

Lesson 3: The 10 Commandments

Central Point: God's Law Requires Perfection

The Decalogue (Greek, "10 sayings") given to Moses at Mt. Sinai was a moral code of 10 commandments written on two tables of stone. In Hebrew the name is "Ten Commandments" (Ex. 34:28; Dt. 4:13; 10:4). It is also called "the moral law," "the two tablets of the testimony" (Ex. 34:29), "the tablets of the covenant" (Dt. 9:9), and "His covenant" (Dt. 4:13). In the New Cov. it is called "the commandments", (Mt. 19:17; Ro. 13:9) and "the Law" (1 Tim. 1:7-10).

- Commonly supposed: 1st four commandments written on one tablet, six on the other
- The first tablet set forth the duties of God's people to a holy God
- The second tablet asserted the ethical duties of a man to his neighbor
- The ten great words; the Law is perfect- Psalm 19:7-11- ten considered perfect of #'s

1. "You shall have no other gods before Me" (Exodus 20:3)

Since God's character forms the basis of the covenant with His people. He demands absolute loyalty. The Scriptures state that God is a jealous God - Deuteronomy 4:23-24; Isaiah 42:8.

2. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image" (Exodus 20:4)

The Israelites made a golden calf to worship even as the Lord gave the laws to Moses. God has never been a tangible, visible Being (Dt. 4:12), but always a Spirit (John 4:24; Heb. 11:6)- faith.

3. "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain" (Exodus 20:7)

God's name and His character are inseparable. Using His holy name lightly in a vain, empty manner is insulting and degrading- Isaiah 29:13. So many use the Lord's name in vain today.

4. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8)

Sabbath means "rest," but God intended for this day to stand for more than an absence of work. It was to be a day of worship, a day to focus on Him- are we too busy in life for Him?

5. "Honor your father & your mother, that your days may be long upon the land" (Ex. 20:12)

God established parents as authority figures; children get their first impressions about God from them and learn submission and authority principles. A rebellious nature will not live long.

6. "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13)

Commandments six through nine pertain to our relationships with one another. The breakdown of these guidelines has plunged many civilizations into decay. No one has the right to take the life from another with evil intent- Genesis 9:5-6! Inside & outside the womb.

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

Refers to being sexually involved with a married person; traditionally used to prohibit all sexual acts outside of marriage. Adultery is possible only if people are prepared to hurt others, to enjoy themselves at the expense of other people- a very selfish act, there is no love in it.

8. “You shall not steal” (Exodus 20:15)

Stealing involves taking something that does not belong to you; emphasizes getting all you own through lawful channels. So this command has broad implications in regards to theft.

9. “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Exodus 20:16)

Gossip, slander and character assassination of one another. Obviously any form of lying, falsehood, exaggerations or intent to deceive is sin- Proverbs 26:18-19; Colossians 3:9.

10. “You shall not covet” (Exodus 20:17)

Jesus elaborated on this commandment by stating, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt. 22:39). The negative & positive work together. You do not harm people you care about.

- **Question:** “Are these 10 commandments still relevant for us today in this age?”
- The law has not been abolished, just fulfilled through the law of the New Covenant
- **Please Read:** **Romans 13:8-10; John 13:34** *The law of love fulfills the Old Covenant law*
- The Law has an abiding significance, representing God’s character that is unchangeable
- So what did Jesus say about the law? **Please Read:** **Matthew 5:17-20**
- **Please Read:** Mt. 5:21-48 *Jesus elevates it from the physical act to the intent of the heart*

The Purpose of the Law

- As we mentioned already, the law reveals God’s holy character for us to emulate
- **Please Read:** **Romans chapter 7**
- The law identified what sin was, which unfortunately gave it power- 1 Cor. 15:56
- The problem is the sinful nature we all acquired when we first sinned
- **Please Read:** **Gal. 6:19-29** The law did not impart life; lead us to Christ

Romans 3:20, “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.”

- No one is justified by observing the law or any moral code of ethics for that matter
- **Please Read:** **Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8-10**
- John 3:3, Jesus made it very clear that a person must be born again to get to heaven
- All the Old Testament saints were in Abraham’s bosom when they died- Luke 16:19-31
- Only through Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection were they set free- Eph. 4:7-10