

Lesson 26: God Gave the Ten Commandments

Our society's view of the Ten Commandments reflects a progressive turning away from the truth of the Bible. The Oklahoma Supreme Court has ruled that a **Ten Commandments' monument had to be removed** from the State Capitol grounds in Oklahoma. The 6-foot-tall (1.8-meter) stone monument, paid for with private money and supported by lawmakers in the socially conservative state, was installed in 2012, prompting complaints that it violated the U.S. Constitution's provisions against government establishment of religion, as well as local laws.

Why are the courts so opposed to the Ten Commandments? Secular governments don't want any competition. Governments want to be free to establish their own laws without a law that limits them.

By rejecting God's Word and refusing to acknowledge that He is the sovereign Creator, by denying their accountability to God and ignoring what His Word says about the consequences and punishment of sin, men find it easy to rush headlong into the utter depths of sin.

But many people still have a vestige of conscience and realize that they need some kind of "religious" standard. They do not want to acknowledge God as their sovereign Creator, nor do they want to believe that He is holy and righteous— a God of wrath. Instead, they want just enough religion to make them feel better.

The Ten Commandments, therefore, are considered as a set of rules for good conduct—a sort of salve for the conscience. Sadly, many churches have had a large part in teaching this deception. (And there's no doubt that many have participated and believed in this kind of teaching simply because they did not have a thorough knowledge of the Bible.) All too often, people want to treat the Ten Commandments as ten suggestions from God. Like it's our choice whether we want to take God's suggestions or not. But the Ten Commandments are not arbitrary and they apply to every human being who has ever lived.

But the Bible shows us that the Ten Commandments are exactly the opposite of this sin-distorted view. They are instead impossibly difficult laws set forth by the holy, righteous, sovereign, Creator God to show sinful man his absolute inability to completely obey God or to save himself from eternal punishment.

Review Questions for Lesson 25:

1. What did God promise Moses when Moses saw the burning bush at Mount Sinai? *God promised that He would bring Moses back safely to the same mountain.*
2. Did God do what He promised? *Yes, God always does what He says.*
3. Why did God plan to give His commandments to Israel? *God planned to give them His commandments to prove to them that they were sinners and that they were incapable of pleasing Him or being accepted by Him through their own efforts.*
4. What was Israel's attitude? *They had forgotten the numerous times when they had doubted God and sinned against Him. They were proud and self-confident.*
5. Why did God tell Moses to put a boundary around the mountain? *To emphasize that sinners cannot approach a holy God. God hates sin.*
6. *Why were the people so frightened?* *Because the mountain was shaking violently, and there was fire, smoke, and lightning.*

7. What did all of this show the Israelites? *It showed them that God is almighty. He is pure, and He hates and punishes sin.*
8. Who was God's messenger to Israel? *Moses.*
9. How do we hear God's words today? *We hear God's message from the Bible.*
10. Today, has God changed His attitude toward sin? *No!*
11. What is God's punishment for disobeying even one of His commandments? *Everlasting separation from God and punishment in the Lake of Fire which God prepared for Satan and his angels.*
12. Did God think that the Israelites would be able to obey His ten commands? *No, God knew that no one would be able to obey them.*
13. Why is it impossible for any person to perfectly obey God's laws? *We were all born sinners and separated from God, so we are not capable of pleasing God.*
14. Will God accept us if we just do our best and obey as many of His commandments as we can? *No.*

A. Introduction

The Israelites, like us, were born sinners, unable to please God. It is amazing that, as sinful as we are, we still think that we are able to obey God.

- Israel was sure they could keep their part of God's covenant with them.
- We are the same today—how often have you heard someone say, “Oh, I just live by the Ten Commandments”?

Yet, another evidence that we are sinners is that we hate to be told what to do—we like to be the ones in charge. But the Ten Commandments were given to us by our sovereign Creator who knew:

- That we could not keep His laws.
- That we needed His sovereign standard of righteousness.
- And that by considering His righteous standard we could then see our own sinfulness.

Let's look now in God's Word at His Ten Commandments.

B. The first commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

Theme: God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.

READ **Exodus 20:3 (NASB)**

³ "You shall have no other gods before Me.

In the first commandment, God said that He and only He should be everyone's God.

This means that people should worship only Him.

- The word “worship” comes from the word “worth.”
- Only God is worthy of adoration and complete allegiance.

He must be the absolute and only leader—above all others in people's lives.

- God will not allow anyone or anything else to share His place as God.
- People must not depend on anyone or anything except Him for everything they need in this life or for life after death.
- They must not worship anyone or anything else.

- They must give God the highest place in their thoughts and give Him praise and thanks for everything.

Isaiah 45:5 says, *“I am the LORD, and there is none else, there is no God beside me....”*

Nothing and no one else should take God’s place in our lives.

- If a person puts anyone else in God’s place, that is rebellion and sin.
- Even if we say with our lips that God is our ruler, yet we do not give Him the first place in our hearts all of the time, we have still broken this commandment.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Consider:

Adam deliberately turned away from giving God first place in his life. Adam went his own way instead of God’s way. All the descendants of Adam have gone their own way. No one has allowed God to rule every part of his life.¹

Our own ancestors disobeyed this first command of God. They put the idols and spirits in God’s place, and Satan took God’s place in their lives.

Consider:

The First Commandment states that there is only one God, and only He can save us. The State or Federal Government believes it is god and on it can save and would have you look to the government for your daily bread rather than almighty God.

Today, many people are putting themselves in God’s place—even to the point of calling this act of rebellion against God their religion. This religion (called “humanism”) teaches the exaltation of man to the place which belongs only to God, giving man the idea that he can have the position of ruler and controller of his own destiny, giving man the credit for all achievements.

Satan is the father of lies, and this lie is highly appealing to the ego of man. Satan appeals to man’s weaknesses, knowing all the while that this very sin is like the one which caused Satan and his followers to be removed forever from their positions of service before God in Heaven. He knows, too, that he and all his followers will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire.

Maybe you wouldn’t call yourself a humanist; you just want to make your own decisions. If you have even leaned on your ideas and desires instead of looking to God, you have broken the first commandment.

Have you ever given people (yourself or others) full credit for something without giving any thought to God’s part in what was done? If you have, you have broken this commandment.²

Have you ever looked for advice in a horoscope or ascribed any significance to the signs of the zodiac? If so, you have broken this commandment.

Have sports or family or home or money or possessions or work or position or social status or appearances or recreation or retirement or anything else ever become more important to you than

God? If your answer is “yes,” you have broken this commandment.

None of us has continually put God first in everything.³

The punishment for disobeying this first command is separation from God. We are all guilty of breaking it.

C. The second commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

Exodus 20:4-6 (NASB)

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.

God gave this second commandment to the Israelites so they would always remember that He is supreme and sovereign— greater than all the things He has created.

Consider:

God is spirit, He does not have a material body, He had no beginning and will have no end, He is everywhere all the time, He knows everything, He is all-powerful, He is absolutely holy and perfect. He is supreme—greater than all. No part of God’s creation, no man-made idol is worthy of worship—only God is to be worshiped.

The Second Commandment forbids idolatry. The State has become an idol and is worshipped as a god when the Bible declares that it is a “minister [servant] of God to [us] for good” (Rom. 13:4). The State, our federal government continues to grow with the promise of political salvation, promising to take care of everyone from the cradle to the grave.

I’ve got a quote here from Shirley Temple, the child actress in the 1930s...and some of you viewing this lesson may not have ever heard of her...but in her day, she was a huge star, no. 1 box office attraction. She said, “Our whole way of life today is dedicated to the removal of risk. Cradle to grave, we are supported, insulated, and isolated from the risks of life-and if we fall, our government stands ready with Band-aids of every size.”

That pretty much sums it up. Today, many of us look to government, to the state for everything, rather than looking to God.

No one knows what God looks like, so God said that we should never try to make anything which we think resembles Him. The only way anyone can know what God is like is to let Him teach them through this book, the Bible. Anything different from what the Bible says is a lie of Satan.

How important it is for us to know what the Bible says about God! Though we do not see Him now with our eyes, we can learn about Him through His Word. God wants us to know Him! That is why He has given us the Bible. The things we learn from the Bible about God are true. Because the Bible says that

God is sovereign, holy, righteous, loving, gracious, merciful, unchanging, all-powerful, all-knowing, and everywhere all the time, we can know for sure that God is exactly like this. Because the Bible teaches us that God demands the death penalty for all sin, we can know for sure that this is the truth.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

All over the world, Satan has led people away from the true knowledge of God. They no longer know the true and living God.

Satan has given other things in the place of God. People have followed their own ideas and other people's thoughts of what they think God must be like.

Perhaps you might be thinking that today this commandment which talks about idols pertains only to foreign cultures. But a closer look reveals that right here in our culture, people are worshiping man-made representations of things they think will bring them favor with God. In their minds, they assign to these man-made things powers that really belong only to God.⁴

All who worship man-made things that they think represent God have broken this command of God and are condemned.

Again, in Isaiah, God tells us, "I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isaiah 42:8).

D. The third commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

READ **Exodus 20:7 (NASB)**

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.

In the **third commandment**, God told the Israelites that they must always respect God, acknowledging that He is their Creator and rightful ruler, and never speak or use His name in a careless way.

- God is the almighty Creator and ruler of everyone and everything.
- Everyone should fear God and realize that He has the power to take our lives and to destroy us all in everlasting punishment.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Consider:

The Third Commandment forbids taking God's name in vain. Politicians appeal to God all the time and yet violate His commandments in the same breath. They'll invoke the name of God and speak of God's will as they pronounce their blessing on same-sex marriages or protecting the right to kill an unborn child.

To insult a human being is bad, but how much more evil it is when we have shown disrespect for the true and living God or used the name of God in an incorrect way. All who have not given God the respect He deserves are condemned.

But here is what I believe this commandment actually means: If you claim to be a Christian, a believer, and you are not living in a manner that is consistent with the Bible; if you are daily doing and saying things that are contrary to what God says in His Word, then you are taking the Lord's name in vain. You've taken the name as a believer, a Christian, a follower of Christ and you've told others that you believe in Jesus—but then if you are not walking in the light; if you are not living as a believer should—then you're taking the Lord's name in vain.

E. The fourth commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

READ Exodus 20:8-11 (NASB)

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.

In the **fourth commandment**, God told them to keep the seventh day as a special day of rest in honor of Him, the one who created all things in six days.⁵

The Fourth Commandment sets one day a week aside for rest. The interesting thing about this commandment is that it's written into the Constitution at Article I, Section 7, Clause 2.

Do you remember what God did on the seventh day, the day after He finished creating the world?

- God rested because He had finished everything that He had planned to make.

Consider:

The Lord told Israel that they should rest every seventh day so they would remember that God alone is the Creator of all the earth and everything in it. God is the only rightful owner of this world. Satan and His demons have taken over this world for their own, but it does not rightfully belong to them.

God gives life to all things. He gives the rain and the sunshine on the earth so everything will grow. He alone is the Creator, owner, and provider of all things. Satan is in control of most of the people in this world, but the world still belongs to God.

Psalms 24:1,2 says, The earth is the LORD'S, and all it contains, The world, and those who dwell in it. ² For He has founded it upon the seas And established it upon the rivers.

Psalms 33:8,9, says,

⁸ Let all the earth fear the LORD; Let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of Him.

⁹ For He spoke, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

All who have looked to and depended on anyone but God as the Creator and giver of all things have disobeyed God's command. This terrible sin against the true Creator will be punished by God.

F. The fifth commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

READ **Exodus 20:12 (NASB)**

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

In the **fifth commandment**, God said that children must respect and obey their parents. If they do not, they are sinning against their Creator. Anyone who disobeys this command is sinning against God.

The Fifth Commandment also defines the family. As we've seen the courts have redefined the family, and by redefining the family they can now rewrite all law in terms of that new definition. In addition, the State has become our new parents. "Honor the State as your real father and mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the State lets you live on."

Herbert Schlossberg explains in his book *Idols for Destruction*, that...

"The paternal state not only feeds its children, but nurtures, educates, comforts, and disciplines them, providing all they need for their security. This appears to be a mildly insulting way to treat adults, but it is really a great crime because it transforms the state from being a gift of God, given to protect us against violence, into an idol. It supplies us with all blessings, and we look to it for all our needs. Once we sink to that level, as [C.S.] Lewis says, there is no point in telling state officials to mind their own business. 'Our whole lives *are* their business' [*God in the Dock*, p. 134]. The paternalism of the state is that of the bad parent who wants his children dependent on him forever. That is an evil impulse. The good parent prepares his children for independence, trains them to make responsible decisions, knows that he harms them by not helping them to break loose. The paternal state thrives on dependency. When the dependents free themselves, it loses power. It is, therefore, parasitic on the very persons whom it turns into parasites. Thus, the state and its dependents march symbiotically to destruction."

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

None of us have obeyed our parents completely.

We've all broken this commandment as well as all the others.

- Remember, even if we obeyed nine of the commandments and disobeyed one, we will still be condemned by God.
- Furthermore, God expects us to obey these commandments from the time we are born until we die.
- One act of disobedience will be punished by everlasting separation from God.

G. The sixth commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

READ **Exodus 20:13 (NASB)**

¹³ "You shall not murder.

In the **sixth commandment**, God told them that to kill someone is sin against God.

- He is the Creator of all people. He gives life to every person.
 - No one has the right to take another person's life unless God says so in His Word.⁶
 - The **Sixth Commandment** was legislated out of existence decades ago by the sanctioning of perpetual war and the legalization of abortion. Now we have organizations like Planned Parenthood selling baby parts for profit, and one political party here in this country endorses this and supports it in every way.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

God also makes it very clear in His Word that, if a person hates someone, he has committed murder in his heart. God says that, if a person wishes to kill someone, he is already a murderer and is condemned by God.

In Matthew 5:21-22 we read, **Matthew 5:21-22 (NASB)**

²¹ "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.'

²² "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.

- If we curse a person, we have committed murder.
- God judges us, not just by what we do, but by what we really want to do.
- God knows our motives because God knows our hearts.

Read **Hebrews 4:12-13 (NASB)**

¹² For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

H. The seventh commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

READ **Exodus 20:14 (NASB)**

¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery.

In the **seventh commandment**, God says that it is sin to have any sexual relationship with anyone except one's own wife or husband. The punishment for all sexual sin is everlasting separation from God.

Consider:

After God created Adam, He gave Eve to him to be his wife. God said that, because they were married, they were no longer two people before Him. They were now just like one person. Husband and wife belong to one another, and they must live only with one another.

Many people today will tell you that this commandment is old-fashioned and out-of-date. But God does not change. Sin is still sin. God has not changed His mind about adultery.

Adultery and all types of sexual sins are also committed in the mind.

*The **Seventh Commandment** in its prohibition of adultery is a summary statement about all marital relationships. The law prohibiting adultery rests on the creation mandate of marriage being between a man and a woman (Gen. 1:27-28; 2:20-25). The compliment of man and woman is what's "suitable," not a man and man or a man and a woman. Jesus confirmed the creation mandate (Matt. 19:1-6).*

Matthew 5:27-28 (NASB)

²⁷ "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY';

²⁸ 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.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

God says that if we look at someone other than our own husband or wife and want to have any type of sexual relationship with that person, then we have already broken this commandment.

I. The eighth commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

READ Exodus 20:15.

Exodus 20:15 (NASB) ¹⁵ "You shall not steal.

In the **eighth commandment**, God said they must never take anything belonging to someone else.

- God is the one who gives each person the right to own and to keep his own property.

- Acts 17:25 says:

²⁵ nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all *people* life and breath and all things;

- If a person takes something which belongs to someone else, then he has sinned against God.

Consider:

Even if a thief gives back the thing he stole or compensates the person for the thing which he stole, that will still not satisfy God for the sin of stealing. The punishment for stealing is everlasting separation from God. God will not accept any payment except death. God will not forgive sin unless the full punishment of death is paid.

Stealing takes all kinds of forms: stealing intellectual property like downloading copyrighted movies or books as well as the state stealing private property thru the right of eminent domain, where they can

take your property from you if they feel that it can be used for some other purpose which will yield more in taxes and income to the state.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Even if a person desires or plans to steal something but doesn't do it because he is afraid of being caught, he is still guilty of stealing before God.
God will never forgive sin until it is paid for in full.
God will punish all sinners for the evil things which they planned to do even though they were not able to or simply did not do them.

J. The ninth commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

READ **Exodus 20:16 (NASB)**

¹⁶ "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

In the **ninth commandment**, God said that they must always tell the truth about everything. God never lies, and He commands us not to lie.

Consider:

Satan is the greatest liar. He lied to Adam and Eve in the garden. He lied to our forefathers and is still telling lies to people all over the world. Satan is the father of all those who persist in telling lies.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Consider:

Some people make false accusations against other people. The motive behind these lies may be jealousy or anger or hatred; the lies are intended to cause the other person harm. Some people start rumors and make up stories. Others carry them on and add to them. Many people like to gossip. What may begin as a true incident is distorted or expanded to include things that are not true. All of this is lying and is sin against God.

We have politicians who lie to us every day. We have a president and administration that lies to us about our healthcare coverage: If you like your doctor, you can keep your doctor. Every family will see a savings of \$2400. We have a secretary of state & President who lied to American people about the terrorist attack on the embassy in Benghazi, Libya, telling America and the world that four American lives were killed because of a YouTube video. Lies, lies, lies.

Some people do wrong things and then lie to cover up what they have done. Even when they are brought to court, they still lie. Many people have escaped punishment here on earth because they have lied and people didn't know that they were lying. But we can't hide lies from God. God always speaks the truth, and He knows the truth about everyone and everything.

K. The tenth commandment

Theme: God is supreme and sovereign.

READ **Exodus 20:17 (NASB)**

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."

God's **tenth commandment** said that they must not covet, that is, want what other people have.

- This was also Satan's sin.
- He was proud and envious of God's position.

Theme: Man is a sinner. He needs God and is helpless to save himself.

Consider:

Many people are greedy and jealous of others' possessions. They dislike those who have more things than they have, and they covet other people's property. They are never satisfied with what they have. In their minds, they are angry because they don't have what someone else has.

Instead of being satisfied, many people have the urge to continually "upgrade." They base their ambitions upon what they think others already possess.

For many, this is a subtle sin. "Keeping up with the Joneses" is really just another form of coveting. Today, advertising goads people on to coveting. Day in and day out, we are faced with pressure to want more and to buy more, so we can be like the image portrayed on the television or the printed page. Why are so many people deeply in debt with credit cards? Coveting has become a mark of prestige and social status in our culture.

The Tenth Commandment indicts the modern State because it covets everything: life, liberties, power, property, authority, money, prestige, privilege, and our souls.

- But God has not changed His mind about coveting. He will punish all coveting because it is sin.

L. Conclusion

Theme: God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.

These are the Ten Commandments which God gave to the Israelites. God's commandments are the same for all people, everywhere.

Remember, if we try to repay people for the wrongs we have done them or if we bring an offering to church to pay for the sin of adultery or even if we serve a prison sentence for stealing, that does not mean our sin debt to God is paid.

The payment for sin is death, everlasting separation from God in the place of punishment which He prepared for Satan and his angels.

All sin will be punished by God. God hasn't changed His mind about sin.
Has studying His Word changed your mind about sin?

What do you think now about the Ten Commandments?8

Questions for Review

1. Does God care if people worship or serve anything or anyone else besides Him? *Yes, that is sin against God. God will not share His position as God and supreme ruler with anyone or anything else.*
2. Is it all right to make an image of something or worship anything else we have made or which God has created? *No, this, too, is sin against God. We do not know what God looks like, so we must not try to make anything which we think looks like Him or worship any creation of his or anything we have made.*
3. Does God care what we think about Him and what we say about Him? *Yes, God will punish all those who do not always honor Him in their thoughts and by their words. It is sin to use God's name in vain.*
4. Why did God command the Israelites to rest on the seventh day of the week?
 - a. *Because God created all things in six days and rested on the seventh day.*
 - b. *Because God wants us to always remember that He is the Creator and everything that we have comes from Him. We must not give Satan or anyone else the praise for all the things in the world.*
5. Does God care if children disobey or are disrespectful to their parents? *Yes, God will punish all those who do not obey and respect their parents.*
6. Why does God punish all murderers? *Because God gives life to all people, He is the only one who has the authority to take a person's life.*
7. What does God say about a person who hates someone else? *God says that person is a murderer.*
8. What is God's attitude toward adultery? *God condemns all sexual relationships except between a man and his wife.*
9. Why will God punish all who steal? *Because God gives people the right to own things.*
10. Are people guilty of stealing if they plan to steal but then become afraid and do not do it? *Yes, they are guilty because God saw that they had planned in their hearts to steal.*
11. What is God's command about telling lies? *God said that lying to anyone is sin against God because He always speaks the truth and hates lies.*
12. Does God care if we are envious of other people and want what they have? *Yes, that is also sin against God. That was Satan's sin. He was envious of God and wanted His position.*
13. Can anyone obey the Ten Commandments? *No.*

LESSON 27: God's Mobile Home: The Tabernacle

