

**Subject: *God's Ten Commandments***

**Scripture: *Exodus 20:1-17***

People are satisfied to think of God as their Creator, Father, Shepherd, and Friend, but the Bible tells us He is also Law-Giver and Judge. It is God's right to make laws and enforce them. We hear a lot about rights: human rights, workers rights, and civil rights. What about God's rights? God is the Lawgiver of the universe. Everything is governed by the laws of God. Without laws there would be absolute chaos. God is a God of order. It has been said that order is the first law of heaven.

The Ten Commandments are sometimes called "Ten Words" or Decalogue. These are the basis of all other laws in Scripture. The Old Testament contains a total of 613 specific commands, but they are all based on these ten commands. Christ said that all Old Testament laws are actually based on two commandments.

***Matthew 22:36-40*** <sup>36</sup> Master, which is the great commandment in the law? <sup>37</sup> Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

These two commandments are a summary of the Ten Commandments: love God supremely and love your neighbor as yourself.

Our American system of laws is based on the Ten Commandments. At the top of the United States Supreme Court building are images of famous law givers and each one is facing toward a man in the middle. That man in the center is Moses with the Ten Commandments. For the next few weeks we are going to focus our attention on God's Ten Commandments. In this sermon I want you to consider the nature of these commandments.

### **1. These are God-given commandments**

Our text begins (vs. 1) "And God spoke all these words." God gave all these commandments. He needed no permission. He asked no advice. He gave no reason. Since they came from God we are bound to honor them, submit to them, remember them, and obey them. They are God's commandments, although many people think of them as the ten suggestions.

Imagine a group of people at work and a question comes up about why the company made a rule about doing something a certain way. Someone on the job will usually challenge that and ask: "Well, who says so?" And then someone else says it came down from the manager or the boss. Why should we be concerned about what's in the Ten Commandments? God says so.

The Ten Commandments are found twice, here in Exodus 20:1-2 and forty years later in Deuteronomy 5:1-6. At both times God reminds them that He is their God and He brought them out of bondage in Egypt. He is their covenant God and they are His covenant people.

### **2. These are unique commandments**

God had given other commands before and after He gave these Ten Commandments. For example, God gave a command to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God commanded Noah to build the ark, and then commanded Noah to go into the ark right before the flood came. God gave this group of ten commands to lay out what He expected people to do and not do. Unlike other commands, they were not limited to a particular place or time.

### **3. These are moral commandments**

As a group, they are often called “God’s moral law.” These are laws about what is right and what is wrong based on God’s standard of right and wrong. God always operates on the basis of law and order—in the physical world and in the spiritual world. He has ordained three kinds of law: natural laws that govern the physical world (law of gravity, etc.); civil laws that govern human life on earth; and moral laws that govern the spiritual world. These laws exist whether a person knows it or not. These laws exist whether a person believes in them or not. The existence of these laws reminds us there is someone who makes them and enforces them. God put these moral laws into effect. He is the Law-maker and the Judge who enforces the laws and holds men accountable.

### **4. These are fixed and binding commandments**

God’s commandments are unchanging and unchangeable. They are specific and absolute. God says what He means and means what He says. His laws can’t be altered or amended. They can’t be removed or replaced. We may ignore them, we may not like them, but we can’t avoid them.

### **5. These are simple and straightforward commandments**

They are not complicated or hard to understand. They are not mysterious. We don’t need some secret code to unlock their meaning. These commandments are clear and plain for all to know. Moses reminded the people forty years later.

*Deuteronomy 30:11-14* <sup>11</sup> For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. <sup>12</sup> It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? <sup>13</sup> Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it, and do it? <sup>14</sup> But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it.

### **6. These are holy, just, and good commandments**

This is what you would expect from a good God.

*Romans 7:12* Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

We will look further into the goodness of God’s commandments in another message. Paul says there’s no problem with God’s law; the problem is with us. By nature, we don’t like law. We do not want to submit to God’s standard of right and wrong, but we want to do what is right in our own eyes. We are guilty of disobeying God’s law, just like Adam and Eve were.

When we break God's law we are guilty of sin. That's the very definition of sin.

**1 John 3:4** *Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*

When we break just one of God's laws we are guilty of breaking them all.

**James 2:10** *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*

When we break God's law there are serious consequences. We are under God's curse.

**Galatians 3:10** *For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

That's all bad news, but there is good news. Jesus kept the Law that we could not keep. He took our sins upon Himself and suffered God's wrath in our place. Jesus died so that we might have forgiveness of sins and even more, He gave us His righteousness when we believe in Him.

**Acts 13:38-39** <sup>38</sup> *Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: <sup>39</sup> And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

**Galatians 2:16** *Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

That is the good news of the Gospel. Agree with God that you have broken His law and sinned against Him. Turn from your sins and trust in Christ as Lord and Savior.