kind of homes that will win.

You know America has just forgotten the basic rules of honesty. I read about a market in California. There was a little boy standing there in front of the fruit stand. There were grapes there. He was putting those grapes, cramming those grapes in his mouth as fast as he could. There wasn't an adult anywhere. A clerk was standing by absolutely helpless, not knowing what to do. And this little fellow was just cramming the grapes in his mouth. After a while, his mother appeared and she saw what was happening. She said, "Johnny, not so fast." This is the kind of a situation that we live in, where we seem to have forgotten the basic rules of honesty.

Well, I want to be very pertinent in this message and tell you this message tells us that any time we take anything that belongs to someone else, or that we keep from someone the thing that we owe to them, we have transgressed this commandment. Now it might be time. It might be money. It might be affection. It might be possessions. It may be courtesy, or appreciation, or love, or anything else. If we defraud somebody else, we have taken that which does not belong to us and we're guilty of stealing. There are many synonyms: to extort, to burglarize, to defraud, to filch, to cheat, to misappropriate, to rob, to swindle, to swipe, to gyp, to embezzle. Now how do we teach our children what this commandment means? You remember that God gave this commandment to the children of Israel. And then He said in Deuteronomy 6 verse 7 that, "Fathers are to teach these things to their sons and to their grandsons."

Well there's a verse in the New Testament that I'd like for you to put in your margin right by Exodus chapter 20 and verse 15, and it is Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 28. And in my estimation this one verse is the perfect explanation and amplification of the Old Testament verse that says, "Thou shalt not steal." Again Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 28, listen to it, "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands that thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Now did you listen to it? Let me read it again. This is a dynamite verse, "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." In that verse there are three things that every parent ought to try to emblazon into the heart of his or her child, to etch there into his or her consciousness; three grand principles.

The first one is **integrity**. "Let him that stole steal no more." The second principle is **industry**, "But rather let him labor working with his hands the things that is good." And the third is **generosity**, "That he may have to give to him that needeth." Now all of these according to the New Testament are wrapped up in this commandment that says, "Thou shalt not steal." Integrity, industry, and generosity; those are three characteristics that all of us ought to say, "Dear God, help me to teach these things to our children. And help us that we might practice these things before our children."



Now let's talk a little bit about the demands of **integrity**, the first of those three items. You know there are many ways that you can live without integrity. Of course there's direct stealing. You know what the kids call shoplifting? A five-finger discount; where they just go in and filch that. It is amazing how much is stolen by sheer shoplifting. Well it may be not just shoplifting; armed robbery, burglary. Our cities are plagued with this. Stealing at the work place is epidemic. Did you know according to the research that I did that the American economy loses over 40 billion dollars a year from stealing on the work place? That's simply embezzlement or pilfering from the work place. And so that's one kind of stealing, just direct stealing; whether it be shoplifting, or whether it be burglary, or bank robbery, or pilfering on the job, or embezzlement. All of these things will receive the sure judgment of almighty God.

But there's another form of stealing and that's fraud, what we call white collar crime. You know for years the Beechnut people sold baby foods, and mothers said, "Well, when you think of Beechnut, you know, we give our little children, I know we raised ours these little jars of baby food, and we thought well that's purity, and that's health and all of that." Then one day the authorities discovered that they had been selling apple juice, and they sold it for ten years. And on the label it said, "100% fruit juice, no sugar added." And when they analyzed it, they found out it was little more than chemicals and dye and water; sort of a chemical cocktail. And so they were told, "You can't sell this on the market. You can't advertise this and let mothers think they're giving their babies apple juice when you're giving them this chemical concoction." So what did they do with it? I'll tell you what they did with it. They loaded up nine tractor trailers with the stuff and within days it was being sold in Puerto Rico, and the Dominican Republic, and the Virgin Islands. The Bible says, "Thou shalt not steal."

I read about a motel. You walk into that motel, it says the rooms are \$80, cash rebate \$20. Now think about that. Doesn't say the rooms are \$60; it says the rooms are \$80, cash rebate \$20. So if you're a salesman, you go in there and they give you a receipt for an \$80 room. You turn that into your employer. Said, "I rented a room for \$80." You put \$20 in your pocket. Now this is going on all over the land. It is a form of stealing.

Halfhearted work is stealing. You work for an employer and don't give him an honest day's labor, you've stolen from him. Colossians 3 verse 22, "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God." Now if you don't fear God enough to give an honest day's work you have broken the commandment that says, "Thou shalt not steal."

I heard about a man who applied for a job, and he asked the prospective employers, he said, "What will you pay me?" He said, "Well I'll pay you what you're worth." He said, "Oh, no, no, no nothing doing." He said, "I just quit a job making more than that." And there are a lot of people who are being paid more than they're worth. And if you're an employer and you don't pay a man what he's worth, you have stolen from that man. Listen to these Scriptures, those of you who have businesses, Colossians 4 verse 1, "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven." That also speaks to the domestic work in your house. That maid or those people who work in your yard, do you pay them what is just and equal? I mean if you were in their place, would you expect to be paid more than you pay those people? James chapter 5 and verse 4 says, "Behold the hire of the laborers who



have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." That means that God sees when you don't pay what you ought to pay. And God sees when you don't earn what you get paid for. Some who are sitting in this building today have no idea that you have broken the commandment that says, "Thou shalt not steal." You just think of yourself as a shrewd business man. Now tax avoidance is one thing. Tax evasion is something else. Having insurance is one thing, insurance manipulation is something else, high finance and sharp dealing; Jesus warned about Pharisees which devoured widow's houses. They saw an opportunity to take advantage of unsuspecting widows whose husbands had died and the woman did know how to protect herself.

Do you know one of the greatest forms of thievery that's going on right here in this area? It's the entire gambling industry. Did you know that? That's all thievery. Let me tell you something friend. Gambling is morally wrong. Now why is it morally wrong? What's wrong with gambling? Well nobody can win at gambling without somebody else losing. Again you don't have to have a Ph.D. to understand that. True legitimate business is win-win. I make a widget. I sell it for a dollar. I get the dollar. You get the widget. I win and you win. In gambling, for every winner there must be a loser. Gambling is profit and pleasure at somebody else's pain and loss. Gambling is an attempt to get what belongs to someone else into your possession, without giving him anything for it. Now if two people meet in a back ally and one puts a gun on the other person and takes what belongs to him, they call it thievery. But if two people meet in a casino and one takes what belongs to the other they call gambling. Oh, they don't call it gambling they call it gaming. Well, you say, "But Pastor, that there's a difference. In the back ally, one person is not very willing." The other person may be willing, but one is not willing. The fact that both are willing doesn't make it any better. A dual is murder by mutual consent. When people decide they are going to shoot each other, that doesn't make it legal just because one is willing to take the other's life and the other is willing to take the other's life. That doesn't make it right. You see when somebody gambles and wins, he has the spirit of thievery. When he gambles and loses, he's been very foolish.

And so the Bible says in Habakkuk 2 verse 6, "Woe unto him that increaseth that which is not his." Withholding love and devotion breaks this commandment. Did you know the Bible commands husbands and wives not to defraud the other in the matter of sexual love? That if you withhold from your husband or from your wife, physical, sexual love and endearment that you defraud them. Why if you withhold from your neighbor love, you defraud your neighbor. The Bible says in Romans chapter 13 verse 8, "Owe no man anything but to love one another." We owe that love. Some have defrauded their parents of honor. Some parents have defrauded their children of guidance, and love, and instruction.

God's Word says, "Thou shalt not steal." Do you know the worst thievery is to steal from God? And so many are stealing from God. You say, "How am I stealing from God?" Well I want to ask you a question; have you given Him your life? You belong to Him, you know. I mean, First Corinthians chapter 6 verses 19 and 20, "You're not your own. You are bought with a price." Isn't that what the Bible says? "You are His by creation." He made you. You are His by redemption. He died for you. "You're not your own. You're bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's." And when you live your life for self and self alone as if Jesus Christ never lived, and Jesus Christ never died, you my friend are a thief. You have taken from God that which belongs to God. You walk God's green Earth. You breathe God's air. You live with the life that God has given you. And you don't pour your life back out to God. Again in First



Corinthians 6 verse 19 and 20, "What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price."

Do you know why we tithe? The tithe is an emblem and a symbol that everything belongs to Him. Don't get the idea that 10% of what you have belongs to God. All that you have belongs to God, because the One who owns the sheep owns the wool. And you happen to belong to Him and all that you have belongs to Him and the tithe is only an emblem and a symbol. Malachi 3 verse 8, "Will a man rob God? Yet ye rob Me? But ye say, 'Wherein have we robbed thee?' In tithes and in offerings." Now, when we steal from others whether it be armed robbery, or a dishonest days work, or where we hold back the wages from those who work for us or whether we try to swindle somebody with a shrewd deal, or whether we try by gambling to get what belongs to somebody else into our possession, or whether we fail to give love, or whether we fail to honor God as we ought. Do you know who we really steal from the most? Ourselves! You see when you fail in these other ways do you know the person who is robbed? It is you! The Bible says in Jeremiah chapter 5 verse 25, "Your iniquities have turned away these things and your sins have withholden good things from you. Your sins have withholden good things from you." It pays to serve Jesus. It pays every day. It pays every step of the way. You have defrauded yourself. In seeking to get, you're the one who loses.

Now, we need to teach this to our children. We need to teach our children integrity; line upon line, precept upon precept. But here's the second thing we need to teach them. Not only do we need to teach them integrity, we need to teach them **industry**. Now remember what our verse said, Ephesians 4 verse 28, "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good." Work is not bad. Work is good. Work is not a curse. Work is a blessing. Do you know what is wrong with this generation? Our young people do not know by and large the duties of honest work and labor.

Now the Bible is very clear about the necessity of work. The Bible says in Second Thessalonians chapter 3 and verse 10, "If any would not work neither should he eat." The ancient Jews; they understood the meaning of this commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." And they also understood Exodus 20 verse 9, the commandment that says, "Six days shalt thou labor," was just as true as the next verse, the one that says, "On the seventh day we're to rest." God commands labor. He says, "Six days shalt thou labor." They saw labor and work as a divine imperative. And the old rabbis used to say this, "He who does not teach his son a trade teaches him to steal." We have boys and girls who are going to college today, and graduating with degrees and still don't know how to make a living. The rabbis again saw work as a gift from God and the prophets did also.

Ecclesiastes chapter 5 verses 18 and 19, listen to it, "Behold that which I have seen; it is good and comely for one to eat, and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labor that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him; for it is his portion." God gives him work, and then the fruit of his work. "Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God." Labor is the gift of God. Work is not a curse. "Six days shalt thou labor."

Now, today, everybody wants to get in a position where they're going to win the sweepstakes so they won't have to work anymore. So many people have the idea you know, "If I just had several millions of dollars I wouldn't work anymore." That'd be pathetic. Be pathetic. I don't care how much money you have.



But we have a generation today that doesn't want to work. And we have a great number of people in America very frankly who are not working.

And I want to say a word. It may sound political, but it's not political. It's moral and Biblical. You cannot legislate the poor into freedom by legislating the industrious out of it. You don't multiply wealth by dividing it. And government cannot give to anybody anything that it doesn't first take from somebody else. And when somebody receives something without working for it, somebody else has to work for it without receiving it. We have to understand that. And the worst thing that could happen in a nation is for half the people to get the idea they don't have to work because somebody else will work for them. And the other half to get the idea it does no good to work because they don't get to keep what they work for. The Bible teaches in Second Thessalonians 3:10 that, "If a man should, would not work, neither should he eat."

Now what happened here, and our young people have to be retrained just on an honest day's work. It happened in the sixties. And in the sixties we were talking about the hippies and the flower children and they were going around smoking dope, and saying, "Peace brother," and talking about free love, and dope was hope, and sex was salvation. And they were saying, "Make love and not war," and all of that. And we said, "Aren't they kind of silly." But underneath all of that was a philosophy that simply said, "Turn on, tune in, and drop out," and the only dirty four letter word was W-O-R-K. Now that was a generation in the sixties. The sad thing about that is they've taken off their frayed jeans and their beads, and trimmed up their hair, and put on suits, and gone to Washington. That was the biggest cultural revolution. Well we had a generation that did not understand the work ethic that was taught by our fathers. And it's still not true in America today that by and large there is a work ethic. And those who are working are not working for the pleasure and the joy of cooperating with almighty God and running this world that He's made for us. But they're only working to get enough money so they can stop working. In Ephesians 4:28 the Bible says, "Let him that stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, working with his hands that which is good." It's good to work. Work is not bad. Work is good.

We need to put our nation back to work and the same thing is true in our prisons. Did you know in 1828 approximately 85% of the inmates in prison were gainfully employed? That is, when they were in prison they were put to work. In 1990 less than 10% of those in the prisons work. Charles Colson says this and I want to quote. He says, "With one of the most destructive and wasteful national policies imaginable, we are deliberately keeping almost a million men and women out of the labor force and denying them the skills they will need when they are released from prison to reenter the labor force." What we do? He said, "I visited more than four hundred prisons." He said, "I see these men locked in a narrow cell, lying on their bunks, staring at the ceiling, nothing to do. They live in a 6-by-9 cage with a tiny black and white television set, a few books, and absolutely nothing to do. We've seen the sullen expressions, the downcast eyes, the simmering bitterness." We have a generation today; many of these young people who are in these prisons and older people, they never learned how to work. They didn't have a daddy who taught them a trade. They didn't have a mama who made them to carry out the trash. They did not learn the basic things of industry.

How long will this nation go on? Those of you who want to retire, you're getting the idea that pretty soon you're going to retire so you can do nothing. God have mercy upon your pitiful soul. You'll never retire from serving God and if you are well enough off so that you don't have to go report in at eight o'clock to the office, that just gives you more time to serve God with all of your heart, with all of your soul.



If you'll look, you see the opposite of work is idleness, just simply not doing anything. We need to teach our children. Not only do we need to teach them integrity, but we need to teach them industry. "Let them labor, working with their hands." Start early with these boys and girls.

Let me give you a good verse to put in your margin. Lamentations 3 verse 27, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." Do you know what that means? Don't ever get the idea, "Well they're only children now they ought not to work when they're children. Wait till they grow up and when they grow up then they'll work and let the children play when they're children." Now folks, I've known what it is to work since I was a child. You may think that being a preacher is no work. You may think, "You don't work, you're just a preacher. You talk a little bit on Sunday morning." I've known what it is to work. When I was in grammar school and junior high school, I was buying my own clothes. I ran a milk route and did a day's work in junior high school and did a day's work before the other kids were getting out of bed. I used to deliver milk to the girl I'm married to right now. She'd go look out to the window to see me set the milk down there on her back porch. I did a day's work. I'm not bragging about it. It didn't hurt me. My dad believed that his boys ought to work. My brother and I had to cut the grass. You know what kind of grass we had in our front yard down in Florida? We didn't have the kind of grass we have up here. We had grass called bitter blue, and it's thick. And when he'd say, "Cut the grass," I was both bitter and blue. Because I want to tell you, we didn't have one of these kind of mowers, we had one of these kind of mowers that you push. And we didn't have one of those kind of edgers with a string on it. We had a little half-moon thing that you put your foot on and went around. All day long we worked on that yard, my brother and I. My dad would come home and inspect it, look at it. I'll tell you it was hard work in the Florida sun. When he'd say, "Boys that's a good job; that really looks good." I felt so good. Felt so good. Felt I'd done something and we earned our way.

I worked my way through college. I'd bus tables. I've been a carpenter's helper. I've been an elevator mechanic. I've been a used car salesman. I've been a fruit picker. I've done all of these things. But I'll tell you one thing I did, I got married. I went for four years of college and four years of seminary, raised a family, allowed my wife to stay home. I worked in the daytime. I worked at night. I got out without owing anybody anything. I give God the praise. I give God the glory, and it didn't hurt me. And I learned how to work, because I learned how to work as a child. And my daddy taught me how to work and I'm glad he did, I'm glad he did. And you say, "Well you think you're hot stuff." No, I don't. I'm just giving you a testimony. I'm telling you friend that work is good.

And the Bible says in Lamentations 3:27, "It's good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth." There's nothing wrong with work. And we need to teach our children integrity. "Let him that stole steal no more." And we need to teach them industry. And sometimes folks it's easier to do it yourself than to get them to do it. Amen? I mean like teaching a four, a four year old is old enough to gather up all the trash and carry out and empty the trash. But you have to, go help him to do it, and pick it up and go with him, and guide him and do it. A six or seven year old; they can help with the dishes. Ten, twelve, they can work in the yard. And remember that when you're teaching them industry, when they go to school that's a part of their work: their activities, their paper routes, their babysitting, their music lesson, the practice time. That's work to them, just like your work is work to you. Now you say, "Pastor Rogers, don't you want to let them play?" Of course you let them play. But this summer a lot of kids will be saying, "There's nothing to do." They'll be



bored. Around my house I was afraid to act bored, because my dad would find something for me to do. Let them work when they work and when they play the play will be a whole lot sweeter.

Now look at this verse, Ephesians 4 verse 28, number one it says, "Let him that stole steal no more;" that is integrity. "But rather let him labor," that is industry. Now here's the third thing, "That he may have to give to him that needeth." The opposite of stealing is not, not stealing, but it is giving. And for every negative, there's a positive. And we need to teach our children **generosity**. We need to teach them charity. We need to teach our children to work, not only to meet their greeds but to meet others' needs.

Let me give you a verse for your margin, Acts chapter 20 verses 33 through 35. Here's what the apostle Paul had to say. He said, "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel." We're going to talk about that next week, coveting. "Yea, ye yourselves know that these hands have ministered unto my necessities and to them that were with me." He said, "I have my needs met, because I work." And then he said, "I was able to meet the necessities of them that were with me." And now listen to this, "I have showed you all things how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Laboring that we might have to meet our needs and laboring that we might give to others. It's a sin and a shame before God that we're expecting the government to take care of our loved ones and our parents and our children when we ourselves ought to do it. And if we would do it with industry, we would have to give to ourselves and to give to others. This kind of living frees us from selfishness. And little children who learn to be selfish are going to be miserable children. Misery comes from mirrors. Joy comes from windows, when we're beginning to pour out and give to others.

I want everybody to do a little experiment with me if you will; not ashamed to make you feel a little childish. But take your fist and squeeze it as tightly as you can for just a moment. If you would, just take it and squeeze it just as tight and hold it there. Squeeze it. Keep it there. Hold it. Don't let go. Just squeeze it. Keep squeezing. Hold it. Don't let go. Don't let up. Just squeeze it. Hold it. Don't relax. Hold it there. Squeeze it. Go ahead. Now relax it. Doesn't that feel a lot better? This is the way so many are living. "That's mine!" They go through life that way. That's the way they go through life. Ephesians 4:28, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the things that is good; that ye may have to give." Life is made up of takers and givers. Teach the children to give and there's so much they can give. Give them understanding, and they'll give you understanding. People today want somebody to understand and to care. It's an amazing thing. Give acceptance. Give forgiveness to your children. Don't let that bitterness poison you and them. Give love. Love means I'll do you good no matter what you do to me. Teach the children to give.

John Wesley, founder of Methodism, great man of God said this in one sentence. "Make all you can, save all you can, and give all you can." Teach children integrity. Teach children industry. Teach children charity, generosity. Teach your children to clean up their neighbor's yard. Go over and help a widow carry the groceries home. Teach them to bring their own money to church. Give them their allowance. But let them take out of their allowance a gift and it may be a nickel, a dime, a quarter, whatever it is, but let the children have the joy of bringing their money to church. Let the children participate in mission projects. Teach the children how to give to their brothers and sisters. Teach them how to give. Train them in giving. You do it by precept. You do it by example. Do it consistently.



I wish I had more time to talk to you about this, but I don't. Time is gone. But now listen to me, listen carefully, the Bible says, "Thou shalt not steal." And I want to remind you again, listen, listen, Jesus on that cross poured out His life's blood for you. He suffered, bled, and died for you. He bought you. You belong to Him. Are you saved? If you steal from God I will promise you, as sure as my name is Adrian Rogers, that you'll steal from yourself. Jeremiah 5 verse 25, "For your sins have withholden good things from you." If I had a thousand lives to live, I'd give every one of them to Jesus. I am so glad that I know Christ as my personal Savior and Lord. And I know all of the toys of this world that we cling to we're soon going to leave. We used to say when I was a kid, "Finders, keepers. Losers weepers. Jesus says, "Keepers weepers. Losers finders." Lose my life. Mark 8:35 says, "Lose your life for My sake and the Gospel's and you'll find it." Jesus said of the devil in John chapter 10 and verse 10, "The thief cometh but to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I've come that you might have life and have it abundantly." Satan is the biggest thief of all and he wants to steal from you the abundant life that Jesus has for you.

Do you know what you ought to do, if you've never done it? Right now you ought to just open your heart and say, "Lord Jesus, I receive the gift of salvation, and I give myself back to You. Lord, I don't want to steal from You. My very life belongs to You and I give it to You right now." And friend, you'll understand that when you give to Him, He gives back to you. And what He gives to you is nothing compared to what you give to Him or gave up for Him.

Let's bow our heads in prayer. If you'd like to be saved, I want to invite you to pray a prayer like this; just pray it out of your heart, "Dear God, I know that You love me, and I know that You want to save me. Jesus, I believe You're the Son of God. I believe You paid my sin debt with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. You died to save me and promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You, Lord Jesus, right now. I trust You, Lord Jesus. Come into my heart, forgive my sin, save me, Lord Jesus." Would you pray that prayer? "Come into my heart, forgive my sin, save me, Lord Jesus." Pray it from your heart; mean it. "Save me, Lord Jesus." Then would you pray this? "Lord Jesus, because You died for me, I'll live for You. And Lord Jesus, give me the courage to confess You openly and publicly. Help me not to be ashamed of You. In Your holy name I pray, Amen."



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