

Being A Christian Class 4

Behaving Christianly *The 10 Commandments*

Review: *The Lord's Prayer reveals that prayer is relational in nature and it provides a pattern for all our prayers.*

The 10 Commandments: *God's Law*

The Ten Commandments represent God's first specific verbal revelation of his nature to his people. Though God spoke all the laws in the Pentateuch (Genesis – Deuteronomy) to Moses, the Commandments are the only ones written by the finger of God (Exodus 31:18, 34:1, 28).

1. During what events of the Story of Salvation do we find the 10 Commandments being given (Exodus 19:4-6)?

2. From Exodus 19 – Numbers 5 God gives Israel various types of laws to guide their common life as a nation. The moral law revealing their duty to God and neighbor; the ceremonial law dealing with religious practice; and the political law dealing with the governing of the nation. What type of law are the 10 Commandments? Are they completely unique? (Rom. 2:14-15)

3. What would a society look like if everyone were able to completely fulfill the 10 Commandments? Why hasn't this worked out yet, and what does this tell us about their function in our lives today? (Rom. 3:19-20; Matt. 5:17-18).

4. What is the difference between God's Law and the Gospel? (John 3:16, Rom. 1:16, 10:4; Gal. 3:13; Col. 1:13-14)

The Decalogue: Traditional

God spake these words, and said:

1. I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

2. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

3. Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

4. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

5. Honor thy father and thy mother.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

6. Thou shalt do no murder.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

8. Thou shalt not steal.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

9. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and incline our hearts to keep this law.*

10. Thou shalt not covet.

*Lord have mercy upon us,
and write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.*

1st Commandment

- What “good news” is declared in the first commandment?
- What “other gods” are present in our current context?
- What is our duty to God in the 1st Commandment (Acts 4:12)?

2nd Commandment

- What are some idols we often serve in our culture? It maybe helpful to think of idols as good things that our hearts make into ultimate things, thereby taking God’s place within our heart.
- What is our duty to God in the 2nd Commandment (Heb. 1:1-3)?

3rd Commandment

- In what ways do people misuse God’s name?
- What is our duty to God in the 3rd Commandment (Matt. 6:9; Philippians 2:9-11)?

4th Commandment

- How was the Sabbath to reflect God’s work in creation?
- What is our duty to God in the 4th Commandment (Matt. 11:28-30; Heb. 10:19-25)?

5th Commandment

- What does God forbid of us in the 5th Commandment?
- What is our duty to our neighbor in the 5th Commandment (Col. 3:20; Titus 3:1)?

6th Commandment

- What does God forbid of us in the 6th Commandment?
- What is our duty to our neighbor in the 6th Commandment (Rom. 12:20; Eph. 4:32)?

7th Commandment

- What does God forbid of us in the 7th Commandment?
- What is our duty to our neighbor in the 7th Commandment (1 Cor. 6:18-20; Phil. 4:8)?

8th Commandment

- What does God forbid of us in the 8th Commandment?
- What is our duty to our neighbor in the 8th Commandment (Phil. 2:4; 1 John 3:17)?

9th Commandment

- What does God forbid of us in the 9th Commandment?
- What is our duty to our neighbor in the 9th Commandment (Pr. 31:8-9; 1 Cor. 13:7)?

10th Commandment

- What does God forbid of us in the 10th Commandment?
- What is our duty to our neighbor in the 10th Commandment (Phil. 4:11; Heb. 13:5)?

Misplaced Dependency:***Idolizing the Law***

We depend upon the law to grant us provision, protection, security, and comfort. We place hope in the law instead of our Heavenly Father.

- False Belief = If I follow the rules, then life will go well, I will be okay
- Results in becoming a slave to the law

Mistaken Expectations:***Capsizing the Law***

We expect the law to secure for us a righteousness that can stand before God, which only the Gospel gives.

- Results in functional legalism
- Loses both the Law and the Gospel

Misunderstood Diagnosis:***Trivializing the Law***

We look to the Law to be the Holy Spirit.

- Law is a mirror not a makeover
- Law is an X-ray not a physician
- Law is a map not a vehicle

Law's true power = leads us to Christ & dependence upon Holy Spirit

The Law is good because:

- *shows us how our faith should express itself*
- *shows us what Jesus is like*
- *reveals the character of God*
- *brings sanity, wisdom, and direction*
- *drives us to Christ and his Spirit*
- *restrains wickedness*
- *convicts of sin*
- *is written on our heart*
- *is part of love*

Telltale Signs of Bondage to the Law:

- The *Pressure* is felt
- A sense of *Unlimited Obligation* that can never be met
- *Insecurity* around not measuring up
- *Loss of passion and joy*

Telltale Signs of Functional Legalism:

- Looking for credit for our good deeds
- Defensiveness
- Comparing yourself to others
- Reputation fixation

Problems with Trivializing the Law:

1. We give the law a power it was never meant to have.
False: Law keeping = transformation
2. We have a suspect motive for relying on the law to change us.
We play HS, results in sin management.
3. We forget the law's real target.
The Heart = target, not behavior
4. We underestimate the sinful nature.
Law limited by flesh to bring real change

The Law is powerless because it can't:

- *maintain our relationship w/ God & others*
- *give us righteousness*
- *justify those who break it*
- *free us from bondage, guilt, & corruption*
- *give us power*
- *give us life*
- *provide us with a substitute*
- *give us the gift of the Spirit*
- *cleanse our conscience*

Old Testament Reading (Ten Commandments—Exodus 20:1-17)

1. YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.

Lord, I detach myself from all things outside of you that compete for my ultimate affection.

2. YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FOR YOURSELF AN IDOL

[i.e., another image for God].

Help me not to shape you according to my own fears and ideas, but to trust and follow you, like Abraham, into the unknown.

3. YOU SHALL NOT MISUSE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD.

Enable me to represent you well in every conversation and interaction.

4. REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY BY KEEPING IT HOLY.

Prepare me that I may rest from all my works each day and set apart a day to put away all earthly anxieties to delight in you.

5. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.

Help me to honor my parents appropriately. May I remember that the same way I treat them, I may be treated some day.

6. YOU SHALL NOT MURDER.

May my interactions today with others, and my words, bring life and not death, edify and not tear down.

7. YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

Free me to live purely, rightly, and respectfully to myself and others.

8. YOU SHALL NOT STEAL.

Help me not to be greedy but to share joyfully with others.

9. YOU SHALL NOT GIVE FALSE WITNESS.

Lord, help me to walk in the truth and to avoid false assumptions about other people and situations—not only in my own mind, but in my conversation with others.

10. YOU SHALL NOT COVET.

May I love you above all else because "Your love is better than life."

Week 4 Review Behaving Christianly: *The 10 Commandments*

- The 10 Commandments express God's character and reveal to us our duty to Him and our neighbor
- God's Law was given after the Israelites had graciously been delivered from bondage in Egypt, yet while Moses was atop Mt. Sinai they chose to reject God in favor of the golden calf (Exodus 13:17-32:35).
- The 10 Commandments represent the moral law that is binding upon all people, whereas the ceremonial and political laws given to Israel are not binding upon us.
- Though there are some unique aspects to the 10 Commandments, the moral law is written on the hearts of all people and Jesus said that He came to fulfill the law, not abolish it (Rom. 2:14-15; Matt. 5:17-18).
- Utopia would result if a society were able to completely fulfill the 10 Commandments, yet as a result of sin in the world this shall never be the case.
- God's Law has three functions 1) restrains evil in the world (a curb) 2) reveals our sin and need for Jesus (a mirror) 3) shows what a God-pleasing life looks like (a guide).
- Since all of Scripture is about Jesus and His purpose to give abundant life to those who trust in Him, the Law's primary function is as a mirror (Rom. 3:19-20).
- Jesus not only fulfilled the Law by obeying it, He also transformed it by revealing that the deeper issue is our hearts rather than our external behavior (Matt. 5:22,28; 15:17-19).
- The Law tells what humanity is to "do", whereas the Gospel tells what God has already "done" in Jesus. We are free to live from Jesus' "it is finished," rather than the Law's accusations of what still has to be done.
- All other religions have law as the primary means of relating to God, whereas Christianity has the Gospel of grace at its center. We relate to God through what He has graciously done in Jesus rather than what we do.
- The Holy Spirit empowers us to know, love, and do the Law, though never perfectly in this life.
- The 10 Commandments are broken down into 2 Tables: 1-4 have to do with how we are to relate to God and 5-10 how we relate to our neighbor.
- The 1st Table is most important as it calls us to be always mindful as to where our heart is in relation to God i.e. are we trusting and depending upon God alone or are we chasing after something else to bring us peace, joy, and love? Are we rejoicing in Christ's saving name and finding rest in His finished work as we worship in community?
- The 10 Commandments begin with the Good News that God has chosen us for Himself and that He is our gracious deliverer, thus He requires exclusive allegiance.
- All our external sins are rooted in a heart of unbelief. In our hearts we do not believe that God will care for us so we chase after peace, joy, and love in things other than God. The Bible refers to this as idolatry, when we make good things into ultimate things.
- Martin Luther said that unless we perfectly keep the first 2 Commandments, we inevitably break all the others. If we do not murder someone out of fear of the consequences rather than out of love for God, we are guilty of breaking it.
- The Commandments do not only discourage certain behaviors, they also point us in the direction of the loving behaviors we are encouraged to take.
- Honoring our parents also points us in the direction of showing respect to all those in authority over us.
- We are to seek to meet the physical needs of others as well as to offer forgiveness to those that have harmed us, rather than harboring grudges and ending others' lives.
- We are to seek to align our thoughts with God's will, so that we express ourselves sexually only within the covenant of marriage.
- We are to seek to ensure that others basic needs are met, rather than steal from them.
- We are to seek to protect people's characters and work that all have equal access to justice, rather than speaking falsely about them.
- We are to seek to be content in all things, acknowledging that God has provided for our most essential needs, rather than coveting what we do not have.

Theological Terms in Simple Language

God's Law: it is the written and revealed will of God. It shows us God's character and points us to the best way to live. Jesus summarized the law as love of God and neighbor. The law is like a map. It can show what a place is like and how to get there. But it is not the vehicle that can take you there; that's the Holy Spirit's role.

Heart: In the Bible the heart refers to core of a person (i.e. root, center). It encompasses the mind as well as the emotions. The heart is active in causing and shaping behavior.

Idolatry: when something other than God takes functional lordship of the heart. Thus idols are like spiritual addictions where good things from God's creation take the place of God within the heart. Idolatry then is the deeper and often hidden sin that is the wellspring of all surface sins. At its core idolatry is about worship and a failure to trust God.

Sabbath: is one of God's gifts to humanity. It is a weekly reminder that God is in charge. Sabbath also is the invitation to rest and enjoy the good things of God within His creation i.e. worship, family, friends, nature, food, music, art, leisure, sports, etc. It is also a reminder that we're to rest in God each day.

Covet: is to want something that you do not have. This is a constant temptation since advertising is designed to cause us to covet. Its danger is that it causes us to feel discontent with what God has provided.

Grace vs. Karma

Bono: I really believe we've moved out of the realm of Karma into one of Grace.

Assayas: Well, that doesn't make it clearer for me.

Bono: You see, at the center of all religions is the idea of Karma. You know, what you put out comes back to you: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, or in physics; in physical laws every action is met by an equal or an opposite one. It's clear to me that Karma is at the very heart of the universe. I'm absolutely sure of it. And yet, along comes this idea called Grace to upend all that "as you reap, so you will sow" stuff. Grace defies reason and logic. Love interrupts, if you like, the consequences of your actions, which in my case is very good news indeed, because I've done a lot of stupid stuff.

Assayas: I'd be interested to hear that.

Bono: That's between me and God. But I'd be in big trouble if Karma was going to finally be my judge. I'd be in deep s---. It doesn't excuse my mistakes, but I'm holding out for Grace. I'm holding out that Jesus took my sins onto the Cross, because I know who I am, and I hope I don't have to depend on my own religiosity.