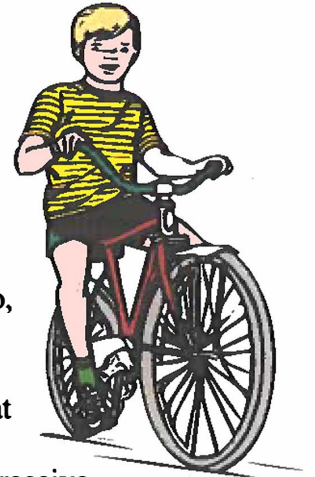


## The Beatitude and the Stolen Bike

Billy was very happy about his new bicycle, because now he could ride to school with David, who was his friend and next-door neighbor. One day, someone took David's bicycle while the two boys were playing at the school playground. After that, Billy was afraid he might lose his bicycle too, so he was careful to lock it before leaving it in the bicycle rack.



Billy had been learning the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes in Sunday school. He learned that the first five commandments are laws that guide our thinking about God. The last five commandments are laws that guide our thinking about others. The Beatitudes are about the blessings we receive when we obey God's laws. Billy's favorite Beatitude was the one about being pure in heart in order to see God. He was trying very hard to see only good in his friends because they were really the perfect children of God.

One day, Billy came home from school crying. He found his mother out on the patio. She saw his tear-stained face and asked him why he was crying. "I was late getting to school this morning," he said, "so I forgot to lock my bike and somebody stole it." "Maybe one of your friends borrowed it," said Mother. "Did you ask anyone if they had seen it?"

"Yes," said Billy, "but nobody knows anything about it. Oh, Mummy, how can anyone be mean enough to steal?" Mother had Billy sit down beside her on the swing. She told him that God never created a person who would steal. He created all his children perfect. "The kid that stole my bike isn't perfect," said Billy in an angry voice. "If he was, he wouldn't have taken it."

Mother told Billy that error would talk to him as long as he would listen. It was trying to tempt him to believe that it has power to make someone steal. But error is just a wrong belief. Billy was giving it the only power it had by believing it. Mother asked Billy which commandment he was breaking when he believed that someone could steal. When Billy didn't know, Mother told him, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." Billy said that even though he was trying to see everyone as perfect, his bike was stolen anyway. Mother asked Billy if he believed in a bad person when David's bike was stolen. Billy said that he had. Mother told him that if he didn't want something bad to come into his life, then he must not believe that something bad had happened to someone else like David.

Billy was still upset and he said, "But how can I keep from believing error when my bike is gone?" Mother said that this is what he needed to do. When error would tell him to believe it has power, he wasn't to listen. Instead, he should immediately be busy knowing that God is the only power there is. "Okay," said Billy, "I'm going to use the truth right now, and then it will destroy my belief that someone can steal."

The next afternoon, Billy ran up his back porch steps and opened the kitchen door. "Mummy," he shouted, "David and I got our bikes back today. They were waiting for us in the bike rack when we got out of school. Isn't it great that the truth about stealing being error and not having any power, was true for David, too?"

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*Matthew 5:8 "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."*