

THE COMMANDMENTS.

The Seventh Commandment (Concl.):

Thou shalt not steal.

1. Bad servants offend against this Commandment by cheating their employer, or by causing him loss through carelessness and inattention in the performance of their duties.

2. Servants should be faithful, exact and honest even in the smallest details. Read what Christ says: « And I say to you: « Make unto you friends of Mammon of inequity, that when you shall fail they may receive you into everlasting dwellings. He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater; and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also that which is greater. If then you have not been faithful in the unjust Mammon, who will trust you with that which is the true? And, if you have been faithful in that which is another's, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hold to the one, and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Mammon. » (*Luke* XVI, 9-13.)

3. It is a grave breach of this Commandment to sue any one in a court of law for money or property to which one has no rightful claim.

4. In every case of wrongful acquisition of, or injury done to, another man's property, restitution should be made as soon as possible and compensation as well given for any loss directly or indirectly resulting therefrom.

5. Such restitution, when it is possible, is absolutely imperative, for unless and until it is made, the sin committed will not be forgiven. The case of Zacheus, which we cite below, is to the point:

« And Jesus entering in, He walked through Jericho. And behold there was a man named Zacheus, who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who He was, and he could not for the crowd because he was low of stature. And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore tree that he might see Him, for He was to pass that

way. And when Jesus was come to the place, looking up, He saw him, and said to him: « Zacheus, make haste and come down, for this day I must abide in thy house. » And he made haste and came down and received Him with joy.

« And when all saw it, they murmured, saying that He was gone to be a guest with a man that was a sinner. But Zacheus standing said to the Lord: « Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have wronged any man of anything, I restore him fourfold. »

« Jesus said to him: « This day is salvation gone to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. » (*Luke* XIX, 1-10.)

6. Not only must the actual author of the wrong make the required restitution, but every other individual as well who is any way responsible for it.

7. Such will be (1) those who abetted by advice or command or in any other way, (2) those who received the stolen property, and (3) even those who, having been in a position to prevent the wrong, failed to do so.

8. Responsibility for the restitution rests on the persons concerned in the following order: first and foremost, on the person in actual possession of the wrongfully acquired property; next, on the person, by whose advice or order the wrong was done; and lastly, on the actual perpetrator and on those who directly assisted him.

9. Restitution should be made to the owner or, should he have deceased, to the heir.

10. Even persons who have inherited wrongfully acquired property are bound to restore it, for under no circumstances is it right to retain what belongs to another.

11. If the person from whom the restitution is due does not know who the owner is, he should seek and follow due advice.

12. In making the restitution, the property wrongfully acquired should itself be handed back, if it still exists, as nearly as possible in its original condition; otherwise its full value should be given.

13. If he is unable to do either, the firm purpose of some day making the restitution when he is able should never be out of his mind, and he ought to spare no effort to effect it as soon as possible.

14. The best way to observe the Seventh Commandment is ever to have as much respect for another man's property as for one's own.

Explanation of the Plate.

15. *The large picture* shows the angel Raphael claiming back from Gabelus the sum of money which the elder Tobias had lent him. So far from denying the debt, Gabelus at once handed the money to the angel. (*Tob. IX, 3-6.*)

16. *Below on the right* a man of position is seen stripping every stitch of clothing off a poor man's back under threat of an unjust and ruinous lawsuit.

17. Opposite we observe an unfaithful servant who has wasted his master's goods.
