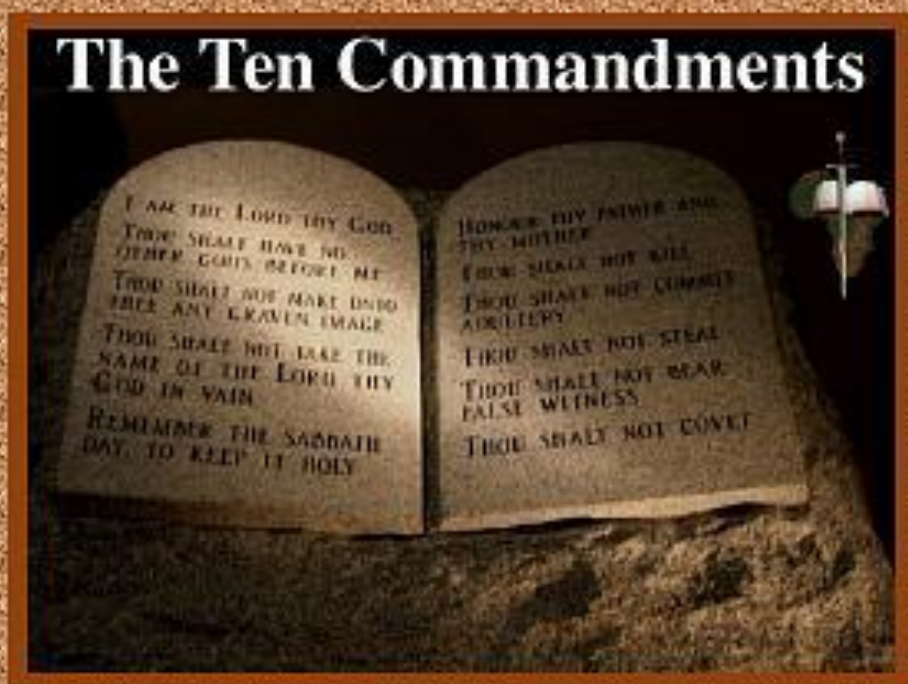


# Messages on the

## The Ten Commandments



By Dr. Jimmy Nelson

# Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart.

**Text:** Mark 12:28-34,

“And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.”

## **Introduction:**

- A. In this message we are dealing with the true expression of love found in verses 28-31.
  1. In verse 28, “And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?”
  2. The Lord Jesus answered him in verses 29-31,

The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou

shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”

B. The scribes response – verses 32-33,

“And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

C. The Lord sees that the man is seeking truth.

Verse 34, “And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.”

1. The Lord saw that the critical attitude of this man had melted away and that his reply to the Lord showed genuine interest in knowing the truth.
2. Therefore, the Lord told him that he was not far from the kingdom of God.
  - He only needed repentance and faith to have a part in the Kingdom of God.
  - All he needed was to have the experience of another “religious man” who at a later period said,

“We know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin”: who exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?" but who added, "I thank God through Jesus Christ!" (Romans 7:14,24,25).

- We are not told whether the Lord saved this man, but perhaps he was among the "great company of the priests" and other Jewish

priest who "were obedient to the faith" after the day of Pentecost (Act 6:7).

- However, it may be he was never saved, thus never entered the kingdom of God.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

- If he maintained his reliance on the keeping of rituals and the ceremonial law, as did the majority of the Sadducees and Pharisees.
- Even today, there are some who have knowledge of the Word of God, yet have never experienced the power of God upon their hearts.

### 3. The theme of these verses is:

“And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”

- It is a command - You shall love the Lord your God.
- This is the foundation of spiritual life.
- It is the beginning of true spiritual love, to love the Lord your God imperfectly, it is the culmination of spiritual life in heaven to love the Lord your God perfectly.
- We endeavor to obey that command as believers, although we are imperfect in our obedience, we long for the day when we will in His presence and love Him perfectly.
- So if someone were to ask you, “What does it mean to be a Christian? Our answer is “It means to be a lover of God.”

- And though we love Him imperfectly, we seek to love Him perfectly and long for the realization of that perfect love in the glory which is to come.
- “Thou shall love the Lord” is also a universal command to all men.
- Thus not to obey and love the Lord is the sin of disobedience.
- This disobedience results in divine and eternal judgment and punishment in a real place called hell and then the lake of fire.

D. A review of events leading to this discourse:

1. It upset the religious leaders when the Lord Jesus Christ entered the city of Jerusalem in what is known as the triumphal entry.
2. Then He went into the temple and drove out the money changers and the merchants selling in the court of the gentiles.
3. Again those who ran the temple, and received great profit from the revenue are not happy with the Lord.
4. In fact, they haven't been happy since the Lord came upon the scene three years earlier and cleansed the temple the first time.
5. The Sanhedrin, the ruling body of Israel, 70 Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes, and the high priest, being both fearful and jealous of Christ:
  - First, because of His condemnation of their apostate religious practices.
  - Secondly, they are attacking Him because of His popularity.

- They feel that His popularity threatens them, their power, their position and their income.
  - So they feel that they must to discredit Him and get rid of Him.
  - They have to find a means to get the people to turn against Him, and also to get the Romans to see Him as an insurrectionist, and execute Him.
  - So, the Sanhedrin sent the Pharisees and Herodians to trap Him.
  - They fail, so they sent the Sadducees to try and discredit Him publicly in front of the people.
  - They failed and quietly went away to regroup.
6. However, Matthew 22:34 tells us that the Sanhedrin reconvened.
- Unknowing to them, they convened to fulfill prophecy.
  - Psalm 2: 2 says,

“The rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed.”

- Even though this could apply to many instances we know that it applies here because it is confirmed in Acts 4.
- The Apostles John and Peter were arrested and:

Verse 23, “And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.”

Verses 24-28, “And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”

- Here the Apostles say that the fulfillment of Psalm 2:2 occurred when they gathered together against Christ.
- That includes the gathering of the Sanhedrin, the false trials before Annas, before Caiaphas, before Pontius Pilate, and Herod and the Roman involvement in the death of Christ along with the people of Israel.

Verse 28 says, “For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”

- So it’s important to note that they went back and reconvened according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.
7. Some have said that the Jesus was a noble teacher, a good man, and a teacher of divine truth.
- But somehow He made some mistakes and ended up dead.
  - This is absolute heresy! Every detail was fulfilled according to the plan of God.

- Much of which was prophesied in the Old Testament, even the details of His death spoken of in Isaiah 53, and clearly revealed in Psalm 22.
  - The fact is, the Sanhedrin reconvened to fulfill exactly what God had predetermined what they would do with no lessening in their own guilt.
8. So out of that meeting comes another attempt to discredit the Lord.

## **I. The encounter with the scribe:**

Verse 28, “And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?”

- A. Mark tells us that he is a scribe, Matthew says that he is a “lawyer.”
1. The scribes (lawyers) were the interpreters of the law.
  2. They were the theologians of their time.
- B. The phrase, “and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well” tells us:
1. That he was present during the previous attempts to discredit the Lord.
  2. Matthew tells us that he has been sent to test the Lord again.
    - He’s not looking for information.
    - The word “test” means to trap Him, this is another attempt to trick and trap the Lord.



3. This scribe is not alone, but is the spokesman.
4. However, this man is actually somewhat honest.
  - He is, I think, not only an emissary of the Sanhedrin, but I think...and a representative of the scribes.
  - I think he volunteered to carry out their mission, but I think he came with a much more objective perspective.
  - He wanted to find something about Jesus for himself because he seems to have an honesty that we don't see in the other that questioned the Lord.
5. Secondly, verse 28 tells us that he admired the way the Lord had defended himself and properly answered their questions.

## **II. What was the entrapment of his question?**

Verse 28, "Which is the first commandment of all?"

- A. He was in essence asking, "What commandment is the primary or principal commandment of all?"
  1. This seems like a pretty innocuous question.
    - It doesn't seem to be connected with anything in particular.
    - So where is the potential entrapment here?
  2. The answer is very simple:
    - The Pharisees greatest complain was that they felt that the teachings of the Lord were contrary to the teaching of the Law.

- Later they will accuse all the Apostles of the same thing.
3. So these religious leaders wanted to get the Lord to say something contrary to the Law of Moses.
  4. The Pharisees accepted the entire Old Testament as the Law.
  5. The Sadducees believed that only the first five books, the books of Moses, were the Word of God.
  6. Thus the Pharisees and the Sadducees did not agree on what was divine Law, but both agreed that Moses' writings (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy and Numbers) were divine Law.
  7. So the Sanhedrin finds a question they can all agree on...what is the greatest commandment, or most important commandment.
  8. Their hope is that the Lord will answer with something that is not found in the Law of Moses.
  9. They hope that this scribe can get the Lord to say something they're positive will not be in the writings of Moses.
  10. Why do they have this hope?
    - Because they have concluded that Christ is anti Moses, anti-Judaism, and is trying to set Himself up as some supreme authority.
    - If they can get Him to elevate Himself above Moses, they believe that the people will be stop following Him.
  11. Why did they hold Moses in such high esteem?

- Moses had some unique experiences with God, the burning bush, being hid in the cleft of the rock on Mt. Sinai, speaking face-to-face with God. He received the 10 commandments, and many other experiences.
- The idea is that in the eyes of the Jewish people there was no one higher than Moses.
- No one could be closer to God than Moses and therefore no reflection of the Word of God would be purer and truer than that which came from Moses.
- So if this question could get Jesus to put His own teaching above Moses, then they could claim Him to be a heretic.
- They wanted an apostate Jesus so that they could convince the people that he was a blasphemer and cause them to reject Him as the Messiah,
- Then they could convince Rome that He was a rebel and threat to Roman's security and should be executed.
- They wanted Him dead, but in order to accomplish that, they had to turn the people against Him.
- So this was the question that both the Pharisees and the Sadducees could agree on.
- If Jesus comes up with a new law, some law they've never heard, then He is a self-declared apostate, He is a self-declared heretic, He has attacked God because God is the friend of Moses.

### **III. The Lord response to the question:**

Verses 29-31, “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.”

- A. And our Lord’s response was perfect and absolutely accurate.
1. He answers from the section of Scripture in which the Pharisees and the Sadducees could agree.
  2. He answers from the Pentateuch and with words that were very familiar to every Jew.
  3. He answers from the portion of Scripture that every Jew was required to recite twice a day.
  4. So, in doing, the Lord affirms complete solidarity with Moses and with the truth of the Word of God as recorded by Moses.
  5. Moses gave this command to Israel in Deuteronomy 6,
    - Moses is about 120 years old about to die.
    - This is his last address to the people of Israel before they enter the Promised Land.
    - In this address Moses is reminding them of what God expects of them when in the land.

Deuteronomy 8:1, “All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD sware unto your fathers. just as the Lord your God has commanded you.”

6. Moses tells Israel that these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which the Lord your God has commanded me to teach you:
  - And you are to obey them in the land you're going to possess.
  - In essence he says you need to go there and obey the Word of the Lord so that you and your son and your grandson might fear the Lord your God.
  - So that they will fear God and keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you all the days of your life and that your days may be prolonged.

B. This portion of Scripture the Shema, gave a great truth.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD.”

“And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”

1. The reason that they are to love the Lord with all their heart is simple:
  - They, nor you and I are able to be obedient externally. Obedience is internal, and comes from the heart.
  - In the polytheistic world these people lived in there were false gods everywhere.
  - But Moses reminds them that there was only one true God, so they did not need to worry about dividing their allegiance. You are to love the true and living God with all of your being, heart, body, soul, strength.

# Thou shalt love the Lord thy God

(Part 2)

**Text:** Mark 28-34:

“And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these. And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.”

## Introduction:

A. In the last message we discussed the Scribe’s question and why he asked it.

1. The question,

“Which is the first commandment of all?”

2. The reason this particular question was asked was, according to Matthew, to trap the Lord.

3. If they can get Him to elevate Himself above Moses, or answer with something not in the Law of Moses they could accuse Him of heresy and persuade the people to stop following Him.

- B. However the Lord responded from the “Shema” found in Deuteronomy 6.

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD. “And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.”

- C. In this message I want us to examine the truth taught in the Lord’s response.

## I. To Whom is absolute love due?

Verses 29,30, “And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.”

- A. “Hear, O Israel!” was said to call the attention of the to the great importance of the truth about to be proclaimed, both by Moses and here by our Lord.

- B. “The Lord our God is one Lord.”

1. Other nations worshipped many gods, but the God of the Jews was One.
2. Jehovah was singular or undivided.
3. This great truth separated the Jewish people from other nations.
4. To believe this, is the first and chief commandment in the law
5. It is also the principal article of the Christian faith.
6. In order to be saved, a person must believe that there is one God, **and** that there are three persons, Father, Son, and Spirit, in the Godhead.

C. "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God."

1. "Thou shalt" is an imperative command!

- So the purest, noblest, highest, most comprehensive, most exhaustive, most complete love is given to the one true God.
- Believers are commanded to love the one true God (Father, Son, and Spirit).
- All three of the divine persons are to be equally loved, since they all equally possess the same attributes, do the same works, and bestow the same benefits and favors upon men.
- We also note that it is only after God saves us that He puts his laws into our heart, and writes them in the mind.
- According to his abundant mercy; He enables us, so that we love the Father who chose us, the Lord Jesus Christ, who died to save us from our sins; and the blessed Holy Spirit, who quickened and now comforts us.
- So, man is commanded to love God, yet he does not, nor does he have the capability to love God until God through the new birth enables the believer to love God.
- The supreme duty of man is to love the one God for who He is, and for what He has done.

D. To what extend is this love to be?

Verse 30, "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength."



1. Thus we are commanded to love God, and told the extent to which we are to love Him.

“With all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.”

2. The "heart" refers to the core of our physical beings and speaks of the sincerity of both the thoughts and the feelings.
  - It speaks of true-heartedness, as opposed to a hypocritical or divided affection.
  - Loving God with all our heart eliminates **all** that contends against the Lord for the throne in our soul.
  - Loving God making us desire to please God, keep His commands, and do those things that honor Him.
  - Why? Because He loves us, and we love Him.
3. “And with all thy soul”
  - The soul is the inner being, the unseen self.
  - The soul refers to “the seat of the emotions and the will.”
  - The soul of man deals with the understanding, will, and active power.
4. As well as with “All thy mind” or understanding, judgment, and will.
  - The word “mind” refers to the “intellect.”
  - As God reveals Himself to us through His Word.
  - The more we learn the more we love Him.

5. “With all thy strength” – The word “strength” speaks of might and power.
- Every ability, every gift, every talent, all our energy combine to love the one true God.
  - It is an intelligent love, it is an emotional love, it is a willing love, and it is an active love. It is an all-consuming love.
  - Thus we see that we are told that God’s whole-hearted love toward us should not be returned with a half-hearted love on our part.
  - So being a Christian means to love the Lord your God with all your entire being.
  - We know the one we love, do we not?
  - Because He’s disclosed Himself to us in Scripture. He’s worthy of our love. He’s worthy of far more love than we will ever be able to give Him this side of heaven.
  - Moses admonished the Israelites to love the Lord, Joshua likewise gave the same admonishment – Love the Lord.
  - But these Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, and their followers never ever came to the place where they love God.
  - They love themselves and they loved money.
  - They were whitewashed tombs, beautiful on the outside, and full of dead men’s bones and uncleanness on the inside.
  - Outwardly they appeared to be righteous, but inwardly they were full of hypocrisy and sin.

- The Scripture is clear - God is not satisfied with the outside appearance of works.
- He demands that we love Him with the inward love that He gives us at salvation.
- If you want to be right with God, if you want to be blessed by God, you must love God with all your heart.
- The Apostle Paul reminded us to let our love abound more and more in all knowledge.
- And I think our love for God is connected to knowledge.
- The more you know about God, the more there is to love.

## **II. The Second Commandment:**

Verse 31, “And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”

A. The second commandment builds on the first.

1. The scribe had not asked about anything beyond the first commandment.
2. But the Lord goes a step farther to teach us the truth that genuine love for God also manifests itself in love for one’s fellow man.
  - This command comes from Leviticus 19:18.

“Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD.”

- First, you are to love God above all things, including yourself.

- Secondly, it tells us that we are to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.
- There's a lot of people who say, "Oh, this means you need to work on loving yourself. You need more self-esteem. You need to love yourself more."
- That is not what this verse says!
- The fact is, you and I already love our self.
- We don't have to learn to love ourselves, our whole lives are consumed with taking care of self.
- When we are hungry we find it something to eat. When we are thirsty, we find it something to drink. When we get sick, we get medical treatment.
- In other words, we always seek to meet the needs that pertain to self.
- What our Lord is saying here is that we are to treat other people with the same detailed care that you give yourself.
- While our supreme and uttermost love and affection is to be reserved for God, we are to love others in the same way that we already love ourselves.
- The golden rule (Matthew 7:12) is here our best interpreter of the nature and extent of these claims.

"Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

B. The Lord is our example of this kind of love!

1. First, He left the glory of heaven and came to willingly give Himself for us.

Romans 5:8, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

1 Cor. 13 tells us that Charity or love never fails.

2. There is none other commandment greater than these:

- The Lord was the first to put these two commandments together as a summary of the Law.
- If we loved God like He commanded us to, we would never break the first four of the Ten Commandments.
- If we loved our neighbor as we should, we would never break the other six commandments.

3. In Matthew 22:41, the Lord said that the whole Old Testament could be summarized in these two commands.

- Man cannot please God through self-righteous deeds and religious works.
- We are commanded to love Him with all the heart, soul mind and strength and to love our neighbor as we love ourselves.
- Getting those two things right would change our churches, our homes, our communities and our world.

### **III. The Question Answered:**

Verses 32-34, "And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he: And to love him with all the

heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices. And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst ask him any question.”

A. When this scribe hears the Lord’s answer, his response is to say, “Well!”

A. This word means “beautiful”.

- “Yes! That is a beautiful answer!
- There is one God and to love Him perfectly and to love others perfectly is far more important than all the religious rituals in the world.”

B. This scribe had come to understand that the Law of God was more than a religious system to follow.

- He had come to understand that it was essentially spiritual.
- He understood that the Law existed to draw man to a faith relationship with God.

Galatians 3:24, “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

C. This man had grasped the truth that God is not reached through empty worship and external rituals.

D. God is a Spirit and He is only approached by a heart that is filled with love for Him.

- And that this kind of love for God is only possible because God first reaches out,

touches our heart, and draws us to Himself, and enables us to return His love.

- Then we are able to live out that love in obedience to God and in service to others.

E. People, as this scribe must understand the truth that external religion and its rituals will never be enough to save the soul.

- The scribe understood that a loving relationship with the Lord is far more important than religion.
- Suddenly, he came to understand that he could go through all the religious exercises and still not be right with God.
- Most folks never understand that truth.
- All over the world today people will go to church, go through their rituals, and think they are in a saving relationship with God.
- In truth, they are lost and on their way to Hell!

F. People must understand that religious works will not save the soul:

Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

- It is grace that saves the soul!
- It is not enough to be religious or to do religious things.
- For a sinner to be saved, that sinner must have vital faith relationship with Almighty God.

- And that is possible only when God makes the first move.
- Sinners are “dead in trespasses and sin.”
- He or she cannot desire God, know God, or come to God until they are drawn of God.

G. When God quickens the dead sinners spirit He shows him his condition.

- God draws that sinner to Himself, John 6:44.
- And when God calls, the sinner is given faith to believe the Gospel, Ephesians 2:8.
- That faith reacts in the heart of the newly awakened sinner and he comes to Lord for salvation, John 6:37.

H. Genuine biblical salvation is the work of God from start to finish.

- It is a spiritual work from start to finish.
- It is not about ritual or religion.
- It is about simple faith in the Gospel of grace.
- Have you believed the Gospel? Are you saved?

B. The Lord hears the scribe’s response and sees a man that is beginning to understand that knowing God is not about ritual, it is about faith based relationship.

1. The Lord says, “Thou art not far from the kingdom of Heaven.”



2. The Lord was speaking to a decent man, a religious man, a man who kept the Law to the best of his ability.
3. But he was not saved! Sinners must understand:
  - It is possible for a person to have a religious upbringing and still be lost.
  - It is possible to hear truth and still be lost.
  - It is possible to have heard the Gospel preached all your life and still be resting on your own goodness and good works.
  - It is possible to be Gospel hardened and to seal your own damnation while sitting on a church pew.
  - It is possible to be “not far from the kingdom of God” and still die and go to Hell.

## **Conclusions:**

- A. What is your spiritual condition?
- B. If you know that you have never truly trusted the Lord Jesus Christ to save your soul, you need to come to Him by faith today.
- C. You need to repent of your sins, believe the Gospel and be born again.
- D. Christian, how is your relationship with God? If it is all it should be, you love Him with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and you love others as you love yourself?
- E. Or do you need to make improvements a certain area of your life?

## **“Thou shalt have no other gods before me”**

**Text:** Exodus 20:1-17,

“And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”

### **Introduction:**

- A. The verses that we read are commonly known as the 10 commandments.
- B. When God began speaking in an audible voice to the people of Israel they asked Moses to mediate.

- C. God, Himself, gave these 10 commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai (Exodus 19:20).
1. Both Exodus 24:12 and Deuteronomy 10:1-5 tell us that God wrote these commandments on tables of stone.
  2. In verses 1 and 2 we have the preface to the Ten Commandments.
  3. Verse 3 is the FIRST commandment, against mental or theoretic idolatry.
  4. The SECOND, against making and worshipping images, or practical idolatry, 4-6.
  5. The THIRD, against false swearing, blasphemy, and irreverent use of the name of God, 7.
  6. The FOURTH, against profanation of the Sabbath, and idleness on the other days of the week, 8-11.
  7. The FIFTH, against disrespect and disobedience to parents, 12.
  8. The SIXTH, against murder and cruelty, 13.
  9. The SEVENTH, against adultery and uncleanness, 14.
  10. The EIGHTH, against stealing and dishonesty, 15.
  11. The NINTH, against false testimony, perjury, 16
  12. The TENTH, against covetousness. 17
- D. The ancient Jews believed that these words were spoken by God as if they were one word.

1. This does not literally mean grammatically one word.
2. Rather that these laws are so closely compacted and united together as if they were but one word, and are not to be detached and separated from each other.
3. The Apostle James speaks of this in James 2:10, where he says,

“Whosoever offends in one point is guilty of all.”

E. Therefore, the moral principles of the Law are timeless and are a direct rebuke to the “New Morality” (immorality).

F. The first commandment is:

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

1. Israel had lived in Egypt where many gods were worshipped.
2. They were to enter the land of Canaan where other gods were already being worshipped.
3. This command was given to them to settle once and for all the absolute uniqueness and unrivaled supremacy of the true and living God.
4. Our concept of God is important.
5. When man does not have a true concept of God, he manufactures other gods.

## **I. The Principles revealed in the command:**

Verses 1-3, “And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

A. Our God is a God of revelation:

1. God spoke (vs. 1) to reveal His will to the people.
2. God declared (vs. 2,3)

“Declare” means “to say or state (something) in an official or public way.

- God publically declares to them that He is “I AM.”
  - Then He declares “I AM’s” will to them.
3. God continues to declare His will for us today.

II Timothy 3:16, 17, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

## **II. What these Principles mean to us:**

Matthew 6:24, “No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”

A. God made a way of redemption for His people.  
Verse 2.

1. Israel was in slavery, but God freed them, brought them out, and gave them a new and wonderful home.
2. If you are a Christian:
  - You were enslaved by sin (John 8:34).
  - The Lord Jesus Christ freed you and brought you out (John 8:36).

- He gave you a new and wonderful home (John 14).

#### B. God condemns idolatry.

1. Man is incurably religious, and if he doesn't know the true God, he manufactures his own.
2. The Greeks had over thirty thousand gods.
3. People in India starve as thousands of cattle roam their streets because they worship cows.
4. Buddhists kiss the toe of the statue of a fat man.
5. Moslems worship a man that died and was buried, but was never resurrected.
6. It is sad to see men, women, and children, bow and pray to gods of wood, stone, and metal that are helpless to help them.

#### C. God condemns refined idolatry.

1. Many people say, "I can worship God just as well on the golf course or the campgrounds as I can in church."
2. This is not true because they **don't** worship Him there. In fact I would say that they are not even thinking about God at all.
3. We are to worship the Creator, not the creation.
4. Can nature help you in the time of need? **NO!**
5. Can nature lead you daily to happiness and the blessings of God? **No!**
6. Nature does not care about man. But God cares about and for His people.

7. I want to worship the One who is concerned about me and my family.

8. James Oliver wrote,

“When I come down to die, I will be content to have the flowers, the trees, and the grass around me.”

9. I won't! I want the Lord Jesus Christ to lead me through the valley of the shadow of death, unto that glorious dwelling place in the Father's house.

D. The God of health:

1. We all know and see people worship strong bodies and seek great strength so that others will admire them.

I Timothy 4:8, “For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.”

2. I'm not talking about exercise, or working out.

- One cannot exercise and add one day, one, hour, or one minute to the time that they have on the earth.
- Why? The Scripture says “There is a time to be born and a time to die.”
- So while physical exercise cannot add time to your life, it can make your life of much greater quality.
- What I'm talking about is people that have made their body their “god.”

3. Yet these same people have no moral strength at all.

- A strong muscular husband is worthless if he is untrue to his vows.
- A strong beautiful wife is only a pain in your heart if she is immoral.
- Young people, good health is a blessing and a strong body is wonderful, but it's no comfort when sin in your life causes you, your parents, and your friends, great pain and heartache.

James 1: 14, 15, "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

4. A desire to view strong bodies can also lead to greater sin problems.

#### E. The god of sports:

1. I like sports, but sports can become sinful when we:
  - Spend money on sports that rightly belongs to God (Malachi 3:8).
  - When our affection for a sport supersedes God in our affections.

#### F. The god of science and learning:

II Timothy 3: 5-7, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

1. This god is always a young god. You will never see textbooks in the school system that are ten year old.



2. It is very clear that Evolution is man's attempt to replace the truth of Sovereign creation with a theory that is now taught as a fact, a truth, in our school system.
3. Hebrews 13:8 teaches us that only God remains the same forever and forever.

#### G. The god of pleasure:

1. Almost every advertisement, television program today puts forth the appeal to please the flesh.
  - It seems that every commercial regardless of what is being advertised has to have sex in it. (Ad promoters say, "sex sells.")
  - To me it seems that they seek to create a "lust" for the pleasure that they product will give you.
2. I think that there is a special appeal made to our young people.

Whiskey sign on 35 as you entered Dallas some years ago. (Front side – the **pleasure** – back side – the sorrow that alcohol brings to families.

3. True pleasure is found is found in faithfully serving God!

#### H. The god of popularity:

1. Sinners prefer the favor of men to the favor of God.
2. So many people seek worldly honor, fame, etc. They desire to be noticed in public.
3. It is so heartbreaking to see what parents allow and young people are willing to do to gain popularity.

4. Our greatest desire should be to be pleasing to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I. The god of wealth:

1. I remember a time when most businesses were closed on Sunday.
2. But the desire to accumulate wealth has caused most to stay open, even on Sunday.
3. These people's desire for wealth has become their god.
4. But the sad thing is that their worship of the god of wealth causes others, who would be in church, to miss services.
5. So many times those who have wealth are never satisfied with the god, they want to make it bigger and bigger, get more and more.
6. But the god of wealth can never satisfy them.

A certain man had a large estate. One visitor to his gardens asked a servant, "How much is this estate worth?" The servant answered, "I don't know how much it is worth, but it cost the owner his soul."

Mark 8:36, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

### **III. What the commands mean to us as Christians:**

- A. The atheist says, "there is no God" yet God clearly manifest Himself to man.
  1. God revealed Himself as God to many individuals:
    - Adam, Abraham, Moses, then to Israel, and finally to the gentiles.

2. A few of the things God reveals to us:
  - His omnipotence, His omniscience, His omnipresence, His power, His glory, His plan and will.
  - That He cannot change, or lie, or neglect to fulfill His promises.
  - God said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved” (Then He gives us faith that we might).
  - He requires that we follow Him – then He empowers us that we might.
  - He says, serve me, and then He blesses us for doing so.

## **Conclusions:**

- A. The ten commandments cannot give you eternal life:
  1. Many people mistakenly look at the Ten Commandments as a set of rules that, if followed, will guarantee entrance into heaven after death.
  2. The real purpose of the Ten Commandments is to force people to realize that they cannot perfectly obey the Law (Romans 7:7-11), and are therefore in need of God’s mercy and grace.
  3. Despite the claims of the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16, no one can perfectly obey the Ten Commandments (Ecclesiastes 7:20).
  4. The Ten Commandments demonstrate that we have all sinned (Romans 3:23) and are therefore in need of God’s mercy and grace, available only through faith in Jesus Christ.

# "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image"

**Text:** Exodus 20:4-6

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.”

## **Introduction:**

- A. In the First Commandment, worshipping a false god is forbidden.
- B. In this Commandment, worshipping the true God in a false manner is forbidden.
  - 1. God gives man a very clear command to follow.
  - 2. God says, in no uncertain terms, that producing an image intended to receive worship is forbidden!
  - 3. Man has a religious instinct to worship something.
  - 4. Every group of people that has ever lived evidenced some sort of religion.
  - 5. In every culture we find that man has invented for himself idols, and representations of his concept of God, to worship.
  - 6. Plutarch said, "You can find cities without walls, without letters, without money, without houses, without theaters and games, but man has never

seen and never will see a city without temples and gods, without prayer, oaths, prophecies and sacrifices."

7. In fact, idolatry seemed to be Israel's weakness.

- This first instance of this is seen in Exodus 32:1-14, with the incident concerning the Golden Calf.
- Israel's idolatry was rooted in the fact that their hearts were turned away from the Lord.
- This violates the first Commandment.
- They also seemed to manifest an over dependence on Moses and had elevated him to the place of a little god.
- Then, they tried to spiritualize their error by equating the worship of the calf with worship of Jehovah God.
- When a person needs some image or representation of God to assist in worship, it is a sure indicator of a lack in the spiritual life of that individual.

8. We have the Bible to guide us in our worship.

9. Man is going to worship something! -- Be sure it is the right God.

## **I. What is forbidden? (Verses 4,5a)**

A. Though no single biblical passage contains a complete definition of idolatry, the subject is addressed in numerous passages.

1. When the commandment was given, opportunities to participate in the honor or worship of idols abounded, and the religions of Canaanite tribes neighboring the Israelites often

centered on a carefully constructed and maintained cult idol.

2. Therefore, idolatry may be summarized as the worship of idols (or images); the worship of polytheistic gods by use of idols (or images); the worship of created things (trees, rocks, animals, astronomical bodies, or another human being); and the use of idols in the worship of God.
3. Also covetousness (greed), is defined as idolatry.
4. The Lord makes it very clear that any image or likeness made as an object of worship is an idol.
  - Graven images and likeness hide God's face.

Illus: A wife whose husband had been absent for a year awaits his imminent return. As she stands at the window and waits, she places a large picture of her husband on the sill to help keep his image in her mind. But what actually happens is that she cannot see her husband, because the picture obscures his face. So it is with images to remind us of our Heavenly Father.

- For whatever reason the image is initially made, soon it becomes the object of worship. (Dan. 3: 7)
- Therefore, God says that any attempt to make an image of God is forbidden.
- To make a true image of God is impossible. (John 1: 18)
- It is absurd to worship an image of God.

- Our attempt to make an image of God would be similar to painting a spider and calling it a prince.
  - Why bow down to the king's picture when the king himself is present?
5. Some religions say they use the image only as a medium to worship God but really do not worship the image.
- God has never bidden, but forbidden, His people to do this.
  - Similarly, the unsaved know that images made of gold and silver are not God, but they worship them anyway!
6. Some religions say that an image (Christ on the Cross, Bleeding Heart, Statue of Mary, etc.) helps them to keep God in their mind.
- This is as absurd as a woman saying she keeps company with another man in order to remind her of her husband.
  - In all reality, an idol or supposed image of God degrades a person's conception of Him.
  - It limits God, who has no limits.
7. We should beware of image worshipers.
- Do not keep company with them.
  - Do not go to their places of worship.
  - Do not join in marriage with them. II Cor. 6:14

An old saying is, "Mingle the sweet with the sour, and the sour will win every time."

- Avoid any superstitious or illogical ceremony in your service to God.
  - All worship must be based on Scripture.
- B. Helps in developing our ability to recognize unscriptural people and practices.
1. Incorporate good scriptural principles in our lives:
    - Through faithfulness.
    - Through prayer.
    - Through Bible study.
    - Through the preaching of God's Word.

## **II. Why should we serve only the true and living God? (Verse 5b)**

- A. Because the Lord is a jealous God.
1. God is lovingly "jealous" for us just as a husband is lovingly "jealous" of his wife, wanting the best for her that he can give.
  2. God is wrathfully "jealous"
    - He cannot bear a rival. We must serve only Him.
    - Allegiance to anything other than God is spiritual adultery.
- B. Danger in Our Homes
1. One of the greatest dangers for believers today is the act of bringing certain objects into the home.



2. The Scripture specifically tells us that any house that has an “**abomination**” within it, will come under a curse:

Deuteronomy 7:26, “Neither shalt thou bring an abomination into thine house, lest thou be a cursed thing like it: but thou shalt utterly detest it, and thou shalt utterly abhor it; for it is a cursed thing.”

3. When we disobey the clear Word of Scripture, and bring an abomination, a cursed object into our home, the above Scripture tells us that we come under the same curse the object.
4. The effects of these curses are varied.
  - These effects include many chronic troubles or accidents, chronic sicknesses, chronic disease, chronic nightmares or mental attacks, constant argument, continued disobedience or rebelliousness, fearfulness, anxiety, and many others.
  - One symptom a Believer may notice is that when idols are present in the home, prayers may be difficult to speak, or there seems to be a lack of the Lord’s presence and peace in the home, or a lack of understanding and/or acceptance of the Word of God.
  - The perfect example is Achan, who took the accursed thing into his home.
  - As a result, the entire camp of Israel was cursed, resulting in their failure to overcome, or prevail, in the battle against Ai (Joshua 6:18-7:12).
  - I Corinthians 10:11 reminds us that these things happened to Israel for our example and were written for our admonition.

- This tells us that we too shall fail to overcome against Ai ("iniquity") if we bring the accursed object into our camp!
  - We recall that there is a long list of curses that come as a result of disobedience, starting in (Deuteronomy 28:15).
5. Because God "visits" or punishes those who offend and disobey Him.
- Sin makes God visit with chastisement, sickness, poverty, etc.

Hebrews 12:5-9, "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?"

6. Parents, God says your refusal to serve Him brings His iniquity upon your children, Deuteronomy 24:16; Ezekiel 18:19-32.
- This is because your children are likely to follow your example and forsake Him also.
7. Each of us who had spiritual parents should thank the Lord for such a great privilege.
- Thank the Lord that you have or had parents that pray for you and watch out for you.
8. Another danger is those who worship something other than God in reality "hate" God.

- Their worship contradicts His written Word and directions to man.
- They shut the door of their heart to the truth. John 14:6
- They hate His true image that is seen in the life of a saved person. (II Tim. 1:12)

### III. What can we expect when we serve the true and living God? (Verse 6a)

Psalm 24:3-5, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation."

#### A. God's mercy.

1. It is **free**. We can force God to punish us but not to love us.
2. It is **powerful**. Don't quit witnessing to your lost loved one, because God's mercy can soften a heart of stone.
3. It is **abundant**, "The vial of God's wrath drops, but the fountain of His mercy runs."

#### B. God's protection.

Psalm 3:1-8, "LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise up against me. Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah. But thou, O LORD, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head. I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah. I laid me down and slept; I awaked; for the LORD sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that have set themselves against me round about. Arise, O LORD; save me, O my God: for thou hast smitten all mine

enemies upon the cheek bone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly. Salvation belongeth unto the LORD: thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah.”

C. God's deliverance.

II Tim. 4:17, “And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

D. God's guidance. (Psa. 73:24)

E. God's pardon. (Mic. 7:18)

F. God's sanctification. (II Pet. 1:4)

G. God's listening ear. (Psa. 4:1)

H. God's salvation.

Titus 3:5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

#### **IV. Who really serves God? (Verse 6b)**

A. "Those that love Him and keep his Commandments."

Love and obedience must go hand in hand.

B. This involves desiring His presence. (Psa. 84:2)

C. This involves hating sin. (Psa. 97:10)

D. This involves selling out completely to Christ. (Gal. 5:14)

E. This involves going to extremes to serve Him. (Psa. 63:6)

- F. This involves putting God before anything else. (Phil. 3:8)
- G. This involves loving Christian fellowship and desiring to be around other believers. (I John 5:1)
- H. This involves real determination to not bring dishonor upon His name.
- I. How do we know we are serving God?
  - 1. God blesses us. (Acts 14:17)
  - 2. Our Christian responsibilities are enjoyable.
  - 3. Things work out right for us. (I Cor. 2:9)
  - 4. We enjoy striving to know God's will.
  - 5. We enjoy studying the scriptures.
  - 6. We enjoy meditating on the things of God.

Isaiah 1:18-20, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it."

## **Conclusions:**

To some degree we are all guilty of manufacturing little gods for ourselves. We may not have a statue or an image to which we bow down, but we do have habits, traditions, activities, people, and possessions that we place ahead of God. This is idolatry and sin. No one, or no thing deserves your worship more than God Himself. Is He receiving it as he should? Is God Almighty your One and True God?

# Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain

**Read:** Exodus 20:1-17, **Text** – Verse 7

“And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. **Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain;** for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”

## Introduction:

- A. In the Taurus Mountains of southern Turkey, lives a certain variety of crane. These birds tend to cackle a lot, especially while flying.

1. The cackle they make gets the attention of eagles, who swoop down and grab them for a meal.
2. The experienced cranes avoid this threat by picking up stones large enough to fill their mouths. This prevents them from cackling--and from becoming lunch for the eagles.
3. This seems an appropriate illustration to begin our message on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Commandment.
4. Why? Because people have problems with the noises and sounds that come out of their mouths as well.
5. Every one of us have a opening called a mouth.
  - In each mouth is a little organ called a tongue.
  - The tongue, though relatively small when compared to the whole body, is one of the most powerful forces in the universe.
  - It must be! After all, man can split atoms, walk on the moon, construct enough weapons to destroy his world thousands of times over, yet he cannot seem to control his little tongue, James 3:8.
  - In James 3:1-12, the Bible gives us valuable insight into this little monster that lives in our mouths.
  - Paul tells us that as Christians, we are to use our tongues for noble pursuits (Ephesians 4:29). He also tells us in Colossians 3:8 that we are to guard what comes out of our mouths.

Psalm 111:10, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever."

- A. God's name must never be used with contempt, irreverently, or needlessly.
- B. The first petition in the prayer Jesus Christ taught his disciples is, "Hallowed be thy name!"
  - 1. Hallowed means, "To treat as holy" to "reverence."
  - 2. In Exodus 3:5, at the burning bush God told Moses:

"Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

- 3. Holy ground is "Hallowed" ground.
  - 4. So "hallowed" means to consider as holy.
  - 5. When God commands us "not" to use his name in vain. He is telling us not to use His name in any un-holy manner; but to treat it as holy.
- C. We live in a day that people think very little about breaking this commandment.
  - 1. We live in a day when God's name is no longer held in reverence

Psalm 111:9, "He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: **holy and reverend is his name.**"

- 2. We are surrounded by profanity, by hypocrisy, and by irreverence, all of which vilify the name of God.
- D. There is something personal and individual about a name.



1. A man doesn't like to see his name misspelled or hear it mispronounced.
2. How much the more does the Holy God of heaven and earth detests His name being treated with irreverence.
3. **Anyone who disrespects God's name disrespects God.**

E. In this message we will examine how the name of the Lord may be violated, and the sure results of this violation.

## **I. How man uses the Name of God in vain:**

A. Most commonly thought of is profane swearing.

1. Profanity is the most stupid sin a man commits.
2. The Bible says there is pleasure in sin for a season, but this is not true in the use of profanity.

B. Your speech is an index to your character.

1. If a man speaks German, he is likely to be a German. If he speaks French, he is likely to be French. If he speaks profanity, he is likely a lost sinner. (Matt. 12:34).
2. Sam Jones said, "When I hear a man cursing, I hold my pocketbook. If he will break one of God's laws, he is likely to break another. If he will curse, he may steal."

C. Profanity is much more common in so-called "Christian American" homes than anywhere else in the world. Heathens have a greater respect for false gods than Americans have for their Heavenly Father.

- D. When you curse, you are actually offering a profane and wicked prayer.
- E. Profanity indicates a lack of intelligence and a limited vocabulary.
- F. A man named Alex Dunlap has wrote and published a tract entitled Ten Reasons Why I Swear.
1. The purpose of the tract was to show how foolish swearing was.
  2. Here are the reasons he gives:
    - It pleases my mother so much.
    - It is a fine mark of manliness.
    - It proves I have self-control.
    - It indicates how clearly my mind operates.
    - It makes my conversation so pleasing to everyone.
    - It leaves no doubt in anyone's mind as to my good breeding.
    - It impresses people that I have more than an ordinary education.
    - It is an unmistakable sign of culture and refinement.
    - It makes me a very desirable personality among women and children of culture and refinement.
    - It is my way of honoring God, who said, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain."

- I'm sheltered here at the church, but I believe that you would agree with me that there are few things more disgusting, or repulsive as a mouth spewing forth profanity.

G. Profanity not only corrupts you, it corrupts your children.

1. Parents, if your spiritual leadership at home is such that your children can learn to curse from your example, there will likely come a day when your own children will curse you and be heartache to you.

The story was told of little Mary who attended Sunday School for the first time one Christmas season. She eagerly listened as her teacher told of the birth of God's Son. She thrilled to the story of the angels, wise men, the star, and the gifts. Then the teacher added, "And they shall call His name Jesus." She looked over at the person beside her and asked, "Why did they have to name such a sweet baby a swear word?" It was the first time that she had ever heard His Name used outside of a curse!

2. Bill Cosby hosted a program called "Kids say the darnest things."

Here is another illustration: Kids repeat what they hear! A little boy said something and his mother was furious. She asked, "Young man, where did you learn to talk that way?" "The boy hesitated, looked toward his father, and asked, "Well, Dad, should I tell her?"

3. George Washington said, "The foolish and wicked practice of profane swearing is a vice so mean and so low that every person of sense and character detests and despises it."
4. When the Lord Jesus Christ lives in your heart there is no room for profanity."

H. Instead we should use the Name of God with Adoration:

1. God's Name is to be held in extreme reverence and adoration.
2. The Jews of old had great esteem for His Name.
  - When a scribes came to the Name of God in the writing, he stop writing, thoroughly wash himself, change pens, then wrote the Name of God.
  - Afterwards, they would throw the pen away so that it could never be used to write another word.
  - Today, many orthodox Jews today will not even say the Name Jehovah or Yahweh but use the word for Lord "Adonai."
  - Today, I am afraid that there is very little respect for God's holy and glorious Name.
3. When we use God's Name, it is to be in a manner consistent with His character.
4. We are to hold His Name in reverence, awe, respect and worship. (Psalms 29:2; 34:3; 66:2; Matthew 6:9).

I. God's name is a violated name.

1. Exodus 20:7 tells us that it is wrong to use God's Name in vain.
2. This word means, "empty, idle, insincerely, phony, frivolous, lacking in reality and truth."
3. When we treat the Name of God in this manner, it is nothing short of blasphemy!

4. Sadly, we hear His Name degraded far more often than we hear it being exalted!
- J. There are 2 primary ways in which we violate the Blessed Name of God:
1. When We Use It As A Curse:
    - How many times have we heard, or said, "Oh my God!"; "God Almighty!"; or something similar?
    - Even Christians are guilty of saying things like, "Oh Lord!"; "My God!"; "Good God!"
    - We've all done it, but doing so is degrading to the Lord's Name using His holy name to casually.
    - Often, people, even Christians, are guilty of using slang expressions that we feel to be harmless, but which are actually derivatives from some form of God's Name.
    - For example, "Gosh, golly, gee, gee whiz, are slang synonyms for the curse word itself.
    - "Dog gone it; Gosh darn it; are likewise synonyms for the word mom washed your mouth out with soap for saying.
    - No matter how you say it or how you slice it up, when we use the Lord's Name in a vain way, we are guilty of violating the Holiest of all Names!
  2. When We Use It Casually:
    - Sunday after Sunday, Christians utter the Name of God in songs, in prayer, and in testimonies, but often there is no sincerity and no genuine reverence for that Name.

- In other words, it just isn't from the heart. It makes us sound spiritual, so we use it. But, when we invoke the wonderful Name of God, we are to do so with meaning and significance, reverence, respect, and from a heart of adoration and worship.
  - Otherwise, it is being used improperly and in vain. Beware, therefore, of the casual usage of God's Holy name
3. Living in hypocrisy is using the Lord's name in vain. (Titus 1:16).

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”

1. This is profane living by those who profess Christ as their Savior.
2. A man who professes Christ with his lips but denies him with his life has a far worse influence than a man who makes no profession at all.
3. Countless thousands of people have never come to church to hear the gospel and are lost, because they use the excuse, "There are too many hypocrites in church."
  - They are right. There are too many hypocrites in churches.
  - Their reason for not coming is a puny one, (yet some Christian's testimony influenced their saying this) Yet they will still be in hell.
4. How many homes have been completely torn up and left in ruin and sorrow because of hypocrisy in people's lives?

1. When husbands and wives separate because godly principles of marriage are ignored. The name of God has been taken vain. (Proverbs 19:29)
  
2. Children rebel against parents with "double standards".
  - I am a Christian, but I .....
  
  - Children hate the hypocrisy they see in the ones they love most and are supposed to respect.
  
  - Another , I am a Christian, but I don't go to Sunday School and church.
  
  - How stupid it must seem to these people's children to insist they do something which obviously has no importance in their own life.
  
  - How ridiculous people must appear to their children when they pretend to love them and say they want God's best for them, but they won't:
    - Pray for them.
    - Teach them Scripture.
    - Talk to others or to them about their soul and the eternal importance of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - The Children are likely to think "Am I as unimportant to my parent's as the God they say they love?"
  
5. Making rash vows is taking God's name in vain.

Psalm 66:13, "I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows."

1. Many people are like the thief on the cross who was interested only in himself. He wanted off the cross.
2. We promise God that we will serve Him if He will straighten out the mess we have made of our finances, but when things get better, we spend His money for something else and never give Him a chance to bless us.
3. Illus: In 1923 a great earthquake struck Japan. Thousands of people lost their lives and thousands more were homeless. America raised millions of dollars and sent the money over to help the Japanese. The Japanese were grateful and said, "Japan will never forget." You can go to Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and see the wreckage that resulted from the 1941 bombing of the American Fleet by the Japanese. In one warship alone, the Arizona, 1400 American men lost their lives. This plunged America into a great bloody war, but is still not as bad as the man who has been greatly blessed by God and promises God he will never forget, and then soon leaves Him out of his life entirely.

## **II. The penalty for using God's name in vain:**

- A. God required the lives of Ananias and Sapphire (Acts 5).
- B. We ought to be fearful of using God's name in vain (Hebrews 10:31).

## **III. THE PROPER WAY TO USE GOD'S NAME.**

- A. In prayer - Men ought always to pray.
- B. The "model prayer" that Christ taught His disciples first mentions the reverence required by God's name (Matthew 6:9).
- C. In praise:



1. Praise God by singing.
2. Praise God by bragging on His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
  - Witnessing is bragging on Christ and telling others what He has done for us.
  - Soul-winning is convincing others that Christ wants to do the same for them.

D. In profession (Romans 10:13).

1. Christ will save anyone that will turn their heart and life over to Him (Acts 2:21).
2. Christ is the only way a person can be saved (Acts 4:12).

# ‘Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery’

Exodus 20:14, “Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

Matthew 5:28, “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

## Introduction:

- A. The seventh commandment is just as modern as the story of infidelity and immorality that we read about in the newspaper and hear about from news cast.
  1. As a youngster I remember hearing about J.F. Kennedy’s affair with Marylyn Monroe.
  2. We all go so tired of hearing Bill Clinton say “I did not have sex with that women” when it was proven beyond a doubt that he did.
  3. The news media is full of celebrity unfaithfulness, divorce and remarriage.
    - A quick internet search showed that there are 22 who have been married 4 or more times.
    - Zsa Zsa Gabor, Elizabeth Taylor, Mickey Rooney, Larry King were the top four.
  4. Humans are sexual beings!
  5. In fact, scientists tell us that our sex drive is virtually equal to our will to live.
    - This is not a bad thing! Why? Because God made us this way.
    - He designed man with a sexual desire.

- When God made man, His first command to mankind was for them to multiply.
  - Now, we all know how human reproduction is carried out.
  - Therefore, we find that God has made man a sexual being.
6. The problem is, our sexuality has been corrupted by sin!
  7. The Bible clearly shows that God's plan for the sexual relationship is to be between a husband and his wife only.
  8. Any form of sexual expression outside the marital relationship is sinful!
  9. This is the very area addressed by the 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment.
  10. Not since Sodom and Gomorrah has there been such lax relationships between the sexes as there is today.
  11. The plays that run the longest, the movies that draw the largest crowds, the websites and magazines with the widest circulation, all do so because their content of vivid descriptions of illicit, immoral sex.
  12. When we think of adultery, we automatically think of a man or woman being unfaithful to their spouse.
  13. Countless broken homes and families attest to the viciousness of this sin!
- B. Yet, this Commandment is far broader than just this.
1. In Matthew Our Lord said,

Matthew 5:28, "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."

2. Any sexual expression outside the confines of the marital relationship is a sin against God!

## **I. Marriage is sacred, and adultery is forbidden:**

- A. As I said a moment ago, all of us have to admit that we live in a time when sexuality, and the expression of it, is rampant in our society.
- B. Sex is found on the television, in magazines, on the internet and billboards.
- C. Ad producers, truthfully, tell their clients that sex sells.
  1. The reality is, that the majority of people like it and want it.
  2. And those that would stand against the tide of blatant sexual expression are labeled hate mongers and threats to national security.
  3. If our society were somehow found by researchers from a distant time, they would without doubt conclude that this is a society obsessed with sex!
- D. When Jesus was on the earth, He looked at His culture and labeled it, "an adulterous and sinful generation" (Mark 8:38).
- E. What would He say about 21<sup>st</sup> Century America?
- F. Consequently this message is just as relevant today as it was in the day our Lord walked the earth!

1. Surveys reveal that nearly 50% of all men say they have committed adultery,
2. That is just the number that will admit to it!
3. Researchers estimate the nearly two-thirds of all married men will commit adultery before the age of 40.)
4. 41% of married women also say they are guilty of this sin.
5. The statistics are just as bad among those who claim to be Christians.
6. Christianity Today did a random sampling of 1000 subscribers and questioned them on the matter of Adultery.
  - 45% said they had acted inappropriately
  - 23% said they had committed adultery.
7. It is a relevant subject because it has a negative effect on our young people.
  - Again, surveys show that 1/5 of youth lose their virginity before the age of 13!
  - It is no wonder that AIDs, sexually transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies are on the increase.
  - A survey found that 40% of youth in evangelical churches were sexually active.
  - The survey also found that 60% of single adults in these churches were not only sexually active, but over half reported having multiple partners!
  - This attitude can all be traced back to a lack of morality and standards at home!

- When children see their parents living immoral lives, it sends the message that sexual immorality is acceptable.

G. God is still against adultery!

1. Immutable God hates it and is still punishing those who are guilty of it.

H. Adultery is a very destructive sin!

I. Adultery is a sin against:

## **II. One's Spouse:**

Adultery does incredible damage to one's spouse!

- A. Genesis 2:24 tells us that when a man and woman marry, they become one flesh.
  1. When one of the partners joins with a person outside that marriage contract, they have broken that bond and have joined with another person. 1 Corinthians 6:16
  2. Adultery says to the innocent spouse, "You weren't good enough for me."
  3. Adultery has the power to destroy the self-esteem of the innocent victim.
  4. Adultery destroys trust! The innocent spouse will have a hard time ever trusting the other spouse!
  5. Perhaps this is why Jesus gave an escape clause in cases of sexual Immorality.

Matthew 19:3-9, "The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause? And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And

said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away? He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so. And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.”

6. The marriage must be "adultery proofed!"

- How is this done?
- By giving heed to the command given by Paul.

1 Corinthians 7:1-5, “Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me: It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.”

7. Adultery is also an attack at one's children!

- Examples:
- David's children followed in his footsteps. Amnon raped his half-sister Tamar.
- Absalom took his father's concubines unto himself.

- Sexual immorality has a way of filtering down to the children.
- A person's spiritual influence is also compromised when they commit adultery.
- Their children lose respect for a parent that destroys the family over illicit and indecent pleasures.

### **III. Adultery is also a sin against yourself:**

Adultery does incredible damage to one's self!

- A. Adultery, among believers, is the result of being in a backslidden condition.
  1. Then, once that line is crossed, the enemy will continue to attack in that area.
  2. Then committing adultery the second, third, fourth times will not be as hard because the will has been softened and one's guard is let down.
  3. Many people are guilty of adultery even though they have never had sexual relations with another person.
    - In Matthew 5:28 the Lord tells us that adultery is as much a matter of heart and mind as it is of the flesh.
    - So called "girl watching," pornography, sexual fantasies, etc. all lead to adultery of the heart and make a person just as guilty as physical adultery!
  4. There will be a terrible price to pay for crossing that line.

Proverbs 6:26-33, "For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his



bosom, and his clothes not be burned? Can one go upon hot coals, and his feet not be burned? So he that goeth in to his neighbour's wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house. But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away. For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts."

5. Committing adultery will your destroy witness and testimony.

- Every time I see Jimmy Swaggart I immediately think of his fall.
- When he starts speaking to people of their soul I wonder how many people remind him of his own shortcoming.
- When you hear King David mentioned how many of us think of his sin with Bathsheba before the wonderful things he did as king?
- Nathan's words to David still ring true today,

II Sam. 12:14, "Howbeit, because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme, the child also that is born unto thee shall surely die."

6. How can a person guard themselves? Adopt the attitude of the Psalmist

Psalm 100:3, "Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Notice Job 31:1-11, "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid? For what portion of

God is there from above? and what inheritance of the Almighty from on high? Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity? Doth not he see my ways, and count all my steps? If I have walked with vanity, or if my foot hath hastened to deceit; Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity. If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands; Then let me sow, and let another eat; yea, let my offspring be rooted out. If mine heart have been deceived by a woman, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door; Then let my wife grind unto another, and let others bow down upon her. For this is an heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges."

- B. We are to guard our eyes, our body, and our mind.
- C. When we put the right stuff, we will get the right results in return.
- D. In the world in which we live today, it is hard to avoid sexual stimulation. Therefore, we are to be on our best guard at all times!

#### **IV. Adultery is detrimental to Society:**

- A. As goes the family, so goes the society.
  - 1. When the family unit is being destroyed, society, as a whole, is in danger of collapsing.
  - 2. In fact, every great empire that has fallen has done so as the result of sexual immorality!
  - 3. Is America next? It all depends on what we do with our sexuality!
    - Homosexuality, pornography, and immorality are quickly becoming the norm of our society.
    - But let us, as Christians, stand against this sin.

- Let us covenant together and vow to God that we will guard our homes and our lives against these evil sins.
4. Immorality in the life of a member of the church can tarnish the testimony and influence of the entire church.
  5. Adultery is such a sin against society that G. Campbell Morgan said, "The adulterer is the enemy of the state. My personal persuasion is that it is an act of treason to the state to allow adulterers and adulteresses to go free and unpunished. The greatness of a people depends upon the purity and strength of the people, and in every nation where the marriage relation is violated with impunity the virus of death is surely and certainly at work."
  6. God's tells His people to avoid this type of behavior.

Ephesians 5:3, 4, "But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks."

#### **IV. Lastly, adultery is a sin against the Savior:**

- A. Those who are saved want to please the Lord.
- B. Nothing displeases Him more than one of His children committing adultery.
- C. Of all the reasons for not committing adultery this is the greatest! (Joseph – Gen. 39:9)
- D. God made several statements concerning adultery:
  1. Adultery was considered the "great sin" – Genesis 20:9; 39:9.

2. Adultery was punishable by death – Leviticus 20:10.
  3. It may not seem so, but God is still punishing adultery today according to Ephesians 5:1-7; I Corinthians 6:9-10.
  4. The sin of adultery destroys that which was created to be the most visible and closest approximation of God's relationship to His people, marriage – Ephesians 5:22-23.
  5. God's prohibition against adultery was given to protect the home which He had established – Exodus 20:14!
- E. When a person commits adultery, the cause of Christ is hindered and the Name of Jesus is dragged down.
- F. Our duty is to be as sexually pure as we can be. We are to avoid any activity that may fuel passion and lead to adultery.

## **Conclusion:**

- A. I believe that no one in this auditorium is committing the sin of adultery.
- B. But no one is immune!
- C. There are five steps which can be taken that will safeguard your life against this horrible sin.
  1. Walk With God – Gal. 5:16 – If we are doing this daily, we will have the ammunition available to be able to stand when temptation arises – Eph. 6:10-17.
  2. Avoid Suggestive Activities - remember Psalm 100:3 - Never allow your eyes to behold things that will cause you to stumble. Keep a clean life!

3. Avoid Flirty Relationships – Stay far away from the person who is flirty, watch out for that "friendship" which could lead to other things.
  - No one just wakes up one day and says "I think I'll go out and commit adultery today."
  - It is always the result of things building up on top of other things that leads to that point.
  - If you can stay from those little things, the big one will never happen to you!
4. Count The Cost – Take a minute to look at the incredible damage that can be done to your spouse, your Lord, your children and your own life.
5. Nobody, however great the body, is worth the loss you will suffer!
6. Love Your Mate Only – Proverbs 5:15-21.
7. If it is too late and you are guilty of committing adultery:
  - Perhaps not physically, but in your heart and mind)
  - Maybe your sin is a secret one, you look at pornography, or watch and read things that cause you to lust in your heart
8. There is hope and forgiveness in the blood of Jesus.
9. He promises us in 1 John 1:9 that He will forgive all our sins when we confess them to Him.

# "Thou Shalt not Kill"

**Text:** Exodus 20:13, "Thou shalt not kill."

I John 3:15, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him."

## **Introduction:**

- A. In this message we will examine God's sixth commandment.
  1. Statistics show that one American is shot, stabbed, beaten, or strangled to death every minute.
  2. It seems that no matter where you turn in our society, or even our world, there are murders.
    - Some of the most popular television shows are full of murder.
    - Most best seller books and movies have murder as a main plot in them.
    - But the reality is it that it is takes place on the streets of every city in American and around the world.
    - With a murder rate of 10 in every 100,000, your chances of being murdered are far greater than your chances of dying in an airplane crash.
    - Murder is a horrible crime against God and against one's fellow man.
    - It may be the greatest offence of all given the enormity of death and what follows thereafter.

- Imagine taking a person's life and that person going immediately into Hell.

B. The 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill."

1. A more specific interpretation would be, "Thou shalt do no murder."
2. God is very specific in this matter of the taking of human life.
3. God forbids murder, but this does not include all killing!
4. You see, while all murder is killing, not all killing is murder.
5. Murder is more than just taking a life!

A. Murder can be defined as the premeditated and intentional taking of another human life.

1. The purpose of premeditated murder is revenge. (Rom. 12:19)
2. Anger precedes premeditated murder.

B. Accidental killing would not be classified as murder.

1. We have an example of this in the Bible.
2. In Numbers 35:11-28, God gave Israel regulations for "Cities of Refuge."
  - These were cities to which someone who had unintentionally killed another human could flee to avoid the "avenger of blood."
3. If you were involved in an automobile accident and accidentally killed another human, then you would not be a murderer.

C. Capital punishment is not considered murder.

1. God's Word gives us the principle that for certain offences, man has the right to terminate another human life.

Genesis 9:6, "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man."

Numbers 35:16-18, "And if he smite him with an instrument of iron, so that he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. And if he smite him with throwing a stone, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death. Or if he smite him with an hand weapon of wood, wherewith he may die, and he die, he is a murderer: the murderer shall surely be put to death."

Leviticus 24:17, "And he that killeth any man shall surely be put to death."

2. Whether or not you personally agree with capital punishment or not, it is plain to see that the Bible authorizes it in cases of murder.
- D. Killings that take place in the exercise of "just war" would not be classified as murder.
1. Throughout the history of the world, nations have had to defend their borders or other weaker nations against aggressive enemies.
  2. The Bible gives us instances where God told His people to enter into war.
  3. Those who kill in "just war" are not murderers.
- E. Killings someone in the act of self-defense cannot be classified as murder.
1. Often, police officers must kill in the line of duty.
  2. Homeowners may have to kill an intruder to protect home and family.



3. Sometimes, people are attacked and must defend themselves.
  4. When they kill the attacker in the process, they are not classed as murderers.
  5. These people are not murderers.
- F. However, there are times when killing is murder and that is what the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment deals with.

## **I. Murder intrudes into God's territory:**

A. God controls man's entrance into life.

1. When man first appeared on this planet, it was at the command of Almighty God.

Genesis 1:27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."

2. The evolutionists tell us that man evolved from a lower life form.
  - They say that life began on some prehistoric beach, where, by some means, a lifeless blob of protoplasm somehow began to live.
  - Then, by some means, this little living blob began to change and eventually all the life on the earth evolved from this blobese humble beginnings.
3. However, God's Word tells the truth concerning the creation of all that is in the world!

Genesis 2:7, "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

- God made man from dirt and gave him life.

- King David speaks of the origin of human life in Psalm 139:13, 14,

“For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.”

- Again Job’s friend Elihu’s spoke of his own beginnings,

Job 33:4, “The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.”

4. It is plain from these verses that God created man and that he is not the product of evolved protoplasm.
5. Since God controls the entrance of man into life, it stands to reason that...

B. God controls the exit of man from life.

Ecclesiastes 3:2, “A time to be born, and a time to die.”

1. This verse makes it very clear that God is in control of a person’s life.
2. He is the One who establishes the boundaries across which no man can cross,

Job 14:5, “Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass.”

Psalm 104:29-31, “Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth. The glory of the LORD shall endure for ever: the LORD shall rejoice in his works.”

3. According to Psalm 139:16 God planned the exact number of our days on earth before we were born.
4. In Exodus 23:26 He has promised to ensure that we live out the full number of our days.
  - Therefore, neither Satan nor any man can shorten our life.
  - However, we can improve our life on earth through exercise, eating right, etc.
  - We can also do harm to our body by disobeying God's laws for our physical body (overeating, bad eating habits, smoking, drinking, not getting enough sleep, lack of exercise, etc.).
  - Sin makes its marks and takes its toll on our lives.
5. It seems that men can do certain things that will shorten or lengthen their days upon the earth.
  - Our Lord died at age 33, James 33, Paul 67, while John lived beyond 95.
  - David Brainerd died at 29 while his contemporary John Wesley lived to be 88.
  - God's will for each of His children is different.
6. Life, as all things are subject to the sovereignty of God.
  - Therefore, no man has the right to deliberately and intentionally end the life of another, except it be for those things already mentioned.
  - God is the giver of human life and He alone must be the taker of human life.

- When a person takes it upon themselves to take the life of another, they have placed themselves in the place of God.
- They have tried to assume His position and power.
- They have tried to step into an area in which they have absolutely no authority.

## **II. Murder interrupts a human life:**

A. Murder can be carried out in many ways:

Webster's New World College Dictionary defines murder as:

"The unlawful and malicious or premeditated killing of one human being by another."

B. Now, here are some of the various ways murder can be committed?

1. Physical Murder – This is the killing of another human being.

- Murder has a history as long as that of the world itself.
- The first murder is recorded in Genesis 4:8 where Cain deliberately and with malice, took the life of his brother Abel.
- It was not self-defense, it was murder.
- Since that day, the history of the world is marked by a constant murder.
- Statistics show that there is a murder every 60 seconds.

- We live in an area where there are not too many murders, but there are many who live under to constant threat of violence.

## 2. Personal Murder – or the act of suicide.

- Each of us has been impacted by the act of suicide. Whether an acquaintance, a family member, a loved one.
- Suicide leaves emotional scars in the lives of those left that never fully heal.
- Often person commit suicide because the circumstances get out of hand.
- Or because they feel overwhelmed and unable to cope any longer with their lives and they decide to end it.
- However, the person committing suicide never things about the lives they are affecting.
- Suicide is a selfish and sinful way to leave the world.
- Just as no man has the right to murder another, no man has the right to murder self.
- Again, life and death are the sovereign acts of Almighty God.
- We live in a time when every 90 minutes a teenager tries to take his/her life. Every 30 minutes one succeeds!
- When a person resorts to suicide, they are failing to avail themselves of the grace of God.

- There is also another side to Personal Murder, a side of which far more people are guilty.
  - How often has a doctor told someone, "If you don't stop this or that, then you will die?" And, how often has that person chosen to go right on with their bad habits and died?
  - Whether it is over in a moment, or whether it takes years, the results are the same. Even suicide can be a slow process.
3. Physician Assisted Murder – Euthanasia or "mercy killing."
- This form of death has been brought to the public's attention by the activities of a Dr. Jack Kavorian, also known as "Dr. Death."
  - Dr. Death helps terminally ill people, or those who are in extreme pain, end their lives.
  - He does this with the aid of a "suicide machine."
  - The "patient" presses a button, and a lethal dose of chemicals is injected into their bloodstream, which causes death.
  - Most of us hear this and think it is horrible and outrageous.
  - I find it amazing that they can't seem to convict this madman.
  - While we think this is barbaric, some countries around the world have legalized physician-assisted suicide.

- It is possible to go to the doctor and be put to death in the office.
- The day is coming when it will happen here too.
- The burden of health care for the aged, for the infirm, for the dying will be the catalyst that pushes "mercy killings" into acceptability and into law!

#### 4. Pre-natal Murder –abortion!

- According to the Bible, life begins at the very moment of conception, Psa. 139:13-16; Jer. 1:5; Luke 1:41.
- Yet, our society seem to view the unborn human as just so much waste material to be thrown away at the mother's convenience.
- Since abortion on demand was legalized in the US, there have been over 37 million abortions performed in this country.
- Somewhere around 4,300 per day, or 1 every 20 seconds!
- The Awful procedure called "partial birth abortion."
- Pro-death advocates claim that the mother deserves the right to choose.
- In my opinion, she made her choice when she decided to have sexual intercourse without protection!
- Abortion is murder! It ends a human life, and that is the domain of Almighty God.

- When a country refuses to respect and protect the lives of its most helpless citizens, no one is truly safe.

### **III. Murder involves more than killing:**

#### A. Murder includes the element of justice

1. Murder carries with it a penalty.
2. In Matthew 5:21-22 the Lord states that murder has a penalty and that murders will be punished.
  - Some seems to have gotten away with murder.
  - They will, however, face God one day and He will render perfect justice – Rev. 20:11-15.
3. Others have been caught, tried and convicted.
  - Some of these are in prison and other have and will pay with their lives. This is part of murder.
  - Some inmates have been saved, yet they will still die for their crime. Is this fair? Yes it is!
  - Carla Faye Tucker murdered 2 people while high on drugs and was sentenced to die. She was saved and became a model Christian and prisoner. Many thought she should have her sentence commuted. Yet she was executed February 3, 1998.
  - There is a price to be paid for murder!

Romans 13:4, "For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he



beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.”

- B. Murder Involves The Element Of Judgment – It is possible to murder another human being and not shed an ounce of blood, or even take their life.
1. Murder can happen in the heart and mind and never find manifestation in reality.
  2. However, in the Lord’s eyes, the murderer is just as guilty.

Matthew 5:22, “But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.”

1 John 3:15, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.”

3. Many people have had their reputations ruined and pure old envy, malice, and hatred have murdered their testimonies.
4. In 1 John 3 the Apostle declares that all who hate their brethren are murderers.
  - He could have said nothing more atrocious; nor is what is said hyperbolic, or exaggerated.
  - A person that is full of hatred wishes the person they hate to perish.
  - It does not matter if that person does not commit the actual act of murder, the Scripture says that the very desire to do harm, as well as the attempt, is condemned before God.

- So wishing or hoping that evil will happen to someone else is considered as murder.
- Thus murder is more than an act of the flesh, it is an attitude of the heart.

#### **IV. The greatest murder of all:**

- A. The murder took place over 2000 years ago outside the walls of Jerusalem, when the Lord Jesus Christ was crucified.
- B. It was an atrocity, for He had done absolutely no wrong.
- C. Yet God allowed it that He might redeem those given Him of the Father before the foundation of the world.
- D. His resurrection and ascension assure the believer of:
  1. Acceptance by the Father
  2. Intercession by our High Priest in heaven
  3. Assurance of the needed power for life and service
  4. Assurance of our resurrection and immortality.

#### **Conclusions:**

- A. The sixth Commandments forbids the unjustified taking of a human life.
- B. Second, we have discussed the difference between “murder” and “killing.”
- C. And lastly we have saw that murder is not just physical in nature but also a condition of one’s heart towards another.

# "Thou Shalt Not Steal"

**Text:** Exodus 20:15, 'Thou shalt not steal.'

Hebrews 13:5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

## **Introduction:**

- A. In the sixth commandment God demanded our respect for human life - "Thou shalt not kill."
- B. In the seventh He demanded our respect for marriage.
- C. In this the Eight we see that God also demands we respect the human right of ownership.
  - 1. This is the only commandment given in the ten concerning property.
  - 2. The other nine deals with man's relationship to God and to his fellowman.
  - 3. Or what man is and what he does with himself.
  - 4. God is more interested in the spiritual than in the material, yet He realizes that due to our worldly nature we need to be cautioned not to steal.

## **I. The right of ownership is God-given:**

- A. It must be God-given because everything belongs to God.

Psalm 24:1, "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

(Repetition) I Corinthians 10:26, "For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof."

1. Christians should realize that it all belongs to God and that He will give us all our needs.

Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

- B. God first gave Adam the right of ownership.

"Dominion" carries with it the right of ownership.

- C. All the great men of the Old Testament owned property Abraham, David, Solomon, etc.
- D. A man is always a better citizen and more contented if he owns something.
- E. The right of ownership brings with it the responsibility to honor God with our material wealth.

Acts 2:41-47, "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; **And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.** And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

1. Those who had "possessions" particularly "property" sold as much as was necessary in order to procure the means of providing for other.
2. Then those things needed were purchased and distributed to supply the necessities of poorer brethren.

3. As every man had need. This expression limits and fixes the meaning of what is said before. The passage does not mean that they sold all their possessions, or that they relinquished their title to all their property; but that they so far regarded all as common as to be willing to part with it IF it was needful to supply the wants of the others.
4. Hence the property was laid at the disposal of the apostles, and they were desired to distribute it freely to meet the wants of the poor, Acts 4:34, 35.
5. This was an important incident in the early propagation of religion; and it may suggest many useful reflections.
  - First, we see the effect of religion.
  - The love of property is one of the strongest affections which men have.
  - There is nothing that will overcome it but religion.
  - Thus one of the first effects of the gospel was to loosen the hold of Christians on property.
  - The early church felt it their duty to provide for needy members.
  - There is no doubt that those who possessed property, after their conversion, regarded their property as a means to supply those who had need.
6. Someone might ask “why the early disciples evinced this readiness to part with their property in this manner,”

- The reason was that the apostles had done it before them.
  - The family of the Savior had all things common.
  - Secondly, it was the nature of religion to do it.
  - The circumstances of the people assembled on this occasion require it.
  - Why? Many of them were from distant regions; and many of them of the poorer class of the people in Jerusalem.
  - In this they evinced what should be done in behalf of the poor in the church at all times.
7. The next question – Was this done commonly among the early Christians?
- The answer is no! There is no evidence that it was.
  - It is mentioned here, and in #Ac 4:32-37 5:1-4.
  - But it does not appear that it was practiced by those who were afterwards converted in Judea.
  - Nor is there evidence that it was done in Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, Rome, etc.
  - So, this was an extraordinary case that we do not find practiced anywhere else.
  - In fact, no community where all things were in common has long prospered.

- It has been attempted by pagans, infidels, and fanatical sects of Christians.
  - But it ends in anarchy, idleness, and licentiousness; and the more cunning secure and control the mass.
8. God evidently intended that men should be excited to industry by the hope of gain; and then he demands that their gains should be devoted to his service.

## **II. There are only three ways that one acquires ownership:**

### **A. As a gift.**

1. Salvation is a gift from God.

Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"

2. Possessions are also a gift from God.

Ecclesiastes 5:19, "Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God."

Genesis 17: 8, "And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God."

### **B. By honest work.**

1. In Genesis 31 we have the account of Jacob who labored very hard and was rewarded of the Lord for those labors.
2. Honest work is the most common method by which men gain possessions.

Ephesians 4:28, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather **let him labour**, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth."

C. The third method is by stealing.

1. Millions of dollars are lost every year in this country over the theft of goods and services.
2. One estimate says that 1 out of every 52 shopper's carries something out of the supermarket for which they haven't paid.
3. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, 4 million people are caught shoplifting every year.
4. But for every one caught, 35 others get away with it. This means that there are over 140 million incidents of shoplifting every year in America!
5. What's really tragic is that only 10% of all shoplifters come from low incomes. 70% are middle class and 20% are classified as wealthy.
6. Regardless of the reason, stealing is wrong!
7. In our text God condemns it and declares it to be a sin.

### III. Three cases of stealing:

A. **Real property.**

1. By direct seizure as spoken of above.
2. Honesty should not be just the "**best policy**" for Christians; it should be our **only** policy.
3. A small theft makes a person just as guilty of stealing as a large one.

B. Secondly, we have **stealing by fraud.**



1. God help the Christian who compromises honesty with the phrases, "business is business", or "they all do it". (Deut. 25: 13-15).
  
2. There is no difference in God's eyes between a person who would steal by taking what does not belong to him and a person who would steal by:
  - As An Employer – underpaying employees are underpaid, over worked and treated badly.
  
  - Devaluing real estate in order to purchase it cheaply.
  
  - God has certain principles, which are to be followed by employers – Col. 4:1.
  
  - However, I am of the opinion that there is less theft among employers than there is among employees!

After F. E. Marsh preached on this subject, a young man came to him and said, "Pastor, you have put me in a bad fix. I've stolen from my employer, and I'm ashamed to tell him about it. I'm a boat builder, and the man I work for is an unbeliever. I have often talked to him about Christ, but he only laughs at me. In my work, expensive copper nails are used because they won't rust in water. I've been taking some of them home for a boat I am building in my backyard. I'm afraid if I tell my boss what I've done and offer to pay for them, he'll think I'm a hypocrite, and I'll never have the opportunity to speak to him about Christ again. Yet, my conscience is bothered." Later when the young man told Pastor Marsh, "Pastor, I've settled that matter and I'm so relieved." "What happened when you told your boss?" "Oh, he looked at me and said, 'George, I've always thought you were a hypocrite, but now I'm not so sure. Maybe there's something to your Christianity after all. Any religion that makes a man admit he's been stealing a few copper nails and offer to settle for them must be worth having."

- Cheating on income tax, etc.
- Parents defraud in order to "get a better deal" and then wonder why their children are dishonest.
- There is no such thing as keeping theft by defrauding a secret. (Num. 32:23)

A man was employed to build a massive arch on the campus of Leland Stamford University. Instead of filling the center of the columns with expensive concrete, he filled them with rubbish and building debris. One day an earthquake shook a section of the state and the arch fell in ruins. The man's dishonest act was revealed to the world.

#### C. By **failure to pay our debts.**

1. This is a contemptible form of robbery.
2. Many people judge Christ, the Church, and Christianity by the way we pay our debts.
3. The outside world does not read the Bible, it reads our lives.
4. What do you think they must feel about Christianity when you don't pay your bills?
5. Zacchaeus gave the people of Jericho confidence in Christianity when his conversion caused him to restore four-fold that which he had stolen from them.

#### D. "Personal property" such as:

1. **Reputation** - God hates gossipers and those who listen to gossip. (Prov. 26:22)
2. **Virtue** – Christians honor God by living a virtues life. Virtue is behavior showing high moral standards.

E. There is one manner of stealing that only a Christian can commit:

1. The stealing of “spiritual property” or that which belongs to God.

- "Will a man rob God?" (Mal. 3: 8)
- Of tithes and offerings. God can certainly make \$9 go farther than you can make \$10 go.
- Of time. Do you tithe 16.8 hours per week to God?
- Talents – The Bible is clear when it tells us that when we are saved, we are given certain gifts from the Heavenly Father – 1 Cor. 12:7-27.
- When we fail to exercise our God given gifts and talents, we are guilty of stealing from the Lord.
- When we fail to fill our place in His body, we are thieves and robbers.
- Our lives are gifts and they are to be invested for the glory of God.

2. The consequences of stealing from God!

When we steal spiritual property God ceases to hear our prayers. (Prov.28:9)

F. And the last thing that is stolen from the Lord - Doctrine.

Deuteronomy 27:17, “Cursed be he that removeth his neighbour’s landmark. And all the people shall say, Amen.”

1. This verse speaks of the physical land markers that distinguish property lines.
2. By calling ourselves Landmark Baptist Church we speak of the Spiritual or doctrinal landmark or truths that we hold very precious.
3. This means preachers and lay people that deny or "water down" the great doctrines of:
  - Salvation - John14:6
  - Church truth – Baptism - Local church
  - Hell - (Luke 16:23) (Ephesians 5:25)

#### **IV. God's remedy for stealing – a clear conscience:**

I Timothy 1:18-19, "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare; Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck."

##### A. Why do we need a clear conscience?

1. It is the mark of a mature Christian. (Hebrews 5: 13-14)
2. It is necessary for a right relationship with God and with men. (Acts 24:16)
3. It is an essential weapon of Christian warfare. (I Timothy 1:18-19)
4. It is necessary in order to share your faith with others. (I Peter 3:16)

##### B. Rationalizations that will keep you from gaining a clear conscience.

1. "It happened a long time ago." --- Why do you still remember it?
2. "It was such a small offense." --- Why is it bothering you?
3. "I'm being too sensitive." --- Maybe you are just discerning between good and evil.
4. "No one's perfect!" --- The standard of perfection is set too low.
5. "They won't understand." You will be amazed.
6. "Making it right will involve money which I don't have." --- Better to have an honest debt than a dishonest weight of conscience.
7. "I'll do it later." --- No you won't.

C. How to gain a clear conscience.

1. Make a list all of those which you have stolen from (Don't forget God!)
2. List them in order of importance.
3. Carefully think through how you will say when asking forgiveness and making restitution.
4. Get prepared, God will give you the opportunity.

## **Conclusions:**

In all honesty all of would have to admit that we are guilty of stealing in one form or another.

If this is the case in your life, then God's Word says that when we steal, we are to repay – Eze. 33:15-16.

We are to practice restitution to those we have wronged. We are to make it right.

# **“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”**

Exodus 20:16, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”

Ephesians 4:25, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another."

## **Introduction:**

- A. Lying and sin have never been separated - they are always together.
- B. Men lie when they sin and sin when they lie.
- C. God hates the sin of lying, and yet Satan has been victorious in the lives of many Christians in this area.
- D. We will study this week of the many reasons why God distinctly prohibits bearing false witness.

## **I. The Importance of Words:**

- A. One gift God gave man that He gave no other creature is the "power of speech".
- B. Thus we see that the 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment has to do with controlling One's tongue.
- C. The spoken word is powerful.
  - 1. It can persuade.
  - 2. It can comfort.
  - 3. It can bring happiness.
  - 4. It can bring sadness.

5. It can cause hunger.

6. It can create desire.

D. It is the mark of a mature Christian to be able to bridle his tongue.

James 3:1-10, "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body. Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be."

E. The written word is powerful.

The reading material found in a home is a good indication of that family's morals and convictions.

## **II. The Bible's message about lying:**

A. Lies are fathered by Satan.

John 8:44, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no

truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.”

1. Satan’s first recorded words are a lie he spoke.
2. He is the father of lies!

B. Christ is the truth.

John 14:6, “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, **the truth**, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”

- C. All the sin and trouble in this world began with lying. (Gen. 3:4)
- D. Lies of false witnesses put Jesus Christ on the cross. (Mark 14:56-60)

### **III. Common violations of this commandment:**

A. It is violated in courts of justice.

1. Justice is based on truth, and truth becomes more scarce with each passing day.
  - Witnesses are sworn to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.
  - Yet a witness can be charged with perjury (lying under oath).
2. It seems as if many of our criminal lawyers are more "criminal" than "lawyer."
  - Hide, conceal, motion that certain truth not be allowed.
  - Tell their witnesses not to tell certain things, and try to stop others from telling all the facts.

B. This commandment is violated by direct lies.



1. Lying is “any type” of designed deception.
2. There is no such thing as a "harmless white lie".
3. Businessmen say, "We have to do a little bit of lying or starve". Better to starve!
4. You are not forced to exaggerate in order to live or be popular. (Luke 12:31).
5. God's nature does not change. He still hates liars.

Proverbs 12:22, “Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight.

Proverbs 19:5, “A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.”

C. This commandment is also violated by gossip and slander.

1. A scorpion carries poison in its tail, a snake carries poison in his cheek, but a slanderer and a gossipier carries poison in his tongue.
2. Many people don't own much more than a good name, and when that good name is murdered by gossip they have nothing left at all. (Proverbs 22:1).
  - Unfortunately, many people enjoy verbally attacking others. (Jer.18:18)
  - Some attack over the telephone, some over the back yard fence, other's outside the church door.
  - It takes a skilled craftsman to build a building, but any day laborer can tear down an old building.

- Likewise, anyone can tear down character, it takes a real Christian to build it.
3. One of Satan's most valuable servants is the gossip and the slanderer.
    - In all reality, few people realize the awesome, destructive power of the human tongue.
    - Because of a miss-spoken word, homes have been splintered, reputations shattered and lives literally destroyed and even ended.
    - That little piece of muscle that lies in your mouth behind your lips and your teeth bless or bruise, heal or hurt, love or lambast.
    - It all depends on how we use it.
  4. This verse deals primarily with one's testimony in a trial setting.
    - God says that we must never be guilty of lying on our neighbor thereby causing him to suffer.
    - We are exhorted to always be truthful and absolutely honest when dealing with another person.
    - As we consider some of what God has said about the tongue, may He help us to understand that every time we speak of someone else, we literally hold that person's reputation in our hands.
  5. The heart of true Christianity is love - John 3: 16
    - Before speaking ill of anyone, think of them in terms of love. Remember your own failings and shortcomings.

- Maintain a servant's heart. This involves becoming excited about making someone else successful.
6. All gossip should be submitted to the test of reason.
- One man said that if he had his way the slanderer would be hung by his tongue and those who listened to him would be hung by their ears.
- D. The 9<sup>th</sup> commandment is also violated by evil insinuations.
1. This involves suggestion rather than accusation.
  2. One of the most evil insinuations is the statement followed by the question mark.

**Illustration:** One man said, "The pastor is certainly a godly man". His listener made an insinuation by merely saying, "Is that right?", or "Oh?"

- E. It is violated by flattery.
1. Men flatter to further their own selfish desires. (Psa. 55: 21)
  2. Insincerity is lying.
- F. It is violated when we remain silent instead of defending the just.

If reputation is at stake, speak up!

- G. It is violated by fault finding and unjust criticism.
1. Our opinions should be formed in the light of God's Word.
  2. We criticize when we don't know all the facts.

3. We also criticize when we look for the worst in others instead of the best.

H. It is violated by hypocrisy.

This means lying with your life.

I. It is violated by lying to God.

- If your life and your desires did not change after you were saved, you are a contradiction to scripture. (II Cor. 5:17)
- Rededications are meaningless unless lives are changed.
- Satan is the biggest liar of all.
- He has men believing they can sin and get away with it.

#### **IV. The Consequences of breaking the 9<sup>th</sup> Commandment:**

- A. God has a place reserved for liars in the lake of fire.
- B. Another of the terrible consequences is that slanderous words can never be recalled.

A woman gossiped about her pastor. She was a Christian and went to her pastor and apologized to him. Then he said, "I forgive you, but I want you to do something for me." She readily agreed. He gave her a basket of feathers and told her to go to each corner of the community and throw a handful of feathers into the wind. When she had done this she came back to the preacher to report to him that the task had been completed. "No", he said, "you must now go out and gather all those feathers up again". "But", she said, "That would be impossible". Then he taught her the lesson that when slander has been spread abroad, it can never be recalled.

C. No doctor can heal wounds caused by the tongue.

1. A person's reputation is one of their most valuable possessions.
2. According to the Bible, one's "good name", or reputation, is far more valuable than riches or expensive ointments, Prov. 22:1; Eccl. 7:1.
3. A person's reputation determines the level of respect they receive.
  - No one has much confidence in a person that is dishonest, deceptive, or lives in a sinful or shameful manner.
  - Most people do everything possible to guard and protect their name from being associated with anything disrespectful and shameful.
  - Yet, a lie can easily destroy a person's reputation.
  - Therefore, a person that lies, or gossips can do unspeakable damage to a person's life.
  - They can destroy that person's reputation and credibility before others.

The words of a false witness can be forgiven, but they will never be taken back, nor will they be forgotten by those who are touched by their poison!

Eternal damage can be done to reputations and ministries.

## **V. The Remedy:**

- A. Clean words come from a clean heart.
- B. Our words should be acceptable in God's sight.  
(Psa. 19:14, Psa. 120:2)

- C. The Lord will help us keep our speech pure.
  - 1. If you will stop and ask God to forgive you each time you fail him in your conversation, you will soon have a much purer speech. (I John 1:9)
  - 2. Daily Bible study will help keep our speech pure. (John 15:1-3)
- D. Our words should be a source of inspiration and comfort to others (Prov. 10:11, 16:24, 25:11).

## **Conclusions:**

- A. The Lord said, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”
- B. James says,  
  
“And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.”
- C. The words of a false witness can be forgiven, but they will never be taken back, nor will they be forgotten by those who are touched by their poison!
- D. Eternal damage can be done to reputations and ministries.
- E. The only thing that will clean up a man’s speech for good is Jesus Christ, for He cleans up the heart first!
- F. Salvation emphasis.

# Thou Shalt Not Covet

Exodus 20:17, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."

## Introduction:

A. This is the last of the Ten Commandments.

1. The first and the 10<sup>th</sup> act as "bookends."
2. The First commandments sums it all up toward God,

"Thou shall have no other gods before me."

3. The last, "sums it up toward men.

"Thou shall not covet."

4. "To covet" means, to want something of the world so badly that we lose all thought of God and heaven.
5. Covet in Exodus comes from the Hebrew word "**chamad**" which means, "To desire or pant after."
6. Possessions are not wrong, material wealth is not wrong, but when these things begin to take the place of God in our lives - God condemns it and hates it.
7. Water is useful for the sailing of a ship, but when the water gets into the ship there is great danger.

B. The 10 Commandments, the Laws of God govern life on earth.

- C. In the 10 Commandments we have seen the high standard of holiness that God expects His people to strive for.
- D. I trust that as we have moved along through these verses, you have seen some area in your life where you recognized the need for some correction and have made the efforts necessary to change to come in line with God's Word.

## I. When is a man covetous?

- A. When a person's thoughts are wholly taken up with the world.
  - 1. God emphasized the importance of a spiritual thought life.

Proverbs 16:3, "Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established."

- 2. If your thoughts are spiritual, you will be spiritual. If your thoughts are carnal, you will be carnal according to Proverbs 23:7.
- 3. Does the understanding that God knows even your thoughts and intents frighten or embarrass you?

Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, **and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.**"

- B. Secondly, a person is covetous when they work harder to get the things of this world rather than the things of God.
  - 1. God does not save your soul, promise to sustain and meet your every need, then expect you to work 7 days a week to pay your bills.



2. Doing so, shows that you have little or no faith that God promised in Philippians 4:19,

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

- C. Thirdly, a person is covetous when their conversation is wholly taken up with the world.

John 3:31, “He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.”

1. A question – does God, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible, the church, the things of God make up a good part of your conversations at home and at work?
  2. Or do you rarely mention these things? Do people have to ask you “are you a Christian?”
  3. They ought not have to ask! Your life, conversation, and actions should testify that you belong to the Lord.
  4. Again, do you find great pleasure in frequenting places where you can find out the latest gossip, and dirt on others, are do you use every opportunity to testify of the blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ in your life.
  5. Young people, is school a time of standing for the Lord Jesus Christ, or talking about cars, girls, boys, sports, ect. There should be a healthy mixture of both.
  6. Don’t compromise Christian values for in order to be popular, or to have friends that have no desire for spiritual things.
- D. Next, a person is covetous when their desire for material wealth or position causes them to be less than honest with others.

1. This includes dishonest in business.

I have heard people say, “You have to lye or be a little dishonest once in a while to succeed in business. (that is not true).

2. Dishonest with friends.

- Your friends tell much about you.

Mexican saying, “Diga mi con quien andas, e te diga quien eres.”

- Do you try to be friends with some people that you really don't have anything in common with, but who can help you materially or socially?
- You ought to surround yourself and your family with godly friends who will encourage you to seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

E. As we look at this 10<sup>th</sup> Commandment, the first characteristic I notice is that this Commandment represents a move away from actions into the realm of attitude.

1. While breaking all the rest of the Commandments has its origin in the heart and mind of man, they all find their ultimate expression in some type of physical activity.
2. This Commandment is different!
  - Of all the Commandments, this is probably the one most often broken and the one that will most readily cause you to break the other nine.
  - We see that covetousness is a terrible sin and one that needs to be confessed and forsaken by every child of God.

Abraham Lincoln was seen walking with his 2 sons and both the boys were crying. A passerby asked the President what was wrong with his boys. He responded, "Exactly what's wrong with the whole world," said Lincoln, "I have three walnuts and each boy wants two."

- The sin of covetousness is clearly seen in the following story.

"On the night of November 16, 1930, Mrs. Henrietta Garret, a lonely 81 year old widow died in her home in Philadelphia, and, unwillingly, started the most fantastic case of inheritance litigation in history.

She had failed to leave a will, or no will was found to her \$17,000,000 estate; a mystery still unsolved. She had expertly handled her financial affairs since her husband's death in 1895 and therefore many felt that she must have realized that without an will, her fortune would become involved in legal battles.

Although, Mrs. Garret, at the time of her death, had only one known relative, a second cousin, and less than a dozen friends; attempts to prove relationship to her and claim a part of her estate was made by more than 26,000 persons from 47 states and 29 foreign countries, represented by more than 3,000 lawyers.

In their efforts to obtain her estate, there were those that committed perjury, faked family records, changed their own names, altered data in Family Bibles and concocted absurd tales of illegitimacy. As result, 12 were confined, 10 received jail sentences, 2 committed suicide, and 3 were murdered.

3. I wonder how many would have admitted they were guilty of covetousness?"
4. There are many, who if they were honest, would have to admit that they possessed a covetous heart!

5. One cannot read the Bible without finding incidence after incidence where men wanted that which wasn't their's.
  - In the Garden of Eden, Eve coveted the forbidden fruit and brought sin and death into the world.
  - At Ai, Achen coveted some gold, silver and expensive garments and brought defeat to a nation and death to himself and his family.
  - Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard and committed murder in his attempt to grab what belonged to another.
  - David coveted Bathsheba, Uriah's wife, and as a result brought the sword of God into his household for generations.
  - Judas was motivated by a covetous heart.
  - Annanias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Ghost because they were covetous.
  - Covetousness had been a problem as long as man has been in this world.
  - Even in these last days, men still want that which isn't theirs. II Tim. 3:1-2; Luke 12:15.

## **II. Covetousness is a terrible sin:**

- A. First, it is subtle.
  1. It can be dress in the robe of virtue but in reality is a dark and terrible sin.
  2. May the Lord help us to never try to make our sin sound spiritual.
    - Gossip is a great example!

- How often do you hear, “Pray for \_\_\_\_\_. And then the person unloads all the dirt they can about them.
- Normally I would not say anything about her (or him) but I’m concerned for you because you two have been very friendly lately.

B. Covetousness is a “Mother sin.”

1. A mother sin is a sin that leads one to other sin:

- Covetousness causes people to break the first commandment by making the material, physical, or social their god.
- Likewise, it causes people to break the second by worshiping other things, homes cars, people, places, things, wealth, etc. rather than God.
- For time sake we skip to the eighth commandment where we find covetousness causing men to sin against God and may by stealing that which is not theirs.

Thieves and covetousness are linked together in I Corinthians 6:10.

- We see that Ahab and Jezebel were guilty of breaking the ninth command (bearing false witness) because they coveted a vineyard.
- We gave an example of this in the story of Mrs. Garrett.

C. God hates the sin of covetousness and judges it.

Psalm 10:3, “For the wicked boasteth of his heart’s desire, and blesseth the covetous, whom the LORD abhorreth.”

D. The sin of covetousness ruins people’s lives and cause them to have no inheritance in heaven.

Ephesians 5:5, "For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

### **III. The Fruits of covetousness in a Christian's life.**

A. It stops the Christian from growing in grace.

1. It dulls the affections and kills our compassion.
2. It quenches the fire of witnessing and personal evangelism.

B. It destroys faith

- A person cannot be covetous and live by faith.
- This is a sin

Romans 14:23, "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

C. It kills contentment.

Covetousness causes a person to not be content with what one has.

D. It Makes Us Greedy Of Gain.

1. When a person has a covetous heart, they are never satisfied with what they have!
2. There will always be a powerful urge for more.
3. It is interesting to note that the word "covet" means "To desire greatly."
4. Covetousness usually refers to an object. When a person is guilty of covetousness, they are guilty of having a heart for things instead of a heart for the Lord.

5. When a person comes to the place where they are never satisfied with God's blessings and always looking for a way to increase their possessions, they must admit that they are greedy!

#### E. It Makes Us Grab Another's Wealth

1. A covetous heart may cause you to go after things that are not yours to go after.
2. Exodus 20:17 says that we can covet property, people and possessions.
3. When we come to the place where we are willing to do anything to have that which belong to another, then we have crossed the line and are guilty of sin before the Lord.

#### F. It is wrong to covet:

1. Property - This verse refers to a neighbor's house.
  - In oriental cultures, it is not considered wrong to take things that are found to be abandoned.
  - However, if we know that something belongs to another person, we are to leave it alone.
  - In fact, we are to protect their interest in it as if it were ours. It isn't wrong for me to like my neighbor's home and to use legal means to purchase it from him, but when I resort to illegal, unethical tactics to obtain his property then I am guilty of covetousness and theft.
2. People – Verse 17 mentions my neighbor's wife.

- To desire another man's wife, or another woman's husband, is sinful.
- It is not wrong to think another man's wife is pretty, but when those thoughts cause a person to have the lustful desire to possess her, then that person is covetousness and adultery.

II Samuel 11 tells us that David resorted to lying and murder to possess Bathsheba.

### 3. Possessions:

- Among the items listed here are servants, animals and anything that belongs to one's neighbor.
- When another person possess something that you or I are determined to possess at any cost, then we would be guilty of covetousness.
- It is alright to like the same things, to possess the same things,
- but when we want that which is the property of another, then we have crossed the line and are guilty of a covetous heart before the Lord.
- When we are possessed of a covetous heart, we have ceased to trust the Lord to meet our needs and instead are looking to acquire that which belongs to another. This kind of attitude will ruin your life.

### 4. It eliminates liberality

A person cannot be a covetous and liberal person

### 5. It leads to more sin – as described above.

### 6. It destroys fellowship with the Lord.



- A covetous person will not receive God's blessing and fellowship.
- Why?

Matthew 6:24, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

#### **IV. The right way to covet.**

- A. God did not say that it was wrong for yo7r neighbor to have a fine house, a good wife, and many possessions – Exodus 20:9.
- B. It is not wrong to work hard for a good wage (Vs. 9)
- C. It is not un-Christian to own property or things.
- D. And lastly I Corinthians 12:31 tells us to "covet" the "best gifts."
  1. Desire to have a Christian atmosphere in your home.
  2. Desire to live for, honor, and glorify the Lord in your life and family.
  3. Claim God's promise to supply ALL your material needs while you concentrate on the spiritual things of God.

Philippians 4:11, "Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."

Verse 19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

#### **Conclusions:**

- A. We can never be faithful to the Lord as long as we are covetous of other things in life.

- B. We must desire to be well pleasing to the Lord Jesus Christ and His will for our life!
- C. Until we do everything else in life will be out of balance!