

Eph 4:28; 17 ¶ "This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness."

These verses speak to us of what we were before being regenerated by the Holy Spirit. They are addressing the need, of the child of God, to not be as the world at large, who live their lives by the lust of their own will, everyone doing that which is right in their own eyes.

20 "But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:"

This verse tells us; this scripture is speaking to those who have already been born again and are walking in discipleship to Christ. Notice, how you learned and heard; by being taught by Christ, not by man. Man can give you the head knowledge, but Christ must do the teaching and revealing.

22 "That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. 25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another. 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. 30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

The subject on my heart is from **Eph 4:28 "Let him that stole steal no more:"** We understand, naturally, that to steal is simply taking, what is not rightfully ours, that which belongs to another. Since this is written to God's people; we make application to ourselves and to the church.

Before you were born-again, did you desire to give God glory? The answer is no. Wherefore, when you are born-again you should begin to bring glory to God's name, in all that you say or do. If you do not put on the righteousness of Christ, and walk in faithfulness to God, if you do not identify as one of the children of God, you are stealing, from God, the glory he should receive for your eternal forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

Just as the Holy Spirit moved upon the virgin, Mary, and implanted the prepared body of Jesus Christ in her womb: when you are born-again; it is the Holy Spirit moving upon you and regenerating your dead spirit and implanting the presence of Christ in you. Being occupied by the Holy Ghost, the presence of Christ in you, you are made a new creature. You have no right to claim, or declare, look what great things I have done. If you do you are stealing the glory of God. You cannot declare I have saved myself, the church cannot say they saved someone, in an eternal sense; to do so is for you or the church to steal glory from God.

Since you are now a new creature, you are to take on the nature of the new creature, laying aside the nature of the old creature. If you fail to put on the new nature of Christ, and you walk in the old nature (whether continuously or momentarily,) you are stealing from God, the glory he is due, for the manifestation of the new creation in your life.

Another way of stealing the glory of God is not making a public profession of your faith in God, and in the finished work of Jesus Christ. How? You ask. You are stealing from God, the glory that God would receive if you were being obedient. If you fail to be baptized, you are stealing from God, the glory that he receives when you follow the example of Christ. If you fail to take up your cross and follow Christ; you are stealing from God the glory that is rightfully his, for your display of faithfulness in Christ. If you fail to fill the place of your calling in the church of Salvation by Grace; you are stealing from God, the glory he would receive from the display of his work in you. Scripture testifies of these things in many places. Here are a few:

- **Php 2:11 "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."** If you choose not to confess Christ as Lord, you are stealing God's glory.
- **Ro 15:7 "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God."** If Christ has received us to God's glory; we should receive one another in the same way, to and for God's glory. If we do not do this, we are stealing.
- **2Co 4:15 "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God."** If we are not giving thanks to God for all things, which include our blessings and our sufferings; we are stealing the glory of God.
- **Php 1:11 "Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God."** "the fruits of righteousness" Are the things we do that bring glory to God, which we can only do through the power of Christ, by the Holy Spirit power with which we are indwelt. If we are not exhibiting fruits of righteousness, we are stealing God's glory.

Each of these texts show plainly, how we are stealing God's glory, when we are not living and performing our duty to God, and to Christ. If we do anything for our own glory; we are stealing glory from God, that which is rightfully his. What does scripture teach us about this? First: **Ex 20:15 "Thou shalt not steal."** God's will is the same in the Old and New Testaments.

- **Ac 12:23; 21 "And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. 22 And the people gave a shout, saying, It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. 23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost."** In this text, both the people, and pompous Herod, failed to give glory to God. God exacted judicial judgment in smiting Herod with death. Since his death was immediate, not only did he receive judicial rebuke; it happened in the sight of all the people, and they too were rebuked. What a great warning; for us to be sure that God gets all the praise due his name, and that we do not steal from God. One example of stealing God's glory, is the principle set forth in this text, is worshipping preachers instead of worshipping God. That is the quickest way to murder a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- **1Th 2:12 "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."** It is easy to see; we are to be walking in the way that Jesus established for us, not doing that which is right in our own eyes. Our calling is to whose kingdom, and to whose glory? God's.
- **1Pe 5:10 "But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."** We are reminded; while we fulfill our duty of bringing glory to God, not stealing his glory; we can expect that we are going to suffer a while. Just a while, for we shall finally be perfected in eternal glory.

There are many other texts in the scriptures that teach us about stealing God's glory. Let us return to the text in Ephesians, where we started.

Eph 4:28 "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." God tells us; honest work (not stealing from others) produces good fruit, and God's blessing of our honest work will provide an abundance, of which we can give to the poor, which brings glory to God. This principle can be applied to the natural, and spiritual, person.

Eph 4:29 "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." God tells us; do not steal my glory by using your mouth to spew forth corruption. Rather, let our words be helpful to others; proclaiming always, what great things God has done, pointing all people to Jesus Christ and eternal life, and thereby bring glory to God.

Eph 4:31 "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." God tells us to live, the Christian life, after what we call the golden rule, seen in: **Mt 7:12 "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them:"** and in" **Lu 6:31 "And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise."** If we do this, we will be living the Christian life to the glory of God's name. We will not be stealing any of God's glory.

May God help us all to live faithfully, in his marvelous grace, and manifest, all the time, that we have Christ in us, to the glory, and the honor, of the name of our heavenly Father. Amen!