

## **Introduction: God's boundaries for abundant living**

The Ten Commandments: Literally translated - "The Ten Words"

### **Three things you need to know to understand the Ten Commandments:**

1. **Who** gave us the Ten Commandments?

*And God spoke all these words...*

Exodus 20:1 (NIV)

2. **When** and **to whom** did He give them?

<sup>1</sup> *And God spoke all these words:* <sup>2</sup> *"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.* <sup>3</sup> *"You shall have no other gods before Me.*

<sup>4</sup> *"You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. <sup>5</sup> You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate Me, <sup>6</sup> but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

Exodus 20:1-6 (NIV)

3. **Why** did He give them?

*Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning."*

Exodus 20:20 (NIV)

**Boundary #1:**  
**"No gods but God."**

**We are to honor God as God!**

- **What** does it mean to have no other gods before us?

➤ Take this test:

**WHO DO YOU WORSHIP?**

1. On whom do you rely? \_\_\_\_\_
2. To where does your time, energy, and money go? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who are you trying to impress? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What or who is the center of your life? \_\_\_\_\_

- **Why** does God command exclusive worship of Himself alone?

1. God's **character** demands exclusive worship of God.
2. Our **welfare** demands exclusive worship of God.

- **How** can we honor God as God?
  - **Recognize** God for who He is.
  - **Recognize** ourselves for who we are.
  - **Accept** the free gift of new birth.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. Why are **boundaries** a necessity for human relationships to work?
2. Why did God give Israel the Ten Commandments? How does that same purpose apply to us?
3. Did God ever intend the keeping of the Ten Commandments to be a means of salvation? (Read Romans 3:20)
4. What does it look like in your life to honor God as God?

**Introduction:** The little boy who “wants the bike,” in all of us...

**Review** - The focus of the First Command: [the object of worship](#)

**Preview** - The focus of the Second Command: [the method of worship](#)

*<sup>4</sup>You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth.*

*<sup>5</sup>You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, <sup>6</sup>but showing loving-kindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.*

Exodus 20:4-6 (NASB)

## Understanding the Second Command: Historical Background

### The Command restated:

Exodus 20:4-5a

- No man-made “idols” are to be used as a means of worshipping the living God (YHWH).

Exodus 20:4a

### Summary:

#### 1. God demands we worship Him in Spirit

- No man-made “likenesses” (images – real, or imagined, pictorial representations of God) are to be used as a means of worshipping the living God (YHWH).

Exodus 20:4b

#### 2. God demands we worship Him in truth

- No man-made idols or images (real, or imagined) are to be worshipped or served.

Exodus 20:5a

### The Reasons identified:

Exodus 20:5b-6

- God's character of “zealous love” demands it.
- Our future, and our children's children, requires it.

**Conclusion:**

*God is spirit, and His worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.*

John 4:24 (NIV & NASB)

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What is the difference between the First and Second Commandments?
2. In what way does each of these "Boundaries" protect our best interests?
3. Why does God so strongly abhor idols and images? How do they distort or reduce His character?
4. What does worshipping idols do to God's people?
5. How do we, as 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians, make idols in our day? How would God want this message to impact your life?

## Introduction: A study in contrasts – “Then”... and “Now”

### The Command:

*You shall not **misuse** (literally – “take up... in vain”) the **name** of the Lord your God...*

Exodus 20:7a (NIV)

### The Consequences:

*“...for the Lord will not leave him unpunished (hold him guiltless) who **misuses** (takes in vain) His **name**.”*

Exodus 20:7b (NIV)

## What's in a name anyway?

- Name: Synonymous with one's **character, reputation, and authority**.
- God's name reveals His essence.
- Summary: We are to take God **seriously!**
- Axiom: Our use of God's name in **word**, in **thought**, or **deed** will reflect our view of God and our relationship to Him.

## In what ways do we use God's name in vain?

- In taking oaths we do not keep – purgery.

*Do not make a promise in My name if you do not intend to keep it; that brings disgrace on My name. I am the Lord your God.*

Leviticus 19:12 (GNT)

- In our attempts to use God for personal gain – pretense.

*These people say they are Mine. They honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me.*

Isaiah 29:13 (NIV)

- In our everyday irreverent conversation – profanity.

*<sup>36</sup> But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. <sup>37</sup> For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned."*

Matthew 12:36-37 (NASB)

## Levels of Profanity:

I. **Casualness** with God's name

II. **Contempt** for God's name

III. **Cursing** God's name

*... I, the Lord your God, will punish anyone who misuses My name.*

Exodus 20:7b (GNT)



### Why do otherwise intelligent people profane God's name?

- They are spiritually uninformed
- They are spiritually undisciplined
- They are spiritually dead

### Discussion Questions:

1. Who is the most precious and important human being in your life? What comes to your mind when you say their name?
2. How would you feel about others dragging the name you wrote above through the mud? Untrue statements, unfair criticism, being the butt of coarse jesting?
3. Why does God put such a high priority on the use of His name? What's behind how we talk, think, and act with regard to God's name?
4. Where do you need to "shore up" how you use God's name? How will this likely impact your relationship with Him?

### **The Command:**

*Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.*

Exodus 20:8 (NIV)

### **The Explanation:**

*Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates.*

Exodus 20:9-10 (NIV '84)

### **The Reason:**

*For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but He rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*

Exodus 20:11(NIV)

## **1. The Message of the Sabbath**

- Your work matters to God
- There's more to life than labor
- Your time belongs to God

## 2. The Meaning of the Sabbath

- **Israel and the Sabbath**

- A "Test" Exodus 16:21-30
- A "Law" Exodus 20:8-11
- A "Sign" Exodus 31:12-17

- **Jesus and the Sabbath**

*Then He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."*

Mark 2:27 (NIV)

- **The Church and the Sabbath**

See: Colossians 2:6-17 & Revelation 1:10 – "Lord's Day"

*One person thinks that a certain day is more important than other days, while someone else thinks that all days are the same. Each one should firmly make up his own mind. Whoever thinks highly of a certain day does so in honor of the Lord...*

Romans 14:5-6a (GNT)

### 3. The Practice of the Sabbath today

- The Sabbath is a gift from God to protect...

- **Our body**: from “wearing out” – Rest-oration

*Only someone too stupid to find his way home would wear himself out with work.*

Ecclesiastes 10:15 (GNT)

- **Our spirit**: from “tuning out” – Re-member

*Let us not give up the habit of meeting together...*

Hebrews 10:25 (GNT)

*I rejoiced with those who said to me, “Let us go to the house of the Lord.”*

Psalms 122:1 (NIV)

- **Our soul**: from “burning out” – Re-creation

*He restores my soul...*

Psalms 23:2-3a (NASB)

### Conclusion: Beware the 3 “Sabbath Stealers”

1. Silence
2. Sabbath
3. Solitude

## **Discussion Questions:**

1. What does the word "Sabbath" mean?
2. In what ways was God's design for the Sabbath different for Israel than for His church today?
3. What is the "spirit" behind the Sabbath? How does it require faith to enjoy this good gift from God?
4. How do you specifically practice the Sabbath principle? What do you do to "refresh" your body, spirit, and soul on a weekly basis? What steps might God want you to take to live a more enjoyable, holy, and stress-free life?

### **The Command:**

*Honor your father and your mother...*

Exodus 20:12a (NIV)

### **The Promise:**

*...so that you may live long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.*

Exodus 20:12b (NIV)

## **1. What does it mean to “honor” your parents?**

Definition: Literally - “to be heavy, glorify, to ascribe value and worth, to respect, to hold in high regard.”

Word usage in the Old Testament:

## **2. Why did God give this Command?**

- [Foundation for family members](#)
- [Foundation for respect of authority](#)
- [Foundation of human development](#)

### 3. What does it look like to “honor” our parents?

- As a **child**, I honor my parents by **obeying** them.

*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother, which is the first commandment with a promise – that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.*

Ephesians 6:1-4 (NIV)

- As a **young person**, I honor my parents by **respecting** and **cooperating** with them.

*Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.*

Proverbs 23:22 (NIV)

*If you curse your parents, your life will end like a lamp that goes out in the dark.*

Proverbs 20:20 (GNT)

- As an **adult**, I honor my parents by **affirmation** and **provision**.

*The father of a righteous man has great joy; he who has a wise son delights in him.*

Proverbs 23:24 (NIV '84)

*Do not withhold good from those who deserve it, when it is in your power to act.*

Proverbs 3:27 (NIV '84)

*But if a widow has children or grand-children, these should learn first of all to put their religion into practice by caring for their own family and so repaying their parents and grandparents, for this is pleasing to God.*

1 Timothy 5:4 (NIV '84)

*If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.*

1 Timothy 5:8 (NIV '84)

Also see: Matthew 15:1-9

#### 4. Are there times when we can't honor our parents?

- The priority of salvation Mark 10:23-31
- The priority of service Luke 9:59-62
- The priority of marriage Ephesians 5:31-33
- The priority of wisdom Proverbs 9:7-9

#### Application:

#### Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you think God makes the family such a high priority?
2. How does our culture's view of both authority and aging affect our obedience to the 5<sup>th</sup> Command?
3. In what ways do you feel good about how you are "honoring" your parents? Which aspects need some attention? How will you address these?
4. Where do you find it difficult to know exactly what honoring your parents look like?



## Introduction: "Thou shall not kill."

### 1. What is the meaning of the 6<sup>th</sup> Command?

- Two words - No murdering
  
- All killing is not murder

### 2. What is the purpose of the 6<sup>th</sup> Command?

*"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed;  
for in the image of God has God made man."*

Genesis 9:6

3. What are some obvious applications of the 6th Command?

*"The length of his [man's] life is decided beforehand – the number of months he will live. You [God] have settled it, and it can't be changed."*

Job 14:5

- Ethical implications

4. What are some not-so-obvious applications of the 6th Command?

Jesus said,

*"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'*

*But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell.*

*Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift."*

Matthew 5:21-24

Conclusion: The 6<sup>th</sup> Command is about **preserving** life.

Because human life is the most precious of all commodities on this planet, God provides boundaries to protect it above all else.

**The Prohibitions:**

1. No murder by violent hands .
2. No murder in angry hearts .
3. No murder by lethal lips .

**The Promise:**

*"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

1 John 1:9

**Discussion Questions:**

1. How would you explain the difference between killing and murder?
2. Which does the 6<sup>th</sup> Command prohibit?
3. In what ways does the 6<sup>th</sup> Command impact the ethical issues of our day?
4. According to Jesus, how is murder really an issue of the heart?
5. What constitutes murder in His eyes?
6. Where do you need to ask God for forgiveness as it relates to the 6<sup>th</sup> Command?

## **Introduction: Where would you have stood?**

**Fact #1: Free sex is costing us plenty!**

**Fact #2: Sex outside of marriage, under any circumstance is sin.**

*You shall not commit adultery.*

Exodus 20:14 (NIV)

### What:

*It is God's will that you be sanctified:*

### Who:

*That you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you*

### Why:

*For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you His Holy Spirit.*

1 Thessalonians 4:3-8 (NIV)

**Fact #3: God is pro-sex! He invented it.**

- It's sacred Hebrews 13:4
- It's encouraged Proverbs 5:15-20  
Song of Solomon
- It's commanded 1 Corinthians 7:3-5

**Fact #4: Cheaters never win!**

- Adultery causes pain

*But a man who commits adultery lacks judgment; whoever does so destroys himself. Blows and disgrace are his lot, and his shame will never be wiped away.*

Proverbs 6:32-33 (NIV)

- Adultery destroys families
- “Living together” diminishes marital success rates and sexual fulfillment.

**Fact #5: We don't fall into sexual sins, we “slide” into them.**

- Adultery starts off in the heart

*You have heard it said, “Do not commit adultery.” But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*

*If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.*

Matthew 5:27-30 (NIV)

- Common “situations” that lead to adultery

- Be as radical as you need to be!

Run from sin

2 Timothy 2:22

Memorize scripture

Psalm 119:9, 11

Don't allow even a hint of immorality

Ephesians 5:3-4

**Fact #6: Adultery is not the unpardonable sin!**

- An act of forgiveness
- A testimony of grace

John 8:3-11

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Discuss the statement, "God is pro-sex!" What does that mean and how could you Biblically support it?
2. What is God's motivation in limiting sex to heterosexual relationships within the boundary of marriage?
3. What are some common myths about how people end up in sexual sin? Discuss the process and progression of sexual sin. What specific implications are there for you, your thought life, and your relationships?
4. What specific steps do you need to take to honor and obey the 7<sup>th</sup> Commandment? Who will hold you accountable?
5. Why is adultery not the unpardonable sin?

## **Introduction: Confessions of a kleptomaniac**

The **meaning** of the 8<sup>th</sup> Command

The **purpose** of the 8<sup>th</sup> Command

The **roots** of “kleptomania”

## **The Question: How do you overcome kleptomania?**

### **Step #1: Face up to the facts**

- We steal by **seizure**

*Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need.*

Ephesians 4:28 (NASB)

- We steal by **deception**

*Wealth you get by dishonesty will do you no good, but honesty can save your life.*

Proverbs 10:2 (GNT)



- We steal by **defrauding**

*Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due, when it is in your power to do it. Do not say to your neighbor, "Go, and come back, and tomorrow I will give it," when you have it with you.*

Proverbs 3:27-28 (NASB)

*Will a man rob God? Yet you rob Me. But you ask, "How do we rob you?" in tithes and offerings. You are under a curse – the whole nation of you – because you are robbing Me.*

*Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house. Test Me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit, says the Lord Almighty.*

Malachi 3:8-11 (NIV)

**Step #2: Do a "P&L" of stealing's impact on your life**

**Step #3: Follow God's divine prescription guaranteed to restore kleptomaniacs**

**Repent**

**Restitution**

**Attack the source (attack pride with generosity)**

**Work hard**

## Discussion Questions:

1. Share with the group your earliest memory of stealing something. What was it? Why did you steal it? Share your most vivid memory of something stolen from you. How did it make you feel?
2. Different people steal for different reasons. Which of the three root causes of stealing mentioned do you think motivate people the most to steal? Why?
3. Why is God so adamant about not stealing? What and whom is He seeking to protect?
4. Which aspect of today's message was most applicable to your life? Is there a step of obedience (you feel free to share) that would protect you from the pain and consequences stealing brings in our lives?

## **Introduction: God's boundary for truth, justice, and trust**

### **Then...**

- Israel's court system

*You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.* Exodus 20:16 (NIV)

- Israel's code of conduct

*Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another.*  
Leviticus 19:11 (NASB)

### **...and now**

- Integrity in everything

*Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.*

Ephesians 4:25 (NIV)

## **1. Examining the problem: Why do we lie?**

1. Fear
2. Hurt-vengeance
3. Insecurity-to impress
4. Misguided protection
5. Laziness
6. Greed
7. Habit

## 2. Pondering the consequences: What lying does to relationships

- It destroys our relationship with God.

*The Lord is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth.*

Psalm 145:18 (NIV)

See also: Psalm 51:5, John 4:24, John 14:16

- It destroys our relationship with ourselves.

*The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out.*

Proverbs 10:9 (NIV)

See also: Acts 5, Joshua 7

- It destroys our relationship with others.

*Like a muddied spring or a polluted well is a righteous man who gives way to the wicked.*

Proverbs 25:26 (NIV)

See also: Proverbs 18:8

## 3. Winning the war: How to stop lying!

Consider the source of the lie – when I lie, I am most like Satan.

Confession – Admit to God and others

Meditate on how God feels about lying – He hates it.

Pray specifically against lying

Write it down

Invite ruthless accountability

**Conclusion: Four airtight truths you can't afford to be deceived on**

1. God loves you and is pursuing an intimate relationship with you.
2. You are a sinner and therefore are disqualified from being able to come to God on your own.
3. Jesus is God's one and only remedy for sin.
4. How you respond to the above will determine your eternity forever.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What was the original intent of the 9<sup>th</sup> Command? Why was obedience to this command essential for social justice?
2. Why is "telling" and "living" the truth so important? What impact do duplicity and deception have in our lives and relationships?
3. In what ways and for what reasons do you find yourself speaking and/or living in less than full integrity?
4. What practical suggestions do you think will most help you in "declaring war on deceit" in your life? Why? When and how will you start to put this into practice?

## **Introduction: Private thoughts / consuming passions**

- More is never enough
- “When ... then...” thinking
- Success: How I’m doing compared to...

## **The Bible calls this coveting**

- Meaning -
- Definition -
- Command – *You shall not covet ... anything that belongs to your neighbor.*

Exodus 20:17 (NIV)

## Five symptoms that tell us “consuming passions” are robbing our joy:

1. **Fatigue**

*Do not wear yourself out to be rich; have the wisdom to show restraint.*

Proverbs 23:4 (NIV)

2. **Debt (to depreciating items)**

*The more money you make, the more money you spend...*

Ecclesiastes 5:11 (LB)

3. **Worry**

*A working man... can get a good night's sleep. But a rich man has so much that he stays awake worrying.*

Ecclesiastes 5:12 (GNB)

4. **Conflict**

*What causes conflicts and quarrels among you? Don't they come from the desires that battle with you?*

James 4:1 (NIV & NASB)

5. **Dissatisfaction**

*You will never be satisfied if you long to be rich. You will never get all you want.*

Ecclesiastes 5:10 (GNB)

**At the core of the 10<sup>th</sup> Command is God's desire for your contentment and purity**

### Three keys to contentment:

*I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.*

Philippians 4:12 (NIV)

1. **Stop** comparing myself with others

*For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.*

2 Corinthians 10:12 (NASB)

2. **Rejoice** and **give thanks** in what I do have.

*If God gives a man wealth and property and lets him enjoy them, he should be grateful and enjoy what he has worked for. It is a gift from God.*

Ecclesiastes 5:19 (GNB)

*Do all things without grumbling or disputing; that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world...*

Philippians 2:14-15 (NASB)

*Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

1 Thessalonians 5:18 (NIV)

3. **Share** what I have to help others.

*Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way, they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

1 Timothy 6:17-19 (NIV)



### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What does it mean to covet? How is this command's focus different than the other nine?
2. What false beliefs drive us to covet our neighbor's stuff?
3. What impact does coveting have in our lives, health, and relationships?
4. Which of the 3 principles to learn contentment do you most need to practice? Why?
5. How has this study of the Ten Commandments impacted you:
  - a) View of God?
  - b) Personal relationships
  - c) Personal holiness?