

Lesson Eleven

In the last lesson we looked at what part the Moral Law plays in God's plan of salvation. The Ten Commandments serve as a good summary of God's moral will for people for all time. In this lesson we will look at the first three commandments. They are often called the First Table (tablet) of the Law and they address our relationship with God.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus showed that the Ten Commandments have a broader meaning than appears on the surface. There he tells us that, "anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:28). He shows us that it is not only the act of adultery that is forbidden, but also the sinful desire. With that in mind we will not only look at the Ten Commandments themselves, but also passages which shed light on their full meaning.

What is the First Commandment?

God says:	From this we know:
<i>Exodus 20:3</i> "You shall have no other gods before me."	We should not give anyone or anything first place in our hearts before God.
<i>Isaiah 42:8</i> "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols."	This includes false gods (idols), people, and possessions.
<i>Matthew 10:37</i> "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."	
<i>Matthew 6:24</i> "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."	
<i>John 5:23</i> "...that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him."	We cannot willingly pledge ourselves to any God that is not the true God. The true God is the Triune God.

God says:**From this we know:**

Acts 5:3, 4 "Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? You have not lied to men but to God.'"

Psalms 33:8 "Let all the earth fear the LORD; let all the people of the world revere him."

Matthew 22:37 "Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'"

Proverbs 3:5 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding."

John 8:46-50 "'Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.' The Jews answered him, 'Aren't we right in saying that you are a Samaritan and demon-possessed?' 'I am not possessed by a demon,' said Jesus, 'but I honor my Father and you dishonor me. I am not seeking glory for myself; but there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge.'"

Hebrews 10:7 "Then I said, 'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll—I have come to do your will, O God.'"

Philippians 2:8 "And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!"

Matthew 3:17 "And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'"

Matthew 4:8-10 "Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor. 'All

We should fear (revere, be in awe of), love and trust in God above all things.

Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the First Commandment by obeying it perfectly in our place.

God says:**From this we know:**

this I will give you,' he said, 'if you will bow down and worship me.' Jesus said to him, 'Away from me, Satan! For it is written: "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'""

Martin Luther said that if we could keep the First Commandment perfectly, then we could keep all of the Commandments perfectly. If we really could love God enough that we never put anything above him, we would be able to live according to his will at all times.

What is the Second Commandment?

God says:**From this we know:**

Exodus 20:7 "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name."

Exodus 34:5-7 "Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, 'The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.'"

Romans 12:14 "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse."

Leviticus 19:12 "Do not swear falsely by my name and so profane the name of your God. I am the LORD."

We should not misuse God's name in any way.

God's name is everything he has revealed about himself—it is his reputation.

Some of the ways God's name is misused:

Using it to curse someone or as a profanity;

Using his name to swear falsely or needlessly;

Teaching or supporting false doctrine in his name;

Hypocrisy (misrepresenting God by claiming to follow God's will while acting contrary to it).

God says:**From this we know:**

Jeremiah 23:31 "'Yes,' declares the LORD, 'I am against the prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, 'The LORD declares.'"

Matthew 15:7-9 "You hypocrites! Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.'"

Psalms 50:15 "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will honor me."

Psalms 100 "Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations."

Matthew 28:18-20 "Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"

We should use his name in a right way by praying to him with all our troubles, praising him, giving thanks to him and spreading the glory of his name to all people.

God says:	From this we know:
<p>John 17:25, 26 "Righteous Father, ...I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."</p>	<p>Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Second Commandment by obeying it perfectly in our place.</p>

The Old Testament believers were so concerned about using God's name (Jehovah / LORD) properly, that eventually they never spoke his name. Because of this, we do not even know the Hebrew pronunciation of God's revealed name.

What is the Third Commandment?

God says:	From this we know:
<p><i>Exodus 20:8</i> "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."</p>	<p>God's command to the people of the Old Testament was to observe the Sabbath (Hebrew word meaning "rest") day.</p>
<p><i>Exodus 20:11</i> "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."</p>	<p>The Sabbath day reminded the Old Testament believers that God rested after the six days of Creation.</p>
<p><i>Deuteronomy 5:15</i> "Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day."</p>	<p>The Sabbath day reminded the Old Testament believers that God had granted them rest from their slavery in Egypt.</p>
<p><i>Exodus 20:9-10</i> "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."</p>	<p>The Sabbath day was an opportunity for everyone to rest from their work.</p> <p>The Sabbath day was an opportunity to hear and learn God's word and to worship God for all his blessings.</p>

God says:**From this we know:**

Exodus 23:12 "Six days do your work, but on the seventh day do not work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest and the slave born in your household, and the alien as well, may be refreshed."

Leviticus 19:30 "Observe my Sabbaths and have reverence for my sanctuary. I am the LORD."

Leviticus 23:3 "There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a Sabbath to the LORD."

Colossians 2:16-17 "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ."

Romans 14:5,6 "One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God."

Galatians 4:9-11 "But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! I fear for you, that

The Old Testament Sabbath was a shadow or picture that pointed ahead to Christ and to the "rest" he gives us.

We do not have to worship together on Saturday or any other set day.

However, God does want us to meet together regularly to worship him and to hear his word.

God says:**From this we know:**

somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.”

Hebrews 10:25 “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Luke 4:16 “He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.”

Matthew 11:28, 29 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Romans 10:17 “Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.”

Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Third Commandment by obeying it perfectly in our place.

Jesus also demonstrated that the rest pictured by the Sabbath is the true, spiritual rest he provides. Rest for our souls comes through faith in the forgiveness of sins Jesus won for us on the cross.

This faith comes from studying the Bible.

Luther explained the Third Commandment in his catechism by saying that, “We should fear and love God that we do not despise preaching and his word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.”

After looking at the first three commandments, it is easy to see that it is impossible to live them perfectly as God demands. Since we cannot do this, it is comforting to know that Christ has perfectly fulfilled all of the Commandments, not just these three, in our place.