

The Ten Commandments



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Introduction

- A kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
- Physical freedom does not automatically make them a kingdom priests and a holy nation.
- Constitution of a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Introduction - continued

The context

- Given to the people who already became God's covenant people.
- God took initiative to set them free.
- Slavery mentality for more than 400 years.

What kind of slavery mentality?

Introduction - continued

God's relationship with his people

- “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery” (2).
- “Recognize me by remembering what I did for you.”
- Beneficial for his people to remember what God did for them.

Introduction - continued

Purpose of the commandments

Deuteronomy 6:24

“The Lord commanded us to obey all these decrees and to fear the Lord our God, so that **we might always prosper and be kept alive**, as is the case today.”

- To live as God’s covenant people under his blessing.

Introduction - continued

- The ten commandments can be divided into two parts:
 - First four commandments.
 - Next six commandments.
- Jesus summarised in Matthew 22:37-40
 - “Love the Lord your God... Love your neighbor...”**

First Commandment

“You shall have no other gods.”

Exodus 20:3

“You shall have no other gods before me.”

- Root of all other commandments.
- “You” – the second person singular.

First - continued

“You shall have no other gods.”

Exclusive love relationship

- Conjugal relationship.
- Beauty of love relationship with undivided heart.
- Without exclusive relationship – dysfunctional.
- **Vertical relationship** with God : horizontal relationships with others.



First - continued

“You shall have no other gods.”

Why this commandment?

- There are no other gods.
Why then is this commandment necessary?
- God first showed his love for us.
- Other 9 commandments are built on this commandment.

Second Commandment

“You shall not make for yourself an image.”

Exodus 20:4

“You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.”

- Should not have any image of art work?
- Roman Catholics omits the second commandment.
- Exodus chapter 32 – Golden calf.

Second - continued

“You shall not make for yourself an image.”

Problem with image

- John Calvin

“Every visible shape of Deity which man devises is diametrically **opposed to the divine nature**; and, therefore, that the moment idols appear, **true religion is corrupted and adulterated.**”

(Exposition of the First and Second Commandments)

- No shape or image can represent God.

Second - continued

“You shall not make for yourself an image.”

Problem with image

- Bronze snake on a pole – Numbers Chapter 21.
King Hezekiah destroyed it – 2 Kings 18.
- Communicate with the photo?
- Motivation of making images.
“You shall not make **for yourself** an image...” (4)

Second - continued

“You shall not make for yourself an image.”

I am a jealous God

- “...for I, the Lord your God, am a **jealous God.**” (5)
 - **Jealousy:** usually negative connotation.
 - When does it have positive and godly meaning?

Second - continued

“You shall not make for yourself an image.”

What does it mean to us in Jesus?

- **Jesus, the image of the invisible God** (Col 1:15).
- Jesus, himself God,... has made him known (Jn 1:18).
- “You shall not **bow down** to them or **worship** them” (5).

Worship in the right way.

“Worship God in Jesus Christ” (Jn 4)

Third Commandment

“You Shall Not Misuse the Name of the LORD your God.”

Exodus 20:7

“You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.”

- God’s name was too sacred to utter with their mouths.
- Four consonants YHWH— yud, hey, vav, hey (יהוה) from Exodus 3:14, “I am who I am” – **Tetragrammaton**.
- Jehovah or Yahweh

Third - continued

“You Shall Not Misuse the Name of the LORD your God.”

God’s name and his honor

- “...the Lord is his name.” (Jer 33:2)
- “...**for the sake of your name** lead and guide me.” (Ps 31:3)

Third - continued

“You Shall Not Misuse the Name of the LORD your God.”

What does this commandment mean to us?

Honoring God through our life of faith

- **“...God is not ashamed to be called their God” (Heb 11:16).**

Recognition or persecution in the world?

Third - continued

“You Shall Not Misuse the Name of the LORD your God.”

Not abusing God’s name

- Calling God’s name / Jesus’ name when upset.

Not taking advantage of God’s name

- False prophets
- Bible teachers and shepherds

Third - continued

“You Shall Not Misuse the Name of the LORD your God.”

Meaning in Jesus

- “...before Abraham was born, I am!” (Jn 8:57)
- John 5:23 “...that all may **honor the Son** just as they honor the Father. Whoever **does not honor the Son does not honor the Father**, who sent him.”
- **In the name of Jesus**: saved (Rom 10:9), children of God (Jn 1:12), pray (Jn 14:13; Heb 4:16), disciples (Mt 28:19).

Fourth Commandment

“Remember the Sabbath Day.”

Exodus 20:8

“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.”

Why did God rest on the seventh day? Genesis 2:2-3

A) Tired B) Sleepy

C) Lazy D) Celebrated completion of creation

Fourth - continued

“Remember the Sabbath Day.”

Westminster shorter catechism - first question

“What is the chief end of man?”

“The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”

- Enjoy Him by worshiping Him on the Lord’s day.

Fourth - continued

“Remember the Sabbath Day.”

Do not work on the Sabbath day

- “On it you shall not do any work ...” (10)
- Time is money.
- What about busy season? Final exams? (Ex 34:21)

Fourth - continued

“Remember the Sabbath Day.”

How did the Israelites respond to this commandment?

- Not keeping the Sabbath law was one of the causes of the Babylonian captivity (Neh 13:15-18).
- Misunderstanding, not doing any activities.
39 categories of activity prohibited on Jewish Sabbath.

39 Categories of Activity Prohibited on the Jewish Sabbath

1. Sowing
2. Plowing
3. Reaping
4. Binding sheaves
5. Threshing
6. Winnowing
7. Selecting
8. Grinding
9. Sifting
10. Kneading
11. Baking
12. Shearing wool
13. Washing wool
14. Beating wool
15. Dyeing wool
16. Spinning
17. Weaving
18. Making two loops
19. Weaving two threads
20. Separating two threads
21. Tying
22. Untying
23. Sewing stitches
24. Tearing
25. Trapping
26. Slaughtering
27. Flaying
28. Tanning
29. Scraping hide
30. Marking hides
31. Cutting hide to shape
32. Writing two or more letters
33. Erasing two or more letters
34. Building
35. Demolishing
36. Extinguishing a fire
37. Kindling a fire
38. Putting the finishing touch on an object
39. Transporting an object between a private domain and the public domain, or for a distance of 4 cubits within the public domain.

Fourth - continued

“Remember the Sabbath Day.”

In Christ Jesus – Why on Sunday?

- “For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath” (Mt 12:8).
- “It is finished” (Jn 19:30).
- Early Christians worshiped the Lord on the Lord’s Day (Act 20:7; 1 Cor 16:2).
- “...a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a **Sabbath day**. These are a **shadow of the things that were to come; the reality**, however, is **found in Christ**.” (Col 2:16-17)

Fourth - continued

“Remember the Sabbath Day.”

Application keeping the Lord’s day

Enjoy God’s blessings and provision.

- John Calvin:
“This commandment is for us to experience Matthew 6:33”.
- God’s invisible hand of blessing.

Restoration by worshiping the Lord.

- “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.” (Mt 11:28)

Fifth Commandment

“Honor your father and your mother.”

Exodus 20:12

“Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.”

For parents: godly upbringing of children at home

“...impress them on your children...” (Deut 6:6)

“...ten thousand **guardians**, not many **fathers**.” (1 Cor 4:15)

Paul as father in Christ – Timothy, Titus, Onesimus

Fifth - continued

“Honor your father and your mother.”

For children: this commandment is God’s blessing

- “...so that you may live long.”
- “‘Honor your father and mother’—which is the first **commandment with a promise.**” (Eph 6:2)
- Adult sons and daughters whose parents are old. (Prov 23:22)

Fifth - continued

“Honor your father and your mother.”

Westminster Shorter Catechism

“What is required in the fifth commandment?”

“The fifth commandment requires **the preserving the honour, and performing the duties**, belonging to every one in their **several places and relations**, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.”

- Honoring parents is the foundation of other relationships.

Fifth - continued

“Honor your father and your mother.”

Survey: “What makes parents unhappy?”

1. When their children lie.
2. ...rebellious.
3. ...do not get jobs or not marry.
4. ...care their girl/boy friends more than parents.
5. ...compare their parents with other parents.

▪ **Parents do not wait.**

Sixth Commandment

“You Shall Not Murder.”

Exodus 20:13

“You shall not murder.”

- Intentional and premeditated murder (Ex 21:12-14).
- Unintentional killing - man slaughter (Deut 19:5).
Wars (1 Sam 18:7), self-defense (Ex 22:2).

Sixth - continued

“You Shall Not Murder.”

Why this commandment?

- Created in God’ image, *imago Dei*. (Gen 1:27)

Jesus’ teaching

“...anyone who is **angry** with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. ...anyone who says, ‘**You fool!**’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.” (Mt 5:21-22)

Sixth - continued

“You Shall Not Murder.”

Application for us

Protect human life from negligence.

- The one that caused death by negligence is responsible.
(Deut 22:8)
- “...a bull gores a man or woman to death” (Ex 21:28-29)
- Dogs, driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Sixth - continued

“You Shall Not Murder.”

Protect human life from anger and violence

- “Anyone who **hates** a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.”
(1 Jn 3:15)
- “Do not be overcome by evil, but **overcome evil with good.**”
(Ro 12:21)

Seventh Commandment

“You Shall Not Commit Adultery.”

Exodus 20:14

“You shall not commit adultery.”

Warning against extramarital sexual affairs (Lev 20:10).

Sexual immorality is sin against own body.

“Flee from sexual immorality. ...whoever sins sexually, sins **against their own body**. ...your bodies are **temples of the Holy Spirit**, ...honor God with your bodies.” (1 Cor 6:18-20)

Seventh - continued

“You Shall Not Commit Adultery.”

Sexual immorality destroys family

The reasons for divorce?

“Infidelity” the main cause of family breakups.

Sexual immorality destroys society

Noah’s time, Sodom.

Seventh - continued

“You Shall Not Commit Adultery.”

Message for us

- **House church:** “...a helper suitable for him.” (Gen 2:18)
- ““For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ This is a **profound mystery**—but I am talking about **Christ and the church.**” (Eph 5:31-32)

Why is house church a profound mystery?

Seventh - continued

“You Shall Not Commit Adultery.”

Application?

“...anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Mt 5:28)

- Examine our hearts.
- Delicious food or sightseeing – whom do you think of?

Eighth Commandment
“You Shall Not Steal.”

Exodus 20:15

“You shall not steal.”

Root cause of stealing: Free of charge mentality

Economists say, “There is no such thing as free lunch.”

Impact occurred from stealing

Far more than the money lost; break-in.

Eighth - continued

“You Shall Not Steal.”

Restitution law of stealing

More than stolen amount “mental damage?”.

“If the stolen animal is found alive in their possession—whether ox or donkey or sheep—they must pay back double.” (Ex 22:4)

Eighth - continued

“You Shall Not Steal.”

Restitution to particular person is not possible

- The thief has no money to pay back
Salve: “...they must be sold to pay for their theft.” (Ex 22:3)
- The offender does not know who were offended.
 - **To the poor:** Collecting tax more than required – Zacchaeus’ 50% of his possessions to the poor. (Lk 19:8)
 - **Offering:** Offer to the Lord through offerings. (Num 5:8)

Ninth Commandment

“You shall not give false testimony.”

Exodus 20:16

“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.”

- The word “testimony” is a legal term.
- “spoken or written statements that something is true, especially those given in a law court.”
- Testimony in Christian faith as open profession of one’s faith.

Ninth - continued

“You shall not give false testimony.”

A case of false testimony in 1 Kings 21

- King Ahab's greed for Naboth's vineyard.
Jezebel raised 2 false witnesses and murdered Naboth.

Who is our neighbour?

- The parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25-37).
- Who is your neighbour?
Context – community of God's people.

Ninth - continued

“You shall not give false testimony.”

Application for us

Do not gossip.

- What is gossip?
- “Anyone who will gossip to you will gossip about you.”
(unknown)
- “Words have no wings but they can fly a thousand miles.”
(Korean)

Ninth - continued

“You shall not give false testimony.”

Gossip causes “character assassination”

- Human heart is fragile.
- Gossip through SNS comments.
- “With their mouths the godless destroy their neighbors...”
(Prov 11:9).

Ninth - continued

“You shall not give false testimony.”

How to deal with gossip against me?

- Defend ourselves, correct, and take a legal action?
- Among believers' community in Christ?
- **Come to the heavenly court.**

Jesus is the Judge and our Defense Attorney.

“Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? “ (Rom 8:33)

Tenth Commandment

“You shall not covet.”

Exodus 20:17

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.”

- What’s going on in our hearts.
- Leads to violate other commandments.
- St. Paul’s confession. (Rom 7)

Tenth - continued

“You shall not covet.”

Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q: “What is required in the tenth commandment?”

A: “The tenth commandment requireth full **contentment with our own condition**, with a right and charitable frame of spirit toward our neighbour, and all that is his.”

Tenth - continued

“You shall not covet.”

Where covetous desire comes from?

- **Not accepting God’s sovereignty**
- **Competitive spirit**

Magic box

Believers – “...preach Christ out of envy and rivalry.” (Phil 1:15)

- **Materialistic value system**

Michael Sandel “What money can’t buy.”

“Whoever loves money **never has enough...**” (Eccl 5:10)

Tenth - continued

“You shall not covet.”

How we can overcome?

- Regarding materials, be content and be thankful to God.
- Regarding people, be content with deep love and respect in Christ.
- **Put off and put on.**

“...content in any and every situation... I can do all this through him who gives me strength.” (Phil 4:12-13)

Conclusion

- **The ten commandments reveal God's character and his heart and vision for his people.**
- **The commandments lead us to Jesus Christ.**
- **Questions?**

The Ten Commandments



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