

A Christian Worldview

Book 4

The Ten Commandments

Pastor Tim C. Moore

Pastor Rick Hertless

Glenn Beard

Pastor Steve Young

Pastor Robert Lederman

Pastor Ademir Simoes

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The Ten Commandments

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10000 FM Road 2243 - Leander, TX 78641

www.fbcleander.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	iv
INTRODUCTION.....	v
1 What Do the First Four Teach?	1
2 What Do the Last Six teach?	8
3 What is the Sum of the Ten Commandments?	15
4 The First Commandment	21
5 The Second Commandment.....	28
6 The Third Commandment.....	35
7 The Fourth Commandment.....	42
8 The Fifth Commandment	49
9 The Sixth Commandment.....	57
10 The Seventh Commandment	65
11 The Eighth Commandment	73
12 The Ninth Commandment	80
13 The Tenth Commandment.....	87

FOREWORD

You are holding in your hands a life-altering book. A great book because its subject matter is written by your Creator. The subject texts are taken from the Word of God. Their commentary is written by my staff at First Baptist Church Leander. It provides the study material each week in our Bible Life classes.

If you ever desire to better understand life, or ever desire to be a better parent, or even become a leader of other men and women, these pages become the knowledge foundation that allow you to become a superb follower of Christ.

In a day like ours when books roll off the presses like cheeseburgers coming through a drive-through window, A Christian Worldview, is a piece of aged and tender Prime Fillet, seared to perfection and sizzling with juices that confirm just the right splash of heavenly seasoning.

Our prayer is many will read this book. Our prayer is even more will study this book.

Answered prayer says that you will devour this book.

Enjoy the journey!

Pastor Tim Moore

INTRODUCTION

The Ten Commandments are a staple in the Christian life. They give instruction on how we should live for God, but just as importantly, how we should live with each other.

God's Commandments are to ensure our relationship with Him as well as with others. As you read through this book, allow yourself to discover the true heart of God for His children. He wrote His Commandments for the benefit of all Mankind. Unfortunately, not all take them to heart. Nevertheless, He remains waiting for His children to recognize that He loves them with a love that no one can fully understand. His love is deeper than this fleshly existence can fathom. He has gone through great lengths to bring us back to Himself, including sacrificing His Son for all who will accept Him. The sacrifice of Jesus covers the sin of all who will accept Him.

The Commandments help us to live a life that maintains a close relationship with God, The Father. His Commandments ensure that we know exactly how he wants us to live for our benefit.

In reading this study, it is my prayer that you experience a closer walk with and have a better understanding of the depths He will go to give His children the abundant life.

- Rick Hertless, DMin. -

1 WHAT DO THE FIRST FOUR TEACH?

By Rick Hertless

Exodus 20:3-8

1. "You shall have no other gods before Me."
2. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."
3. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain."
4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."

At the onset it must be stated that, the Law is perfect. The Law was written as guideline to know a Great and mighty, loving God and to understand His love for us. Many say that we are no longer under the Law, which, to a large degree, is true. Nevertheless, the Law was not abolished upon the advent of Jesus. Quite the contrary.

Deuteronomy 6:5

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."

Jeremiah 31:33

But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Hebrews 10:15-18

But the Holy Spirit also witnesses to us; for after He had said before, “This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds I will write them,” then He adds, “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” Now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

The commandments were written so that we might understand that God wants to be part of our life. He is not seeking a one-sided relationship. He is seeking a reciprocal relationship. He knows that the only way we can be with Him for eternity is that we are perfect. He cannot allow sin into His sinless Heaven. So then, how can we possibly live with Him? We cannot uphold the Law on our own. He sent His Son Jesus to complete our perfection. Even though Jesus is the completion of our perfection, God does not expect, or allow, us to forsake His commandments. His commandments show the perfection of Jesus in our lives.

So, you might be thinking, “Then are we working our way into Heaven?” The answer is emphatically, “No!” It is not for our salvation that we obey the Law. It is for the love of The Father that we obey the Law.

Notice the above Scriptures say that God's Law will be written on our hearts. In other words, because of our love for Christ, the Law becomes a part of us. We will want to obey, not for fear of Hell, but for the love of God. It is the same with any relationship. Most want to please the people they love; not because of their fear, but because of their love. It is our desire to show our love to our loved ones by doing what pleases them.

1.1 THE FIRST FOUR

The first four commandments are to show how we are to please God; how we are to live for Him and show Him that He is our God and that we love Him. He is a monogamous God. He has no place for polytheism (The worship of many Gods). Deuteronomy 6:5 says, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength." Jesus reiterated this sentiment in Mark 12:30, Matthew 22:37 and Luke 10:27. Notice, all these Scriptures tell us that God wants all our love. This is not a foreign concept. I have never met a married couple that was willing to share their mate with another. You might be thinking, "There are some who will do that." Yes, but those relationships are usually fleeting and do not last. Relationships like those are flesh driven and do not have the foundation necessary to last. God is seeking an everlasting relationship. He is a jealous God who does not want to share you with

another, nor does He want you worshipping other gods. There is no other.

1.2 A JEALOUS GOD

A few years ago, I heard a well known talk show host say when she heard that God was a jealous God she no longer wanted to serve Him. In her mind, jealousy was a sin and if God could sin, He is not worthy of worship.

God's jealousy is not a fleshly jealousy. It is not simply a feeling that one gets to have control over another. No, God's jealousy is that of protection. It is that of One who will sacrifice everything for the ones He loves. God proved my previous statement by the sacrifice of His Son so that all who believe in Him can have eternal life. All who believe in Jesus will live with a loving God for eternity.

When our human mind considers jealousy, it is more on the selfish aspect of the relationship. But when God considers jealousy, it is on the level of knowing what is best for His children. He does not want His children to be harmed. Thus, He will fight for those who have trusted Him.

1.3 ETERNAL COMMANDMENTS

God's commandments are not so He can have a reason to "zap" you and send you to Hell. His commandments are so you can have a close relationship with Him. Every time you have unrepented sin, you grow

farther away from The Father. But His desire is to have you close every day. His desire is to be a part of your every decision. He wants to cry with you when you are weak and celebrate with you when you win. His is not a desire to sit from a distance and watch. His is a desire to be a part of your life.

When you love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, you will want Him to be part of everything you do. That is why there is no “vacation” from God. Many think they can take a vacation and “let their hair down” as it were. A “What happens on vacation stays on vacation” mentality. But when you love the Lord with all your heart, you will want to take Him with you everywhere.

God’s commandments help you to stay pure and have the abundant life. As your relationship with God remains pure, your fleshly relationships remain pure also. The closer walk you have with God, the closer walk you have with those who you love and care for. Your leadership, in God, gives others the example and the courage to walk with Him as well. When you stray, you are giving others the excuse to be able to stray as well. Therefore, maybe it could be said that your eternal security is a beacon for others as well.

That is not to say that others will not have to answer for their own lives. However, it is to say that your life will help others be able to live in a closer walk with the Lord.

God cares for you in everything you do. It is His desire that you prosper in Him. I am not talking about monetary wealth. I am talking about an abundance of life that goes far beyond what mortal man can comprehend. It is an eternal blessing that can be given only by God.

Notes

2 WHAT DO THE LAST SIX TEACH?

By Rick Hertless

Exodus 20:12-17

5. "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you."
6. "You shall not murder."
7. "You shall not commit adultery."
8. "You shall not steal."
9. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."
10. "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

2.1 WHAT IS THE FOCUS OF THE LAST SIX COMMANDMENTS?

The last six commandments are relational commandments. The Great Commandment is stated by Jesus. He gives two commandments that encompass the Ten Commandments.

- Matthew 22:37-40
 - Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 'This is the first and great commandment. 'And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 'On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.'"
- Mark 12:30-31
 - 'And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment.

- “And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”
- Luke 10:27
 - So he answered and said, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’”

The last six are not about our relationship with God. They are about our relationship with each other. There are 77 “One Another’s” in the New Testament. God constantly reminds us to love each other. Why? Because it turns out that we struggle with loving one another. We struggle with knowing that we are not perfect. We are quick to judge, yet we forget about the “log” in our own eye. Therefore, God continuously reminds us to love one another. If you examine the last six commandments, they say the same thing that the Great Commandment states.

If you obey the Great Commandment, it is impossible to dishonor your parents, murder, commit adultery, lie or covet your neighbor’s possessions.

Loving one another honors God.

2.2 HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER

Ephesians 6:2 says, “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise . . .” In my way of thinking, this should be an easy one. No matter how you were treated by your parents, they gave you life. If this was the only blessing you received from your

parents, it is enough. I do not know the kind of life you are living. Perhaps you might even be saying, “It would have been a greater blessing if I had not been born.” But you would be wrong! Because of the life you now have, you have the opportunity to live an everlasting life so joyous that no one can imagine its full impact. 1Corinthians 2:9 says, “But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”

Because of your parents, you have the opportunity to live with God forever. You have the opportunity to experience the abundance that no one can even imagine. That alone should be worthy of honoring your parents, no matter your life’s experiences.

2.3 YOU SHALL NOT MURDER, COMMIT ADULTERY, STEAL, OR LIE
Again, these are relational commandments. Remember, God does not make these commandments to be cruel. Sin destroys lives. Murder puts a person in jail, or worse, and destroys the life of the family who lost a family member.

Adultery destroys a family. Sin feels good for a season, but when it comes to fruition, it destroys. Lying destroys trust. It hurts both the liar and the one lied to. The relationship is destroyed due to the disobedience of the commandment given.

Disobedience to God's commandments comes from lack of trust in Him. When you trust someone, it is easy to do what they ask of you. However, when that trust is mislaid, obedience falls by the wayside as well. Ironically, humanly speaking, trust is easily lost. But trust in God should be easy. He has never broken His promise. The promises He has made have been misconstrued as being broken by the disobedience of His children. For example: When one falls into financial struggles, they might blame God. But it was poor choices made that caused the struggle.

I have told this story in previous books, but it is relevant to understanding the concept of falsely accusing God of letting one down.

I once had a young woman in my office who was struggling. I gave her the Gospel and asked if she would like to give her life to Christ. She said, "No!" When I inquired further, she told me that she was mad at God. She said that she and her boyfriend had been in a car accident that landed her in the hospital for months and took the life of her boyfriend. When I heard the details, I was able to understand better. They were driving 90 miles per hour and crashed the car. I asked her if she tried to stop her boyfriend and she said, "No!" At that point I told her that, at most, it was her boyfriend's fault for going too fast. At the very least, it was her fault for not trying to stop him. But it was not God's fault.

God gives life's guidelines to help us to live the abundant life He planned for us. Unfortunately, most of us mess that up and then many times try to blame God.

2.4 DO NOT COVET

Do not covet! What does covet mean? Simply, do not desire. Do not desire what others have. Actually, this commandment goes along with stealing. When you desire something that you do not have, it may lead to taking from another to get it.

But I am going to take this to a different level than what you might be thinking of. Covetousness does not necessarily lead to stealing. But it still destroys family. Many marriages have been destroyed for the desire to have what their neighbors have. Therefore, an individual goes to work and strives solely on the desire. The desire might be a better car or house, clothes, or just more money. Forsaking everything else, including family, he justifies his being away from the family to give them better. Unfortunately, the desire, covetousness, destroys the family. What started as a meaningful act fails because of the wrong motive and the desire of what is had by one's neighbors.

John 10:10 says, "The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." God's abundance comes to those who trust Him. Why? Because trust leads to obedience and obedience leads to prosperity. Not necessarily prosperity of the flesh, but prosperity in Christ.

I have never been with a dying man who says, "I wish I had worked more." No, he always says, "I wish I would have had more time with

my family.” The abundance God offers comes in much better ways than material possessions. In fact, the desire and struggle for material possessions many times destroys the family.

God is a relational God. His desire is for you to have the abundant life. His abundance resides in the happiness one can only have in Jesus Christ. Find Him and follow Him. The rest will fall into place.

Notes

3 WHAT IS THE SUM OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

By Rick Hertless

Matthew 22:35-40

Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?”

Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ “This is the first and great commandment. “And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

3.1 The sum of the Ten Commandments is the Great Commandment.

However, even though Jesus reiterated the Great Commandment, it came from God in Deuteronomy 6:1-9 which says:

“Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, “that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged.

“Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you—‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’ “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul,

and with all your strength. “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.

“You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. “You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. “You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Although this is a long Scripture quote, I believe it is important to understand the desire of God to bless His children. Notice God does not say, “Obey these or I will smite you into oblivion.” The Law was a “placeholder” until Jesus came with the ultimate sacrifice for forgiveness of sin.

God’s desire is to bless His children. That is not to say that there will not be consequences for those who habitually break His Law. It is to say that the purpose was guidance to understand how we are to live for God that pleases Him most.

God’s desire for Israel was to bless them and “multiply greatly.” His desire for us is the same. He sent His Son, Jesus, so we could have the abundant life. The Law was given to keep us from straying from God to the point of no return. It was a kind of an anchor to keep us from drifting so far from God that we could not be reconciled.

With the advent of Christ, He became the anchor. But much more than that, He did what the Law could not; He became a Savior as well.

3.2 PURPOSE OF THE LAW

Galatians 3:19

What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.

So, The Law was a “placeholder” until Jesus came. We have discussed this previously, but The Law was to illuminate how God wanted His disciples to show that they were believers in an All-Mighty God. The Law explained exactly how believers should demonstrate to the world the power of Yahweh.

The Law was never intended for salvation. The sacrifice of Jesus was always intended to be retroactive, that is, it was always intended to cover the sins of past, present, and future. But God, wanting to demonstrate His love for the world, gave the Law for everyone to know of His perfect character.

God has always known that His children were not, and could be, perfect. The point of the Law was not so we could work our way into Heaven. He knew that it was impossible for imperfect humans to live by a perfect Law. But His purpose was always to give us the abundant life. His Law exudes the perfect, abundant, life. By following His commandments, believers can stay out of the pitfalls that lead to hardship in this world. His purpose has always been to maintain a relationship with His children.

Until Jesus came, the previously stated relationship could only be maintained through the priests and the blood sacrifice of animals. These sacrifices were never intended to save. They were intended to nurture our relationship with God until the perfect sacrifice came. Jesus is that sacrifice. We no longer have to go through a priest or perform a sacrifice to be heard by God. Jesus' sacrifice allows us to go straight to God. Jesus is the sacrifice. Through Him, we can walk into the very Throne Room of God.

3.3 HAS THE LAW BEEN SUPERSEDED?

There are many who claim and preach that we are no longer under The Law. We are simply under grace. To a degree that is true. First, there is no longer need to sacrifice for our daily sins. The sacrifice of Jesus covers all our sin. The acceptance of Christ justifies our stance before God. The Law has been written on our heart. There is no more need for the writings of tablets and books to be justified before God. So, in one sense, there is no longer need for the Law.

God did not give His Law with the belief that we, in ourselves, could fulfill the Law. There are no works of righteousness that justify us before a Holy God. Quite the contrary. God says that our works of righteousness are but "filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6)." So, The Law, in and of itself, was never a tool for salvation. As mentioned before, it was a relation giving spirit that allowed Man to commune with God.

Jesus has always been the only pathway to salvation. His sacrifice covered all sin; past, present, and future. The pathway to salvation has always been of the heart, not of works.

Hebrews chapter eleven is known as the faith chapter. All righteousness attribute to man was through faith. It was a matter of the heart. Their works of righteousness were to no avail without faith. Each of the faithful of Hebrews eleven were attributed righteousness because of their belief in God, not because of what they accomplished. Quite the contrary, everything they accomplished was only because of their faith. They were not justified by their works, but by their faith in God to accomplish the task He had given for them to accomplish. Each believed first and then worked.

God wants us to work because we love Him. He does not seek our works to fulfill His promise of salvation. Many try to “win” Heaven because of the good works they have done. But God has done the work. Our job is to believe. John 6:28-29 says, “Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.” We believe in Jesus, the Messiah, because He has already come. They believed that the promised Messiah would come. Both are focusing on Jesus and His works of righteousness, not our own “filthy rags.”

Notes

4 THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

By Robert Lederman

Exodus 20:1-3

And God spoke all these words, saying:

“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

“You shall have no other gods before Me.

4.1 WHAT DOES THE FIRST COMMANDMENT TEACH US?

“I am the Lord GOD,” what does this bring to your mind? For me it is about serving one God; only God. In our life we tend to worship many! What are some of them; Love, Money, Fame? There are so many we could never count them. In Deuteronomy 5:7, it was simple: “You shall have no other gods before me.”

Wait, what? Can’t I love other things and the Lord at the same time? I love my wife, and we are one, doesn’t that count?

Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5, Mark 10:8, and Ephesians 5:31

emphasize the unity that God intends for a married couple, signifying a physical, emotional, and spiritual union.

So, if this is true, and we are one as a couple, we should love the Lord God with all our soul and all are might, right? But I am confused... or is that Satan speaking as he is the father of confusion.

We were never meant to be worshipping false idols, yet here we are today doing this, why? If we were called by name, what is the issue? Shall we go back to Genesis 3:4-5?

4 “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman.

5 “For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

Sin causes us to have false idols and people who hold themselves above GOD.

There are many who put themselves at the same level as GOD and are worshipped above GOD. I think that it is crazy that people put other people of sin before GOD.

Let us look at Isaiah 45:4-6:

4 For Jacob My servant’s sake, And Israel My elect, I have even called you by your name; I have named you, though you have not known Me.

5 I am the Lord, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me. I will gird you, though you have not known Me,

6 That they may know from the rising of the sun to its setting That there is none besides Me. I am the Lord, and there is no other . . .

“I am the Lord, and there is no other” wait, we are back to this again. This is difficult in the world of the digital age and instant gratification. Let us ask the question, “What can you do without GOD?”

Like Moses, when he came down out of the mountain, what did the people do that lacked faith? They made their own GOD.

Exodus 32:1-5 states the following:

Now when the people saw that Moses delayed coming down from the mountain, the people gathered together to Aaron, and said to him, “Come, make us gods that shall go before us; for as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”

And Aaron said to them, “Break off the golden earrings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me.”

So all the people broke off the golden earrings which were in their ears, and brought them to Aaron.

And he received the gold from their hand, and he fashioned it with an engraving tool, and made a molded calf. Then they said, “This is your god, O Israel, that brought you out of the land of Egypt!”

So when Aaron saw it, he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, “Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD.”

Exodus 32:25-26

Now when Moses saw that the people were unrestrained (for Aaron had not restrained them, to their shame among their enemies), then Moses stood in the entrance of the camp, and said, “Whoever is on the LORD’s side—come to me!” And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.

4.2 WHO IS YOUR GOD?

Who is your GOD? Quite possibly, if you are honest with yourself, it is your worldly possession that is your golden calf? And why is it that? What are you worshipping today that takes precedence over GOD?

Does GOD come first, or merely secondary in your daily walk? You might be saying, “O, I call him when needed, he is second but first when I need him for that time.”

Matthew 4:10-11 says:

Then Jesus said to him, “Away with you, Satan! For it is written, ‘You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.’”

Then the devil left Him, and behold, angels came and ministered to Him.

You see what happened here? Jesus was tempted for 40 days and never gave in, why did he not fold and just worship Satan?

Satan tempted him 3 times:

1. To turn stones into bread to satisfy His hunger.
2. To throw Himself down from the temple to prove He is the Son of God.
3. To worship satan in exchange for the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

Deuteronomy 6:13-15 says:

Fear the LORD your God, serve him only and take your oaths in his name. Do not follow other gods, the gods of the peoples around you; for the LORD your God, who is among you, is a jealous God and his anger will burn against you, and he will destroy you from the face of the land.

I think it is simple to see, if Jesus can move satan away and Jesus has given you the same power, called the Holy Spirit, what is the issue? What is stopping you from serving one GOD?

Revelation 22:8-9

8 Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things.

9 Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

Look at what John did:

- John's Reaction: John, overwhelmed by the visions and revelations, attempts to worship the angel who has been guiding him.
- Angel's Rebuke: The angel firmly refuses John's worship, correcting him and emphasizing that worship belongs to God alone.
- Servitude shared: The angel identifies himself as a fellow servant, alongside John, the prophets, and all who follow God's word, highlighting their shared purpose and humility.
- God, the focus: The core message is to direct all worship and devotion towards God, the ultimate source of truth and salvation.

When looking at this, what is the common goal? GOD himself! When we worship false idols or any other god, what makes us think that the other so-called gods are higher than our GOD Jehovah? GOD has many names, but is the same GOD.

Elohim: Creator God. ...

El Elyon: Most High God. ...

El Olam: The Everlasting God. ...

El Shaddai: God Almighty. ...

Immanuel: God with us. ...

Jehovah Jireh: The Lord our Provider. ...

Jehovah Mekoddishkem: The Lord who Sanctifies you.

Do not worship false idols for they never rose from the dead, what they make you is dead and separated from Jesus.

Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

I want you to notice, and hope you did, that I do not place "satan" in capital letters. GOD is always the one we should focus on.

"You shall have no other gods before me" Where do you stand today in your worship? Are you in church to be a false idol to others or to the GOD almighty you worship and be the disciple that Jesus asked you to be?

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength." This is the first and Great Commandment . . .

Notes

5 THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

By Glenn Beard

BLUF

As I have started to begin the lessons that I write, I will kick off this one with the Bottom Line Up Front. The BLUF for the question, “What is the Second Commandment?” is “You shall not make for yourself a carved image. . . you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. . . (Exodus 20:4a, 5a)” Those of us that grew up reading and hearing the King James Version of the Bible will likely remember this translated as:

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image . . . Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them . . .”

Putting it simply, we must not create things to worship or serve.

Additionally, we must, at all costs, avoid worshipping or serving any created thing.

5.1 WHAT IS THE SECOND COMMANDMENT?

Exodus 20:4-6

4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth;

5 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me,

6 but showing mercy to thousands, to **those who love Me and keep**
My commandments. (Bold emphasis mine)

The Ten Commandments were originally given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Elohim, the Triune God who created the universe and everything in it, spoke these commandments to him for the Children of Israel. The Lord also gave additional rules about all aspects of life, direction for numerous moral standards, and a plethora of specific guidelines for worship. Exodus 31:18 tells us, “And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony. . .”

A common question asked by those who try to cast doubt on the veracity of Scripture is, “If man wrote and/or translated the books of the Bible, how can we be sure God’s Word was translated accurately?” For the original written laws this a moot point; when initially giving Moses the Law, God provided them with a unique method. The God of Moses, our Creator, wrote the law in His own hand; as stated in the second book of the Bible, “And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, **He gave** Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God (Exodus 31:18).” (Bold emphasis mine)

The Second Commandment teaches us, “You shall not make for yourself a carved image . . . (Exodus 20:4)” It continues, “. . . you shall not bow down to them nor serve them (Exodus 20:5).” God, in the Ten Commandments, expressly forbids the making of images for the purpose of worship. Our worship and our devotion must be directed at and focused exclusively on Him. Some have interpreted the Second Commandment to mean that we should make no representations of God, even of Jesus for artistic purposes. While others, specifically within some of the liturgical denominations, have mostly ignored this commandment all together.

Furthermore, John quoted Jesus’ explanation of the requirement that worship be in spirit and truth, in John 4:23-24, the Savior, when speaking to the Samaritan “woman at the well,” tells us:

23 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.

24 God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” Additionally, in his letter to the church in Rome, Paul warned against trying to make God into our image and worshipping created things.

Romans 1:22-23:

Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.

Pastor David Guzik provides an excellent overview in his *“Study Guide for Exodus 20.”*

i. The second commandment doesn’t forbid making an image of something for artistic purposes; God Himself commanded Israel make images of cherubim (Exodus 25:18, 26:31). It forbids the making of images as an aid or help to worship. “If the making of cherubim was permitted, then the prohibition of the ‘image’ will refer only to the making of direct objects of worship.” (Cole)

ii. “To countenance its image worship, the Roman Catholic Church has left the whole of this second commandment out of the decalogue, and thus lost one whole commandment out of the ten; but to keep up the number they have divided the tenth into two.” (Clarke)

iii. In John 4:24 Jesus explained the rationale behind the second commandment: God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth. The use of images and other material things as a focus or help to worship denies who God is (Spirit) and how we must worship Him (in spirit and truth).

iv. Paul reminded us of the danger and futility of trying to make God into our own image: Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man; and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things (Romans 1:22-23).

David Guzik :: www.blueletterbible.org “Study Guide for Exodus 20”
https://www.blueletterbible.org/comm/guzik_david/study-guide/exodus/exodus-20.cfm?a=70004

5.2 WHAT DOES THE SECOND COMMANDMENT TEACH?

Centuries before Paul wrote to the Roman church, Isaiah shared God’s admonition to men who try to minimize the majesty of our Creator and form lavish idols made of gold or silver. God revealed the

lifelessness of the idols and their inability to hear the cries of the worshippers.

Isaiah 46:5-9

5 “To whom will you liken Me, and make Me equal and compare Me, that we should be alike? 6 They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver on the scales; They hire a goldsmith, and he makes it a god; They prostrate themselves, yes, they worship. 7 They bear it on the shoulder, they carry it and set it in its place, and it stands; From its place it shall not move. Though one cries out to it, yet it cannot answer nor save him out of his trouble. 8 “Remember this, and show yourselves men; Recall to mind, O you transgressors. 9 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me,

In Isaiah 44:9-20, the prophet details the futility of making images, even of gold, for worship. He revealed the shame and lack of profit for the workman who would create such any such images. Isaiah explains what will happen these men, “They do not know nor understand; For He has shut their eyes, so that they cannot see, and their hearts, so that they cannot understand (v18).”

There is no gain for the man who creates the idol or bows down to it. Moreover, in the second part of Luke’s writings Paul provided additional insight; “Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man’s devising (Acts 17:29).”

God made it very clear; He is a jealous God (Exodus 20:5). In his farewell addresses to the people of Israel before they entered the

promised land, Moses reiterated the Commandments that God had given him. The man whom God had chosen to lead His people out of slavery in Egypt was reminding them the Law He had provided, and admonishing the Sons of Abraham to be faithful and follow the Law that God had imparted to them.

Moses cautioned them to follow the Law with the promise of God's "...visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me (Deuteronomy 5:9)." However, he also reminded them of the promise made to them if they follow His commandments: "but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments (Deuteronomy 5:10)."

5.3 CONCLUSION:

The second commandment clearly tells us that we must not make any images for us to worship or use in worship. Our God, Elohim the Triune being, is the Creator and Sustainer of all life and everything that exists; He is the only God. He tells us that He is jealous (Exodus 20:5). His desire for mankind, the beings He made in His own image (Genesis 1:26-27), is to commune with Him, and His demand for them is to worship Him only. 1 John 5:21 puts it simply, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen."

Notes

6 THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

By Steve Young

Exodus 20:7

“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

6.1 WHAT IS THE THIRD COMMANDMENT?

This commandment prohibits misusing God’s name in any way, from trivializing it to blaspheming it. It also extends to using God’s name falsely in oaths or vows and requires that we use God’s name with reverence and respect.

When we use the name of the LORD our God in vain, we falsify who God is and what He stands for. As children of God, we should actively reflect God’s nature in our actions, speech, and thoughts; in every aspect of our lives really. Taking His name in vain is to reflect His nature in an erroneous way. Our lives are intended to be the light of the world so that we show a lost world who Jesus is.

The name “Christian” means “little Christ.” We become, or take on, the name of Christ when we repent and believe the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 15: 1-8 says:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, which you also received and in which you stand, by which also

you are saved, if you hold fast that word which I preached to you - unless you believed in vain.

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.

After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remains to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles. Then last of all He was seen by me also, and by one born out of due time."

Some of the most common ways we break the third commandment are when we swear by God's name and character even though a promise will not be fulfilled. We use our language carelessly. How often do we say, "I swear to God" as if it really means anything? When we swear falsely, we are vowing by the name of God whose character cannot lie, and whose word can never be broken.

Matthew 5:37 "But let your 'yes' be 'yes,' and your 'no,' 'no.' For whatever is more than these is from the evil one."

Another way we break this commandment is by employing God's name lightly. Let us be honest. People stub their toe on a table leg and blurt out a curse word related to God's name. They are not asking God to eternally judge the table, are they? We as Christians bear His name but, how many times do we break this commandment? Even before we became Christians, we were created to bear the image of the Almighty God. Humanity was created by God, and for God, so

when God's name is taken in vain it twists who God is. As humans we are all bound to break any commandment at one time or another; we are guilty. But the good news is, Jesus is the answer to our guilt.

We need to look to the life Jesus lived on this earth as an example of how to conduct our lives. Jesus did justice to God's name because He never took the name of His Father in vain. Even when Jesus was hanging on the cross the leaders were trying to figure out what name to attach to Jesus.

Matthew 26:63-64:

But Jesus kept silent. And the high priest answered and said to him, "I put you under oath by the Living God: Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God!" Jesus said to him, "It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.

Jesus retained that name, and lived up to it perfectly, even up to the point of death; a perfect man who knew no guilt so that we being guilty could become guiltless.

6.2 WHAT DOES THE THIRD COMMANDMENT TEACH US?

Paul speaks of these commandments as a mirror into our sinful hearts.

Galatians 3:19-29:

What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator does not mediate for only one, but God is

one. Is the law then against the promise of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.

But the scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore, the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave or free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus and if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The commandments were given by His grace so that we would see our need. It is not possible for us to live up to God's standard. We need a Savior. Absolutely not one drop of the blood of Jesus Christ was shed in vain. None for whom He died will ever perish.

It is so important that we recognize the greatness that is in the name of God. In His name is salvation, love, grace, mercy.

Psalms 96:4-9 says:

For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised; He is to be feared above all gods. For all gods of the people are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Honor and majesty are before Him; Strength and beauty are in His sanctuary. Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples, give to the LORD glory and strength. Give to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come into His courts. O, worship the LORD in the beauty of His holiness! Tremble before Him all the earth.

Before we came to Christ as believers, the concept of spiritual warfare was not even on our horizon. Once we became Christians, the battle began.

Ephesians 6:12-17:

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all take the shield of faith which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.

When we read and meditate on the word of God, and then start living this out, we put ourselves on the path of living and reflecting the image of Christ in us more and more. Our lives reflect the reverence and honor that belongs to God alone.

Finally, let me say that it is not a vain thing to serve the living God. If you are doing the work God called you to do then it cannot be in vain.

1 Corinthians 15:58 says, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

Galatians 6:10 says, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith."

It is impossible for any work we ever do in God's name to be in vain.

Are you ready to put on the full armor of God and get to work?

Notes

7 THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

By Glenn Beard

BLUF

Again, let us begin with the Bottum Line Up Front. The BLUF of this lesson, “What is the Fourth Commandment?” comes from Exodus twenty verse eight. It is, “Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy.”

God gave this commandment, along with the others, on Mount Sanai. God was reminding His people of the creation of the Universe and how He had fashioned all of Creation in six days and rested on the seventh day. God sanctified this day and commanded that His Children rest on the seventh day of the week and keep it holy. In his farewell address to the people of Israel, Moses reiterated this commandment and all the commandments encouraging them follow God and to remember where they had been and what the Creator had done for them.

7.1 WHAT IS THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT?

Exodus 20:8-10,

8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.

The Fourth Commandment is inextricably related to the creation. Moses writes in the first chapter of Genesis that God created the earth and all the universe in six days. “Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So, the evening and the morning

were the sixth day (Genesis 1:31).” Then Elohim also tells us through the writings of Moses in Genesis 2:1-3 says:

1 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished.

2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.

3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.

By providing the Ten Commandments, our Creator plainly laid our rules for mankind to follow. In the fourth commandment, He expounds on His purpose for the seventh day of the week. The seventh day was “sanctified” and given for man to rest. In his farewell writings to Israel, Moses provides detail and explains the Sabbath more thoroughly and reminds them of what had done for them.

Deuteronomy 5:12-15:

12 ‘Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you.

13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work,

14 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you.

15 And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by

an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.

7.2 WHAT DOES THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT TEACH US?

Leviticus 23:3 – “Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the Lord in all your dwellings.”

Did God need six days to create the universe? Did He actually need to rest afterwards? It is clear that the answer to both of these questions is, “Unequivocally, NO!” God is supreme and omnipotent; He spoke everything, time, matter and space, into existence with just His Word. Before He spoke, there was nothing, just the eternal Trinity.

Jeremiah, praying for understanding, proclaims, “Ah, Lord God! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You. (Jeremiah 27:17).” God assures Jeremiah, “Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me (Jeremiah 27:27)?”

Unquestionably, there is nothing too hard for God. Pastor Adrian Rogers used to tell the story of a young man asking his minister why God went to so much trouble to make the universe so tremendous with so many stars. Rogers simply smiled and asked, “What trouble?”

It seems intuitive that God created the universe six days and “rested” on the seventh day for the benefit of mankind. There is a celestial reason for each of our periods of time: a day is the time it takes for the earth to make a full rotation; a month is based on the cycle and revolution of the moon around the earth; and the year is based on the revolution of the earth around the sun. However, there is no astronomical basis for the seven-day week. God created the earth in six days and rested on the seventh as a pattern for mankind to follow. Some Christians attempt to put gaps in between the days, or they try to say that the six days were long periods of time. However, God wrote the clarification with His own finger.

Exodus 20:11-12:

For in **six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth**, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it. **Six days you shall do your work**, and on the seventh day you shall rest . . . (Emphasis mine)

This clearly establishes God’s creation work to be in a literal six-day week. He created the universe in six days and rested on the seventh, and He sanctified the Sabbath. Then, when He provided the Law, God established the week for man. Man was to work for six days and rest on the last day of the week.

7.3 WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN SABBATH?

Acts 20:7:

Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

Christ told us that He had come to fulfill the law, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill (Matthew 5:17).” God established the Sabbath as a day of rest after a week of work; it was a covenant He had made with man, but Jesus’ sacrifice instituted the New Covenant.

Jesus fulfilled the terms of God’s covenant with Israel. He obeyed the law and, for our sins, suffered the curses of the law. He earned what Adam failed to earn and paid the price for the sin of Adam and Eve and all their children (Rom. 5:17). He endured the wrath that we deserved.

God’s work and rest established a pattern for humans. The fourth commandment said that Israel needed to rest from their work on the seventh day because “in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day” (Exod. 20:11). Israel must work and then rest because that is what God did.

Why, then, do Christians rest and worship on Sunday, the first day of the week?

When Christians practice the Sabbath, they follow a different pattern. They do not work and then rest. They rest first. That is because they follow the pattern of the new creation, which began when Jesus Christ rose from the dead—on the first day of the week, not the seventh.

Jesus completed all the work needed to save us (John 19:30). His work earned our rest. This is the gospel. So, when we worship Him and rest on Sunday, we embrace His finished work. We receive and proclaim His grace. Then we work Monday through Saturday knowing we can earn nothing from God through our obedience in the tasks he gives us.

When we practice the Sabbath, we come to Him. We lay our burdens on Him and find rest for our souls. We are strengthened by our worship because we know, in the week of toil ahead, we have an indestructible peace.

We come to Christ for Sabbath rest. Then, in his grace and strength, we work.

(www.christianity.com <https://corechristianity.com/resources/top-questions/why-did-the-sabbath-change-to-sunday>)

The New Covenant Sabbath is illuminated in the following passages:

John 20:19: “Jesus appeared to His Apostles on the first day of the week, breathed on them the Holy Spirit and commissioned them to spread the Gospel.”

Acts 20:7: “The disciples came together on the first day of the week to break bread.”

1 Corinthians. 16:1–2 Paul told the churches at Galatia and Corinth, “On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper . . .”

Notes

8 THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

By Glenn Beard

BLUF

Again, I will begin the chapter with the Bottom Line Up Front (BLUF) for the question of the lesson, “What is the Fifth Commandment? (Exodus 20:16).” The BLUF is “Honor your father and your mother . . .” The first four commandments are defined on our relationship with God. The rest of the commandments prescribe how we should interact with and treat others. The fifth commandment is the first of these and specifically addresses how we should treat our parents. This is also the first commandment with a promise (Ephesians 6:2).

8.1 WHAT IS THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT?

Ex 20:12

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

This commandment is very straightforward; God commands us to honor our parents. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary “honor” may be used as a noun or a verb. In the fifth commandment it is a transitive or action verb which means it has a direct object. Honor must be bestowed upon someone or something.

The Merriam-Webster definitions relative to its use in this commandment are:

- 1) to regard or treat (someone – the direct object) with admiration and respect: to regard or treat with honor (Bold added by me)
- 2) to give special recognition to: to confer honor on

In spite of God's clearly understandable mandate, we often fail to treat our parents with the proper respect they are due. Notice that I said due, not deserve. God did not tell us to honor our parents if they deserve it; He simply commanded "Honor your father and your mother . . ." The only thing any person truly deserves is Hell, but we are provided mercy through Christ's sacrifice. God's commandments are not conditional.

Some of us have wonderful parents that lived Godly lives and raised us to honor our heavenly Father, but others may have had abusive, absent or seemingly worthless parents. I am sure that it may be very difficult for some of us to honor our parents.

My mother is older, her hearing is impaired, and her memory is not what it used to be. She often has to ask for me, and others, to repeat things during a conversation. Likewise, she sometimes repeats things. Unfortunately, I too frequently become impatient and fail to honor her as my Lord commands. My fleshly self is very impatient and prone to being short with others. I have shown that I am incapable, in my

own strength, to properly honor my mother. Therefore, I must die to self and surrender to the Lord in order to honor my mother with the honor she is due.

We must turn to the Spirit of our Savior to give us strength to follow our Creator's commandments. In Philippians 4:13 we are guaranteed, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." This is not the magic phrase for us to be able to bench press 500 pounds or make an "A" on a test without studying. In the previous verses, Paul revealed his learning to be content with "whatever state" he was in. Likewise, he explained; "I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need (Philippians 4:12)." Yet, in spite of the hunger, abuse, and suffering, he had learned that Christ, through the Holy Spirit's living in Paul, could bring him through anything.

In his farewell addresses to Israel, as he had with the other commandments God had given, Moses reiterated the fifth commandment to the people before they entered the promised land. He not only reminded them of the directive of the fifth commandment, but Moses also explained the benefits of their obeying this commandment. "Honor your father and your mother, as the Lord your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it

may be well with you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you (Deuteronomy 5:16).”

8.2 WHAT DOES THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT TEACH US?

God wrote the Ten Commandments with His own finger on two tablets of stone (Genesis 31:18). Tradition tells that He wrote the four about our relationship with Him on the first tablet, and on the second he wrote those about our relationship with man. The fifth command is the first commandment of those that instruct us on our relationship with others. It was likely first because God wanted to emphasize the importance of families. Paul expounds on the directive in his letter to the church at Ephesus:

- 1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
- 2 “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise:
- 3 “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”
- Ephesians 6:1-3 -

Paul added the directive of obeying our parents telling us that it is right to do so. He reiterated this in his letter to the Colossian church, “Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord (Colossians 3:20).” This time he added that obeying our parents is “. . .pleasing to the Lord.” Clearly, the Lord God has declared that honoring and obeying our parents is important.

Additionally, when Paul imparts the qualifications for elders in his letter to Titus, he tells us that an elder must be “. . . blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of dissipation or insubordination (Titus 1:6).” Likewise, he shared the qualifications of a deacon with Timothy, “. . . one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?) (1 Timothy 3:4-5) . . .” He also included specific guidelines about the family in the qualifications for a deacon: “Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well (1 Timothy 3:12).”

Undoubtedly, our Heavenly Father meant for families to be an integral part of society and the place where children are brought up to walk with the Lord. All the “overseers” of the church are called to have good families with submissive children and oversee their own house well. This starts with the father in the home; he is called to be the spiritual head of his family. He is accountable for spiritual teaching and guidance, and he is responsible for provision and protection. However, God also calls for children to honor and obey their parents.

8.3 CONCLUSION

Of the six commandments that prescribe our dealings and interactions with others, five of them are simply declarative directives instructing mankind in things he should use to ensure relationships. These are

simply telling us the way we should interact with all of mankind; they are simple: Do Not kill; Do Not commit adultery; Do Not steal; Do Not lie; and Do Not want that which belongs to someone else. “Violating these laws constituted unholiness (Chuck Smith).”

The first four commandments deal with our relationship and worship of our Creator and are more than just simple guidelines; they give more detail and even give some explanation. They tell us how to maintain a right relationship with God. They are specifically concerned with our relationship to the Architect of the universe and how we are to worship Him. There is an obvious reason these were the first commandments.

- Have No Other Gods
 - It is imperative that we put God first in our lives and worship Him only.
- Make no graven images
 - We must not allow things, thoughts, activities or people to take priority over Him.
- Do not take the name of the Lord in vain
 - His name is holy; don't use it flippantly or as a curse word).
- Remember the Sabbath and keep it holy
 - “Jesus was often accused of violating the Sabbath day. His response was that His Father worked on the Sabbath day, and so He worked. He said that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. Paul said that one man esteemed one day above another, another man esteems every day alike, let ever man be fully persuaded in his own mind (Chuck Smith).”

“Violating these laws constituted ungodliness (Chuck Smith).

(https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/smith_chuck/SermonNotes_Exd/Exd_21.cfm?a=70002)

The fifth commandment is the first of the commandments on our interaction with others. It is specifically concerned with our responsibility to our parents. It is the only one of these six commandments guiding our interpersonal relationships to be made positively, “. . . honor your father and your mother...” as opposed to “Thou shalt not. . .” Additionally, it is the only of these mandates that includes a promise. God instructed the Israelites to honor their fathers and mothers that their days “may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you (Exodus 20:12b).” So, remember to honor your father and you mother, even when it may be difficult.

Notes

9 THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

By Robert Lederman

Exodus 20:13

You shall not murder

Oh boy, you mean kill someone. What does this really mean? Murder of a person?

Deuteronomy 5:1-5, 17

1. And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them.
2. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.
3. The Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.
4. The Lord talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire.
5. I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the Lord; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain.
17. "You shall not murder"

Let us break this down, Deuteronomy 5:1:

And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them.

Moses gathers all of Israel to hear God's law. This emphasizes the importance of “listening,” “learning,” and “obeying” God’s commands. It is a call to active participation in the covenant.

Deuteronomy 5:2 says, “The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.”

This refers to the covenant made at Mount Horeb (Sinai) when God gave the Ten Commandments. Moses reminds the people of their special relationship with God, who personally entered a covenant with them.

Deuteronomy 5:3:

The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day.

Although their ancestors were also part of God's plan, Moses emphasizes that this covenant is directly with the current generation. He underscores personal responsibility — they cannot rely solely on the past; they must respond in their own time.

Deuteronomy 5:4:

The Lord talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire . . .

This poetic expression (“face to face”) signifies the direct and powerful encounter with God’s presence on Mount Sinai, represented by fire.

Though they did not literally see God's face, the experience was overwhelming and deeply personal.

Deuteronomy 5:5:

I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount.

Moses acted as a mediator because the people were terrified by God's presence — they requested that Moses speak to God on their behalf. This shows the fearsome holiness of God and the need for mediation between God and man.

These verses set the stage for the re-telling of the Ten Commandments. Moses calls Israel to remember their covenant relationship with God, highlighting their responsibility to obey. It reflects God's holiness, Israel's fear, and the essential role of Moses as a mediator.

If you continue to read these commandments, you will see the laws that are in place still matter today. Murder is not just of the body, but the soul of life that God gave us through Jesus.

Matthew 5:21-24

21. "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.'

22. But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.

23. Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,

24. leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

As Jesus was talking on the Sermon on the Mount, he wanted to deepen our understanding of the Law. Jesus wants us to know The Law by not just our external feelings, but our internal ones as well; He was talking about the Law of Moses.

In verse 21 Jesus states:

You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.'

This piece of scripture calls out the following of the Sixth Commandment (Exodus 20:13; Deuteronomy 5:17): "You shall not kill." Jesus affirms this teaching but prepares the listeners for a deeper interpretation. "Judgment" refers to legal consequences under Jewish law. Is it a moral law or one of the old Law? Jesus speaks on this as we continue to read.

Verse 22 Calls out the authority of Jesus in these simple words "But I say to you."

- Whoever is angry with his brother without a cause – Jesus targets the root of murder: unjust anger. Inner rage can be spiritually dangerous.
- ‘Raca!’ - An Aramaic insult meaning "empty-headed" or "worthless." Using demeaning language shows contempt and invites moral accountability.
- ‘You fool!’ – A stronger insult implying moral corruption. Jesus warns that contemptuous attitudes and words can lead to spiritual ruin ("danger of hell fire").

What does this all; mean? Anger, insults and contempt are serious sins and not just physical murder. Murder can mean many things to each one of us, but to slander a brother is a sin within itself.

Matthew 5:24 says, “. . . leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar” is an example that Jesus connects relationships with worship. But He continues to reconcile the relationship by saying, remember if your brother has something against you, “. . . leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

The key here is the priority; reconciliation takes rights over and ritual. Always remember that GOD desires a relationship with you through forgiveness.

Jesus teaches that murder begins in the heart. True righteousness is not just about avoiding physical violence, but also about eliminating anger, contempt, and broken relationships. He calls for reconciliation and love as foundational worship and godly living.

So how do we not murder in the sense of killing someone? Again, I do not think murder is just physical. Murder can be of a person or of yourself, whom do you love more? Whom do you love first, why would Jesus not be at the center?

I can tell you from experience, we condemn our bothers and never look at ourselves, it's easier to condemn another than your own actions.

Matthew 7:1-5

1. "Judge not, that you be not judged.
2. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.
3. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?
4. Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye?
5. Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

It is clear as stated, murder is not only an internal feeling but an outward expression of who you are.

Have you ever told someone that you hate them? CS Lewis stated the following:

The primary truth for us to understand is that God hates evil, but loves righteousness. If we rightly understand that the cross defines the central purpose of Jesus' earthly ministry, then we will also rightly understand that Jesus came to defeat the very wickedness that had held humanity in its grip since Adam's tragic fall. Jesus came as God's promised Messianic deliverer, and what motivated Him was His love of righteousness, and His hatred of wickedness (Heb. 1:8-9; citing Ps. 45:6-7).

Starkly stated, Jesus hates evil. This is an absolutely essential, and convicting, truth. But it is also absolutely essential for us to understand that Jesus loves goodness and righteousness. That is why the apostle Paul writes, "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good" (Rom. 12:9).

Be not a murderer of your brother, but come to him with the love of Jesus in your heart.

1 John 3:15 says, "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."

Notes

10 THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

By Steve Young

10.1 THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

Exodus 20:14 “You shall not commit adultery.”

The Bible condemns adultery, viewing it as a sin against God and a betrayal of marriage vows. It is one of the Ten Commandments, prohibiting sexual relations with someone other than one’s spouse. While the Old Testament prescribes severe punishment, including death, the New Testament emphasizes the internal dimensions of adultery, condemning lustful thoughts as well.

The seventh commandment “Do not commit adultery” is not given to bind us, but to liberate us.

1 John 5:2-3 says:

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.

The seventh commandment includes and deals with all immorality. Simply put, all sexual involvement outside of marriage is a sin against God.

God created us and knows us better than we know ourselves. God knew the consequences of breaking the seventh commandment would lead to emotional heartbreak. God loves us and does not want that for His children. When God says “Thou shalt not” He is saying “do not do that, it will hurt you.”

The word fornication means any sexual immorality outside of marriage. If you are sexually active before marriage you are breaking the seventh commandment. The logic of thinking that it is ok because you are not married simply does not work. Engaging in sex before marriage is committing adultery against the person you will marry and can lead to obstacles you will have to overcome once you are married.

1 Corinthians 6:18 says, “Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.”

Your body is affected by sexual sin. You have no doubt heard the phrase “safe sex” misleading people into believing that it is ok, and there is nothing to worry about. I think the narrative should be about sacred sex within the sanctity of marriage.

10.2 ADULTERY ALSO AFFECTS THE HOME AND THE CHILDREN IN THAT HOME.

“The man who commits adultery tells his child, “Your mother is not worth much and your father is a liar and a cheat. Furthermore, honor

is not nearly as important as pleasure. In fact, my child, my own satisfaction is more important than you are (R. Kent Hughes – Wheaton College).”

Adultery can also affect the church. You might claim that it is not any of the church’s business, but remember the church is one body.

I Corinthians 6:15-16 says:

Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! Or do you know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For “the two” He says, “shall become one flesh.”

Adultery can also be a sin against your Nation. History shows us that sin brought down several ungodly nations. The Roman Empire, Egypt, Babylon, Greece etc. Any enemy of the home is the enemy of society.

Proverbs 14:34 says, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people.”

The Ten Commandments are not advice; they are holy laws. It is Almighty God who said, “you shall not commit adultery.”

When King David committed adultery, he was smart enough to pray, “Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight (Psalm 51:4).”

Proverbs 6:32, “Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; he who does so destroys his own soul.”

Why does he destroy his soul? Because he sins against Almighty God.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 says:

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

No matter how you embellish it, God says, “My children do not live that way.”

10.3 WHAT DOES THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT TEACH US?

Society seems to be a train wreck at times. As followers of Christ, there are ways we can be the light to a lost world. Imperfect as we are, as children of God we should be an example to those around us. How? I believe we should model the sanctity of Marriage. We teach our children by showing them. If you are not a Christian, then give your heart to Jesus. If you have failed and sinned, bring it to Christ. He will forgive, and He will not hold grudges. Come to Jesus and He will cleanse you.

Isaiah 1:18 says,

Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Once you are forgiven, God does not merely forgive you and then say, "Now do better." He comes to live in you to give you power day by day through His Holy Spirit.

We are also commanded to Love. Love is a decision and anybody can love who chooses to. Decide to love and devote yourself to God and your family. Also, it is so important to guard your heart.

Proverbs 13:20, "He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will be destroyed."

Watch what you set in front of your eyes. You would not put trash in your mouth; so why put trash in your brain? Do not say it will not affect me.

Proverbs 6:27, "Can a man take fire to his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?"

Proverbs 4:23 says, "Guard your heart above all else, for it is the source of life (CSV)."

Matthew 5:28 says, "But I say to you whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." This

verse emphasizes that sin begins in the heart and mind, not just in physical actions. It highlights the seriousness of lust and the importance of guarding one's thoughts and intentions.

Jesus is not only concerned with external actions but also with the purity of the heart and mind. He raises the bar for righteousness, showing that inner desires and thoughts can be sinful.

James 1:14-15 says:

But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is fully grown, brings forth death.

We must be intentional in our decision every day to live for God and to follow His commandments. Joshua 24:15b, "As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD."

The story of Hosea is a beautiful story that points to Jesus and his Bride, the church. It tells us of God's redeeming love for His church, for us! We are the church; we are His bride.

Hosea 3:1-3:

Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the LORD for the children of Israel, who looked to other gods and loved the raisin cakes of the pagans." So I bought her for myself for 15 shekels of silver, and 1 ½ homers of barley. And I said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man-so, too, will I be toward you."

Hosea is told by God to redeem, literally (buy back) his wife who is now up for sale. Hosea foreshadows Jesus, who will be the ultimate Redeemer of God's people. He will buy back a people who are unwanted and unloved. He will purchase them from spiritual adultery; from forsaking their true Husband for lesser husbands who cannot satisfy.

Jesus, unlike Hosea, paid an even higher cost to redeem us. He paid with his life. He shed His blood to bring us, God's people, to Himself. You can also see Jesus in Gomer's place; our place, my place!

2 Corinthians 5:21 says, "For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

God made Jesus who knew no sin to be sin for us so that we might become the righteousness of God. We were cursed, just like Gomer, yet Christ redeemed us from the curse of The Law by becoming a curse for us.

Galatians 3:13:

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree") . . .

Adultery is not an unforgivable sin. Jesus died for us that we might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10). We are redeemed, we are loved, and we are God's children.

Notes

11 THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

By Glenn Beard

BLUF

As usual, I will begin this lesson with the Bottom Line Up Front (BLUF). The BLUF for the question, “What is the Eight Commandment?” is very direct. The answer is simply, “You shall not steal.” The eighth commandment is the fourth of the commandments that deal with how we should interact with and treat others. It primarily deals with property; this commandment plainly tells us that we should not take anything that does not belong to us. However, there are other acts that are considered as the same offense.

11.1 WHAT IS THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT?

Exodus 20:15, “You shall not steal.”

Like all of the Ten Commandments, this one is straightforward; it succinctly tells us that if we want something that is not ours, we must not take it, unless we purchase it or it is given to us. It is simple to understand yet, it is often disregarded and defied. Today, society has grown averse to acknowledging sin. They give stealing many different names: shoplifting, embezzling, robbing, pilfering, appropriating, pinching and others. Additionally, the word “steal” sometimes has a

somewhat positive connotation. When someone purchases an item or service at a very good price, the transaction is often referred to as a steal.

The world also gives endless excuses for stealing: “The thief was disadvantaged as a child” or “He was hungry.” “Others might say, “She deserved to take it.” However, we are all responsible for our own actions. We are not exonerated by excuses. God gave us His commandments and the other moral laws so that we might recognize our sin, “. . . for by the law is the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20).”

There are three basic types of law given by Jehovah God. The Gospel Coalition explains it this way:

In the Reformed Protestant tradition, Christians have sought to answer this question by distinguishing between three types of law: moral, ceremonial, and judicial. According to this view, the moral law is forever binding, the ceremonial law was intended to point to Christ and is thereby abrogated since his death and resurrection, and the judicial law is binding on non-Israelite nations only insofar as its general equity reflects the natural law.

This viewpoint doesn’t deny that Christ fulfilled the whole law or that all three kinds of law were mixed in the same old covenant and were all binding on people at that time. It simply states that when different Mosaic commands receive different treatments in the New Testament, that treatment isn’t arbitrary but reflects a difference in nature that already existed during the Old Testament and could have been discerned even then.

([www.thegospelcoalition.org https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/continuity-moral-law/](https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/continuity-moral-law/))

The eighth commandment is a “Moral Law.” In the English Standard Version Global Study Bible: Footnotes for Exodus 20 the following observation is revealed:

The sixth through eighth commandments present general prohibitions not to murder, commit adultery, or steal. These are the minimum standards for a just society. Israel is later called to be holy and to love the Lord with all their heart, soul, and might (Deut. 6:4–9), and to show their neighbors goodwill and generosity (Lev. 19:18). When Jesus refers to the law in the Sermon on the Mount (“you have heard that it was said,” Matt. 5:21–48), he is correcting the mistaken assumption that these laws (as understood by the Pharisees) revealed all of what it meant to be a child of God. (See Matt. 5:21–24, 27–28; and note on Matt. 5:21–48.) ([www.blueletterbible.org https://www.blueletterbible.org/esv-study-bible/notes/exo/chapter-20?a=70015](https://www.blueletterbible.org/esv-study-bible/notes/exo/chapter-20?a=70015))

As with the other commandments and laws, Moses reiterated the Eight Commandment in his farewell speeches to the people of Israel. “You shall not steal (Deuteronomy 5:19).” Before God’s Children entered the Promised Land, the man who God sent to lead them out bondage in Egypt imparted wisdom to his people, including reminding them of the laws God have given.

11.2 WHAT DOES THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT TEACH US?

Although the eighth commandment which forbids stealing, on the surface seems to be a simple prohibition about taking that which does not belong to us, the other Laws and writings in God’s word elucidate more depth into God’s intent for this law. Jehovah added later in the

book of Exodus, “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall surely bring it back to him again (Exodus 23:4).” The God of Israel is righteous, but He is just as well. Laws are given for the benefit of mankind.

King Solomon, the wisest of all the great kings of Israel, further clarified the intent of the “You shall not steal.” Through the wisdom given to him by his Creator, King David’s successor decreed in Proverbs 21:6-7:

Getting treasures by a lying tongue is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death. The violence of the wicked will destroy them, because they refuse to do justice. (Bold emphasis mine)

Likewise, in his letter to the church at Ephesus, Paul went beyond the command. He illuminated what the man should do when he stole “no longer.” “Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need (Ephesians 4:28).” In the letter, Paul emphasized to the Ephesians that it is more important to build up their heavenly account than the temporary earthly wealth they could acquire on while they were in the flesh.

The website, BibleRef, elaborates on the eighth commandment below:

"Stealing literally refers to objects. But Scripture demonstrates that we "steal" from others anytime we selfishly deny them what should be theirs (Exodus 23:6; Proverbs 22:22; Isaiah 10:2). “The people of

the land have used oppressions, committed robbery, and mistreated the poor and needy; and they wrongfully oppress the stranger. (Ezekiel 22:29)” “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. (Malachi 3:8).” Fraud would be considered both lying and stealing (Leviticus 6:1–3; Deuteronomy 25:15; Job 24:2–4) “Indeed the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the reapers have reached the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth (James 5:4).” Some forms of theft, such as capturing men to be sold as slaves, were subject to the death penalty “He who kidnaps a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall surely be put to death (Exodus 21:16).”

(www.bibleref.com <https://www.bibleref.com/Exodus/20/Exodus-20-15.html>) (Italicized verses added by me)

11.3 CONCLUSION

Thou shalt not steal is the eight commandment and the fourth of the commandments that provide principles for man’s interaction with others. The Creator of the universe penned the Ten Commandments on stone tablets with His own finger (Exodus 31:18). God gave us the Law to show us our need for Him. The Law revealed our sin and showed that we are completely separated from the Creator.

Romans 3 :23 tells us, “. . . for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” However, God did not abandon us in our sin. “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us (Romans 5:8).” He made a way for our sin to be atoned. He sent His only son to die for us (John 3:16). If we repent of our sins, confess Jesus as Lord, and believe that God has raised Him

from the grave we are saved from the penalty of failing to follow the Law and given the privilege of spending eternity with Him.

Notes

12 THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

By Rick Hertless

Exodus 20:16

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

12.1 WHAT IS THE NINTH COMMANDMENT?

The ninth commandment is saying, do not lie. But to put a finer point on it, we go back to the relational aspects of the commandments.

God’s commandants are not as concerned about sinning against Him as much as sinning against others.

Do not get the wrong impression here. God is concerned about believers sinning against Him, but mainly because of the separation it brings between the believer and God Himself; not to mention the eternal separation sinners have with God. But even that focuses on having what is best for us at heart.

God always focuses on relationships; relationships with Him, as well as, with others. Notice the ninth commandment says, “Do not bear false witness against your neighbor.” Like the other commandments, God is concerned with believers keeping pure relationships with each other.

As was stated previously, there are 77 “one another’s” in the New Testament and 142 exact phrases of “one another.” God is concerned

with us loving each other. Because of our propensity to sin, God knows that it is difficult for us to love one another. Therefore, He continuously reminds us. God tells us 21 times in the New Testament, “Love one another.”

12.2 WHAT DOES THE NINTH COMMANDMENT TEACH US?

Psalm 15:1-3 says: A Psalm of David.

LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart; He who does not backbite with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor does he take up a reproach against his friend . . .

God’s Commandments are about walking with Him from your heart, not out of obligation. The key to the above verse is “. . . truth in his heart.” It is by the heart that we are declared righteous. You might be saying, “Wait a minute. Are you saying that we don’t need Jesus? Was His sacrifice invalid?” On the contrary! It is through our belief in His sacrifice that we are saved. It is by our heart that we are saved. There are many who declare the name of Jesus, but that does not mean they know Him.

Matthew 7:21 says, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.” What is the will of the Father? To believe in the One He has sent. So as with the saints of old, it is with our heart that we believe and are righteous. It is with our heart that we have faith in Jesus.

By faith we are declared righteous through the sacrifice of Jesus. The Pharisees and Sadducees believed Jesus existed; He stood right in front of them, but they did not believe in Him. They believed in their own power and lust for things of the flesh instead of God.

Zechariah 8:16-17: 8:16

These are the things you shall do: speak each man the truth to his neighbor; give judgment in your gates for truth, justice, and peace; let none of you think evil in your heart against your neighbor . . .

Again, it is about relationship. It is with your heart that you love your neighbor. It is with your heart that you are obedient to God, because you trust and love Him.

Matthew 22:37-40

Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ “This is the first and great commandment. “And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Above is known as the Great commandment. It is interesting that Jesus chose to use the word “neighbor” in this Scripture. God reiterates the need to love each other. And not only love one another, but love others as we would love ourselves. God’s word is consistent. It is His will that we love each other and grow in relationship with one another.

Today, our culture is such that most do not even know who their neighbor is. They could not name them by name, let alone love them. But God encourages us to love our neighbor. In other words, get to know them and share the Gospel with them. The ultimate love we have to give is the Gospel of Jesus Christ; The Good News. The greatest love we can show is the love of God through His Son. How much greater love could there be than to give the gift of eternal life.

To “bear false witness” is even worse than a simple lie. To bear false witness is to say that a person did something that they did not actually do. False witness puts innocent people in prison and destroys lives. Plus, the person bearing false witness puts their own reputation on the line. To be a witness means that one has seen something first hand. If the lie is uncovered and exposed, the person bearing false witness destroys his own creditability, destroys his own witness. Thereby, destroying two lives. For even though the innocence may have been discovered, the damage has already been done and others had to suffer.

For example, if a woman is told her husband has been unfaithful and the allegation turns out to be false, the woman may have already started the separation proceeding, thus demonstrating her lack of trust in her husband. When the truth is discovered, now the husband is upset with the wife who did not believe him in the first place. At least three relationships are destroyed.

12.3 NO WHITE LIES

This argument usually goes on deaf ears, but it should be stated nevertheless. There is no such thing as a “white lie.” A lie is still a lie. It is still not the truth. Ephesians 4:25 says, “Therefore, putting away lying, ‘Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,’ for we are members of one another.”

I was once preaching about white lies on Sunday. On Monday, my treasurer, a man of about 80 years old, questioned me about my sermon. He said sometimes white lies can be needed. I told him I did not think so. He replied, “You mean when your wife asks if she looks fat you tell her, “Yes”?” While that is a comical scenario, there must be a way to speak the truth. He continued and said, “If white lies are a sin, then no one can get into Heaven.” My answer? “Exactly, that is why we need Jesus.” Romans 3:23 says, “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God . . .” that is an excellent example for someone who says they are not a sinner. Thankfully, 1 John 1:9 says, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

12.4 COME TO GOD IN YOUR HEART

God wants us to come to Him with all our heart. He does not want only part of our lives; He wants it all. He wants to have a relationship with us. There is only one way to do that. That way is through Jesus Christ.

The relationship God has given to us is a personal relationship. It is a relationship that allows us to call out to Him, "Daddy." It is a close relationship. Ours is not a religion. Religions keep men away from God. Christ brings us close to God. Religions are encumbered by rules that cannot be kept. Christ has covered our mistakes by the sacrifice of His life for us. His sacrifice covers our sin, even white lies. Does that mean that we can go on sinning without thought of the consequences. Paul says, "God forbid (Romans 6:15)." No, because of our love for Christ, we should seek to live a purer life to show our love for the Father.

Notes

13 THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

By Rick Hertless

Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Romans 7:7

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.”

As previously discussed, the commandments were given so that we might know what sin is and have the knowledge of the character of God. Furthermore, it is a means to allow us to commune with a holy God. He has given His commandments as a way for us to come to Him in repentance and fellowship with Him.

Before Jesus, repentance was done through the sacrifice of animals. But sacrifice was not sufficient even for the day, let alone eternity. No, God wanted a way to fellowship with us eternally. Therefore, He sent His Son as an eternal sacrifice for us to be able to commune with Him and have the close relationship He intended since He created Adam.

Even so, we are imperfect beings and struggle with sin daily. His commandments remind us of the need to ask forgiveness at each transgression, even many times a day. Yes, these transgressions have already been forgiven. We are not to ask forgiveness to God for the transgressions of the day so we can be saved. We ask forgiveness to keep a close relationship with The Father. He knows we sin. He wants us to be aware that we sin. In doing so, we sin less as we remember that we are hurting God each time we transgress.

The good news is, He has given us the avenue to talk to, and fellowship with, Him every moment of every day. Jesus is the way and God's commandments give the means to know how we are to stay in constant communication with God. Because of the commandments, we know when we are hurting God by disobeying Him. Out of love for a Mighty God, we repent of the sin as we recognize our transgression. God is faithful and just to forgive our sin because of the sacrifice of Jesus.

More than that, those sins are cast away and remembered no more. They are not counted against us because of the blood covering of Jesus for all who accept His grace.

13.1 - WHAT DOES THE TENTH COMMANDMENT TEACH US?

God's plan is for His children to live in contentment. Unfortunately, our culture is to always seek more. More cars, bigger houses, more

possessions; to that end, families are torn apart for the want of these possessions.

Because of this lustful culture, Men have worked night and day, forsaking their families to provide bigger and better. Believing they are doing what is right for the family, they divide the very relationships they are seeking to enrich. Many times, men subsidize love by outside relationships away from the family; relationships that were cultivated by good intentions of serving his family, but destroyed because of lack of judgement and contentment of what God has given.

Women have been convinced that bigger is better and work outside the home to provide for the family. Satan has convinced women that they are the providers rather than men and men have succumbed to the pressure of the world, allowing the family unit to be destroyed by the outside teaching of strangers to their children. Instead of the children learning the values of the family, they learn the values of the world that is purported by well meaning teachers of the world.

Children without guidance, have strayed from the faith and truth which is the Word of God. Sundays have become days to “sleep in” and rest from the trappings of the world and the fatigue of overwork.

Philippians 4:11-12

Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how

to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

In our culture, contentment is misconstrued as laziness. The lust for money is mistakenly traded for happiness. In our culture, “Thou shalt not covet . . .” is replaced with “get all you can get.” “Keeping up with the Joneses” is a real philosophy that must be reexamined by Christians.

As with most things, the world has infiltrated the Church instead of the Church influencing the world. Make no mistake, it is nice to have nice things. I have nice things. But it is forsaking God and family to have the nice things that becomes sin.

1 Timothy 6:10

For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Please do not misunderstand what I am saying. More than that, do not misunderstand what Paul is saying to Timothy. Money is not the root of all evil. What is the root of all evil is forsaking what God has given you to obtain more above all else that is the root of all evil.

When you forsake your family to “give them a better life” you are giving the exact opposite. Lives are destroyed because of the lack of relationships that you should be providing.

1 Timothy 6:6-8

Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content.

There is a balance that must be achieved to be able to live the life of abundance we have been promised by Jesus in John 10:10. The balance comes by staying on your knees and in God's Word to achieve what has been promised to believers.

Contentment seems to be a bad word in the English language these days. Again, please do not misinterpret what I am saying. There should be ambition and hard work to accomplish goals. But one can still be content in the pursuit of goals. The problem comes when one allows others to place the goals on another. Contentment does not follow when one tries to "keep up" with others. In fact, by trying to stay abreast of others, you may find yourself behind your capabilities; stifling what you are capable of.

I knew a man once that was playing in the newly founded World Football League. He and others were recruited and drafted into the league with millions of dollars in salaries and bonuses. His teammates began to show up in Lamborghinis and Porsches, but he, even though he was a quarterback, continued to drive his old Plymouth Valiant.

He was ridiculed and laughed at by his teammates, but his response was, "This is a new league. It may not survive. So, I am waiting to see

what happens before I invest in a bigger house or better car.” Sure enough, the league failed within a few years and he and everyone else were out of a job. His teammates lost everything and were declaring bankruptcy. He still had millions in the bank. He was content with what the Lord had given him and the life he was leading. There was no need to impress others.

Hebrews 13:5

Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Jesus said He would never leave nor forsake us. He said He would guide our steps if we will allow to do so. His desire is for us to store up eternal treasure rather than earthly possessions. One day, we will stand before Him naked. We will bring nothing with us. He will reward us for what we have done. Your possessions for eternity will come from Him.

It is the same today. Everything you have belongs to the Lord. What are you doing with it?

Notes