

Ten Words part 2 Exodus 20:13-21 bible-sermons.org August 22, 2010

How do you know if you are in a liberal church? You know when they call the Ten Commandments the Ten Suggestions!

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 (ESV) ⁴ *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.* God elaborated on what that meant in the first five commands. Do you remember them?

- One: God is number one!
- Two: Don't make idols or bow to them.
- Three: Don't take God's name in vain.
- Four: Remember the Sabbath.
- Five: Honor your father and mother.

It is our jealous husband asking to be first in our lives, not because He is selfish but because He wants what is best for us. He doesn't want us thinking less of Him than He truly is. He wants us to reverence and respect Him by honoring His name. He wants us to set aside time for Him. He wants us to honor the His authority in our lives. **God wants what any husband would desire of his bride.**

Now we move to what Jesus said was like the first great command, loving our neighbor as ourselves. (Romans 13:9) If we honor Him, then we honor those made in His image. We will see the dignity and potential in every human life. That does not mean that everyone reflects the glory of God or expresses His image, but that we all have that potential. (Genesis 9:6)

Here are our guidelines of action toward one another: Command number six spoken in an audible voice to the people declared. ¹³ *"You shall not murder."*

The word for murder in Hebrew includes causing the death of another through carelessness or negligence. This does not cover warfare or capital punishment as both are allowed in other passages. (Exodus 21:13; Numbers 21:2-3)

We might assume that we have no problem with this one, but Jesus elaborated on it in a way that includes us all. Matthew 5:21-22 (ESV) ²¹ *"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' ²² But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.* Anger with your brother was declared to deserve the same punishment as murder! To express that anger in words was something for which you should be tried in court. To call someone a fool is to balance on the rim of hell!

Why is Jesus so severe? He sees as God sees. He sees the anger in the heart is making selfish demands while forgetting our own need for forgiveness. (Matthew 6:15) He sees what we would do if it were not for the fear of consequences.

Commented [Paul Wall1]: Romans 13:8-9 (ESV)
8 Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.
9 The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Commented [Paul Wall2]: Genesis 9:6 (ESV)
6 "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image."

Commented [Paul Wall3]: Exodus 21:12 (ESV)
12 "Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death."

Commented [Paul Wall4]: Numbers 21:2-3 (ESV)
2 And Israel vowed a vow to the LORD and said, "If you will indeed give this people into my hand, then I will devote their cities to destruction."
3 And the LORD obeyed the voice of Israel and gave over the Canaanites, and they devoted them and their cities to destruction. So the name of the place was called Hormah.

Commented [Paul Wall5]: Matthew 6:15 (ESV)
15 but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Righteous anger is not out of selfish demands but rather from the heart of God that detests evil. Jesus expressed righteous anger several times. (Mark 3:5; John 2:15-17) It had nothing to do with not having His way and everything to do with His opposition to man's stubbornness toward God.

When the insult is spoken, it means the thought has gone from the heart to the lips. Action has been taken, and it sets in motion a series of events that leave lifelong scars, and sometimes actually ends in a death. (1John 3:15)

To call someone a fool in Jesus' day was to say that they were godless, without morals, a degenerate. (Psalm 14:1) Jesus said that was dancing with the devil. Satan slanders and accuses. It is the opposite of the of the New Testament command to love one another, to encourage, and build one another up. (Romans 13:10)

Like the laws regarding our relationship with God, the laws regarding our relationship with man are based on the character of God. Murder is wrong, because God is the life giver. The time of one's passing is God's prerogative, not ours.

You can remember number 6 if you picture a bomb with a fuse. Number six is, "Do not murder".

¹⁴ *"You shall not commit adultery.* The meaning is quite clear, and yet our culture has chosen to ignore this one. Have you noticed how the breaking of these commands is glorified by the film industry? It is the sign of the decline of a civilization. When hedonism becomes the god of choice the end of that society is not far behind.

The Biblical definition of adultery is for a man to have relations with a married woman. Both parties were considered guilty of adultery. Once again, the law is based on God's character. Adultery is wrong because God is faithful. He keeps His word. He keeps His promises. (Numbers 23:19) An adulteress has broken her promise to her husband and the man involved has helped.

Jesus expanded this command as well, and He did so in way that causes most men to shudder. Matthew 5:27-28 (ESV) ²⁷ *"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.'* ²⁸ *But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.* If you are a man with red blood and testosterone, you have more than likely broken this command. Does that excuse us? No! It does tell us that man is fallen and selfish. (Isaiah 56:11)

I've heard all kinds of excuses for this one. "God doesn't mind if we enjoy the beauty of His creation." No, He doesn't. But when you look on another person and think of how you could use them to satisfy yourself without regards to the consequences in their life or the life of those around you, you are considering the height of selfishness. (Proverbs 18:1) You are entertaining being of a very different spirit than God who is faithful and true to His word.

Physical attraction is natural, but what you do with that attraction in your mind and heart is where sin enters. "She is lovely!" can quickly change into other thoughts. As children of God we are to capture our thoughts and make them obedient to Christ. (2Corinthians 10:5) The concept implies that we cannot always keep out a passing

Commented [Paul Wall6]: Mark 3:5 (ESV)
5 And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

Commented [Paul Wall7]: John 2:15-17 (ESV)
15 And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables.
16 And he told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade."
17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

Commented [Paul Wall8]: 1 John 3:15 (ESV)
15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

Commented [Paul Wall9]: Psalm 14:1 (ESV)
1 TO THE CHOIRMASTER. OF DAVID. The fool says in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good.

Commented [Paul Wall10]: Romans 13:10 (ESV)
10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Commented [Paul Wall11]: Numbers 23:19 (ESV)
19 God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

Commented [Paul Wall12]: Isaiah 56:11 (ESV)
11 The dogs have a mighty appetite; they never have enough. But they are shepherds who have no understanding; they have all turned to their own way, each to his own gain, one and all.

Commented [Paul Wall13]: Proverbs 18:1 (ESV)
1 Whoever isolates himself seeks his own desire; he breaks out against all sound judgment.

Commented [Paul Wall14]: 2 Corinthians 10:5 (NIV)
5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

thought or impulse, but we can decide whether or not we will reject it or contemplate it.

Pornography is an increasing scourge on the world made even more prevalent by the internet. It objectifies women and turns shape and form into idolatry. It is addictive and destructive. Anyone who thinks one can take that fire into their mind and not be burned, is fooling them self. (Proverbs 6:27)

This thought world, where our battles are won and lost, is a key component of all these commands. The way we treat our thoughts depends on where our heart is set. If your heart is set on things above you will capture your thoughts and make them serve your Lord Jesus Christ. (Colossians 3:2) If your heart is set on this world, you will contemplate those destructive thoughts that are not of God. Thought patterns turn into action. Actions turn into a lifestyle whether for good or evil.

If you let anger control your thought life, it will be expressed in things you say. (James 1:19-20) If you let lust control your thoughts it will turn your eyes and lead you further and further down the road to actions. For the born-again follower of Jesus, the contemplation of evil brings conviction, guilt, and shame. That is God's protective hand. It is the Spirit of God within you that is disgusted with the contemplation of evil. We repent, and are cleansed, and the next time the evil thought tries to invade, we take it to the cross. (1John 1:9) You may have to do it a million times. Every time you do, you are walking in victory. Don't think the enemy of your soul is just going to give up and leave you alone.

To remember number 7, picture a heart with crack in it in the shape of a seven. Number seven is, "Do not commit adultery".

¹⁵ *"You shall not steal.* Theft is taking something God has put in another's care. It is really saying that God made a mistake in giving it to them. It is rebelliously declaring, "I should be the custodian." It is the same selfishness as adultery. It is saying, "That person should be mine and not their spouse's. God made a mistake in allowing them to marry. He or she should belong to me." Whether an object or a person or even ideas, to take what belongs to another is really selfishly rebelling against God's providence. As with the other commands, we can see that the contemplation of the heart is just as important as the action itself.

An easy way to remember this is to picture a burglar's mask. It is the shape of an eight. Number eight is, "Do not steal".

¹⁶ *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.* Since Jesus expanded the meaning of neighbor to anyone we should happen to meet, this command is telling us to not lie – period! (Luke 10:36) The language of the command implies a courtroom situation, but can be applied to any situation in which you speak of someone else. Leviticus 19:11 tells us not to deceive anyone. That broadens it even further.

In other words, we are to be truthful. Why? Because God is true and in Him is no lie. (1John 2:21) It is not in His nature to deceive. (Titus 1:2)

Commented [Paul Wall15]: Proverbs 6:27 (ESV)
27 Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned?

Commented [Paul Wall16]: Colossians 3:1-2 (ESV)
1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.

Commented [Paul Wall17]: James 1:19-20 (ESV)
19 Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger;
20 for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness that God requires.

Commented [Paul Wall18]: 1 John 1:8-9 (ESV)
8 If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Commented [Paul Wall19]: Luke 10:36 (KJV)
36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

Commented [Paul Wall20]: Leviticus 19:11 (ESV)
11 "You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another.

Commented [Paul Wall21]: 1 John 2:21 (ESV)
21 I write to you, not because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

Commented [Paul Wall22]: Titus 1:2 (ESV)
2 in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began

Some have argued that a lie could serve a good purpose such as saving a life. Should Germans have told the truth if they were hiding Jews in their attic during Nazi Germany? How many of us really face that kind of situation? You can complicate the simple command by imagining scenarios, but the thrust of the command is like that of all the commands. Are you operating from a heart of love or selfishness? The letter kills but the Spirit gives life. (2Corinthians 3:6) If you are standing before a just and holy God, what would He have you do?

We know the difference between justifying our actions to get what we want, and struggling to do what is right before God, even when it may cost us dearly. Don't fool yourself.

When wrestling against temptation, we can usually see what is of God and what is not by examining whether or not we truly want God's will or our own way. If we use clichés like, "God wants me to be happy!" or "God just put this in front of me so it must be His will!", we'd better watch out! The honest heart can tell when it is seeking God first without regard to our own inclinations or desires.

You can remember command number nine is "Do not lie" by thinking of a 9 lying down.

Finally, the last of the ten is the clincher. ¹⁷ *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."* Covet means to intensely desire something for your own. God looks upon the heart. This why Jesus said that even to look on a woman to lust after her is adultery. This is the root of thievery, a heart craving after something that belongs to another.

God desires for us to find our contentment in Him. **When our hearts are satisfied in Him, when the first commands are truly kept from the heart, we don't have the need to see things in this life as a source of satisfaction.** (1Timothy 6:6) If we are satisfied with God, we don't make idols out of His creation. We take time to be with Him. We won't be lusting after another's wife or stealing to obtain things or lying to advance our self over others. (Hebrews 13:5)

When the rich young ruler came to Jesus and asked the way to eternal life, Jesus told him to keep the commands. Matthew 19:18-20 (ESV)¹⁸ *He said to him, "Which ones?" And Jesus said, "You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness,* ¹⁹ *Honor your father and mother, and, You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* ²⁰ *The young man said to him, "All these I have kept. What do I still lack?"*

Did you notice Jesus quoted all the relational commands except for the last one? The young ruler was outwardly perfect, but inwardly his heart craved the security of wealth. Jesus answer was to give his wealth away to break the covetousness in his heart. If greed is your vice, kill it by finding the joy in giving... *"and come follow me."* (Luke 12:15)

You can remember command number ten is not to covet by thinking of the number one as a door cracked open with two eyes staring through at a big diamond ring that is the zero.

Commented [Paul Wall23]: 2 Corinthians 3:6 (ESV)
6 who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

Commented [Paul Wall24]: 1 Timothy 6:5-6 (ESV)
5 and constant friction among people who are deprived in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.
6 Now there is great gain in godliness with contentment,

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Commented [Paul Wall26]: Luke 12:15 (ESV)
15 And he said to them, "Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions."

Coveting things is trying to fill the void in our hearts that only God can fill. You can't keep the commands unless your heart is filled with God. The Law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. (Galatians 3:24) It shows us the basic level of goodness/Godness to reveal how lost we are. Then we know we need a Savior.

Some of you saw the Way of the Master program that was the inspiration for the numbers as pictures to memorize the commands. Ray Comfort approaches people and asks them if they are going to heaven. He goes through a few of the commands with them and as they confess that they have broken them, he explains that they are lying, murdering, adulterers. Then he shares the way of salvation. I wouldn't recommend that method on everyone. My conviction is that we need the leading of the Holy Spirit rather than a formula, but Ray's point is valid. People aren't likely to come to Christ unless they see how desperately they need Him.

18 Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off¹⁹ and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." We have casually gone through this sermon and for most of us it's just another Sunday. But remember, they were hearing the voice of God. The ground was shaking, the mountain was smoking, and God's voice thundered.

Their response was to ask Moses to be their priest. "You go meet with God and tell us what He says. It's just too frightening for us!" In one sense, that is what God wanted. (Deuteronomy 5:28) He wanted them to trust Moses was hearing God. He wanted us to see in Moses the need for our Great High Priest, Jesus. He is the one that would make the intimacy God desired with mankind possible, through His death for our sins. Now we can truly become a kingdom of priests. (1Peter 2:9-10)

20 Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin." Don't fear but do fear. Don't fear that God is an angry, judgmental, destroyer of life. He's not your enemy. He has come to teach you to fear His justice upon sin. It is His love for you that wants you to live in the freedom of His laws. It is His love that desires that your life be free from the consequences of sin. **Fear His justice, but don't fear His intentions toward you. He longs for you to find life in Him.** (2Peter 3:9) He longs to be first in your life. He desires to make you His treasure and that you have access to Him at all times. (Matthew 11:28-30)

While the people stood back from the mountain, trembling in fear, Moses went into the thick darkness of the cloud and received the words of the covenant. Later, He will go up to receive the tablets carved with the finger of God and receive instructions for the building of the Tabernacle.

The very next instructions are about worship. Through sacrifice the people would look forward to the One who would give them access to God without the fear of judgment. Sacrifice pointed to the need of judgment and the severity of sin. The stones of the altar of worship were not to be chiseled, but natural stone. It pointed to the salvation having nothing to do with man's work. It would all be of God who would provide the perfect lamb that would take away the sins of the world. (John 1:29)

Commented [Paul Wall27]: Galatians 3:24 (ESV)
24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.

Commented [Paul Wall28]: Deuteronomy 5:28 (KJV)
28 And the LORD heard the voice of your words, when ye spake unto me; and the LORD said unto me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken unto thee: they have well said all that they have spoken.

Commented [Paul Wall29]: 1 Peter 2:9-10 (ESV)
9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.
10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Commented [Paul Wall30]: 2 Peter 3:9 (ESV)
9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Commented [Paul Wall31]: Matthew 11:28-30 (ESV)
28 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.
30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Commented [Paul Wall32]: John 1:29 (ESV)
29 The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

We could never keep these 10 rules. Jesus kept them in our place, and then took the judgment we deserve for breaking God's basic rules. In accepting what He did for us, we find we have been made right with God. We have access to His throne without fear. We strive to keep the commands because our hearts have been changed. Will you memorize them? Will you meditate upon them?

Questions

- 1 Go over the first five words from memory.
- 2 How did Jesus sum up the last five?
- 3 How did Jesus expand on the sixth?
- 4 On what are these laws based?
- 5 What is the technical definition of 7? Jesus definition?
- 6 How do we resist temptation?
- 7 What is in the heart of someone who breaks the eighth command?
- 8 What is the technical meaning of 9? The broad meaning?
- 9 What causes us to break the tenth?
- 10 How can we recall each command?
- 11 What purpose does the Law serve?