

# **The 10 Commandments Today**

*A Thirteen Lesson  
Bible Class Study*



*a study of the 10 Commandments from the law of  
Moses, compared to the covenant of Christ*

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## *Introduction*

God revealed himself and the beginning of his will to Moses on Mount Sinai as the Exodus ended and the wilderness wandering was about to begin. Within the law of Moses are the 10 commandments, long remembered and revered for their simplicity and purity.

What is the place of the decalogue today? Many teach that it is still binding while dismissing the rest of the Old Testament as antiquated. But if the Old Testament has been taken out of the way, how could the 10 commandments continue to be in effect? This series of lessons will attempt to answer that question and mine the New Testament of Jesus Christ for hints of the 10 commandments.

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# Lesson 1: *The Giving of the 10 Commandments to Moses*

The 10 Commandments rank as the world's simplest and greatest legal code ever. In the minds of many, that code is still binding upon man today, but this series of lessons seeks to debunk that theory without casting any denigration upon the great code of Moses. In fact, the principles set down by God on Moses's tablet are still influential today, despite the fact that the New Testament law has replaced the Old Testament as the code currently in force.

The giving of the Law of Moses might be compared to the Constitutional Conventions of the United States in the late eighteenth century. A people was being gathered together in a new way and a new law was in order. With Israel, however, the law was coming from above in a way which precluded men from offering amendments or votes.

Three months after God had led Israel out of Egypt, she came to the wilderness of Sinai where the nation camped before the great mountain of that name. God introduces Moses to the concept of his covenant, about to be revealed and which required submission before blessing. The people rejoiced at this suggested arrangement and promised their undying loyalty. Preparations were made for the reception of the law set for three days later, with a special focus on consecration and reverence.

When that day dawned, God greeted Israel with thunder and lightning and a thick cloud on the mountain. The sound of a trumpet announced the divine presence, reminding Israel of the greatness of her God. With the awesome sight of this great smoky mountain before them, Moses ascended it to meet God again.

As the 10 commandments were revealed, the people grew even more fearful of Jehovah. The great sight before them was intended to help create godly reverence for the law Moses was bringing back, but while he tarried, the people soon forgot their oath of loyalty. Before the tablets could be dusted off, they had fallen into heathen idolatry by crafting a golden calf to worship as their deliverer. As Moses arrived with the tablets of testimony and saw what sin his brother had allowed Israel to undertake, he cast them against the mountain with anger, breaking them in pieces.

Moses punished the sinners and then received a duplicate copy of the law from God on the same mountain. The law revealed to this point contained more than just 10 commandments, which were its first tenets. Many other laws were part of God's covenant with Israel; these can be studied in Exodus chapters 21-31.

## Questions

1. Why had the children of Israel been in Egypt (Gen. 45:3-8)?
2. Why had Israel's comfort in Egypt been changed to servitude (Exod. 1:8-14)?
3. How did an Israelite like Moses gain standing among the Egyptians (Exod. 2:1-14)?
4. How did God first appear to Moses (Exod. 3:1-12)? What mission did he give the man?

5. List some ordeals that befell Egypt and Israel as this freedom was attained (Exod. 4-15).

6. The strange route out of Egypt to Canaan that Israel took is justified as necessary by God for one reason. What is it (Exod. 13:17-18)?

7. The first 18 chapters of Exodus establish the courage of Israel in undertaking the escape from Egypt at Moses's advice, but also her fleshly weaknesses and lack of trust in God. Although war did not overcome them, what did (Exod. 16:1-3, 17:1-3)?

8. How did God want the people to regard him and his law (Exod. 19:1-9)? What was their initial reaction (Exod. 19:8, 20:18-19)?

9. Where was the law given to Moses? Describe the atmosphere that day (Exod. 19:16-19).

10. The 10 commandments are generally divided into two groups. The first four deal with man's direct relationship with God; the latter six deal with man's relationship with other men. List the 10 commandments below, according to this method.

**Laws For Relating to God**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

**Laws For Relating to Other Men**

- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

11. How did Israel's weakness become apparent quickly, proving that keeping even the 10 commandments would prove difficult (Exod. 32:1-18)?

12. How did the tablets get broken?

## Lesson 2: *Are the 10 Commandments Binding Today?*

It will be a shocking statement to many, but the 10 commandments were never given to any people on Earth other than the Israelites, beginning with the time of Moses. The 10 commandments, and the entire law of Moses, were not given to Gentile nations, and moreover, the New Testament of Jesus Christ actually supersedes that old law as it takes effect.

### Questions

1. There were two parties in the Old Covenant in which Moses participated. Identify them (Exod. 19:3-7).
2. Were the Gentiles also called to Sinai to receive the law and bind themselves to it?
3. Of all the 10 commandments, the Sabbath seems to excite the most interest in religious controversy. Consider Exodus 31:12-18. List some clues from this passage that the 10 commandments was bound only on Israel under the law of Moses.
4. What was Christ's mission concerning the Law of Moses (Matt. 5:17-18)? How did he succeed (John 17:4, Rom. 10:4, Luke 24:25-27)?
5. Three major passages from Paul's letters indicate that the law of Moses was taken out of effect upon the establishment of the New Testament of Jesus Christ. The first appears in Second Corinthians 3:7-11. What is meant by "the ministry of death, written and engraved on stones"?
6. In what tense—past, present or future—does the writer describe that ministry in stone?

7. Of the ministry of death or ministry of the Spirit, which is declared superior?
  
8. How did Paul describe the Old Testament in 2 Corinthians 3:11? Writing before the fall of Jerusalem and its temple, how did he describe it in Hebrews 8:13?
  
9. Paul's letter to the Ephesians pointed out the racial separation between Jew and Gentile, meant for relief under the New Testament. Considering Ephesians 2:11-13, could both the Old Testament and the New Testament be in effect simultaneously? Why or why not?
  
10. What has Christ done with the Old Testament, which served to divide Jew from Gentile (Eph. 2:14-18)?
  
11. Under the law of Moses, only Israel was considered the people of God. Who are the people of God today (Eph. 2:19-22, cf. Romans 2:28-29)?
  
12. What does fleshly circumcision signify in God's sight today (Rom. 2:28-29, cf. Gal. 5:6)?
  
13. What form of circumcision brings one into God's family today (Col. 2:11-15)?
  
14. What did Christ do with the handwriting of requirements (the old law)?
  
15. How does the priesthood of Christ prove that the law has been changed (Heb. 7:11-13)?
  
16. Although the law of Moses is no longer in effect, and its 10 commandments are thus not binding upon Christians today, nine of them are renewed in the New Testament. Which one of them is not?



## Lesson 3: *The First Commandment: Other Gods*

Exodus 20:2-3 reads: “ I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no other gods before me.” The foundation of God’s covenant with Israel was his exclusive right to their worship and his future blessing was dependent upon their faithfulness to this tenet. Indeed, Israel’s demise many years later is clearly blamed on violating this commandment.

### Questions

1. Upon what great blessing did God base his claim to Israel’s exclusive and eternal praise as the 10 commandments began to be given (Exod. 20:2)?
2. Describe the conditions of the Israelites prior to this blessing (Exod. 1:8-16, 3:7).
3. Describe the impression that the Red Sea crossing must have created in the minds of the Hebrews (Exod. 14:1-31).
4. In giving this first commandment, was God acting jealously (cf. Exod. 34:10-16)? Explain.
5. What step did God command to help Israel avoid putting other gods ahead of him (Exod. 34:12-15)?
6. How do the scriptures describe the following gods of Canaan?
  - Molech (Lev. 18:21, Jer. 32:35):
  - Ashtoreth (Judges 10:6, 1 Sam. 7:3-4):

7. How did Elijah overcome the worshipers of an other god called Baal (1 Kings 18:19-39)?
  
8. Is the first commandment still binding on us today, as a tenet of the Law of Moses? Why or why not? If *not*, may we now have other gods before Jehovah?
  
9. What other gods did Paul and Barnabas encounter in Lystra (Acts 14:8-13)? How did they handle the problem (Acts 14:14-18)?
  
10. Of what was Paul accused when he preached in Athens (Acts 17:16-18)? Which was the only God the Athenians worshiped who was not really one of the “other gods” God condemned (Acts 17:19-31)?
  
11. Nowadays, a move to tolerate all religions and celebrate everyone’s god has gained steam. Can Christians participate in this movement by refraining from teaching adherents of other gods (1 Cor. 8:5-6)? Why or why not?
  
12. Name some “other gods” which men are tempted to serve in this day.
  
13. What are some ways in which we make “Self” an other god (Luke 9:57-62)?
  
14. Which is the first commandment of all, according to the teaching of Jesus Christ (Mark 12:28-30)?
  
15. If you have no other god before Jehovah, what will you do on Sunday mornings?

## Lesson 4: *The Second Commandment: Graven Images*

Exodus 20:4-6 reads: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love me and keep my commandments.” Idolatry continues to plague spiritual Israel, though often through different means.

### Questions

1. Explain the jealousy of God as it relates to worship and idolatry. Compare it to a woman’s right to be jealous over her husband’s romantic affections (cf. James 4:4).
2. What was going on back at the camp while Moses tarried with God, receiving this and other commandments (Exod. 32:1-6)?
3. List three of four attitudes or characteristics of the people (including Aaron) that led to this hasty descent into idolatry.
4. Read Exodus 32:7-10. How does God describe the idolaters and their actions in this passage?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
5. Where did they likely get at least part of the gold needed for this idol (Exod. 12:35-36)?
6. What punishment did God initially suggest for the idolaters?

7. After Moses convinced God to relent, he met Joshua on the way back to the camp. How did Israel's leader react to the sight of this idolatry (Exod. 32:19-21)?

8. What lesson could the Israelites have gained from the drink Moses gave them?

9. Clearly, the second commandment prohibits what Israel did that day. Is the second commandment still binding today as a part of the law of Moses? If not, is idolatry then permitted under the New Testament?

10. Two phrases in Romans 1:25 identify how God feels about idolatry. Identify them below.

- a.
- b.

11. What was Paul's first impression of the great, historic city of Athens (Acts 17:16)? What did he do about it?

12. How do we know that idolatry is condemned under the covenant of Christ (1 Cor. 6:9-11, Rev. 21:8)?

13. State simply the advice of Paul and John concerning idolatry:

- a. Paul (1 Cor. 10:14):
- b. John (1 John 5:21):

14. Is an idol anything really (1 Cor. 10:19-20)?

15. Identify a few ways in which Catholicism makes regular practice of idolatry.

16. What form of idolatry is often the most powerful in New Testament times (Eph. 5:5, Col. 3:5)? How can this properly be called idolatry (cf. Matt. 6:19-24)?

## Lesson 5: *The Third Commandment: Taking God's Name in Vain*

Exodus 20:7 reads: "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain." Modern men hear God's name taken in vain so frequently that it is a temptation to become accustomed to it to the point that it does not sound offensive anymore. Although the 10 commandments are no longer in effect, as such, taking God's name in vain is still sin to be avoided. There are two ways in which this sin is committed—using God's name to validate false swearing of an oath and using God's name in a trifling, disrespectful manner.

### Questions

1. Consider Leviticus 19:12. What are the two ways in which God's name can be taken in vain?
  - a.
  - b.
2. What was the penalty for swearing falsely (Lev. 6:1-5)?
3. Read Numbers 30:1-2. Was it permissible to swear oaths under the law of Moses? How serious a matter was such an oath?
4. Has God ever participated in an oath (Heb. 6:13-18)? Explain.
5. Identify the nature of the oaths in the following New Testament passages:
  - a. Acts 2:30:
  - b. Acts 23:21:
  - c. Romans 1:9:
  - d. Romans 9:1:
  - e. Galatians 1:20:
6. Read Matthew 5:33-37. An oath is defined as "a solemn affirmation or declaration, made with an appeal to God for the truth of what is affirmed, and imprecating his vengeance, and renouncing his favor if what is affirmed is false" (*Barnes Notes, Gospels*, page 57). The condemnation before us in the sermon on the mount concerns the hypocrisy of the Jews in that age through which they professed to adhere strictly to the law, but had, in fact, assaulted it with the creation of loop holes. One of these loop holes involved the taking of oaths in common conversation which they they did not consider to be binding. They would swear by the temple, the head, heaven and Earth, thinking that so long a they refrained from swearing by the name of Jehovah, perjury would not be held against them by God. It was this corruption of oaths that Jesus was exposing, and not the taking of oaths itself. The matter of judicial oaths is not under consideration. How did the Lord show the binding nature of all these oaths?
  - a. swearing by heaven:
  - b. swearing by the earth:
  - c. swearing by Jerusalem:
  - d. swearing by the head:

7. Instead of seeking the comfort of loophole oaths, how should a person make promises (cf. James 5:12)?

8. Read Matthew 23:16-22. Of what sinful and baseless oath distinction did Jesus accuse men here?

9. To summarize these passages, did one really escape making an oath on God's name by swearing only on his temple or creation? Were such oaths thus non-binding?

10. On what occasion did Jesus accept a judicial oath (Matt. 26:62-64)?

11. Ancient Jews so feared profaning God's name that they refrained from using it all, substituting other words whenever they came to it in scripture even. Today, the abuse of God's name is so common that few even take notice anymore. What are some ways in which people use God's name in a trifling way?

12. Some are unaware that God's name has been corrupted into euphemisms, which also cause the speaker to take God's name in vain. List some euphemisms for God and Jesus that are used as exclamations of joy or anger without thought to the divine.

13. Read Matthew 12:35-37. How does this passage condemn using God's name in a trifling manner?

14. On what basis is it sinful to take God's name in vain—the 10 commandments or the teaching of Christ for the New Testament?

## Lesson 6: *The Fourth Commandment: Remember the Sabbath*

Exodus 20:8-11 reads: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.” The Sabbath was an important part of the old law and one that first century Jews clung to sentimentally and avidly. As a part of the law of Moses, however, it is no more in force today than any other part of that code. Protestantism has clouded the issue by calling Sunday the “Christian Sabbath,” which it in no way is.

### Questions

1. On what day of our week would the Sabbath day fall?
2. To what group of people was the Sabbath given, according to Exodus 31:13-17? Are you a member of this group of people? How does Ephesians 2:11-12 prove that Gentiles were not made part of this covenant, as Israel was?
3. Consider Exodus 31:16-17. What was the purpose of the Sabbath observance? What was to be its duration for the nation of Israel?
4. How long was the Aaronic priesthood to endure (Exod. 40:15)? Is it still in effect today (Heb. 7:11-13)?
5. What was the penalty for working on the Sabbath (Exod. 35:1-3)? If the Sabbath is still binding today, would not the penalty for Sabbath-breaking also be binding?
6. Read Numbers 15:32-36. Was stick-gathering considered work? How do you know? Will you carry sticks or stones this Saturday?

7. Read Numbers 28:1, 9-10. What does God make a part of the Sabbath day observance here? If the Sabbath day is still in force today, how can this observance be out of effect?

8. The rabbi's interpretation of Sabbath law included travel as a form of work and thus strictly limited how far a Hebrew could travel on the seventh day of the week, even to worship (Acts 1:12). Using Joshua 3:4 as a guide, they estimated that a distance of 1000-1200 yards was the maximum allowable. Still, many loop holes were created to extend this distance slightly. If the Sabbath is binding and we moved our weekly assembly to Saturday, how many members of this church could attend in this building without violating the distance interpretation?

9. Did Jesus observe the Sabbath according to the law or was he a violator of the law (1 Peter 1:19, Heb. 4:15, Acts 13:27-28, 2 Cor. 5:21, 1 John 3:5)?

10. Why then did the Jewish leaders often object to him on the Sabbath (Matt. 12:1-14, 15:7-9; cf. Matt. 27:18)?

11. Read Luke 13:10-17. How did Jesus show their hypocrisy in accusing him of breaking the Sabbath (cf. Matt. 12:11-12)?

12. How does Colossians 2:16-17 prove that the Sabbath is not binding upon Christians?

13. Why did the early Christians do so much preaching on the Sabbath (Acts 13:43, 18:4)?

14. On what day of the week did the early Christians assemble for worship (Acts 20:7)?



## Lesson 7: *The Fifth Commandment: Honoring Parents*

Exodus 20:12 reads: “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you. Israel’s heritage in Canaan became a Hebrew axiom, proving that the divine blessing was dependent upon the people’s submissiveness. The fifth commandment marks a shift from responsibilities directly toward God to those toward other people. Although the 10 commandments are no longer binding upon men today, as such, the doctrine of Christ updates a person’s responsibility toward his parents for the final dispensation of time.

### Questions

1. What comment upon this commandment does Moses make in Deuteronomy 27:16? Define “contempt.”
2. What was the Old Testament penalty for cursing one’s parents (Exod. 21:17)? If the law is still binding, would the penalty also be binding on us today?
3. Since the law of Moses has been taken out of the way, are children now permitted to curse and show disrespect to their parents? On what basis do you state your answer?
4. The Pharisees of Jesus’s day did lived under the law of Moses. How did they violate the fifth commandment without actually pronouncing a curse upon their parents (Matt. 15:1-9)?
5. Consider the list given in Romans 1:28-32. List three sins in this passage that people of the world would consider the most heinous. Answers will vary.
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.

6. Disobedience to parents is included in this list. How does God rate the awfulness of this sin here or in any passage, as compared to other sins?

7. How does verse 28 then describe disobedience to parents, among other sins?

8. What penalty does God pronounce as fitting for one who is disobedient to his parents?

9. Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5. What does Paul recommend we do to those who prove themselves disobedient to their parents?

10. When is it right to disobey one's parents (Acts 5:29, Eph. 6:1)?

11. How does the Holy Spirit suggest we learn to show piety at home (1 Tim. 5:3-4)?

12. How does Paul express the seriousness of neglecting one's parents (1 Tim. 5:8)?

13. List some ways in which we can show honor to our parents.

## Lesson 8: *The Sixth Commandment: Murder*

Exodus 20:13 reads: “You shall not murder.” This command seems to be the simplest of all and yet the Old Testament is filled with bloodshed. The sixth commandment did not condemn the killing of animals, for sacrifice was also commanded. Nor did it condemn killing within warfare or capital punishment. The sixth commandment condemned killing people in more common settings, and although the 10 commandments are not binding upon Christians today, the prohibition against murder has actually expanded to cover its root causes as well.

### Questions

1. Describe the first murder in Bible history and its root cause (Gen. 4:1-12).
2. Describe the punishment for murder enacted by God in the covenant with Noah (Gen. 9:6).
3. How was negligence that led to a person’s death punished (Exod. 21:28-29)?
4. How would mob “hit men” have fared under the law of Moses (Deut. 27:25)?
5. Did God recognize life in the womb as worthy legal protection (Exod. 21:22-24)? If so, how?
6. On what basis can we condemn the sin of murder today?
7. Read Matthew 5:21-26. The gospel of the kingdom which Jesus was teaching provided for an assault on the root cause of murder. Verse 22 exposes things that lead to homicide. List them.
  - a.
  - b.

8. When disputes arise between brethren, what steps does Jesus recommend in the interest of resolution, according to the following passages?

- a. Matthew 5:23-24:
- b. Matthew 5:25:
- c. Ephesians 4:26-27:

9. The apostle John reflects his master's doctrine concerning the expansion of the murder prohibition. What sin does he equate with murder (1 John 3:14-15)?

10. Would this prohibition include feelings of apathy toward a troubled brother (1 John 3:16-18)?

11. What was the penalty for murder under the Old Testament law of Moses? What is the penalty under the New Testament law of Christ (Rev. 21:8)?

12. In ancient Israel, the civil and religious codes were one in the same. The law of Moses provided both sets of laws, interconnected and indivisible. Under the law of Christ, civil and legal matters are left to the state, for many different nations would claim members of Christ's spiritual and invisible kingdom. What provision does the New Testament make so that states may execute murderers (Rom. 13:1-7)?

13. Abortions today are most often performed as a means of birth control. On overwhelmingly rare occasions, abortion is performed due to rape, incest, or threat to the mother's life. Judging from the scriptures in this lesson (especially the principles set forth in Exodus 21:22-24), should abortion fall into condemnation as murder under the law of Christ? Why or why not?

14. Is it murder to kill a nasty spider, a tasty cow, or other animal (Gen. 1:26, Acts 10:12-13)? Is it murder to kill an elderly person with a special machine, if the person has requested that he be killed? Is any sin ever justified if both parties agree to its commission?

## Lesson 9: *The Seventh Commandment: Adultery*

Exodus 20:14 reads: “You shall not commit adultery.” God’s marriage regulations began in the Garden of Eden, but were cast aside not long after. Even the most spiritual of people in the Old Testament can be found with plural wives, concubines, prostitutes and in other immoral activity. When Jesus came, however, all the moral confusion surrounding human sexuality was put in perspective and the Eden Ideal was lifted up once more. The seventh commandment is no longer binding upon mankind, but the doctrine of Christ renews the divine mandate concerning adultery.

### Questions

1. What was the penalty for violating the seventh commandment (Lev. 20:10)? If the 10 commandments are still binding today, would the penalty also be binding?
2. What is the penalty for adultery under the New Testament of Jesus Christ (Rev. 21:8, Eph. 5:5)?
3. Leviticus 18 describes a number of forms of sexual immorality which were condemned under the law of Moses. List those that appear in the following verses:
  - a. Lev. 18:6-18:
  - b. Lev. 18:20:
  - c. Lev. 18:22:
  - d. Lev. 18:23:
4. What did Jesus do when the Pharisees challenged him to judge a woman caught in the very act of adultery (John 8:2-11)? Did this action show tolerance of adultery or validation of what was sin?
5. The most noteworthy case of adultery in the Bible involved King David and the wife of one of his generals. Read 2 Samuel 11:1-17. This episode reveals much of what leads to adultery and what often follows it. Answer the following questions about it.
  - a. What did Bathsheba do, negligently or not, that led to the adultery (verse 2)?
  - b. What mistake did David make when he saw Bathsheba for the first time that night?
  - c. How did David initially attempt to cover up his sin and its evidence in Bathsheba’s womb (verses 6-11)? How was he foiled in this cover up plan?

d. How did David attempt a cover-up a second time (verses 12-13)? How was he foiled?

e. How did David finally succeed in making certain Uriah would never find out that David had been with his wife (verses 14-17)?

6. This case seems to be an extreme one, but in fact, it well illustrates all the immorality that surrounds a case of adultery. List some ways in which adultery damages society today.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

7. How did the doctrine of Christ go deeper than what was taught concerning keeping the seventh commandment (Matt. 5:27-30)?

8. Read Matthew 19:1-10. Moses had instituted a special allowance that made no-fault divorce possible. (Deut. 24:1-4), and the Pharisees' question turned on continuing that beloved privilege to put away the wife of one's youth. Did Jesus continue this allowance into the New Testament? To what ideal did he point as the hallmark of his doctrine and law on marriage?

9. What single ground is mentioned as justifying divorce and allowing the wronged party to remarry in the Lord?

10. Did his disciples perceive this doctrine to be stricter than under the law of Moses, about the same, or looser (see verse 10)?

11. What does 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8 say about the importance of sexual morality for Christians?

## Lesson 10: *The Eighth Commandment: Stealing*

Exodus 20:15 reads: “You shall not steal.” Property rights are an important facet of the American democracy and system of self-government by the people and this sentiment dates back to the seventh commandment of the law of Moses. Stealing violates personal property rights and leads to anarchy within society. Although the seventh commandment was done away with as part of the Old Testament law of Moses, the prohibition against stealing is renewed under the New Testament law of Christ.

### Questions

1. Exodus 22 enlarges upon the seventh commandment, dealing with hypothetical cases of theft. Answer the following questions from these cases:

a. What was the restitution standard when a rustler was caught (verse 1)?

b. How was a property owner who killed an intruder during the act punished (verse 2)? Was a property owner guiltless who later hunted down an intruder and killed him (verse 3)?

c. Is this an example of stealing in verse 5? Why? How could something like this happen today?

d. What care should be exercised when holding another’s property for safe keeping (verses 7-13)?

2. Leviticus 19:13 condemns those who cheat their neighbors. Understanding that our neighbors are more than just those people who live on our street, how is it possible to cheat your neighbor today?

3. How did Rachel become a thief (Gen. 31:19-35)? What effect did her sin have on those around her?

4. Consider Joshua 7. Why was God so angry with Israel that he allowed them to lose the battle of Ai?

5. Did Achan confess his sin willingly? What did he call the root cause of his crime?

6. What effect did Achan’s crime have on Israel (Josh. 7:25)? What was his punishment?

7. What is the effect on our society because of theft?

8. In times of economic downturn, situation ethicists argue that a certain amount of stealing is justifiable. Stealing bread is rationalized as a crime of necessity. Does the commentary on the seventh commandment found in Proverbs 6:30-31 justify theft under certain circumstances?

9. Judas Iscariot is perhaps the most famous traitor in history, but many do not realize that he was also a thief. Describe the depths to which he went as a thief (John 12:1-6).

10. How can a love of money lead disciples to betrayal (Titus 1:12-16)?

11. Are the following examples of theft? Explain.

- a. Copying another's written material into your report without giving credit.
- b. Reporting less income than is true on your income tax return.
- c. Using two copies of a computer software program when the license only allows you one.
- d. Accepting more change than is proper due to clerk error when paying for something.
- e. Pocketing a dollar bill that you saw fall from an unaware person's hand.

12. What do the following passages say about those who bemoan thugs who rob banks and mug innocent people, but themselves will cheat on their taxes, steal cable television or violate copyright laws

- a. Matthew 23:14:
- b. Romans 2:21-24:
- c. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10:
- d. Ephesians 4:28:



## Lesson 11: *The Ninth Commandment: False Witness*

Exodus 20:16 reads: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” False witness is rooted in lying and antipathy toward others but is expressed directly when called to speak under oath. A system of civil justice is dependent upon the general honesty of the citizenry and society itself is terribly harmed when trust does not reign. False witness is an assault on Christ’s “golden rule” about doing unto others as you have them do to you.

### Questions

1. Read Exodus 23:1-3. False witness like this can occur outside the courtroom. How might we be guilty of circulating false reports in everyday life (Prov. 10:18)?
2. Some people justify dishonesty in legal matters if it benefits a needy person. Is false witness ever justified (cf. Lev. 19:15)?
3. Read Leviticus 6:1-7. List the five areas in which a person could bear false witness listed here:
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
  - d.
  - e.
4. What two parties are offended by false witnessing?
5. What was the penalty for a convicted false witness?
6. How was God often involved in cases of false witness (Lev. 19:11-12)?
7. Read Deuteronomy 19:15-21. How many witnesses were required to establish a matter?
8. What penalty was due a false witness in a case in which a man was criminally accused?

9. How did God describe false witnessing in Proverbs 6:16-19. In what company did this sin fall?

10. To what three things does Proverbs 25:18 compare a false witness? Explain.

11. At its root, false witness is a willingness to tell lies for selfish gain, self-promotion or protection. What do the following passages say about telling lies and selfishness?

a. Ephesians 4:25:

b. Philippians 2:3-4:

c. Proverbs 22:12:

d. Revelation 21:8:

12. Why is bearing false witness sinful today—because it violated the ninth commandment of the law of Moses or because it violates the New Testament of Jesus Christ?

13. Read Matthew 15:16-20. Why is it especially significant that bearing false witness is said to proceed from the heart of a man?

14. Read Luke 3:7-14. What did John tell the soldiers to do as fruits of repentance? What then is true of a Christian today who tells lies?

15. List some common ways in which people tell “little white lies” today.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.

## Lesson 12: *The Tenth Commandment: Covetousness*

Exodus 20:17 reads: “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.” The tenth commandment exposes the jealousy and discontentment of heart that leads people to desire what belongs to another to such an extreme that hearts are corrupted and hands are soiled with sin. Covetousness is sinful under the New Testament law of Christ as well as having been a violation of the defunct law of Moses.

### Questions

1. According to Proverbs 1:19 and 15:27, what does greed for gain accomplish? Explain.
2. Envy of the wealthy is ancient sport and it is widely practiced today. According to Proverbs 23:4-5, why is the yearning to be rich foolishness?
3. Explain the wisdom of the following statement from Proverbs 30:8: “Give me neither poverty nor riches—Feed me with the food allotted to me; Lest I be full and deny you, And say, ‘Who is the Lord?’ Or lest I be poor and steal, And profane the name of my God.”
4. Consider Ecclesiastes 5:10. Will a person given to covetousness ever be satisfied? Why or why not?
5. Describe what resulted from the covetousness of the following Old Testament characters:
  - a. King David (2 Samuel 11:1):
  - b. King Solomon (1 Kings 11:1-4):
  - c. King Ahab (1 Kings 21:1-14):
  - d. Achan (Joshua 7:1-9, 20-26):

6. Explain the significance of Matthew 6:19-21 as it touches on the sin of covetousness.
  
7. How does a covetous heart interfere with one's discipleship, according to the following passages?
  - a. Matthew 6:24:
  
  - b. Matthew 6:31-34:
  
  - c. Matthew 13:22:
  
  - d. James 4:1-4:
  
8. Read Luke 12:13-15. In what *should* one's life consist (verse 21)?
  
9. To what does Paul liken covetousness in both Colossians 3:5 and Ephesians 5:5? Explain.
  
10. How does Paul describe the blessings of contentment (1 Tim. 6:6-10, Phil. 4:11-13)?
  
11. What advice does Paul give the rich so that they might not fall into covetousness (1 Tim. 6:17-19)?
  
12. Identify the greedy people and what they coveted in the following passages:
  - a. Acts 24:24-26:
  - b. Acts 19:12-27:
  - c. Acts 16:16-19:
  - d. Matt. 19:16-22:
  - e. Matt. 26:15-16:
  - f. Matt. 14:1-7:

## Lesson 13: *Review*

The 10 commandments rank as the world's simplest and greatest legal code ever. In the minds of many, that code is still binding upon man today, but this series of lessons was intended to debunk that theory without casting any denigration upon the great code of Moses. In fact, the principles set down by God on Moses's tablet are still influential today, despite the fact that the New Testament law has replaced the Old Testament as the code currently in force.

Nine of the 10 commandments are clearly echoed in the doctrine of Christ; only the Sabbath observance is not enjoined upon Christians today as a part of the new law. It is important for Christians to make distinctions—rightly divide—the old law from the new, for many unscriptural acts result by seeking convenient authority from Moses when Christ will not condone it.

### Questions

1. List the 10 commandments.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

2. Which commandments was Israel violating while God was giving Moses the 10 commandments? How?

3. There were two parties in the Old Covenant in which Moses participated. Identify them (Exod. 19:3-7). Were the Gentiles also called to Sinai to receive the law and bind themselves to it?

4. What was Christ's mission concerning the Law of Moses (Matt. 5:17-18)?

5. How do the following passages show that he succeeded?

a. 2 Corinthians 3:7-11:

b. Ephesians 2:11-11-16:

c. Colossians 2:11-15:

d. Hebrews 7:11-13:

6. Although the law of Moses is no longer in effect, and its 10 commandments are thus not binding upon Christians today, nine of them are renewed in the New Testament. Which of them is (are) not?

7. The first four commandments reveal the jealous nature of God. For what was God jealous? Is he still a jealous God (Matt. 6:24, James 4:3-5, Luke 9:57-62)?

8. List some of today's most popular idols.

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| a. | d. |
| b. | e. |
| c. | f. |

9. Review Lesson Six in this series. The Sabbath day is more than just the last day of the week, it was defined by certain practices enjoined upon the Jews. List some of them. What was the penalty for violating any of these commands?

10. Is the Sabbath observance binding on God's people today?

11. Is capital punishment "murder," forbidden by the Old Testament?

12. What does it mean to bear false witness?

13. To what does the New Testament compare covetousness?



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