

The Ten in the New
The Ten Commandments
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Tonight we want to see the 10 Commandments in the New Testament and see how the New Testament and to the apostolic writers used and quoted and used the themes if not the exact text from the 10 Commandments in expressing the ethical demands that are on believers here today. This gives us a sense of the permanent authority of the 10 Commandments. They have not been set aside. The moral law is still in effect today and the illusions that we're going to see are different in form but the substance is clear. And I think it's worthy of answering the question why would we focus on the 10 Commandments from the Old Testament if we are believers under a new covenant? Well, tonight's message will help us understand the very serious importance of that. We focus on the 10 Commandments because the New Testament does, and as New Testament believers, that carries over to us.

So what I want to do is invite you to turn to Exodus 20. We'll read the 10 Commandments in their entirety and then we'll go through them and show how the New Testament picks up the themes and the text of the 10 Commandments. Exodus 20, I'll actually begin in verse 1.

1 Then God spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 3 You shall have no other gods before Me. 4 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. 5 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, 6 but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. 7 You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain. 8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and

all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy. 12 Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you. 13 You shall not murder. 14 You shall not commit adultery. 15 You shall not steal. 16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 17 You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

Now what we're going to do is we're just going to take these commandments one by one. We're going to go through all 10 tonight and just read the commandment and then see where the theme or the text is replicated in the New Testament. This is just kind of an introduction, a survey of sorts to give us a sense of perspective of the importance of knowing and understanding the 10 Commandments, and I would earnestly ask those of you that consider yourselves to be a part of Truth Community Church to be praying for this series as we come up on it. We really do need the 10 Commandments to plow the soil of our hearts, to humble us, to convict us of sin, and to drive us more closely to Christ. I love our church, I love all of you, I'm grateful to be your pastor, it's a privilege to be your pastor, but I'm not convinced that as a congregation we really have a deep enough appreciation of sin, a deep enough conviction of sin that drives us and causes us to have the appreciation for Christ that we should. I'm not saying it's not there at all, I'm just concerned as a pastor and, you know, this is just a subjective sense, I don't have any particular things in mind, but I just have this abiding sense that our sense of the seriousness of sin and the holiness of God is not at all what it should be. And the 10 Commandments in the hands of the Spirit of God, are able to produce that in us but it's incumbent upon us as a church, as a congregation, as you individually, to earnestly be seeking the blessing of God on the teaching of his word. Scripture says that it is the law that is our tutor that leads us to Christ, and the flippant way that some people live, the flippant way that some people deal with the word of God and approach it, and the flippant way of life, these things do not bespeak people that are deeply impressed by sin as the law of God imposes it upon our hearts.

So that's why we're doing the series and that's why we want to set this context here tonight. I need the very thing that I was just asking you to pray about. This isn't me speaking down to you, we're speaking horizontally here and saying we need to rally together, we need to come together in prayer and ask the Lord to bless his word because we just want to see the Spirit of God at work. We want to see genuine conversions taking place and that happens as people come under conviction, and conviction comes as they come under the authority of the word of God, the law of God, pointing out specifically and particularly the sin in their lives, and if we're not after that, then we're really wasting our time. If we're just here to gather together and enjoy one another's fellowship, we're really wasting our time. Our aspirations and our goals must be much higher than simply having a comfortable place to worship with people that we generally like and get along with, right? And so that's why we spend this time on these things.

So let's consider the commandments. There's going to be 10 points tonight corresponding to each commandment. The math on this and the parallelism is all pretty easy to follow. So let's look at the first commandment which we said in an earlier message is telling us no false gods. No false gods. The first commandment telling us there are to be no false gods in our lives. The first commandment emphasizes the exclusivity of God both in his essence and in our affections.

So look at it there in verse 3 as it says simply, "You shall have no other gods before Me." In other words, you are to hold the God of the Bible as unique. There is to be an exclusive place in your affections for him, and as a result of that you allow no competing desires or other thoughts or philosophies or beings supplant him or be beside him in your affections. The singular defining affection that drives everything else in your life is to be love for the Lord God, the Lord God of the Bible.

Well, the Bible repeats this theme in the New Testament in a number of ways. Look at Matthew 4 with me. Look at Matthew chapter 4 as we look briefly at the account of our Lord's temptation in the wilderness by Satan. It says in verse 8 that, "the devil took Him to a very high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to Him, 'All these things I will give You, if You fall down and worship me.'" In other words, supplant in your heart me for the living God. And Jesus while not quoting the first commandment directly, quotes the theme of the first commandment when he said to him, "Go, Satan!" In other words, "Be gone! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'" And so there is to be this cultivated affection and conviction in your heart that says God is the only one that ultimately matters to me. He is unique. He has an exclusive place in my affections and things of the world or things of other matters can never compete with him, and we consciously repent of things that we find and sometimes make more important than God in our lives.

I remember that there was a time where the, this is long ago, long before I was married, talking with friends and I had things going on in my life and I was a brand-new Christian and I said something really foolish. I said, "Do you know what? I don't want to go to heaven right now because I want time to enjoy these things on earth." Well, I was being an idolater at that point. I had something other than God as the supreme affection in my heart. I had other things beside him, other things that I was more devoted to and that I wanted more than him and than his presence, and what a foolish sinful thing for me to have said. Well, I wonder if there are things in your heart like that that you find that you're more attached to the things in life, the relationships in life than you are to the God who saved you. When you think of what Christ did for you, you think of him on the cross, you think of redemption and all that it means, how could anything possibly compared to that as the supreme object of your affection?

That's what the first commandment is teaching us and you'll find passages that emphasize it in a different way. We won't turn to these. 1 Corinthians 8:6, Galatians 3:20, 1 Timothy 2:5, they are all making the point that there is one God. There is only one God. And as you meditate on that, you realize how that brings you into a position of worship and a recognition of his unique holiness, his unique position in the universe. He is set apart. He

is unique. He is different. There is no one like him. And it is the instruction of the first commandment that we are to take that to heart and govern the affections of our heart accordingly. No false gods, first commandment. Since there is only one God, you can have no others, and so we see that from the first commandment and the way that it is applied in the New.

Now the second commandment, go back to Exodus 20, the second commandment has the idea of no false worship. In other words, there is a true God and he must be worshiped in a true way according to what he has revealed. We are not free to make up our own methods of worship. We are to worship in accordance with what has been revealed and set down in Scripture, and so God commands in verses 4 through 6 as follows. He says, "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth." You are not to make, in other words, you are not to make a physical object that somehow represents the true God. It's not only a matter of not worshiping false gods, it's a matter of not using physical imagery to worship the true God who is a spirit. Any kind of physical image trying to represent God in a physical image greatly assaults his glory and reduces him to something earthly rather than the great heavenly infinite being that he is, and that's the point of the second commandment. So God goes on and says in verse 5, "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments."

Now where do we find this theme stated in the New Testament? Well, it's found in the numerous New Testament warnings against idolatry. Let's look at just a couple from the book of 1 Corinthians, starting in 1 Corinthians 6, and you see how seriously the Lord takes this. He showed in the second commandment in Exodus 20, he warns us that he takes this command seriously. "Don't do this for I am a jealous God and I visit iniquity on subsequent generations who violate this commandment." Well, you see this same kind of sobering emphasis in 1 Corinthians 6, and we tend to gloss over its warning against idolatry for the sake of the sexual sins that surround it, but look at verse 9. 1 Corinthians 6:9, he says, "do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?" He says, "Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters," there it is, a New Testament emphasis picking up on the second commandment saying idolatry is a sin that excludes people from the kingdom of God, "nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God." That's a sobering serious warning that causes us to probe the depths of our heart and ask where is it that my deepest affections lie? What is it that I want the most out of life? If it's anything other than the Lord God, if it's anything other than the Lord Jesus Christ that you want most out of life, you are worshiping an idol. You have made an idol in your heart and you are worshiping it because you desire something other than God more than him and that is a gross and serious sin to commit. This searches out the deepest motivations of our heart, doesn't it?

In 1 Corinthians 10:7 it says, "Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, 'The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play.'" Do you see how idolatry becomes simply a matter of prioritizing earthly amusements and earthly pursuits over the nature of worshiping the true God? This is a serious warning and it's a sin that we're all guilty of. We're all guilty of violating this. People make idols of so many things, make idols even of family, even of marriage. You know, we'll talk about this more when the time comes to address the second commandment. In 1 Thessalonians 1:9 it says you turned away from idols to serve the living and true God. In 1 John 5:21 it says, "Little children, guard yourselves from idols." You know, the Bible only has to say something one time for it to be important, to be something that arrests and commands our attention. We have this command against idolatry stated at least those four times in the New Testament, and so there is no false worship. We're to examine our hearts and purge it of those things that would supplant God as the supreme object of our affections. He is the one and only God and as a result, he is to be the one and only object of our worship and affections. That's the second commandment.

Thirdly, the third commandment: honor God's name. Honor God's name, and you can go back to Exodus 20. The third commandment requires us to honor the name of God and look at verse 7 of Exodus 20, the third commandment, honor the name of God. It's expressed in a negative form which requires a positive action. "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain." You know a very simple and familiar place where you can find this theme in the New Testament is at the very start of the Lord's prayer, Matthew 6:9 where Jesus said, "pray in this way," and he said, he instructs us to pray, "Our Father who is in heaven," what? "Hallowed be Your name." Let your name be sanctified. Let it be set apart. Let it be honored and worshiped. Let it be honored and worshiped throughout the world, throughout the church and, Lord, let it be set apart and worshiped in a unique and high way in my own heart. The name of God which is a representation of all that he is, is to be hallowed and respected by us. It's a part of his moral law that flows from his unique and surpassing majesty. The surpassing majesty of God calls for his name to be honored and to be spoken with respect and not in flippant ways.

As I pointed out in my message, "Meet the 10 Commandments," this is so routinely violated that our ears have just become dull to it. I fear that there are some even in the room here with me tonight, you know, are happy to say the sinful phrase, "Oh my God," in a flippant way, expressing, you know, at the most trivial way, at the most trivial things, responding to them and using God's name in a flippant, casual, disrespectful way like that. And you can multiply the examples and we did that last time and we'll do it more as we go through the third commandment, but God's name is to be honored and respected. It's not a matter of casual conversation. When the name of God comes up, there should be a sense of reverence that comes over your tongue and over your heart in respect to the great majesty of who he is. I'm quite convinced and I hope to make this point as we go through the commandments, to just show how the holiness of God is fundamental to understanding the significance of the 10 Commandments. The holiness of God sets him apart so that there could be no other gods. The holiness of God means that he must be worshiped in the right and proper and biblical way. The holiness of God means that his

name is treated with respect and all of that is indicated by the Lord's instruction to us to pray. The first line of his model prayer for us deals with the holiness of the name of God and imparts it and imprints it on our hearts in that way.

So our constant prayer, our ongoing prayer should be that the name of God would be honored. "God, be glorified in my life. God, be glorified in my family. God, be glorified in my church. God, be glorified in evangelism. God, be glorified in the conversion of sinners. God, be glorified in the obedience of Your people and let it start with me. God, be glorified and bring and send revival upon this wicked land of ours. God, be glorified and let the gospel spread so that Your name would be honored and loved and revered by everyone who comes into contact with it." That's the idea and it's convicting, isn't it, to realize just how often that thought doesn't really come to our minds? The third commandment points this out to us and convicts us of our indifference to his name.

And as I said, a little bit of a tangent here, reminder for those of you that haven't been here for the early parts of our series. In addition to convicting us of sin, the 10 Commandments are doing something else, they are teaching us how to love God. The 10 Commandments are teaching us how to love God. Jesus was asked, "What is the greatest commandment?" He said, "Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, strength and mind." Well, beloved, that's more than just a sentimental feeling about God and, you know, an emotional reaction of feeling close to him. The content of what it means to love him is found in, is expressed in and is guided and instructed to our hearts by these early commandments. That means that you hold him unique. It means that you allow no competing affections for that exclusive space in your heart. It means that you honor his name. And these commandments as they are understood in their implications, instruct us in how we are to love God in the way that he demands to be loved. He demands exclusive devotion. Jesus said, "If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross and follow after Me." Take up an instrument of death, die to yourself, and come and follow after Christ. You know, and so we ask ourselves, we look in the mirror and say, "Is that me? Is that reflected in anything that animates my life? Does that drive my life at all?" I know for many of you it does. I understand you do it imperfectly, but we all come under the authority of this command.

Fourth commandment, going back to Exodus 20 for just a moment. Fourth commandment, easily the most controversial of commandments in Reformed theology and we're not going to sort all of that out tonight, but just to bring the fourth commandment to your attention in verses 8 through 11 of Exodus 20. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy." Now without going into the detail, I've prepared my messages on this, they'll come in due course, but the New Testament treatment of the Sabbath as one of the 10 Commandments is distinct and it's different from the other nine and we'll explore that when the time comes. For now, for today it's enough simply to

show you this, that the New Testament speaks of the Sabbath and points to Christ as the fulfillment of the Sabbath.

Look at Colossians 2 as we see how the word of God fits together. Colossians 2, speaking of the nature of true salvation, of regeneration and redemption, the holy word of God says this, "When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions." You see the new birth and forgiveness spoken of there. Salvation is such a wonderful thing and I hope that all of you are in Christ and know the blessing of that, but if not, I invite you to him right this moment to put your faith in him, turning from sin and putting your faith in Christ for your redemption. Young people, you little children, this can be yours as well. There's no reason for you to be outside of Christ because he calls you to come. Verse 14, "having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." He died for our sins. He paid the penalty for us and he released us from the bondage to Satan and demonic forces as shown in verse 15, "When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him."

So Paul has given us this great summary of the doctrines of salvation. He has shown as the wonders and the implications of what it means to be in Christ, to be united to him in his death, burial and resurrection. And what's the consequence of being in Christ, then? What flows from that? What's the next thought that he expresses in verse 16? He says, "Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ." What he is saying here is that because Christ has come, died for our sins and been raised from the dead, because he has caused us to be born again and he has saved us from our sins, he has forgiven all of our iniquities, having taken them out of the way and nailed them to the cross it says earlier in the passage, what he's saying is, "Understand this, that the rest of the Sabbath is fulfilled in Christ." The Sabbath commandment was pointing to rest and now that Christ has come, we find our rest in him, not in a literal seven day rotating calendar matter. We find our rest in Christ because he has fulfilled everything and our spiritual rest is found in him. We rest from our works of trying to please God because Christ has already pleased him on our behalf, and if we are in him, the rest has been accomplished and therefore we rest in him and we do not need the ceremonial aspects of the law to please God anymore. He's pleased with his Son and if we're in his Son, he's pleased with us by imputation and therefore we find the New Testament treatment of the Sabbath set forth before us. "Remember the Sabbath" tells us to remember Christ and what he has done for us, and to rest in him, to be content in him, and to know that everything that God requires from us has been fulfilled in our matchless Lord and Savior.

So that's number 4. Number 5, the fifth commandment: honor your father and mother. Honor your father and mother. Look at verse 12 with me, honor your father and mother. This command, the fifth command opens up what's known as the second table of the law. The first four commandments are related to our vertical responsibilities and obligations

before God. The second table relates to horizontal relationships, and the lead one is honor your father and mother. Verse 12, "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you."

Now this commandment is quoted directly by the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 6. Look at that text with me, Ephesians 6:1 and 2 where it says, "children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth." Look, as Paul is giving instruction to Christians, the letter to the Ephesians was a general letter meant to be circulated to many different churches. It has a broad universal application to all Christians is the intent of it. After Paul in the first three chapters has explained and honored God for the nature of salvation, he chose us, he redeemed us, he adopted us, he sealed us with the Spirit, it's not by works but by grace you have been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not as a result of works lest anyone should boast, for you have been created in Christ Jesus for good works it says in verse 10. We're his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Now what do those good works look like? Well, Paul spends the last three chapters of Ephesians explaining what those good works look like and he covers a broad range of life in the church, and life in the family, life in marriage, life in the workplace, and so forth. As part of that broad context, he draws upon as he's speaking about family relationships, he draws directly upon the fifth commandment and says, "Children, here's what you are to do and this is why. You are to obey your parents because God has commanded in the 10 Commandments that you honor your father and mother." So he clearly shows the ongoing operation and authority and effect of the 10 Commandments but citing them in a letter that is directed to the nature of living out the Christian life. So the fifth commandment clearly found in Ephesians 6:1 through 2.

Now the next three we're going to treat together. If you're taking notes, these are points 6, 7 and 8 all together, and there's a reason that will become obvious why we're doing it this way. Go back to Exodus 20. The sixth, seventh and eighth commandments hopefully if you haven't already done this through prior catechisms in your earlier life or something like that, hopefully you're starting to be able to associate the commandments and learning them as we repeat them in this way. The fifth commandment, "Honor your father and mother." Sixth commandment, here we go, "You shall not murder." Seventh commandment, "You shall not commit adultery." Eighth commandment, "You shall not steal." Now why are we treating those together and these familiar commandments, why are we treating them together like this? Well, there are multiple passages that help us think through this. Paul in his letter to the Romans explicitly quotes these commandments as authoritative and he quotes them all in the same place.

Look at Romans 13 with me. Romans 13 where he says this, he says, "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law." Do you see again the law is instructing us on how to love. The law is instructing us on how to love. It is our tutor that leads us to Christ. Once we are in Christ, it instructs us on

how we are to love him. And he goes on to say in verse 9, "For this, 'You shall not commit adultery, you shall not commit murder, you shall not steal.'" And while he treats them in different order than how they are given, you find them all right there in the same place and that's why we're treating these three in one combined multifaceted point because we find it right there gathered up in one place, Paul citing these three commandments and others and applying them to Christians.

Jesus Christ did this himself in Mark 10. Turn back there with me. Mark 10. You see how the Lord and Paul, who had the mind of the Lord, saw these commandments and gathered them together into one place. Jesus did this as he addressed the rich young ruler in Mark 10:17. He said where we find the Scripture saying, "As [Jesus] was setting out on a journey, a man ran up to Him and knelt before Him, and asked Him, 'Good Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' And Jesus said to him, 'Why do you call Me good? No one is good except God alone.'" And the goodness of God is revealed in his commandments and look at what Jesus does. Again, we're seeing how the New Testament takes the 10 Commandments and applies them and uses them as authoritative. So Jesus says in verse 19, "You know the commandments, 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'" Many of you have the commandments directly from the 10 Commandments in all caps indicating that he's quoting from the Old Testament. Jesus spoke nearly the entire second table to the rich young ruler, said, "Do this and live." And the reason that he did this was not because the man could actually earn and inherit eternal life through his obedience, he was quoting the commandments to him to set the standard before him to expose his sin to him. He was a proud man and he had idols in his heart. He loved his wealth and so he walked away from the Lord having asked the right question, he walked away because he loved his money more than he loved the Lord. So he walked away eventually after he said this in verse 20, "Teacher, I have kept all these things from my youth up." He didn't understand them at all and, "Jesus felt a love for him," there in verse 21, "One thing you lack: go and sell all you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.' But at these words he was saddened, and he went away grieving, for he was one who owned much property." He didn't understand the first thing about the 10 Commandments even though he asserted that he kept them from his youth. So we see these three commandments gathered up in Romans 13 and in Mark 10.

Now let me point something else out to you about individual commandments here, about the commandment against murder, the commandment against adultery. Look at Matthew 5. Jesus here is speaking to people, he is showing forth what true repentance looks like to his disciples. That's the whole point of the Sermon on the Mount. I won't take time to explain that again, but in Matthew 5 he quotes these individual commandments and expands on them to show that they're not simply matters of external behavior but they apply to the desires and emotions of the heart. So he quotes the commandment, shows its authority, and then clarifies its implications on those who hear.

So in verse 21 of Matthew 5 he says, "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not commit murder.'" For the sake of time, we'll skip to verse 22. He says, "But I

say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell." In other words, your hatred and your anger toward your fellow man is a violation of the commandment against murder. It's a violation of the sixth commandment. Even if you never lift a knife or point a gun and use it and take someone's life, you can still be guilty of the commandment not to murder because it applies to the heart, and it applies to sullen rebellious attitudes toward parents and towards authority. You know, this defiance against authority and wishing away is a violation against the commandment against murder. You know, to reject authority is to say, "I wish you were dead." And Christ says that wish in your heart convicts you as a murderer. The law convicts you of that and the reason that it convicts is because the law still is in effect, the moral law still has authority.

Now in like manner, the Lord treats the seventh commandment against adultery in a similar way. Very familiar, we don't need to spend any extended time here but in Matthew 5:27 he says, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery,'" you shall not commit adultery, "but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." You don't need the physical act to be guilty of adultery, and adultery stands for the whole category of sexual sins that men engage in, men and women engage in.

So we see from these collective commands from Romans 13, Mark 10, how the Lord himself and Paul quotes them as authoritative. We see here in Matthew 5 the Lord applying them to the heart in specific instances on the commandment against murder and against adultery. Is it starting to dawn on you that the 10 Commandments matter? That the 10 Commandments have authority? That the 10 Commandments still apply today? That the moral law is still in effect? To say that it's not is to just rip pages and pages out of the New Testament and to leave it as an unrecognizable document as it's been handed down to us.

So what does this mean in terms of we said that the law is teaching us how to love, how could love be the fulfillment of the law? Well, just think about what love is. Love would not murder the object of its love. Love would not commit adultery against the object of its love. Love would not steal from the object of its love. Instead love would give, love would be faithful, love would be kind. And all of these things are instructing us on the nature of genuine love and move us, and we need this so much in the world in which we live and move and all of our thoughts have been influenced by it, to move love out of that sentimental category of internal feelings alone and into the realm of positive constructive attitudes and actions that actually benefit those that we claim to love. So the sixth, seventh and eighth commandments, you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, I've easily shown you multiple places in the New Testament where those are quoted.

Now ninthly, the ninth commandment: you shall not bear false witness. You shall not bear false witness. God is truth. He is a true God. It is impossible for him to lie. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through

Me." Well, because God is like that, there is a moral implication for his creatures that they are to be truthful as well. So it says in Exodus 20:16, "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

Now where do we find this theme mentioned in the New Testament? Well, I'll give you only one for tonight but look at Ephesians 4:25. And actually let me just set the broader context for this. In verse 22 of Ephesians 4, Paul makes a statement about how we have laid aside the old nature of life and now we need to put on the new nature, the new man. So in verse 22 he says, "in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth." So he points out, having explained the nature of salvation in the first three chapters, he now says, "Now that that spiritual act is an accomplished fact in your life, now that that is done and on the basis of what Christ has done for you, now do this. Now take this new life and live it out. Exercise faith-based obedience." And where does he start this exercise of faith-based obedience? He says in verse 25, "Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor for we are members of one another." In other words, the patterns of deception have to stop and what comes out of your mouth must be yes, yes, or no, no. Jesus made that point as well in Matthew 5 after the passage that we talked about, and just emphasizing the critical importance of truth, of not being deceptive but being someone who is honest and whose word can be believed.

Look at Matthew 5. I decided I wanted to take you there after all. Matthew 5:33. This importance of bearing true witness. Verse 33, "Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, 'You shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord.' But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black." Oaths theory are not necessary in ordinary conversation. It's enough for you simply to speak the truth, is his point. And so he says in verse 37, "let your statement be, 'Yes, yes' or 'No, no'; anything beyond these is of the evil one." If you say yes, then it ought to be true and you don't need an oath to magnify the truth of what you say. If you say no, it ought to be no, that ought to be real, that ought to be the way things really are.

So this commandment against bearing false witness goes right to the core of the heart of those who would mislead people with their words or their actions by withholding information, secretive lives, double lives, all of this hypocrisy, projecting one image when in reality you're someone else in private. The commandment against bearing false witness brings all of those things to the table and convicts us of our guilt before God by not simply saying false things but by being false people. These things are very searching and you see it in the 10 Commandments, this is the point for tonight, you see it expressly in the 10 Commandments, you see the themes being emphasized in the New Testament as well. And beloved, when Paul's talking in Ephesians 4 through 6, as he's talking about those chapters, he's uniquely speaking about life in the church and this is how we are to relate to one another, with candor, with transparency, with kindness, with love and

gentleness, putting aside grudges and bitterness, putting aside foolish and temporary divisions over this thing or that, putting aside those things that put a wedge between you and someone else. It has no place in the church of God, no place in the Church of Christ. If we are one united in Christ, united by the Spirit in him, then on what basis do we maintain petty resentments against one another, I ask you? And I ask for good reason.

These are the things, violations of these kinds of working out of the 10 Commandments, these are the things that will fracture a church. These are the things where churches can go astray and so I plead with you to search your heart and if there's anything like that in your heart, that you're confessing that before the Lord and you're getting yourself right before God vertically, and then you're practicing the kind of forgiveness that's been given to you in Christ. If Christ has forgiven you, on what basis do you not forgive one of your brothers for something that's been said or done? And when these kinds of divisions get baked into the life of a church, it's very difficult to correct it. It's very difficult once those roots go deep to try to pull them out so that they are no longer infecting the garden of God. So if you find yourself having taken a couple of steps down that road toward a fellow brother or a fellow sister in Christ, beloved, it's time to stop and let the 10 Commandments arrest your attention the way that the New Testament applies the 10 Commandments, arrest your attention so that we're honoring God in all that we do individually and corporately. This is of great sober significance.

So finally, 10th and finally, the 10th commandment: you shall not covet. Let's look finally at Exodus 20:17. You know, if the word of God has stepped on your toes tonight, don't resist that and don't buck against it. Humble yourself before the Spirit of God and say, "Work in my heart and conform me to the image of Christ." That is the only proper way to respond when the arrows of the Spirit pierce your heart. There's no reason to be upset, there's no reason to be defensive, just say, "Lord, thank You for calling this to my attention. My only desire is to be a pleasing servant in Your sight, and if there are things in my heart, things in my life that need to be cleansed out, then thank You for convicting me of it so that I can repent and that I can be cleansed by the blood of Christ, and that I can return to the path of walking the righteous life that You've called me to live." No other response is worthy of Christ. And we all need this, every one of us needs this. It's serious.

Anyway, 10th commandment: you shall not covet. Verse 17, "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor." And as I like to point out when we're going through the 10 Commandments, the 10th commandment shows us that from the very beginning God's law applied to the heart. The 10th commandment explicitly applies to the inner desires and the inner motions of the human heart. God commands not only the outer man, he commands the inner man and tells us what we are to be like, and in commending us not to covet, the corresponding positive command would be, "Be content with what you have."

Be content with what you have, and where do we find this command repeated in the New Testament? Well, the Apostle Paul certainly felt the force of this command in his pre-

conversion life and he refers to it in Romans 7:7. He says, "What shall we say then? Is the Law sin?" In other words, because the law exposes sin, is the law sinful? He says, "May it never be!" God forbid! No, no, no, no, let's not talk that way. That's really off-track. The train is derailed at that point if that's where you go with us. He says, "On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, 'You shall not covet.'" So the law convicted Paul and helped lead him to Christ as Christ eventually made himself known on the road to Damascus to him.

Go back to Romans 13:8 which we've already quoted. It's speaking to Christians, speaking to the people of God, the blood-bought people of God, Paul says, "Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law." And he goes on to say those commands that we looked at earlier, and then he explicitly says right there in the middle, "You shall not covet." And you see once again the New Testament applying the 10 Commandments to New Testament believers as being in force for them to obey here in the present life.

Well, there are other passages that we could look at. 1 Timothy 1:9 and 10 is important this way and at this point kind of piling on to what I've already shared with you so we won't take the time to look there. But beloved, here's what I want you to see and here's what I want to close up on. It's so easy for teaching like this to be misrepresented by nefarious actors who try to misrepresent and twist what's actually being taught so that the word of God is obscured, the devil is always on the prowl looking to try to do something to disrupt the people of God so let me make this point of emphasis as I close. As we're talking about the 10 Commandments, we are not setting forth the way before you by which you might earn your own salvation. We are not saying that. Scripture makes it plain that all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We're all lawbreakers. We've all fallen short and so no one obeys this law and earns salvation, the law simply convicts us of our sin. But it does more than that. No, no, salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Not by works that we have done. I quoted Ephesians 2 earlier. We do not keep these commandments to earn merit with God. Our merit is in Christ. It is outside us. It is external to us. It is a gift given to us by imputation, by crediting in the divine account, given to us in Christ when our faith is in him. So we're not talking about salvation by works but what we're saying is this, the 10 Commandments reflect the enduring moral will of God, and when you are saved from your sin, when God has redeemed you, the 10 Commandments instruct you on how to love him. The 10 Commandments have the effect of restraining your feet from pursuing sin. The 10 Commandments show you what is pleasing to God in addition to the other aspects of the work that they do, and that's why the New Testament repeats their themes. Jesus Christ did not abolish the moral law. He made that abundantly clear in Matthew 5:17 through 20. No, he obeyed it on our behalf and paid the penalty for our violations of it.

So now, now, beloved, in some ways this whole thing tonight has been able to make this one final closing statement, now we will embark on a study of the 10 Commandments to better learn how to please our God and to be more sensitive to our sin as we grow in Christ. God will use this to grow us, to convict us, and to help us understand the fullness

of what it means to live in obedience to him and that's why we'll continue our study in coming days. For tonight as I close, let me just say that everything that we've said here tonight, if you are not in Christ, all of this convicts you of your own guilt before God. The law reveals to you your need for a Savior and that is why we continually, repeatedly, earnestly, in whatever multiple ways of limited giftedness allows us to do, that's why we offer Christ to you. You need Christ as a Savior. You need Christ to redeem you because you're guilty of breaking the law of God and that brings judgment upon your head. So I invite you with a brokenness in my heart, I invite you once again to come to Christ, give yourself to him that he might exercise his saving power in your soul.

Let's pray together.

Our Father, we thank You for Your word. We thank You for the law that at one point or another convicted us and showed us our need for a Savior, and having led us to Christ, Father, we found that all that the law demanded of us was fulfilled in Christ and now we can look to it to find out how to live in a way that is pleasing to You. I pray, Father, for this church. I pray for the people of this church that You love and in a faltering imperfect way that I love also, Father, and I plead by the blood of Christ that You would work in hearts, Father, in the hearts of Your people, in the hearts of the redeemed, work in their life to sanctify them in the truth, work in their lives to change them, to humble them, that where pockets of sin remain, Father, that You might expose it for true genuine repentance that they might know the cleansing and the peace of walking with You in a humble confession of sin over the course of life.

And Father, for those in the room that are outside of Christ, Father, You know that we pray for them. I ask You, Father, once again, I ask You once again, O God, that Your Spirit would convict them, would work in their lives and that You would graciously draw them to Christ, change their heart, give them new life that they might exercise repentance and faith toward Christ and enter into Your heavenly kingdom. Father, You've brought us all here to hear these things tonight out of Your word, however poorly it's been presented, may Your Spirit work to compensate and to seal truth to hearts in each one and then may Your Spirit work, may Your Spirit do His mighty work in souls to save them and to conform them to the image of Christ, ultimately to deliver every one safely into Your glorious heavenly kingdom. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

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