

THE COMMANDMENTS

Catechist.

You said that your Godfathers and Godmothers promised for you that you would keep God's holy Will and Commandments. To whom were these Commandments given?

Answer. To his ancient people Israel, by the hand of his servant Moses.

Catechist. What are these Commandments?

Answer. The same which God spake in the twentieth chapter of Exodus, saying, I am the LORD thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

I. Thou shalt have none other gods but me.

II. Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them.

For I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and show mercy unto thousands in them that love me and keep my commandments.

III. Thou shalt not take the Name of the LORD thy God in vain: for the LORD will not hold him guiltless, that taketh his Name in vain.

IV. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all that thou hast to do; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God.

In it thou shalt do no manner of work, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, thy man-servant, and thy maid-servant, thy cattle, and the stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V. Honour thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

VI. Thou shalt do no murder.

VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VIII. Thou shalt not steal.

IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his servant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is his.

SECTION THREE – THE COMMANDMENTS (10 COMMANDMENTS)

Section three of the catechism – “The Commandments”

When you were baptized, your godparents promised that you would keep these – live by these (so the assumption is that you would be taught them, and encouraged to live by them).

So, besides the faith itself (what we believe - creeds) **there is also the idea that Christianity is about a certain lifestyle, or way of living.** In the Bible, this is called law – those things Christians should or are supposed to do (and *not* do).

*We need to remember that there is a lot of discussion in the church about the difference between law and grace. This week it is OT (Old Testament) law, next week we look at the NT (New Testament) understanding of law, and the concept of grace in the church.

Purpose of the Law (10 Commandments)

1. **When we know the commandments we see how great God is.** Why? If you understand the commandments, you will understand the perfect character of God. Through his commandments, we should recognize that he is perfect, and far above us and our temporary desires, weaknesses, rebelliousness and sin.

2. **When we know the commandments we see how bad (sinful) we really are.** In the law we see how far we have fallen from God’s standards, and expectations of us, and how different we are from him – how imperfect we are. The law shows us God is holy, *and that we are not.*

3. **When we know the commandments we see how we are to live.** This may seem obvious.

“For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.” (Titus 2:10–14 ESV)

10 Commandments

First Five Commands

1. **“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. “You shall have no other gods before me.”**

Out of Egypt – Israel saved from slavery in Egypt, brought to God’s mountain to worship Him. They were given at Mt. Sinai by God, who saved and protected them. In *response to salvation, live this way.*

Worship: we will all worship or serve something or someone. We were created to worship and serve God, and God only. (*Devote our time, talents, and treasures – all of our lives*).

Similar to Jesus’s words:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Matt 22:37–40 ESV)

Similar, because to have no other god but YHWH (Hebrew name of God in the Old Testament – the God of Israel). *So, to have a god means this is what you put your trust in, hope in, where the purpose of your life – all of this, your purpose, identity, where you spend money, time, how you make decisions, are all a result of who or what your gods are. So, YHWH is saying your entire existence should be lined up with ME as the top priority.*

2. **“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or 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 or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.**

This has caused much concern through the ages. The point of it is that the creation of objects which represent other gods (or the one true God) to then worship the object.

God is a Jealous god – like a bride and groom – no other's in this relationship.

3. “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.

The name of “the Lord” (YHWH). In the Bible, the name of the Lord represents his character, and his being – and to “Take” his name had to do with worship (which is about our entire lives, not just at church). So, when you worship God, don't do it wrongly. And when we speak of God, don't speak of him wrongly. It is not just about saying “God” or cursing, but you shouldn't do that either, after all, He is God – not a curse word.

4. “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 to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and 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, the Sabbath was Saturday in the OT (Day God rested from creation – see Gen 2:2). The point is, *God sets aside a day for his people to not work*, but to rest, like he did. We are supposed to have a pattern or cycle to life, where we stop, and rest – instead of go, go, go. The truth is, if God didn't tell us to, we wouldn't stop.

This command also assumes something – that we are to work. We were made to work. Work is not bad, but good, and gives us dignity.

5. “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

This command is about family relationship, it is a broad commandment, and comes with a promise of blessing. Now, this does not say sacrifice God to family, or worship family, or put them first. And there are times when our family relationships will be opposed to you if you are following Jesus. (See: Matt 12:46-50). So the first commandment overrides this one. **But, it is**

saying it is really important. Means to obey, to not shame, and to respect your parents. We are to submit to their lawful directions. And it might even mean caring for adult parents in old age.

Also, it is important to note that it says mother – in that time, women were not valued like men, and often considered property. And yet, the law holds them equal to the man in the marriage relationship. (Two become one). *God values women.*

Last 5 Commands – BIG DO NOTs

6. “You shall not murder. Murder involves killing. But there are lots of places in the law of the OT where killing is allowed – death penalty for various things. Murder, is a decision to take a human life of your own accord. Now, Jesus expands this idea of murder to the human heart:

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, ‘You fool!’ will be liable to the hell of fire.” (Matt 5:21–23 ESV)

So, anger and hatred shows the heart condition equal to murder, in the heart.

7. “You shall not commit adultery. This is of about sexual sin. Strictly speaking, adultery is about sex with someone who is not your husband or wife. But, the Bible is clear about sex, and when and how it is permissible. Sex is supposed to be between one man and one woman, in marriage, which lasts for life, and is monogamous (no others). Everything outside of this is sin. (So, the law actually expands this – not with mom, or brother, or an animal, or with the same sex etc.).

And this is the same sexual morality of the NT and Jesus. But Jesus takes this same idea, and makes it even harder:

““You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman [or man] with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matt 5:27–29 ESV)

8. **“You shall not steal.** You are not to take things that belong to someone else.

9. **“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.** This is about lying, especially telling things that are not true – making up stories. (Not just lying and saying, no I did not do this or that, but also telling false stories). **The context of this is lying in court – being a lying witness against a neighbor.** So this is about truth telling. He or she did this or that – all of this has to be true. If we lie, it breaks down society and human relationships. It is increasingly difficult to have a relationship with someone who doesn’t tell the truth.

10. **“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 is your neighbor’s.”**

Coveting is actually a heart word – it is an attitude, not an action. There is a heart inclination to desire things that are not ours, and this is sinful. Now, this is one of the most popular sins of our western society, because it drives everything in our economy. So, we are all being encouraged to covet all the time. *It is an extreme desire to possess and acquire a thing.*

MEMORIZE ME.....



THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

1 You shall have no other gods before Me.	6 You shall not murder.
2 You shall not make idols.	7 You shall not commit adultery.
3 You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.	8 You shall not steal.
4 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.	9 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
5 Honor your father and your mother.	10 You shall not covet.