

Q110. What does God forbid in the eighth commandment?

A. God forbids not only outright theft¹ and robbery,² punishable by law. But in God's sight theft also includes all scheming and swindling in order to get our neighbor's goods for ourselves, whether by force or means that appear legitimate,³ such as inaccurate measurements of weight,⁴ size, or volume;⁵ fraudulent merchandising; counterfeit money; excessive interest;⁶ or any other means forbidden by God. In addition God forbids all greed⁷ and pointless squandering of his gifts.⁸

1. 1 Cor. 6:10 – “thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, swindlers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God.”

2. 1 Cor. 5:10 – “not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since you would then need to go out of the world.”

3. Luke 3:14 – “Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.’”

1 Thess. 4:6 – “that no one wrong or exploit a brother or sister in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, just as we have already told you beforehand and solemnly warned you.”

4. Prov. 11:1 – “A false balance is an abomination to the Lord, but an accurate weight is his delight.”

Prov. 16:11 – “Honest balances and scales are the Lord's; all the weights in the bag are his work.”

5. Ezek. 45:9[–11] – “Thus says the Lord God: Enough, O princes of Israel! Put away violence and oppression, and do what is just and right. Cease your evictions of my people, says the Lord God. You shall have honest balances, an honest ephah, and an honest bath. The ephah and the bath shall be of the same measure, the bath containing one-tenth of a homer and the ephah one-tenth of a homer; the homer shall be the standard measure.”

Deut. 25:13[–16] – “You shall not have in your bag two kinds of weights, large and small. You shall not have in your house two kinds of measures, large and small. You shall have only a full and honest weight; you shall have only a full and honest measure, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. For all who do such things, all who act dishonestly, are abhorrent to the Lord your God.”

6. Ps. 15:5 – “who do not lend money at interest and do not take a bribe against the innocent. Those who do these things shall never be moved.”

Luke 6:35 – “Instead, love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.”

7. 1 Cor. 6:10 – “thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, swindlers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God.”

8. Prov. 5:16 – “Should your springs be scattered abroad, streams of water in the streets?”

Q111. What does God require of you in this commandment?

A. That I do whatever I can for my neighbor's good, that I treat others as I would like them to treat me,¹ and that I work faithfully so that I may share with those in need.²

1. Matt. 7:12 – “In everything do to others as you would have them do to you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.”

2. Eph. 4:28 – “Those who steal must give up stealing; rather, let them labor, doing good work with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy.”