

Lesson 11

DESIRE NOT THE UNDESERVING



In Samaria, there lived a man called Naboth. Ahab was the king of Samaria at that time. Naboth had a vine garden near the palace of the king. The king wanted to make that garden his own. But, Naboth was not ready to give his parental property to the king.

When the queen Jezebel knew about this, she accused Naboth of blasphemy. Naboth was stoned and put to death. The king now owned Naboth's property. The cry of Naboth reached God. The just God sent His prophet Elijah to the king. God spoke to Ahab through the prophet Elijah: "You have murdered Naboth and took over his possession. The Lord says: "In the place where dogs licked up the blood of Naboth, dogs will also lick up your blood too" (1 Kings 21:19). That was the punishment king Ahab got for his greed.

God who Does Justice

In the Old Testament, in such events, we see God who is intent on doing justice. Yahweh is the Protector and Provider of all those who are denied justice and are exploited. God who is just, desired that Israel His beloved children should also be just. But God saw that the men who were given birth out of the fullness of His love becoming unjust due to their selfishness. It is the desire that

everything should be mine, that led man to greed, poverty and wars. God created the universe for all. When people forgot this and became selfish, rich and poor came into being on the earth. **The poor, who were denied of their rights, became more and more poor, In order to protect the rights of the poor and the exploited, God gave the commandment: "You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor" (Ex 20:17).**

Greed

The Tenth Commandment, 'Do not covet another's property' forbids any act of greed, the root cause, leading to cheating, stealing and robbery. The desire to earn money is not wrong in itself. But it is wrong to covet unjustly what belongs to another; what is not our own. A greedy man will not be satisfied with the money he has. Those who are greedy for wealth will not be satisfied with wealth. **Greed is an excessive desire to amass wealth.** Along with this desire for power, comforts which the wealth brings also may come. Such desires are forbidden according to the Tenth Commandment.

Earning of Wealth

It is God Himself who has given man the ability to earn wealth. Each man has the right to earn wealth through rightful means and to make one's life secure for today and tomorrow. The right and duty to earn wealth for one's life through work or employment is God-given. But it is a serious evil to earn wealth by unjust means and needlessly. The universe is created for the whole of humanity and it is sinful when a person seeks and cares for only his own security and pleasure.

Covetousness or Greed

Covetousness or greed is the desire to own things, namely money, power or positions beyond one's needs and abilities. It will lead men to many problems in life.

Do not Hinder the Rights of Others

Each man has the right to enjoy the natural resources created for all by the loving God. He can own wealth in a just manner to satisfy his needs and to make his life secure. No one can violate such rights.

Virtues that Help to Conquer Greed

Spirit of Poverty

The real spirit of poverty consists in Evangelical Poverty. It is the mode of life with trust in God's providence, not finding one's satisfaction in the abundance of material goods. Jesus said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven (Mt 5:3). Those who have this spirit of poverty use their God-given gifts for the glory of God and for the good of their fellow-beings.

Thrift

God is the true owner of wealth. Human beings are only the stewards of wealth. This connection leads a person to thrift. Thrift is the mode of action of a person who spends only the money that is necessary for his life, and gives the rest of his wealth for the welfare of others. The number of persons who spend their wealth wantonly is increasing. God does not desire such a practice. The rich should have the realization that their wealth is God's gift.

Generosity

Generosity is a virtue that enables us to help the poor and to contribute to the eradication of poverty by realizing that we are responsible for the poverty in this world. The basis of generosity is the good will to sacrifice one's own comfort and help others in their needs. Only those who have the good will to share can be generous.

Satisfaction

It is the attitude of being satisfied with what God has given. It is a state of mind where one finds joy in what God has given him, necessary for his life and not regretting what he has not. The thought that the most important thing in our life is seeking the kingdom of God and His justice will help us to develop this attitude.

Protection of Nature

Man is not the owner of nature, but only a steward. No one should possess natural resources for selfish purposes. Natural resources are for all. Man has to learn to nourish nature and not to exploit it unjustly. Only those who have made the nourishment and protection of nature a part of their life style, can use water, air, trees etc. only in the measure they need and without wastage.

The importance of the 10th commandment, 'Do not covet another's property' is very relevant today. Nowadays, the rich rather than the poor are intent on getting the rights and wealth of another. This commandment reminds us to put an end to coveting the property of other people. Let us come to the realization that all are equal and wealth is the gift of God for all.

Let us Pray

O God, who blesses us by giving what is necessary for us,
help us to lead a life of satisfaction.

Read the Word of God and Narrate

Lk. 12:13-21.

Word of God for our Guidance

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the
Kingdom of heaven (Mt 5:3).

Let us Do

Learn by-heart the following basic Sins and virtues that are their opposites.

The Seven Capital Sins and The Virtues Opposed to them

Pride	X	Humility
Greed	X	Generosity
Lust	X	Modesty
Anger	X	Patience
Gluttony	X	Self-control
Jealousy	X	Charity
Laziness	X	Enthusiasm

My Resolution

I will help the poor students in my parish, as far as I can.

Find out the Answer

1. Explain in a few words that earning wealth is one's fundamental right.
2. When does earning of wealth become evil?
3. What is evangelical poverty?
4. Explain thrift and generosity.
5. What do we mean by covetousness or greed?