

The Ten Commandments Bible Study

It can be tempting for Christians to think that the ten commandments are not significant to the Christian life. “We live by grace through faith! What do the ten commandments have to do with us?” As we will see in the course of this study, they have quite a bit to do with us. Yes, the Christian is not saved by their works, but their faith will be seen by the works that they do (James 2:22). Jesus did not come to abolish the Law; He came to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17). This does not mean that the Christian lives disconnected from the Law. Kevin DeYoung says, “Salvation is not the reward for obedience; salvation is the reason for obedience. Jesus does not say, ‘If you obey my commandments, I will love you.’ Instead, he first washes the feet of the disciples and then says, ‘If you love me, you will keep my commandments.’ All of our doing is only because of what he has first done for us.” What we see throughout the entirety of Scripture is that the people of God should live differently than the world. At no point in the New Testament will you see any of the ten commandments cast to the side. Instead, these commandments are reinforced throughout the entire Bible (as we will see in this study). The purpose of this study is more than just seeing that the ten commandments have relevance for your life. The purpose of this study is simply this: How can I live more like Jesus in a world that lives only for itself? The ten commandments won’t make you a Christian, but they will help the Christian be more Christ-like. As I was creating this study, I was also preparing a class on how to pray. One of the tips that I recommended (courtesy of Martin Luther) was using the ten commandments as a guide to shape your prayers. At the end of each devotional, instead of having discussion questions, there will be a prayer based on the Scripture for that day. Feel free to pray that at the end of your quiet time or feel free to use it as a guide to influence your prayers for the day. In this study, I will try to include the entire Scripture reference for each day but there will be some days where the passage is too long to fit onto a page so make sure that you have a Bible with you! I pray that these next 30 days with the ten commandments will be a tool that brings you closer to the Savior!

-Pastor Brady Bassett

Day 1- Exodus 20:1-2

“Then 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 slavery.’”

Devotional

Who has the right to give a law and demand obedience to that law? What gives someone the right to demand something from someone else? If you look at the political climate of the United States today, you are probably hearing this question asked quite a bit. What is lawful and what is not? Who gets to 1. Make the law and 2. Define what is meant in the law? Looking at the news today, it does not seem that man will find the answer to that question for quite some time. However, the answer is readily available in Scripture, whether man wants to accept that answer or not. The Giver of the Law is the Creator of the Universe. The Creator has every right over the Creation to demand obedience to the Law that is given. In Exodus 20:1-2, we see God Almighty, the Lord, is the One that gives the law and the One who saves. The Law was not created by man; it was graciously given by God. When God speaks, man is to listen. The problem is that they don't. The entirety of the human life would be improved if mankind truly followed the ten commandments. But when God speaks, sinners cover their ears. Why did God give the Law? Was it to crush us under it or was it to raise us up? No, God gave the Law so that life would be lived to the fullest. Not to the fullest as fallen mankind would describe it but lived to the fullest as the way that the Creator of life would define it. A Christian's obedience to God and the Law will make the Christian more like Christ and both now and in eternity, that will only increase the joy in their lives. Who has the right to say what mankind can and cannot do? The One that created them and the only One that can save them.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I thank you that you are a God who speaks. When you speak, may I listen with a clean heart. Only you can make my heart clean and only you can save my soul. You are the Lord my God, and I will praise you.

Day 2- Exodus 20:3 (Commandment 1)

“You shall have no other gods before Me.”

Devotional

Humans are constantly looking for something or someone to worship. Everyone has something in their life that they feel that they cannot live without. Maybe it is a spouse, or a child, or a job. It may not look like worship, but they do in fact worship it. Maybe their problem is the worship of self. There are no shortages of options for when it comes to worship. However, these options make horrible gods. These gods cannot save, they do not address the greatest problem in our lives, and when these gods fail, where or what will we turn to? The first commandment presupposes that God alone is God. As we will see tomorrow, there are no gods before Him and there are no gods after Him. God does not give to man His resume as to why He should be considered for the open worship position in their lives. He simply states that He is God and that is reason enough. This is the God who created us, sustains us, gives us hope and a future. He is the God that loves us beyond what we deserve. He alone is worthy to be praised so why would we look anywhere else? Where is your hope? Where is your joy? Where is your peace? It can only be found in the God of the ten commandments, the God of Scripture, the God of the universe. Tim Keller writes, “If we look to some created thing to give us the meaning, hope, and happiness that only God himself can give, it will eventually fail to deliver and break our hearts.” Stop looking around for something to worship; cling to the God who is there.

Prayer

God, keep me from pursuing idols. There is so much in this world that fights for the center of my heart. On my own, I am powerless to not pursue them. I pray that you would keep my eyes and my heart entirely on you. May Jesus Christ be the center of my life. My heart will be restless if it does not find rest in you.

Day 3- Isaiah 44:6-8 (Commandment 1)

“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me. ‘Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it; Yes, let him recount it to Me in order, From the time that I established the ancient nation. And let them declare to them the things that are coming and the events that are going to take place. ‘Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any other Rock? I know of none.’”

Devotional

Isaiah 40-45 is a masterclass on the first commandment. Reading through those chapters, it is clear that God alone is God over all things. Who is like the Lord our God? No one! There is no God but God alone. I think that Christians can often forget just who it is that they worship. We don't deny that God is there, but we don't live like He is the God that created all things with just a word and destroyed death on the cross. Sometimes we need a Job moment. If you are familiar with the story of Job, you might know what I'm talking about. Job was a faithful follower of the Lord who lost everything. Instead of turning his back and heart on God, he remained faithful but wanted God to give him an answer as to why these awful things were allowed to happen to him. At the end of the book of Job (Job 38-41), God speaks to Job out of a whirlwind but instead of directly answering Job's question, God does something else. He proclaims His excellencies. Instead of being taken to trial by Job, God puts Job on the stand and questions him. He asks Job questions like, “Were you there when I laid the foundations of the earth? Have you understood the expanse of the earth? Can you send out the lightning? Will you condemn Me that you may be justified?” God is saying, “Job, you really don't get it. This whole world bends to My will.” And with this answer, Job is satisfied. Are you? He is the first and He is the last. Besides Him, there is no god.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, who is like you? There is no one! May I be a faithful witness to the God who has created all things. Keep me from false idols that are vying for my attention. You alone are God!

Day 4- Acts 14:12-17 (Commandment 1)

“But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out and saying, ‘Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them.’”

Devotional

When we read the story of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra and how the locals attempted to worship them, we may think of it as evidence that the first century was filled with people easily caught up in the idea of the supernatural. Surely, a 21st century human would not place deity on another human being! The first century was a time where people were more prone to the supernatural and the sacred and what we see happening in Lystra is something that would be unheard of today! Not exactly. We make gods out of practically anything and anyone. While man might not bow on their knees, they do exalt in their heart. R.C. Sproul makes this connection: “We do have a tendency to exalt our great men and women to the status that belongs to God alone. The tendency is so deeply rooted in our souls that we have to be on guard against it in every circumstance. Only once did the living God become incarnate. This is no myth but sober history. The Son of God lived on earth under the law of God, and He was delivered up and crucified.” God gives great gifts to mankind. God gives spouses, children, family, friends, and other great gifts but they all make horrible gods. Don’t let a gift from God become the object of your love and devotion. It is not worthy of all praise, honor and glory.

Prayer

Lord thank you for the people that you have put in my life. You are the giver of great gifts that I do not deserve. May I not worship the gift, but may my heart be devoted totally to the Giver. Keep my eyes on you alone, Lord Jesus!

Day 5- Exodus 20:4-6 (Commandment 2)

“You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.”

Devotional

In the first two commandments, we see who we must worship and how he desires to be worshipped. God wants us to worship him. That should be clear to us so far. What may not be as clear is how we are to worship him. If we say that we love and honor God but do not worship him in the way that he commands to be worshipped, we cannot truly claim to love him. Think of it in this way: if someone has a nut allergy and says, “I don’t want Peanut M&M’s, I can’t have peanuts, don’t give it to me,” does it make sense to say, “I think these Peanut M&M’s are what you would want so here you go,” is that person honoring the individual with the allergy? Absolutely not! We are totally disregarding the desire of the person even if we are claiming to be acknowledging the person. As the beforementioned individual with a nut allergy, if I say that I can’t have anything with peanuts and someone has that information and yet still offers me something with peanuts, I don’t feel loved or valued by that person. Now this isn’t a perfect illustration, but I hope it captures the point. God has told us how he wants to be worshipped. God is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth (John 4:24). Philip Graham Ryken writes, “God has the right to tell us how he wants to be worshiped, and he has commanded us not to spurn his love by turning him into an idol.” When man attempts to turn God into an idol, no matter what the intention might be, the idol will never truly represent the fullness of God’s nature. There will always be the risk of false worship. This is seen all throughout the Bible, one of the most famous examples involving a certain golden calf. God tells us how we must worship Him and if visual aids are necessary to do that, can we really say that we are worshipping in spirit and in truth?

Prayer

Lord, help me to better understand how you desire to be worshipped. Create in me a clean heart that seeks to worship you as you desire to be worshipped. You are worthy to be praised, and I desire to worship you as you command to be worshipped.

Day 6- Romans 1:18-25 (Commandment 2)

“For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them.”

Devotional

Romans 1 may just be one of the most heart-wrenching chapters in the entire Bible. A quick reading of that chapter should make it clear that no single person can claim ignorance when it comes to God. Man knows the God that is there. To claim that God is not there is to lie to yourself. Cornelius Van Til has a famous illustration that captures Romans 1 and the state of mankind well. Van Til says that man is like a little child that is sitting in his father's lap while trying to slap his father's face. What Van Til is saying is that the little child is totally reliant on the lap of his father but hates and rejects the presence of the father. Man is dependent upon God and God's creation, but Romans 1 shows us that we “slap his face” and deny that he is there. We know that God is there, but we live as if he does not exist. God makes himself known. We see by the grandness of creation that God is Creator. We see the image of God in those that are made in God's image. The issue is that man would much rather embrace their own image than the God who has made them in his image. Do you see how idolatry can be so dangerous? When we make something as an image of God, we are really modeling it after ourselves. We want the authority, power, and recognition. Idols will always fall short of the glory and greatness of God. Man can never come close to that. If God is revealed in Scripture and everything that we need to know and worship him is revealed in Scripture, what logical reason do we have for idols? One does not exist. You don't need idols, you don't need images, you need not create one, you only need Christ who himself is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15).

Prayer

Lord, you have been clearly seen by the works of your hands. To deny that you are there is to deny what is plain to all. My hope is in you alone and may I only long for the day where I see you face to face.

Day 7- Exodus 20:7 (Commandment 3)

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.”

Devotional

The last two commandments have affirmed the holiness and righteousness of God. Everything that we do in life should reflect the holiness of God. All the actions that we take as believers should be representative of the God that has saved us. Henry Scougal wrote a book in 1677 title, *The Life of God in the Soul of Man*, and this is a near perfect representation of what happens when we become Christians. The Holy Spirit comes and dwells in our hearts and our actions should reflect that. Not only should the things that we do be holy and pleasing to the Lord; the things that we say should be holy and pleasing to the Lord. That is what the third commandment is commanding us to do. How do you talk about the Lord? Far too often people think of God as “the old man upstairs” or speak of Him in a less than exalting way. The third commandment is given so that we would not bring dishonor upon the name or person of God. Is the way that we speak about God glorifying to Him? Do our lips glorify God, or do they curse Him? The third commandment could be summarized as this: How greatly do we value the Lord our God? The higher the value, the higher we will talk of Him. As Christians, we are bearing the name of the Lord and everything we say and do will inevitably reflect upon Him. Are we giving glory or are we bring shame? It is important to remember that this commandment calls the people of God to proclaim the name and nature of God. Staying silent does not amount to observing the third commandment. Every day, believers are called to make the name of God known and proclaim the excellencies of our Savior. The third commandment also goes beyond commanding us to not swear. We can say nothing bad but contribute nothing good. To follow the third commandment, our words must be as Paul instructs in Ephesians 4:29: “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.”

Prayer

Lord let both my actions and words properly represent who you are. Let everything that I say this day be a testimony to the God of my redemption. You are holy and righteous forever and ever, amen.

Day 8- Matthew 5:33-37 (Commandment 3)

“Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.’ “But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. “Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. “But let your statement be, ‘Yes, yes’ or ‘No, no’; anything beyond these is of evil.”

Devotional

When I was a kid, I thought that I had a surefire way to help my beloved Baltimore Orioles win a World Series. Of course, if you look at their record for the past 30 or so years, maybe I should have just pushed for a winning record but I was young so you can’t blame me for aiming for the stars. I was just starting to really begin reading the Bible and I thought that I could strike a deal with God. On the surface, the deal was pretty straightforward: I would read my Bible every single day if the Orioles would win every game for the rest of the season and win the World Series. As you can tell with a quick Google search, that didn’t happen. My beloved O’s have not won a World Series in 43 years. Is it my fault for not going through with my promise of reading my Bible every day as a 10-year-old? I’m assuming it isn’t. Sometimes bad teams are just bad. What’s the moral of this story? Connected to the third commandment is the command that we would take our vows, oaths, and promises seriously. In Matthew 5, Jesus tells us that when it comes to the oaths that we make, we should let our yes be yes and our no be no. There are times in our lives where we will be under oath. Jesus does not command us to never take an oath. The command comes from the fact that if all the earth is the Lord’s, we cannot escape God’s name and involvement. John Frame puts it like this, “Jesus teaches here (and in Matt. 23:16-22) that to swear by anything in creation is to swear by God, for God’s name dwells in all creation.” Everything that we say and everything that we do should be done with the knowledge that is happening with God’s direct involvement.

Prayer

Lord, help my yes to be yes and my no to be no. May I pursue truth in all that I say and all that I do. Heaven is your throne, and the earth is your footstool. No matter where I go, I cannot escape your presence. Let every promise that I make be faithful to you.

Day 9- James 5:12 (Commandment 3)

“But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your yes is to be yes, and your no, no, so that you may not fall under judgement.”

Devotional

You may have read this verse and thought, “Wait a minute, that sounds familiar! Didn’t we read this yesterday?” Yes and no. James is obviously referencing what Christ said in Matthew 5:33-37 but we also see a reference to judgement that was not quite as obvious in Matthew 5. Is James teaching that a Christian can lose their salvation and fall under the eternal judgement of God if they break a promise or an oath? No, James is not teaching that a Christian can lose their salvation. Paul says in Romans 8:1 that there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ. In John 8:36, Jesus says that if the Son sets you free, you are free indeed. He doesn’t say that if one has been set free by the Son that there is a chance the Son may change His mind later and let them go again. No, the salvation of the Christian is a certainty. What James is talking about is that if we find ourselves in persistent sin, we may never have been saved to begin with. As John says in 1 John 1:6-8, “If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.” That is what James is referencing in James 5:12. If we claim to be a follower of Jesus, everything that we say and do should properly represent Jesus. If we claim to be a Christian but our lives look nothing like Him and if our words sound nothing like Him, we need to stop and seriously reflect on if we have a saving relationship with Christ. If you find yourself breaking promises left and right but claim to be a Christian, stop for a moment and ask if that is something that a Christian should be doing. Could you imagine Jesus making and breaking oaths and promises? What security in salvation could we possibly have if Jesus operated in that way? None at all! Paul says in 2 Corinthians 1:20, “For all the promises of God find their Yes in him.” Christ’s yes is yes, and His no is no. What about you?

Prayer

Lord search my heart and reveal to me any hidden or unhidden sin that is keeping me from fully glorifying you and enjoying you forever.

Day 10- Exodus 20:8-11 (Commandment 4)

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. “Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. “For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.”

Devotional

In these first four commandments that we have gone through, we see what I call the law of the vertical. The first four commandments have to do with how we relate to, obey, and serve the Lord. In the next six commandments, we have the law of the horizontal and that is the law by which we live with our fellow man. As we look at this fourth commandment, I think that you will find that as Christians, it may be tempting to think that this is the easiest of the first four commandments but out of the first four commandments, this is the one that we appear to break the most. This is the commandment that God has passed to us that we are to remember the sabbath day and keep it holy. This is our commandment to have a day of rest. I think that you are going to find that the way that you rest is going to greatly impact the way that you work. If you don't rest well, you won't work well, or at least as well as you could. Both work and rest are good things because they are a God thing. God works one sees in the creation narrative, God also rested. Work is not a bad thing. Adam worked in the garden prior to the fall. We are made for work, but we are also made for rest. If we live a life with the mentality that it can be all work and no rest, we are failing to honor the God who created us. You are human and you need to rest. I know that it can be hard to stop but you and those around you will be better off if you take time to rest. But don't just take a day for rest and ignore the rest of this commandment. The Sabbath was given as a day of rest, and it was also given as a day of worship. Sunday is not an excuse to sleep in. You were made to praise, and you were made to be in a community of people that worship also. It isn't always easy, but it is always necessary.

Prayer

Lord, give me the peace of mind to rest. If you were to stop working, everything would fall apart. I do not have that power. You are controlling all things and because I trust that you are good, I can have the peace of mind to rest and to worship.

Day 11- Mark 3:1-6 (Commandment 4)

“They were watching Him to see if He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. He said to the man with the withered hand, “Get up and come forward!” And He said to them, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save a life or to kill?” But they kept silent.”

Devotional

Who has the right to define what is lawful on the Sabbath? Only the Creator and Lord of the Sabbath. At the end of Mark 2 and going into Mark 3, we see Jesus identified as the Lord of the Sabbath. In one of my favorite moments in Mark’s Gospel, we see Jesus condemning the unlawful additions that the Jewish people had added to the fourth commandment. Some of these additions were ridiculous. The Jews were guilty of adding “laws” to the Sabbath commandment. Some of these additions included that it was unlawful for a Jew to kindle a fire on the Sabbath or separate two threads on the Sabbath because it was considered work. The Jews even taught that unless an injury was life threatening, medical attention could not be sought on the Sabbath. This is the complaint that we find in Mark 3. A man with a withered hand has come to Jesus for healing (an injury that is not fatal) and the Pharisees are waiting to see if Jesus will “break” the Sabbath to heal him. Jesus asks them a question that most of us would probably say is a simple question: Is it lawful to do good or to do bad on the Sabbath? Is it lawful to save a life or to kill? But notice that the Pharisees don’t say anything. They can’t answer the question. The reason that they can’t is because they are unable to answer both statements. If they say that it is against the law to do bad and to kill, they have to say that it is lawful to do good and save lives. They couldn’t answer because their own intentions were to do harm and kill on the Sabbath (Mark 3:2; 6). Jesus called them to intentional compassion, but their hardened hearts would not allow them to. May our hearts not be so hard that we refuse to show compassion to those that God has created in His image. May we not be silent when it comes to loving God and loving neighbor.

Prayer

Jesus may I be challenged to make an intentional effort to show compassion to those around me. I have done nothing to deserve your love or your mercy, but you have freely given it. May I not lose sight of the cost of my redemption and may all that I do be a response to what you have already done on my behalf.

Day 12- Hebrews 4:1-11 (Commandment 4)

“So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His. Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through *following* the same example of disobedience.”

Devotional

It should not take us long to look at this world and recognize that something is not quite right. Deep down, I believe that we all want to rest but no matter how many days off you get, you still feel restless. Something just does not feel right. It feels as if we aren't really home yet. Some days feel like a great vacation but even the greatest vacations leave the traveler longing for home. The Christian is the one that is longing for a far country, where their true home lies. Not only does the Christian long for home, the Christian longs for true rest. Where does this rest come from? It only comes from Jesus Christ. The author of Hebrews reminds the reader of the Sabbath rest that waits for the people of God. Yes, the people of God must traverse through this life and go through countless days of hard and sometimes discouraging work but there is a purpose. There is an eternal rest waiting for believers where the fullness of the Sabbath day will be experienced. We will finally be able to experience perfect Sabbath rest in the presence of God. I don't think that the purpose of being in God's presence in Heaven will be to put our feet up. Yes, we will finally experience perfect rest, but we will also work. We will rest from our labor here on earth, but we will not be floating on a cloud for eternity. We will serve and work, but the toil of labor will finally be over. This may be hard for us to fully understand. I certainly don't understand how perfect rest and perfect work will come together because we have never experienced it yet. In whatever way the believer serves the Lord in heaven, we know this: It will be a fulfillment unlike anything that we have ever felt in this life. It will be a joyful giving that will never cease in joy and will never contribute to tears or pain. In eternity, work and rest will be perfected for all believers in Christ Jesus. What a great motivation for what we do for Him now!

Prayer

Lord Jesus, we know that you and your Father are always working. May we learn to rest for your glory and to work for your glory. Help us to keep our eyes on the Sabbath rest that is to come.

Day 13- Exodus 20:12 (Commandment 5)

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.”

Devotional

As mentioned back on Day 10, the first four commandments could be called the Law of the Vertical because of how they directly connect to God and man. In the next six commandments, we see the Law of the Horizontal, how we relate to those that are made in God's image. When Jesus says that the greatest commandments are to love God and to love neighbor, he is summarizing the entirety of the commandments. Why start with the command to honor our father and mother? It comes down to immediacy. The first human contact that you have outside of yourself is your parents. You don't exist without your parents. You most likely live for years under the direction of your parents. To say that we are to honor our mother and father does not limit showing honor to everyone else. This commandment does not say that if we simply show respect to our parents that we can ignore the other authoritative people that come into our lives (bosses, politicians, coaches, etc.). What the Lord is saying in this commandment is that if we aren't willing to honor our parents, there is a high likelihood that we won't honor others in authority over us. St. Augustine puts it like this: “It's your parents you see when you first open your eyes, and it is their friendship that lays down the first strands of this life. If anyone fails to honor his parents, is there anyone he will spare?” It is crucial for children to respect and honor their parents. How often can we look at the fall of society today and see moments where children fail to honor their parents. How often can we look at the same results and see parents that fail to parent their children? Parents, the fact that you are a parent means that God has entrusted you with a life that you are to shape and mold. You are to be the greatest spiritual influence in the lives of your children. Don't waste this time. Show your children that you are someone that is worth honoring by pointing them always to God, our Heavenly Father.

Prayer

Lord, may I honor my parents well. Thank you that you have given them to me. I pray that you would work in their lives in powerful ways so that their task of leading becomes easier. Empower them to lead with mercy and Christ-centered devotion. Help my heart when honoring seems difficult.

Day 14- Luke 2:41-52 (Commandment 5)

“And He said to them, “Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s *house*?” But they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all *these* things in her heart. And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.”

Devotional

Who truly knows what it means to honor His father and mother better than the Lord Jesus? Jesus Christ is the only person to have ever perfectly obeyed not just the fifth commandment but every commandment. In [Luke 2:51](#), we see that Jesus, though fully God, submitted to Mary and Joseph. We see throughout His entire life, a perfect honoring of His parents. Even to the end of His life, He loved and honored His mother. We assume that by the time of Christ’s ministry and crucifixion that Joseph had already died and Jesus has taken it upon Himself as the firstborn to take care of His mother. To the very end of His life, He is doing it. In [John 19:26–27](#) we read: “When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son!” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother!” And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home.” To His dying breath, Christ was looking to love and honor His mother. As Jesus hangs on the cross, He looks to take care of His mother. With the time that the Lord has given to you, you need to love and honor your mother. You need to love and honor your father. No, they aren’t perfect. Maybe they have made a huge mistake. Maybe they have harmed you mentally or physically. I understand that there are aspects to honoring your father and mother that will make it difficult to do so. God understands that. The commandments of God aren’t hard; they are absolutely impossible. That is why we need the Holy Spirit. That is why we need help. With whatever time you have with your parents, do what you can to honor and love them like Jesus honored and loved His parents. He is their Lord and their Savior but, in the flesh, He was also their child. Love your parents well and honor them with the time that you have with them.

Prayer

Lord, I know that it is close to impossible to honor my parents in the way that you have called us to. I know that my parents have not been perfect. Let me see my sin first before I point out theirs. Help me to love them completely, despite the flaws that we have as humans.

Day 15- Ephesians 6:1-4 (Commandment 5)

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

Devotional

Out of all the commandments, this is the only one connected to a promise. If parents were honored, the days of the people of Israel would be prolonged. To dishonor one's parents was punishable by death in the Old Testament. If we were to still live by this standard in the 21st century, I'm pretty sure the human race would have gone extinct. When God says that we are to honor our parents so that our days may be long, it is a reminder of eternal life. It is a reminder of our true home in heaven. It is a reminder of God's gracious provision and His giving of rewards for our obedience. If we honor our earthly parents now, there is a reward for our obedience. If we honor our Heavenly Father now, think of how much greater the reward for our obedience will be. As we honor our Heavenly Father now, we can be reminded that our obedience will not go unnoticed and that one day, we will see the fulfillment of the reward for our obedience. Christ was rewarded for His perfect obedience to the Father, and we know that there is a reward for our obedience to our Heavenly Father. We don't work for the reward, but we work out of a desire to honor Him that has saved us. There will always be a greater honor that we can show and there will always be a greater praise that we can give to the Lord. In verse 4, we see an important reminder for fathers. It is your responsibility as a dad to bring your children up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Don't hand off the spiritual responsibility that you have to someone else. God chose you to be the father of that child and not someone else. If God has chosen you for that task, why would you want to leave the spiritual instruction and discipline of your child to someone else? What do you need to work on so that you can better lead your children in the Lord? Fathers, as you lead your home and your children, don't forget that the Lord commands you to be kind. Don't neglect what the Lord has given you.

Prayer

Lord, may we keep eternity in our sight. May we not lose sight of the reward that is secured for us by Jesus. If I am a father, let me lead my family well. Instruct me so that I may instruct them.

Day 16- Exodus 20:13 (Commandment 6)

“You shall not murder”

Devotional

As the number of commandments increases, the words in those commandments have been decreasing. Four words make up the sixth commandment but oh how greatly those four words impact our lives. There is more to this commandment than just a command to not kill someone. What this commandment defines as sin is not just the killing of another human being but every step along the way that leads to murder. I would be willing to bet that practically no one in life just murders someone spontaneously. No one wakes up one morning and wanders into murder. This does not mean that accidents don't happen but there are steps that are taken before murder. There is anger, there is hatred, there is a denial of loving one's neighbor, and a defiance of God that first takes place all before murder happens. In fact, this commandment brings to the forefront just how far we are from truly loving our neighbors as we should. Thomas Watson, the great Puritan divine said that behind the command to not murder is the command that we are to do all the good that we can for the preservation of the lives of others. Is that truly what God is calling us to in this commandment? I believe that it is. God does not call us to “Not hate our neighbor.” He calls us to actively love our neighbor. Behind this commandment is the recognition that man is deserving of honor because he bears the image of God. J.I. Packer writes, “The commandment rests on the principle that human life is holy, first because it is God's gift and second because man bears God's image. Human life is thus the most precious and sacred thing in the world, and to end it, or direct its ending, is God's prerogative alone. We honor God by respecting his image in each other, which means consistently preserving life and furthering each other's welfare in all possible ways.” So, you haven't murdered your neighbor. That's great! We don't have to make a police report! But can you honestly say that you have loved and sought out the greatest good of your neighbor? There is the heart of the sixth commandment.

Prayer

Lord Jesus, help me to love my neighbor. Help me to seek out the greatest good of all people. Please cast away any hatred that I may have in my heart that is preventing me from loving those that you have made in your image.

Day 17- Matthew 5:21-26 (Commandment 6)

“You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not commit murder’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’ “But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, ‘You good-for-nothing,’ shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, ‘You fool,’ shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.”

Devotional

That first statement that Jesus makes we know is true. Those that murder are liable to judgement but the problem with the understanding of that teaching was that the Pharisees and the scribes assumed that you could hate someone as much as you want as long as you didn't kill them. They seemed to teach that it was only those that murdered that would be held accountable for that action. What Jesus does is He brings the matter back to the heart. He reminds us that anger and hate is at the root of all murder. There is hatred of neighbor and there is a hatred of God because like we mentioned in our study of Exodus 20:13, murder is the taking of the life of someone that has been made in the image of God. A.W. Pink said, “But this commandment is not restricted to forbidding the actual crime of murder. It also prohibits all the degrees and causes of murder, such as rash anger and hatred, slanders and revenge, and whatever else may prejudice the safety of our neighbor or tempt us to see him perish when it is in our power to relieve and rescue him.” So where does this leave you? Where do you stand with your neighbor? Where do you stand with your enemies. The Lord says it is not enough for us to just not actively root against those that are around us, we must actively pursue loving those that are around us. Reconciliation is so important to Christ that He says in verses 23 and 24 that if there is something that we have against our brother, it is better for us to leave our offering at the altar and go and be reconciled to our brother. Why is this important? Because we can't truly love God if we love those that He loves. What do you need to do to make things right with your brother? Whatever it is, go to that person and come back together to worship the God who created you both.

Prayer

God, help me to love my neighbor. If there is something that I am holding against them, make me aware of it. I cannot fully love you if I do not love those that you have created.

Day 18- 1 John 3:14-15 (Commandment 6)

“We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

Devotional

Christ is the perfect example of one that loved His neighbors and His enemies. We know this because Paul says in [Romans 5:10](#) “For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.” There is not a single person on this planet that is not guilty of breaking the sixth commandment because we are each responsible for the death of the Son of God! Your sin and my sin is responsible for the death of Christ and because we are murderers of the Son of God, our lives should be required of us. God has every right to put us to death for breaking the sixth commandment but in His mercy, He offers us the life of His Son. Christ lived a perfect life, yet He died the death that we should have. Instead of railing against His enemies, He prayed for them. Have you ever thought about that? While on the cross, suffering the worst pain imaginable, while having the wrath of God poured out against Him, Jesus Christ prayed for His enemies (Luke 23:34). If Jesus can bare the weight of the wrath of God, the weight of the hatred of His enemies, and bear the weight of crucifixion and still love us, then you and I have absolutely no excuse to not love our neighbors and our enemies. The fact that Christ did not judge the world at that very moment is a testimony to His patience and His mercy. You and I have a lot of work to do. If we are going to claim the name of Christ, we need to partake in the acts and mission of Christ. This means loving and praying instead of hating and cursing. This means seeking welfare and not harm. This means striving with all our might to live at peace with those that are around us. Our lives need to be a living sacrifice and testimony to the newness of life that Christ brings to us. There is never a moment in our lives where hate is a viable option. We were purchased out of love and our lives should radiate that love. Is your life a reflection of the love that Christ has given to you? Remember, you can’t claim to have the love of Christ if you are actively hating your neighbor.

Prayer

Jesus thank you for loving me while I was your enemy! Lord help me to love not just with word or tongue, but in deed and in truth.

Day 19- Exodus 20:14 (Commandment 7)

“You shall not commit adultery.”

Devotional

No one places a higher emphasis on marriage than God Himself. As the Creator of male and female, God is also the Creator of the marriage covenant. When God created marriage, He already knew that marriage between a man and a woman would be a visual of God's love for His people. Adultery is not a momentary lapse of reason between a husband and a wife. It is a serious offense that directly insults the perfect love that exists between Christ and the church. Some people when they see the word adultery associate it with cheating on a significant other and that is part of it and a decent way at understanding the seventh commandment. When you look at the Hebrew word that is used for adultery, it is often associated with idolatry and that is why as we will see later on, why God looks at adultery as such a heinous sin and why he equates Israel's unfaithfulness with adultery. God is the creator of marriage, and he puts a huge emphasis on the need for faithful marriage. When we see adultery, we see everything that godly marriage is against. We see betrayal, we see hatred, we see coveting and desiring what isn't ours, we see sexual impurity. Adultery goes against what God has put forth and it is a rejection of His perfect will, and it is a rejection of all that marriage represents. To commit adultery does not just mean cheating on one's spouse or having sex with someone that you are not married to, it is a total rejection and denial of what God has created marriage to be. Take a moment and read Malachi 2:13-16. Here you will see exactly how God feels when the covenant of marriage is broken. The reason that God hates divorce, adultery, and sexual sin is because it is an attack on Himself. If marriage is to represent the relationship between Christ and the Church, just think how disfigured that image would be if Christ was unfaithful to the Church! It is a disgusting image. Marriage is to be taken seriously. It is a divinely appointed covenant that God has brought forth for the good of a man and a woman. We need to be faithful because God Himself is faithful to us.

Prayer

Lord, protect my marriage if I am married. May I not look at others with eyes that were meant solely for my spouse. Protect our hearts as we live and love together.

Day 20- Matthew 5:27-32 (Commandment 7)

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. “If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. “If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell.”

Devotional

Just as Jesus did with the fifth commandment, He does with the seventh commandment. He does not create a new meaning for the seventh commandment; He brings out the fuller meaning of what God already intended when He gave the seventh commandment. Jesus warns us about the dangers of lust. Lust is dangerous because it often forces the sinful thoughts of your mind into sinful action. Jesus wants us to know that the things we think and do in secret will be brought to light. Nothing that you have ever done or have ever thought has happened without an audience. You are always front and center when it comes to God. There is not a thing you have said, done, or thought that has manages to squeak by Him. What we also see in Christ’s words is that lust and adultery is more than just physical action. Sin is not restricted solely to the things that we physically do. Sin is also connected to all that we think. One is not faithful to his spouse if he never touches another woman but is mentally undressing someone that is not his wife. That mindset has not gone unnoticed by the Lord. Sexual sin is serious. All sin is serious. How can we fight against it? By physically removing ourselves from any situation where that sin could master us. Jesus says in these verses that if one hand causes us to sin, it would be better for us to cut it off. Obviously, Jesus is not advocating for self-harm. What Jesus is doing is stressing how greatly we must pursue holiness. Jesus says it does us no good to constantly hang around the sin that seeks to destroy us. The very sin that we cling to will be the very sin that drags sinners to hell. All sin you need to avoid, and you need to run from. I think of Joseph in the book of Genesis who was faced with sexual temptation, and he chose to not just reject sin’s advances but actively fled from it. You shouldn’t just avoid sin; you need to flee from it.

Prayer

Lord, I repent of all my hidden sins. Help me to not just flee from sin, help me to pursue holiness.

Day 21- 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 (Commandment 7)

“Or 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 effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.”

Devotional

After a quick reading of 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (and maybe even the ten commandments), you might be left wondering, “Who can enter the kingdom of God?” Paul’s list in these verses do not cover every possible sin that man can commit but the list gets the point across. Heaven is a place for perfect people. The sexually immoral will not inherit the kingdom of God. I don’t know the heart of every person that will read this study on the ten commandments. You might be married; you might not be. You may have never had a problem with lust or maybe you feel completely buried under the weight of your lusts. Is there hope for you? Well, if you stop at verse 10, you might not think that there is any hope. But praise God that Paul does not stop at verse 10! As Paul goes through this list of sin, he anticipates some boasting from the Corinthians that he was writing to. When Paul gets to verse 11, it’s as if he says, “Pump the brakes guys. Some of you were like this too. But you were washed clean by the name of Jesus Christ.” I can’t see into your heart. God can. God knows. He knows you better than you know yourself. If you are in the midst of sin, sexual or otherwise, no that you are not totally beyond the reach of God’s forgiveness. Every sanctified saint was once a sinner that needed saving. Maybe that person is you? Maybe you recognize that you have destroyed your relationship with your significant other. Won’t you repent to them and ask them to forgive you? Hidden sin does nothing but increase the damage. Work will need to be done, and conversations will need to be had, but isn’t it worth it? Won’t you bring your sin, whatever it may be, to the only One that can remove that heart of stone and replace it with a heart of flesh? Know that Christ Himself promises that whoever comes to Him, He will never cast out. Even the chief of sinners can find forgiveness and grace in the hands of our perfect Savior.

Prayer

Lord, forgive me of my sins. As Christians, we will never outgrow the need for grace and forgiveness. Show me mercy so that I may show mercy to others.

Day 22- Exodus 20:15 (Commandment 8)

“You shall not steal.”

Devotional

When I was in high school, I remember my teacher having us read Khaled Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*. Without getting in too deep on the details of the book, I remember one line that jumped out to me then and continues to jump out to me now. In the book, the father of the main character mentions that the most wretched act that one could commit is stealing. His argument is that all sin is connected to theft. If you kill a man, you steal his life. If the man is married with children, you steal from his wife and his children by stealing the life of the husband. Even lying is theft because the truth has been stolen. Hosseini makes a good point, and the argument sounds good but is it Biblical? Is stealing really the worst sin that one could commit against another human? While I would not argue that stealing is the worst of all sins, it is certainly one of the earliest sins that we see man commit. If you go back to Genesis 3, you can see that Adam and Eve steal the fruit of the tree that God commanded them not to take from. They desired that which was not there, they desired to be like God and wanted to steal His reputation and His glory. This all leads to the predicament that we find ourselves in now. The issue of stealing comes down to an issue with contentment. We steal because what we currently possess does not seem like enough. We steal because we believe that if we could just acquire this one thing, something inside of us will feel complete. The issue with stealing is that it is impossible to stop with just one theft. Any thief that you ask will tell you that they could not stop after the first one. Maybe it was the rush of “getting away” or maybe it was the discovery that what they thought they wanted didn't accomplish the feeling of contentment that they wanted to have. No matter what it might be, when they received what they stole, they still felt incomplete. All sin is like that. We can't stop with just one. We need more because we think that if we receive more, we will have all that we need to be happy but that has never been the case. Satan is going to do all that he can to convince you that the next thing is THE thing that you need to be happy. Don't listen to him. All that you need to be content in this life and the next is what the Lord freely offers to you: Himself.

Prayer

Lord, grant me only what is necessary. Give me all that I need so that I may glorify and enjoy you forever.

Day 23- John 10:7-18 (Commandment 8)

“So Jesus said to them again, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have *it* abundantly.”

Devotional

Who is Jesus? He is God Himself. He is the Son of Man. He is the only begotten Son of God. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Creator of all living things, the Great I Am. He is also the good shepherd. What does the good shepherd do? He gives His life for his sheep. He is the only way to eternal security. He knows His sheep and His sheep know him. Who are His sheep? The Body of Christ, the church. As a Christian, you are one of the sheep that Christ speaks of. He came so that you would have life, and He doesn't mean that you would squeak by with the bare minimum. No, He came so that you would have life abundantly. It is crucial to remember that Jesus did not come to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many. Yes, we serve Him now as Christians, but Jesus did not come at His first coming with an iron fist but with open arms. He gave all of Himself so that we would have all of Him. Notice the stark contrast between the shepherd and thieves that are mentioned in John 10. Jesus as the shepherd gives all that He has while the thieves take everything that does not belong to them. The thieves come to take life while Jesus comes to give His. The devil is the archetype for all earthly thieves. The devil wants nothing more than to destroy you. Thomas Watson writes, “The devil is the great master-thief, he robbed us of our coat of innocence, and he persuades men to take up his trade; he tells men how bravely they shall live by thieving, and how they may catch an estate. As Eve listened to the serpent's voice, so do they. As birds of prey, they live upon spoil and plunder.” What voice are you listening to? Are you listening to the One that gave His life or are you listening to the one that wants to rob you of yours? If Jesus has sacrificed everything for you, what are you willing to sacrifice for Him?

Prayer

Jesus may my heart and my ears be open to the voice of my Good Shepherd. While I often walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I have nothing to fear because I hear your voice and I follow you.

Day 24- Ephesians 4:28 (Commandment 8)

“He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need.”

Devotional

There is a misconception that exists in the world that Christians are not allowed to possess anything. Well, maybe not anything, but they should have as close to nothing as possible. Some may think that the most Christlike person in the world is the one that lives in isolation with no earthly possessions, but you never see that statement being made in the Bible. God gives good gifts to His people. It is not a sin to have money, it is a sin to be owned by money and to worship it. Paul warns the believers in Ephesus that they should no longer steal but labor to make a living. I'm not sure how many in the Ephesian churches were thieves but in a city that was known for a transient lifestyle, I am sure that former thieves were included in the congregation. Paul reminds them that thievery is not the way of Christ. As we have stated before, work is a good thing because work is a God thing. God wants us to work, and he wants us to make a living. But notice something important at the end of verse 28. We are to work so that we can have something to share with those in need. God blesses us so that we may go and bless others. God wants us to give to those that are in need. The enemies of Christianity have often accused Christianity of boarding on socialism and communism. They believe that the Christians put all their possessions in a pot and say, “Take what you want, and I'll take what I want.” They will point out verses like Acts 2:42-47 as evidence for this. But Christianity is nowhere near this! One of the clearest pieces of evidence is that Christians eagerly gave things away to bless others. They were not forced to put everything into one bank account and allow access to everyone, they freely gave what they had because a life changed by Jesus changes what we prioritize. The Communist mindset is: What's yours is mine. The Christian mindset is: What's mine is yours. Do you see the difference? To obey the 8th commandment means that not only do we not take what doesn't belong to us, it also means that we give what we do have so that we can be a blessing to others. Do you have a heart to give? It's not about the amount; it is about the quality of the heart.

Prayer

Lord, help me be a blessing to others. You have freely given yourself; may I freely give to those in need.

Day 25- Exodus 20:16 (Commandment 9)

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

Devotional

What do you guys think that means? What does it mean to not bear false witness against your neighbor? Just a quick reminder that where the Bible says neighbor, it does not mean the person that is living next door from you, but it covers every person made in the image of God. This command involves telling the truth. We are not to lie to our neighbors. Like the other commandments, that which is mentioned is not all that is associated with the command. In Exodus 20:16, we see this commandment is being connected to not lying in court against your neighbor. If you have watched court shows or crime shows before you know that when the witness or whoever comes into the court and takes the stand, the judge swears them in and asks, “Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth?” Why is it so important that they tell the truth? Because someone’s life is on the line! One false witness could destroy the life of another human being. If we are to love our neighbor, how can we truly love them if we lie about them? We need the truth. Unfortunately, truth is often replaced for feelings. Truth seems to depend on how we feel at any given moment or regarding any particular person but is that how truth and facts come into being? No, truth is truth regardless of how we feel about it. God Himself is the definition of truth. He tells no lies, and no deceit comes from Him. If we lie and bear false witness against our neighbor, we are lying about what we know is true of God. When the Lord gave this commandment, it is a great reminder of the fact that God cares about us. God knew that it was wrong if people were taken advantage of because of a lie and this commandment is a crucial reminder to the fact that there is no such thing as a little white lie. All lying is sin, and God will hold liars accountable. If God is truth and we are the people of God, shouldn’t we be a people of truth?

Prayer

Lord help me to pursue the truth. May I seek the good of my neighbor by pursuing truth for my neighbor. The truth may not always be easy, but it is always right.

Day 26- Mark 14:53-65 (Commandment 9)

“Now the chief priests and the whole Council kept trying to obtain testimony against Jesus to put Him to death, and they were not finding any. For many were giving false testimony against Him, but their testimony was not consistent. Some stood up and *began* to give false testimony against Him, saying, “We heard Him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.’” Not even in this respect was their testimony consistent.”

Devotional

Imagine for a moment that you are on trial for a crime that you did not commit. It should be obvious that you are not guilty of what you are being accused of. As you sit before the judge, a long line of “witnesses” come in to testify against you. One claims one thing about you while someone else claims something entirely different. As the long line of witnesses come through, it becomes apparent that they have no idea what they are talking about. Nothing that anyone says lines up with the testimony of what the person after them says. It is increasingly clear to you that the truth is not being told, and they are bearing false witness about you. On paper, this should be a very swift dismissal of the charges. Imagine the horror when the judge says, “Well, some details are a little off, but we really don’t care. We want to lock you away and throw away the key. In fact, we don’t even need to lock you away because we are calling for an immediate death penalty. Actually, we hate you so much that it does not matter what anyone else claims, we will kill you.” You would probably try to do any and everything to get out of that wouldn’t you? Jesus didn’t. Jesus stood in the midst of that kangaroo court and did not open His mouth. He knew the statements were false, He knew the hearts of the people, He knew that it did not matter what the court said, He was to die for the sins of His people. Think about it for a second, every false statement that they made about Jesus could not be backed up and He still pays the penalty. He was innocent! You and I though are guilty. If we were to stand before a judge today and he was to play back every sin we ever committed, he would have us dead to rights. But what does Jesus do? He says, “Everything that is true about them, put that debt on me. I will pay for it. Take my life and give it to them. Take their guilty verdict and replace it with my innocent verdict. Let me bear witness about them.” That really does change things doesn’t it?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for taking my guilty verdict and giving me your innocent verdict.

Day 27- Colossians 3:9-11 (Commandment 9)

“Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its *evil* practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— *a renewal* in which there is no *distinction between* Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all.”

Devotional

The Christian life is more than just ethical or moral improvements. Simply doing the right thing is not evidence that someone is a Christian. There are unsaved people that help others, donate to good causes, and are kind individuals but none of this makes them a Christian. When Paul writes to the Colossians, he encourages them to not lie to each other. Lying was a part of who they were prior to their conversion but the gospel changes everything. When one comes to faith in Christ, it is as if one version of them is put to death and a new version of them takes its place. It may not appear immediately to you, but the moment you become a Christian, you go from death to life. This means that things in your life change because your proximity to Christ has changed. Now you want to be like Him, rather than run away from Him. Paul reminds the Colossians that their willingness to lie needs to be put aside because they aren't who they used to be anymore. When we become Christians, we need to realize that we cannot stay who we used to be. You won't be sinless, but you will sin less. The old self is gone, and the new self is here. Have you realized this? Carl Henry writes, “The doctrine of the crucifixion of the old self is to be paralleled by the doctrine of the realization of the new self. Where the latter emphasis is absent, the Christian life deteriorates into a morbid and repetitious resort to the altar rail in defeat and repentance. Christian ethics proclaims more than the doom of the old nature; it affirms the birth and growth of the new man in Christ.” If you are a Christian, recognize that you are a new man. On the outside, you look the same, but the inside has been made brand new. Have you put aside your old practices to embrace the newness of being born again? I hope so!

Prayer

Lord, if there is any part of my old nature that needs to be put to death, do it. I pray that I embrace the newness of life that you have given me. May all the evil habits be replaced with holy ones.

Day 28- Exodus 20:17 (Commandment 10)

“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 belongs to your neighbor.”

Devotional

What does it mean to covet? To covet means that we are not content with what the Lord has given to us. It means that we desire to have what other people have. I think that there is a very important reason why this commandment is listed as the final commandment and that is because there is really no way for sinful mankind to avoid it. It so easily connects to the commandments that came before it. Charles Spurgeon said of the tenth commandment, “When people break the other commandments, they often break this one first.” None of us can say that we have never had an unhealthy desire for what someone else has. None of us can say that when we see someone else get recognition for something that we played a part in that we wish we were getting the praise that they were getting. None of us can say that we have never looked at the house, the cars, the gaming systems, or the life of someone else and wish that we had that instead of what we already have. To have an unhealthy desire for someone else or what they have is an incredibly dangerous sin because when we covet, there is never a moment of absolute satisfaction. The more that one covets, the more that they want and the less content they will grow to be. It is one of those things where if we were to covet something that belongs to someone else, chances are that even if we did get that which belonged to them that we would just go on and start coveting something else. Coveting is dangerous because not only does it cause us to hate our neighbors, it also causes us to grow discontent and hate God. How easy is it for us to become jealous of what someone else has and blame God that He did not give it to us. How often do we use the excuse that we deserve something more than someone else and that is why we should have what we want? How then do we combat this sin? We need to learn how to better value Christ. Jesus says in Matthew 6:33, “But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” The more we long for Christ, the less we long for the things of this world. The greater contentment we find in Jesus the less appealing the things of this world will become.

Prayer

Lord, I know that I cannot avoid these commandments. Help me to be content with what you give me and give me nothing that is not necessary.

Day 29- Philippians 4:10-13 (Commandment 10)

“But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned *before*, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak from want, for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.”

Devotional

One of the greatest solutions to the problem and sin of coveting is learning to be content with what we have. Paul certainly was. No one could say that Paul was a hoarder. He spent several years of his life just barely getting by or being in prison. If anyone had an excuse to be discontent with his circumstances, it was the Apostle Paul. But does Paul seem discontent in these verses? Absolutely not! He has learned to be content with what the Lord has given to him. God knows the needs that we have. He knows our needs better than we do and if we know that He is in control of all things, we can be happy with the things that He chooses to give us. For us to be truly content, we need to recognize that God does not owe anything to us. God does not owe you eternal life, He does not owe you the house you live in or the food that you eat or the clothes on your back, but He has graciously allowed you to have those things. Do you know what it means to be satisfied in Christ? I think that one of the best solutions to coveting is to stop looking at yourself. If you want to stop coveting, if you want to stop having sinful desires of other people or other things, stop thinking about your own wants. Find your satisfaction in what Christ has already given you! Find satisfaction in the love that you show to your neighbor! Remember what Paul says in Ephesians 1:3, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” God has already blessed us as His people with EVERY spiritual blessing and if He is content to give us everything regarding that which is most important, may we also be content regarding everything which is secondary.

Prayer

God, give me the attitude of Paul. May I learn in the seasons of plenty and want to be content with what you have given me. Your strength and your love sustain me.

Day 30- Luke 12:13-32 (Commandment 10)

“And do not seek what you will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things. But seek His kingdom, and these things will be added to you. Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.”

Devotional

Did you know that God knows exactly what you need? Did you know that God cares about you far more than you could ever care about yourself? In Luke 12, Jesus addresses concerns that fit right at home in 21st century worries. We too worry about what tomorrow will bring. We worry about what we will wear, what we will eat, where we will go, and what we will have. We are worriers. But we are worriers that have tremendous value. We have all been created in God's image. If Jesus cares about the flowers that grow, how much more does he care about those that He has created and has died to save! In the grand scheme of eternity, we will be able to see that we really did have everything that we needed. We will look back and see how God was providing for us every step of the way. Even at the moment of our death, God did nothing more but hasten the Christian to His side. At that moment, God will say, “Come and enter into the joy of your Master.” Be content dear Christians. God is providing for you more than you could possibly imagine. There is no reason to covet what you do not have when Jesus Christ offers you all of Himself. There is however a good version of coveting and desire that we should pursue. How so? Edmund Clowney explains, “Our fixed desire is for the saving power of God's kingdom to be manifested in this world. We seek it now in the work of the Spirit, and in the future in the return of Jesus Christ. We are to covet Christ's mighty work among the nations, and the glory of his coming again in resurrection power and judgment.” As we wrap up our time in the ten commandments, I challenge you to look at your own life and see where you are falling short. The ten commandments are a great way of seeing what needs improving in our lives and I guarantee you, we could all improve in all ten areas that we have read about over the past few weeks. Praise God that we have a savior that is willing to save us despite how often we fall short. Praise God that He is willing to make us aware of our sin and make us aware of our need for a Savior.

Prayer

Lord, reveal to me the areas of my life that need improvement. May your will be done in my life.