

# THE COMMANDMENTS: THEN AND NOW

The set of rules, the Ten Commandments, are the code of law given by God directly to Moses on Mount Sinai. After the Exodus, when God delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, His chosen people almost immediately lost sight of God's power and goodness to them. They resented their hardships and began to complain. They became quarrelsome and difficult to govern. Moses sought God's help on Mount Sinai. (Exodus 15–18)

## The Old Testament

God Himself engraved His will for the people on two tablets of stone. The first group of commandments laid out the rules to protect the harmony between God and people; the second group was designed to maintain respect between people. It was vital to the stability of the forming tribal nation that everyone act in a trustworthy manner. Selfishness risked the community's survival. When a person broke a commandment, he had to pay a penalty, repay the person he had injured, and make a sacrifice to restore peace with God.

The Law must be viewed as a great, gracious gift from the God of Israel to His people. Unlike all the other ancient near eastern gods, the Lord God revealed His will and made it very clear how to please Him and how to properly conduct one's life in order to get along in society. Despite the gift of these divine commands for governing relationships, the people set up idols and worshipped them, they lied and stole from one another; many of their leaders were corrupt, and they refused to honor God. Over the next 1400 years, the law was often forgotten and the worship of the true God was abandoned. God called to the people. Sometimes they would return to God and be restored. Other times they would ignore Him and suffer devastating hardships.

The Lord said that someday He would send a Savior and would have a new covenant with His people. The law would be written on their hearts, not just on stone tablets. They would do the right thing because they loved God (Jeremiah 31:31-33).

## The New Testament (New Covenant)

God sent a Savior, Jesus Christ, to live a perfect life and take the penalty for sin through His death on the cross. Through His sacrifice, He made forgiveness and friendship with God possible, and made us perfect in God's eyes through faith (Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16, 3:9–14). Jesus came to fulfill the law, and taught that the spirit of the law was as important as the letter of the law. (See other side of this pamphlet, also Matthew 23:23.)

**"BY THIS WE KNOW THAT WE LOVE THE CHILDREN OF GOD, WHEN WE LOVE GOD AND OBSERVE HIS COMMANDMENTS. FOR THIS IS THE LOVE OF GOD, THAT WE KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS; AND HIS COMMANDMENTS ARE NOT BURDENSOME."**

—1 JOHN 5:1-3 NASB

# 1 NO OTHER GOD

THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.

**GOD IS THE CREATOR AND LORD OF THE UNIVERSE. HE DESERVES OUR FIRST LOYALTY.**

## THE PRINCIPLE ▶

Put God first and give Him our devotion. God should always be our highest priority, over everyone and everything. A god is anything a person allows to rule his or her life. Other gods could include: deities of other religions, superstitions, horoscopes, money, possessions, career, personal comfort, family, friends, addictions, fame, power, security, romance, sex, church, extreme patriotism—anything that comes before God.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN? ▶

- Abraham proved that God was his first priority by being willing to give up his own son (Genesis 22:1-14).
- The people of Israel were worshiping other gods, so the prophet Elijah challenged the prophets of those gods to a contest. Elijah prayed that God would answer him so all would know that the LORD is God. The LORD answered and proved His superiority (1 Kings 18:20-40).
- God commanded the prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute who was unfaithful to him, so that Hosea might understand how God feels when His people turn to other gods (Hosea 1-3).
- Daniel and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, risked their lives because they remained devoted to the LORD as their only God (Daniel 1; 3; 6).

## IN THE BIBLE ▶

When asked, "Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment" (Matthew 22:26-38).

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money" (Matthew 6:24).

Jesus said, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only" (Luke 4:8).

## JESUS' TEACHINGS ▶

Jesus said that all the commandments and rules in the Bible hang on two basic principles:  
**1. Loving God with all of your heart, mind, soul, and strength (First four commandments).**  
**2. Loving your neighbor as yourself (Next six commandments).**

In the Old Testament, people were offering sacrifices to God because the law commanded them to do so. God wanted sacrifices and burnt offerings as an outward sign of a right heart attitude. God wants to be acknowledged, and He wants people to show mercy to others (Hosea 6:6). God wants us to obey the laws and rules He gives us because we treasure Him and we want to serve Him.

## EXPLANATIONS ▶



# 2 NO IDOLS

THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGE.

**GOD IS SPIRIT AND IS BIGGER AND MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY REPRESENTATION.**

Put faith in God only. Idol worship is worshiping or serving anything in the place of God. Idolatry can also include the worship of the true God *through* an idol. God does not forbid or condemn all representations of people and animals. God commanded that ornamental artwork be made in order to make things beautiful. When we worship something we can see, touch, or control, we miss the power and grandeur of God.

- The prophet Habakkuk wrote that idolatry is when man trusts his own creation more than he trusts God (Habakkuk 2:18, 19).
- While Moses was receiving the Ten Commandments, the Israelites created a golden calf, bowed down, and sacrificed offerings to it. God became very angry with them (Ex. 32:1-24).
- Gideon made an idol, which became a snare for his family, because Israel worshiped the idol instead of God (Judges 8:26, 27).
- The prophet Isaiah spoke of idol worship, saying a man will burn a tree for warmth or cooking while using the same tree to fashion an idol for worship (Isaiah 44:9-20).
- The Apostle Paul associated idolatry with impurity, lust, evil desires and greed (Colossians 3:5).

Jesus said, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal” (Matthew 6:19).

Jesus said, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted” (Matthew 18:14).

When Jesus met the Samaritan women at the well, she asked whether to worship God in Jerusalem or Samaria. He said, “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:23, 24).

God instructed Moses to build a Tabernacle that contained furniture overlaid with bronze or gold, a solid gold lampstand, and the ark of the covenant overlaid with gold (Exodus 25:1-27:21). Solomon had Hiram the Bronzeworker mold a bronze sea (basin) and had it placed upon twelve bronze oxen statues (1 Kings 7:23-26).

God gives many people the gift of craftsmanship and the abilities to make beautiful images. To sculpt, paint, or design something can bring glory to God. Yet, God is spirit and cannot be represented by any image crafted by human hands. To do so would be an insult to the very nature of God. God also desires that we worship Him in spirit, and not through something we ourselves created (John 4:23, 24).

# 3 DO NOT MISUSE GOD'S NAME

THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN.

**GOD'S NAME IS HOLY, POWERFUL, AND GLORIOUS.**

PRINCIPLE

MEANING

BIBLE EXAMPLES

JESUS' TEACHINGS

EXPLANATIONS

God's name is holy and should be treated with respect. There is power in the LORD's name and it shouldn't be used lightly. Because God is Spirit, we know Him through what He says about Himself; to take His name in vain violates God's nature. As God's creation, everything a person says and does should be done in order to praise and glorify God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

- When a man named Shelomith blasphemed the name of God with a curse, the Lord commanded that he be taken outside the camp and stoned to death (Leviticus 24:10-16).
- Jesus was accused of blasphemy because He claimed to be God (John 10:33).
- The high priest claimed that Jesus broke the third commandment by claiming to be God, and condemned Jesus to death for this blasphemy (Matthew 25:63-68; 27:39-43; John 10:33).
- James warned believers to watch what they say, because the tongue is capable of evil and poison and can easily corrupt a person (James 3:5-9).

Jesus said, “...every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven...But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned” (Matthew 12:31, 36, 37).

Jesus said to begin praying with: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name” (Matt. 6:9). In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, “Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool...Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one” (Matthew 5:33-35, 37).

Jews and Jewish scribes would go to great measures in order to avoid saying or writing the LORD's name for fear of blasphemy. The Bible says we are to pray, heal, and baptize in Jesus' name (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:17; John 14:13; 16:23; Acts 3:6).

The Bible says that what we say is very important and it is a glimpse into who we are (James 3:9-12). God loves us and wants us to love and worship Him in whatever we are doing and at all times. God wants us to use His name; it is holy and powerful. If we can show respect for the names of our fathers, mothers, teachers, and doctors, how much more we need to respect the name of our sovereign God.



# 4 REST ON THE SABBATH

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY.

**GOD VALUES REST, SPIRITUAL REFRESHMENT, AND TIME FOR HIS PEOPLE TO WORSHIP HIM.**

As a gift, God gives all people a day to rest after six days of labor. God knew how to preserve His creation, and rest was a necessary component to that preservation. Without rest, valuable top soil is used up and the land becomes useless. In the same way, without rest, human beings become unproductive. Without spiritual refreshment, we can have rested bodies inhabited by unrested minds. The very center of rest is the worship of God. It is where we find our fulfillment because worship is what we were made for. The Sabbath day is an opportunity to renew our relationship with God and refocus on Him by honoring Him in our worship.

- The Sabbath was ordained in creation and ordered by God even before the commandments were given on Mt. Sinai (Genesis 2:2, 3; Exodus 16:23-29).
- Death was the prescribed punishment for working on the Sabbath (Exodus 35:2-4).
- The prophet Isaiah wrote that God detested meaningless sacrifices and empty obedience to religious festivals, to new moon celebrations, and to the Sabbath day (Isaiah 1:11-13).
- God instituted seven holidays as sacred assemblies and special Sabbath days. These included: Passover, Unleavened Bread, Firstfruits, Weeks, Trumpets, Day of Atonement, and Tabernacles (Leviticus 21:1, 2).
- Every 50th year was to be a sabbath year, the year of Jubilee, in which the land would not be tilled, slaves were freed, and alienated property restored (Leviticus 25:8-33).

One day Jesus started healing people on the Sabbath and many people came to Him to be healed. The synagogue ruler told the people to come back and be healed on any day but the Sabbath. The ruler thought healing on the Sabbath was a violation of the fourth commandment. Jesus rebuked him and told the people that it acceptable to have mercy on someone on the Sabbath, even if it may appear to violate the law (Luke 13:15, 16).

Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27, 28). In this way, Jesus declared that a person may do good on the Sabbath.

In the Old Testament, the Sabbath day was observed on Saturday, the seventh day of the week, because God rested on the seventh day after creating the universe. Jesus rose from the dead on Sunday morning, the first day of the week. Through Christ's death and resurrection, He instituted a new creation (Galatians 6:14-16). Since Christ's resurrection, most believers have been recognizing Sunday as "the Lord's day" on which tithes are given and the Lord's Supper is celebrated (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16; Revelation 1:10).

Some suggest that followers of Jesus should still observe the Sabbath on Saturday rather than on Sunday. Others suggest that the Sabbath can happen on any day of the week. The Sabbath is to be a holy day, to rest, refocus, and praise God for creating us anew in Christ.

# 5 HONOR YOUR PARENTS

HONOUR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER: THAT THY DAYS MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE.

**GOD WANTS ALL PEOPLE TO RESPECT AND HONOR THOSE HE'S PLACED IN AUTHORITY.**

PRINCIPLE

MEANING

BIBLE EXAMPLES

JESUS' TEACHINGS

EXPLANATIONS

Treat parents with respect, no matter what the situation may be. Most parents made great sacrifices to bring up their children. No one is a perfect parent, and in some cases, fathers and mothers are dishonorable and have caused pain and grief. Even in these cases, when parents may not deserve it, God expects us to honor them for His sake. God promises long life to those who honor their parents. Scripture also makes it clear that sometimes we must follow God instead of obeying parents.

- King Solomon wrote that wisdom comes from obeying one's parents (Proverbs 23:22-26).
- Jesus was obedient to His earthly parents as He grew up in Nazareth (Luke 2:51).
- The Apostle Paul commanded children to obey their parents in everything, and he reminded them that the fifth commandment contained a promise. If children honor their parents they will enjoy long life (Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20).
- After the flood, Noah became intoxicated. Seeing Noah in this condition, his son Ham made fun of him to his brothers, Shem and Japheth. Even though Noah was irresponsible, Ham received a curse for dishonoring his father. Shem and Japheth were blessed because they honored their father (Genesis 9:20-27).

Jesus rebuked the Jewish authorities of His day for not taking care of their aging parents. He said that they made up excuses in order to avoid having to honor their parents (Matthew 15:4-6).

Jesus taught that He must be a priority even above one's family. He said, "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37).

Jesus honored and respected His parents by obeying them while He grew up and providing for His mother's care once He was gone (Luke 2:51; John 19:26, 27).

The Hebrew word *kabed* means to make honorable or to glorify. This verb has a wide range of connotations that far exceeds simple obedience. It is important to obey parents, but children must also show their parents respect. The Bible strictly warns children against cursing and abusing their parents (Exodus 21:15-17).

On the other hand, Jesus clearly pointed out that God must be the priority. God's will is more important than the will of one's parents (Judges 14:1-4; Matthew 10:37; Luke 13:15, 16). When parents command or model something that is against God's will or clearly goes against loving God and neighbor, they can still be honored without being obeyed.



# EXODUS 20:1-17

**And God spoke all these words: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.**

**You shall have no other gods before me.**

**You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 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 fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to thousands who love me and keep my commandments.**

**You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.**

**Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 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. 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.**

**Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.**

**You shall not murder.**

**You shall not commit adultery.**

**You shall not steal.**

**You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.**

**You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor." (NIV)**



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Rose Publishing, Inc.  
4733 Torrance Blvd., #259  
Torrance, CA 90503 U.S.A.  
[www.rose-publishing.com](http://www.rose-publishing.com)

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Scripture taken from THE HOLY BIBLE: KING JAMES VERSION and THE HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®.NIV®.

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This pamphlet is also available as a 19" X 26" wall chart.

Printed in the United States of America. 020306SP

ISBN-10: 1-596360-61-5

ISBN-13: 978-159636-061-7

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Stock # 577X *The Ten Commandments* pamphlet  
Retailers: Package of 10 pamphlets = Stock #578X (ISBN 1-59636-062-3)



# WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT COMMANDMENT?

*When the Pharisees asked Jesus which commandment in the law was the greatest, Jesus said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:37-39).*

Every law is based on a principle. In Jesus’ day, many people were obeying the law, but they weren’t upholding God’s principles. Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan to illustrate this concept. In this parable a man is attacked on a road and left for dead. As time passes, a priest and a Levite (someone who knows the law well) pass by the man and do not help him. Later, a Samaritan (considered to be a lower-class person) comes across the injured man and helps him; he even pays for his medical treatment. The law did not allow anyone to touch a dead body. Even though this man was not dead, he may have appeared to be dead to those passing by. The Samaritan risked disobeying the law in order to show mercy to an injured man. The priest and the Levite passed by the man for fear of breaking this law (Luke 10:25-37).

For Jesus, showing mercy to others and truly loving your neighbor is far more important than obeying a ceremonial purity law. Jesus encouraged people to live by the Spirit of the law rather than the letter of the law. He wanted people to make sure they understood *why* we obey a commandment. Paul wrote that with Christ the law is no longer written on tablets of stone, but it is written on our hearts. The reason we break a commandment stems from what is in our hearts. In the same way, the reason we obey a commandment is because our hearts have been transformed in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:1-17).

Today, people are to drive within a speed limit. Why? Because speeding is dangerous to ourselves and to other drivers and our lawmakers value life. For this reason, driving faster than the speed limit is against the law. However, when someone is rushing an injured friend or relative to the hospital, it is acceptable to set aside some traffic laws. In this situation, those who enforce laws accept the principle that life is more valuable than obeying the speed limit.

## THE PRINCIPLE ▶

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN? ▶

## IN THE BIBLE ▶

## JESUS’ TEACHINGS ▶

## EXPLANATIONS ▶

# 6 DO NOT MURDER

THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

## GOD CREATED HUMAN LIFE AND HOLDS IT SACRED.

Murder is the unlawful killing of another human being, usually premeditated. The Hebrew word *ratsach*, always translated as “murder,” is used for this commandment to contrast this prohibition with other forms of killing such as accidental death, war, self-defense, capital punishment, and the killing of animals. God created human beings in His own image. To take someone’s life into one’s own hands is to destroy the image of God.

- After the flood, God instructed Noah and the generations to follow that death is the prescribed punishment for murder (Genesis 9:6).
- Cain, Simeon, Levi, Moses, Joab, King David, Absalom, and the Apostle Paul were all guilty of murder (Genesis 4:8; 35:25, 26; Exodus 2:11, 12; 2 Samuel 3:27; 11:14, 15; 13:28; Acts 9:1).
- The Bible says that God hates and detests hands that shed innocent blood (Proverbs 6:17).
- The Apostle Paul encouraged the believers in Rome to live at peace with everyone. He said that personal revenge belongs to God only (Romans 12:18, 19).
- The Apostle John wrote that anyone who hates his brother is a murderer. He also wrote that true love is evident in those who lay down their lives for others (1 John 3:15, 16).

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” (Matthew 5:21, 22).

Jesus said, “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also” (Matthew 5: 38, 39).

Hearing the leaders of His day threatening to stone a woman to death, Jesus said, “If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8:7).

Even though war, self-defense, and capital punishment are not prohibited by the sixth commandment, God values life and wants His people to preserve the lives of others and love their neighbors as themselves. This is an important factor of which to be mindful whenever the taking of the life of another human being is considered.

Jesus makes it clear that hatred for one’s neighbor is the core cause for murder (Matthew 5:21, 22). It is this same hatred that is forbidden by this commandment. As with the breaking of all other commandments, murder comes from the heart.



# 7

## NO ADULTERY THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

### GOD VALUES FAITHFULNESS AND SEXUAL PURITY.

Be faithful to one's husband or wife. Marriage vows made before God should be kept in spite of difficulties. Sex is a gift from God and is reserved for marriage only. Any sexually immoral act that betrays those vows, including premarital sex, is considered adultery. When we break the seventh commandment, we are sinning against God, our spouse, and against our own bodies (1 Corinthians 6:18).

- The Bible says that anyone who commits adultery should be put to death (Leviticus 20:10).
- God equates unfaithfulness to Him with adultery (Jeremiah 3:6-9).
- After King David committed adultery with Bethsheba, the prophet Nathan confronted him. David repented and wrote Psalm 51, a psalm of repentance. David wrote, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me" (Psalm 51:10, 11).
- Jesus forgave a woman who had been caught in adultery. Jesus told her that no one condemned her and to go and sin no more (John 8:10, 11).

Jesus said, "You have heard that it was 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" (Matthew 5:27, 28).

Jesus also said, "I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery" (Matthew 19:9).

Jesus said, "...anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery" (Matthew 5:31, 32).

Jewish law allowed a man to divorce his wife for any reason. Jesus' teachings shocked the disciples. They responded with: "If this is the situation between a husband and wife, it is better not to marry" (Matthew 19:10).

Paul taught that abandonment by an unbelieving spouse was also grounds for divorce (1 Corinthians 7:15).

Jesus said that the condition of the heart that leads to adultery is lust. The Apostle Paul wrote: "whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Philippians 4:8).

# 8

## DO NOT STEAL THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.

### GOD VALUES PRODUCTIVITY, INTEGRITY, AND GENEROSITY.

#### PRINCIPLE

#### MEANING

Respect other people's possessions. Stealing includes taking items that don't belong to us, defaulting on loans, not paying bills, cheating on tests, goofing off at work, cheating on income taxes, taking sick time when you or your dependents are not sick, stealing cable services, illegally downloading or copying software, music, movies, or printed material, and not giving to God.

#### BIBLE EXAMPLES

- The Apostle Paul wrote to the Ephesians telling them to stop stealing and to start working for their money, so that they could share with the needy (Ephesians 4:28).
- The Bible says that all people are to pay their taxes and repay their debts. The Scriptures warn against defaulting on loans and neglecting bills (Romans 13:6-8; Proverbs 22:26, 27).
- The prophet Malachi wrote that when people don't bring their full tithe and offering to God they are stealing directly from God. God promises to bless those who bring Him their full tithe and offering (Malachi 3:8-12).

#### JESUS' TEACHINGS

When we steal we don't trust God's provision. Jesus said "Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?" (Matthew 6:25, 26).

Jesus said, "And if someone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well...Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you" (Matthew 5:40, 42).

#### EXPLANATIONS

The Bible warns against taking out loans. The Bible also encourages those who do take out loans to repay their debt. Jesus encouraged those who loan money to forgive the debts of others. Jesus also encouraged people to give freely and allow others to borrow things from you without asking anything in return.

Jesus is presenting a picture of a caring kingdom, a kingdom where people give to others freely out of love. In Christ's kingdom, there would be no need for stealing out of lack of food, clothing or shelter. In addition, there would be no need for loans or debt, because peoples' needs are cared for by one another. In fact, the early church expressed these principles in how they cared for each other (Acts 4:32-37).



# 9 DO NOT LIE

THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOUR.

## GOD IS TRUTH AND HE VALUES HONESTY.

Be trustworthy and maintain integrity by being honest. Lying can take the form of gossip, false accusations, blame, and self-deceit. It is important to keep promises and be responsible to the commitments we make. Liars can not be trusted, and even when a liar tells the truth, he or she may not be believed. The Bible forbids attempting to deceive God.

- The Bible says that the wise keep all falsehoods and lies far from them (Proverbs 30:8).
- The Bible says that God hates a lying tongue, and delights in those who tell the truth (Proverbs 12:12).
- Those who speak the truth are valued by kings (Proverbs 16:13).
- In the early church, a man named Ananias and his wife Sapphira sold some property and claimed to donate the entire amount to the church. Instead, they kept some of the money for themselves. The Apostle Peter said they were free to keep some of the money, but since they claimed to bring the entire amount, they lied to the Holy Spirit. Their lie resulted in immediate death by the hand of God (Acts 5:1-11).

Jesus said, “The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him. But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken. For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned” (Matthew 12:35-37).

Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6).

Before Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land, he sent spies into the city of Jericho. The prostitute Rahab housed the spies and helped them escape. When the authorities asked about the spies, Rahab deceived them and thereby saved the spies. Later, Rahab was saved because she honored God by preserving the lives of the spies. She knew God’s will and His plans for the people of Israel; therefore she chose to obey the principles that honor God’s will. Her decision to mislead and deceive her leaders as to the whereabouts of the Israelite spies was honored by God (Joshua 2:1-6; 6:17-25).

Truth-telling makes for a functional and just society. People who tell the truth can be trusted. Sensitive application of honesty and truth nurtures relationships and helps foster communities that are functional and enriching.

PRINCIPLE

# 10 DO NOT COVET

THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOUR'S HOUSE...  
NOR ANY THING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOUR'S.

## GOD VALUES HUMILITY, CONTENTMENT, AND PEACE.

MEANING

Be content with what we have. Don’t long for things that belong to others. Avoid the pursuit of happiness and joy through the accumulation of material wealth, possessions, someone else’s spouse, and other’s friends. Don’t allow earthly things to fill a void that only God can fill. Ask God to provide what we need. God promises that He will take care of our needs if we seek Him first and not money, popularity, or possessions.

BIBLE EXAMPLES

- King Saul was jealous of David’s success and coveted the respect and praise David received from the women in all the towns (1 Samuel 18:6-9).
- King David coveted his neighbor Uriah’s wife Bathsheba and he committed adultery with her. David then murdered Uriah to cover up his treachery (2 Samuel 11:1-27).
- The Apostle Paul encouraged the early church to be content with what they had and warned them about loving money and possessions. Paul said that the love of money is the root of all evil; it causes greed, envy, and pride (Philippians 4:11, 12; 1 Timothy 6:6-10; Hebrews 13:5).
- The Apostle John warned believers about loving the world and the things of the world. He said that anyone who loves the world does not have the love of God in him (1 John 2:15).

JESUS' TEACHINGS

Jesus said, “So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:31-33).

Jesus said, “A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions” (Luke 12:15).

A rich young man with a lifelong commitment to keeping all the commandments came to Jesus and asked what more he needed to do. Jesus’s response to the man’s request for eternal life went right to the heart of the tenth commandment: “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me” (Mark 10:17-23).

EXPLANATIONS

Generally, the purpose of advertising and marketing is to feed on their customers’ discontent by appealing to a person’s selfish nature. These advertisers promise people fulfillment if they buy their product. Their ads seem to suggest that when you purchase a particular item, you will be surrounded by friends, a beautiful spouse, and a really great, enjoyable life. These advertisers know that people covet and that people have the tendency to be dissatisfied with what they have.

God wants us to be content with what we have and to keep our eyes focused on Him; not on things of this world (Philippians 4:11,12).