

# **The Ten Commandments**

## *Trinity Baptist Church Discipleship Training*

(July, 2005)

### **Introduction:**

There are two things essential in the life of the believer—knowledge and obedience. No one can possess the hope of eternal salvation without obedience (1 John 2:3-4). As Thomas Watson said, “Obedience carries in it the life-blood of religion” (*The Ten Commandments*, page 1). No one can practice Biblical obedience without knowledge. One can possess knowledge without putting it into practice but practice demands a standard. In order to rightly obey God we must be rightly informed of His standard or rule of obedience. God has prescribed for us laws for regulating our actions. These laws are summarized in the Ten Commandments and obedience is demanded of all men (Romans 2:14-15).

Some argue that the Law has been fully abrogated by the coming of Christ into the world. They claim that to demand obedience to the Law from Christians is to bring them under that heavy yoke of bondage that no man has ever been able to bear. Doesn't the Bible state that we are not under the Law but under grace? To bring the Christian under obedience to the Law is in opposition to the liberty that all Christians enjoy in Christ—it is nothing but legalism. In answer to these objections, we must simply hear the words of our Lord: “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.”<sup>18</sup> For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matt. 5:17-18). The Christian is not under the Law as a covenant of works but the Law will forever remain God's standard of obedience. Samuel Bolton aptly phrased it: “When we read that the law is still in force, it is to be understood of the law as a rule, not as a covenant. Again, when we say that the law is abrogated, and that we are freed from the Law, it is to be understood of the law as a covenant, not as a rule” (*The True Bounds of Christian Freedom*, page 28).

The purpose of this study is to examine each of the Ten Commandments that they might instruct us in the way of obedience. Although there will be some degree of defense for the perpetuity of the Ten Commandments, particularly with regard to the Sabbath, the scope of this study will largely presuppose that the Ten Commandments are reflective of God's holy character and will thus continue to stand unchanged into eternity.

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### **The Identity of the Ten Commandments:**

The Ten Commandments in our generation have suffered under an unfortunate loss of identity, particularly with the advance of New Covenant Theology. Many are claiming today that the Fourth Commandment should not be considered a part of God's Moral Law. "Some New Covenant theologians appear to argue for the content of the Moral Law in this fashion: Since sins against nine of the Ten Commandments were published by God prior to the promulgation of the Decalogue via Moses, and since those same nine commandments are represented in the New Testament, then these nine commandments represent the Moral Law" (Barcellos, Richard C. *In Defense of the Decalogue*, Page 77).

The fact that the seventh day was set apart and hallowed by God at creation demands the acknowledgement of its existence before the publishing of the Ten Commandments. Israel was observing the Sabbath before the giving of the Law in Exodus 20. In Chapter 16 some gathered manna on the Sabbath against the command of God. God condemned their breach of the Law.

**Exodus 16:28-29** – "And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws? <sup>29</sup> See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."

Would it not seem strange that God gave ten laws etched in stone but only nine would have a perpetual observance? The Ten Commandments are ten—none have been abrogated.

### **The Purpose of the Ten Commandments**

1. The Law has never be a means of sinners being reconciled before God. Salvation in both the Old and New Testaments has always been by grace alone through faith. Law has never been opposed to grace.  
**Romans 4:3-5** – "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. <sup>4</sup> Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. <sup>5</sup> But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."
2. The Law shows sinners their need of a Savior  
**Galatians 3:23-24** – "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. <sup>24</sup> Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith."  
  - A. The Law makes demands for absolute obedience. The Law teaches us how to live but does not offer the power for obedience. No man can meet its demands.
  - B. The Bible teaches that the Law actually provokes us to sin.

**Romans 7:8-9** – “But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin *was* dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.”

1. In other words, the Law increases sin. The Law does this in two ways.
  - a. One, the Law reveals our guilt before God. Before a man comes face to face with the Law he doesn't see himself as a guilty sinner.
  - b. Two, men by nature rebel against the Law – In this way by the Law transgressions are actually increased.
2. Bunyan illustrated this truth in *Pilgrims Progress* as Christian goes to the Interpreter's house:

“Then the Interpreter took Christian by the hand, and led him into a very large parlour that was full of dust, because never swept; the which, after he had reviewed a little while, the Interpreter called for a man to sweep. Now, when he began to sweep, the dust began so abundantly to fly about, that Christian had almost therewith been choked. Then said the Interpreter to a damsel that stood by, ‘Bring hither the water, and sprinkle the room;’ the which when she had done, it was swept and cleaned with pleasure.

Christian: Then said Christian, ‘What means this?’

Interpreter: The interpreter answered, ‘This parlour is the heart of a man that was never sanctified by the sweet grace of the gospel: the dust is his original sin and inward corruptions, that have defiled the whole man. He that began to sweep at first is the law; but she that brought water, and did sprinkle it, is the gospel. Now, whereas thou sawest that , so soon as the first began to sweep, the dust did so fly about, that the room by him could not be cleansed, but that thou was almost choked therewith: this is to shew thee, that the law, instead of cleansing the heart, by its working, from sin, doeth revive, put strength into, and increase it in the soul, even as it doth discover and forbid it; for it doth not give power to subdue.’”

- C. The Law convicts men of their sin and their helplessness in keeping the Law and drive him to Christ.
3. The Law teaches the redeemed how to live for the glory of God
 

**Galatians 3:25-28** – “But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. <sup>26</sup> For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

    - A. The Law reflects the righteous character of God
    - B. The Law is in no way opposed to the Gospel. The same Law that shows us our sin and guilt before a holy God is the Law that then teaches us how we might live righteously before God after we are saved.
    - C. The redeemed have been redeemed from the Law as a taskmaster, a standard that none can meet. Now the Law has become a joy. The saved man who loves God loves to honor Him.
 

**1 John 5:3** – “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”
  4. The Law restrains sin in society.
    - A. The Law cannot change our sinful nature but to a certain extent it serves to restrain the sinfulness of man. It teaches that there is a holy God who punishes sin and thus restrains men by the fear of God.

- B. Men are lawless by nature but God's Law is the basis of civil law which restrains lawlessness. Almost every culture prohibits murder, thievery, etc.

## General

1. God gave His Ten Commandments on two stone tablets.
  - A. The first tablet, the first four commandments, contains our duty to God, particularly how He would be worshipped. The second tablet, the last six commandments, contains our duty to our fellow man.
  - B. The Roman Catholic Church divides the commandments with three on the first tablet and seven on the second. This is necessary for them to annul the second commandment against images. Instead they divide the tenth commandment into two parts.
2. There is a sense in which God's Law has been written upon the hearts of all men. This is sometimes referred to as natural law.
 

**Romans 2:14-15** – “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: <sup>15</sup> Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)”
3. Because of the sin and the natural dullness of the human heart God gave His Law in written form, the Ten Commandments.
 

Calvin writes: “But man, being immured in the darkness of error, is scarcely able, by means of that natural law, to form any tolerable idea of the worship which is acceptable to God. At all events, he is very far from forming any correct knowledge of it. In addition to this, he is so swollen with arrogance and ambition, and so blinded with self-love, that he is unable to survey, and, as it were, descend into himself, that he may so learn to humble and abase himself, and confess his misery. Therefore, as a necessary remedy, both for our dullness and our contumacy, the Lord has given us his written Law, which, by its sure attestations, removes the obscurity of the law of nature, and also, by shaking off our lethargy, makes a more lively and permanent impression on our minds” (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.8.1)
4. No man since the fall has ever been able to perfectly keep the Ten Commandments. All have broken them and are condemned by them.
 

Spurgeon's Catechism:  
*Question 65:* Is any man able perfectly to keep the commandment of God?  
*Answer:* No mere man, since the fall, is able in his life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but does daily break them in thought, word, and deed.
5. The Ten Commandments are best understood as the summary of what God requires of man. Obedience to the Law demands an external keeping of the letter of the Law but also demands the inward obedience to the spirit of the Law. This is made abundantly clear by our Lord: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: <sup>28</sup> But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5:27-28). God looks not only upon the outward appearance but upon the heart. He looks not only upon adultery but upon lust and covetousness. He looks not only upon murder but anger and hatred as well.

## The Rule of Love

1. The sum of all that God requires of man is summed up in love  
Love is the fulfilling of the law.  
**Romans 13:8** – “Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.”  
**Matthew 22:37** – “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”
  - a. We must love God with our whole heart – undivided
  - b. We must love God for Himself – for His intrinsic excellence
  - c. We must love god with our whole strength – as much as we are able
2. If love is the fulfilling of the law, without it obedience is impossible
  - a. The Scriptures are abundantly clear that faith is essential for obedience  
**Hebrews 11:6** – “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”
  - b. The Bible also teaches that faith and love cannot be separated  
**Galatians 5:6** – “For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.”
  - c. If you lack love, you lack everything that is pleasing to God
3. Our love for God is the proper motive for every religious act
  - a. Love is the fruit of regeneration
  - b. This love is demonstrated by our obedience  
**John 14:15** – “If ye love me, keep my commandments.”  
**John 14:23-24** – “Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. <sup>24</sup> He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.”  
**1 John 5:1-3** – “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. <sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. <sup>3</sup> For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”

## The Preface of the Ten Commandments

**Exodus 20:1-2** – “And God spake all these words, saying, <sup>2</sup> *I am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

### I. “And God spake all these words”

- A. The Ten Commandments are from God
  - 1. According to His wisdom
  - 2. According to His power and authority
    - a. God is the Lawgiver
    - b. God has the right to make laws and demand obedience to them
    - c. We must hear them, respect them with reverence, remember them, believe them, obey them
  - 3. According to His goodness. God has not left us without a law
- B. All of the Commandment are from God
  - 1. God declared their number
 

**Exodus 34:28** – “And he was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the ten commandments.”
  - 2. We must hear all of them
  - 3. We must obey all of them
 

Calvin: “The Lord has been pleased to deliver more fully and explicitly in the Ten Commandments, everything relating to his own honor, fear, and love, as well as everything relating to the charity which, for his sake, he enjoins us to have towards our fellow man” (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.8.12)

### II. “*I am* the LORD thy God”

- A. This phrase reveals the greatness of God – “*I am* the LORD”
  - 1. There is none but Him
  - 2. He is the Creator. He alone rules all of creation which to Him owes its very existence. He has the power and lawful right to rule.
 

**Romans 11:36** – “For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen.”
- B. This phrase reveals a condescension – “Thy God”
  - 1. God is self-sufficient, independent, immutable
  - 2. That God would declare Himself to be “our” God is a wonderful act of grace.
- C. This phrase reveals a relationship
  - 1. Lost men are naturally alienated from God
  - 2. God is our God and we are His people.
 

**Jeremiah 31:33** – “But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”
  - 3. This reconciliation is only possible through Christ

- III. “which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”
- A. God delivered Israel from the place of pollution and bondage of Egypt. With the Exodus came a change of masters. The Law became not a new form of bondage but God's gracious rule of obedience.  
God has delivered us from the pollutions of this world and the bondage of sin  
Israel's deliverance is a type of our deliverance from sin and Satan  
**Romans 6:22** – “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.”
- B. God's reminders of His works towards His people are designed remind us of His covenantal faithfulness. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He is the God of Israel. He is the God who delivered Israel from their bondage in Egypt. He is the God who has delivered us from our own fetters and He claims us as His own. He demands of us absolute faithfulness.
- C. God's general goodness to all men is also designed to elicit gratitude. God is worthy to be worshipped by all. All men should honor God as the gracious Lawgiver.  
**Romans 2:4** – “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?”

## *The First Tablet – Our Duty to God*

### **The First Commandment**

**Exodus 20:3** – “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.”

Spurgeon's Catechism:

*Question 43:* What is required in the first commandment?

*Answer:* The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God and to worship and glorify Him accordingly.

1. The First Commandment is the very heart of true worship. Upon this commandment all others rest. It is the very heart of religion and the very basis of our duty to God. There is one God and all men owe supreme allegiance to Him. Breaking this command is high treason.
2. “Thou” is second person singular. Although the Ten Commandments were given to the nation of Israel they are binding upon each individual. Obedience is required of every human being and all will be judged on the basis of the Law.
3. “no other gods” – This declares the absolute supremacy of God. He will share His glory with none. He will have no rivals.
  - A. Man is prone to idolatry. He is prone to elevate worldly things to the place of preeminence and setting his love upon them.
  - B. This is not a declaration that there *are* other gods; only that depraved humanity sets them up as his gods.  
**Philippians 3:19** – “Whose end *is* destruction, whose God *is* their belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame, who mind earthly things.)”

4. "before me" –
- A. God has no equals. He is independent, self-existent, self-sufficient
  - B. We are to serve and worship God in all His majesty and excellence.  
This is the sum of the duty of man towards God.  
**Matthew 22:37-38** – “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment.”
5. This is man’s chief source of happiness and joy
- A. Nothing in this present world can truly satisfy the soul of man.
    - (1) It is only because of sin that man suppresses and resists the one true God.  
**Romans 1:21** – “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified *him* not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.”
    - (2) In his blindness fallen the lost man worships that which is created above the Creator. This only ends in the increase of his misery.  
**Romans 1:25** – “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”
  - B. God's grand purpose for man is for him to embrace his Creator and worship Him. Man is at his highest end when he is worshipping and truly enjoying God. This is the true source of happiness.  
Spurgeon’s Catechism:  
*Question 1:* What is the chief end of man?  
*Answer:* Man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.
6. According to Calvin, the duties which we owe God fall under four heads: Adoration, Trust, Invocation, and Thanksgiving. These are to be directed to God alone.
- A. *Adoration:* To do homage to His majesty while submitting to His Law. It is to bow before Him in fear and reverence.
  - B. *Trust:* "Secure resting in Him under a recognition of His perfections, when, ascribing to Him all power, wisdom, justice, goodness, and truth, we consider ourselves happy in having been brought into intercourse with Him" (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.8.16).
  - C. *Invocation:* Recognizing our weakness, we are to seek His aid in every need.
  - D. *Thanksgiving:* Gratitude which flows forth from the fountain of all His blessings.
7. Thomas Watson gives several reasons why we must cleave to the Lord as our God. (From *The Ten Commandments*, pages 52-53)
- A. *Because of its equity:* It is just that we should give homage to the One through whom we have our being. It is the height of ingratitude to give our love to any but God.
  - B. *Because of its utility:* The blessings of God come to those who cleave to Him.  
**Romans 8:28** – "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose."  
**Psalms 144:15** – ". . .happy *is that* people, whose God *is* the LORD."
  - C. *Because of the necessity:* If God is not our God He will curse us. If God is not our God there is none else to help us.

## The Second Commandment

**Exodus 20:4-6** – "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth: <sup>5</sup> Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; <sup>6</sup> And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. "

Spurgeon's Catechism:

*Question 45:* What is required in the second commandment?

*Answer:* The second commandment requires the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances as God has appointed in His word.

*Question 46:* What is forbidden in the second commandment?

*Answer:* The second commandment forbids the worshipping of God by images, or any other way not appointed in His word.

1. As the First Commandment commands us to worship God alone giving Him full and absolute allegiance, the Second Commandment commands *how* God is to be worshipped. God is not to be worshipped through the imaginations of men but only by those ways which He has appointed. As the First Commandment states the Object of our worship the Second Commandment describes the mode.

**John 4:24** – "God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth."

A. This commandment contains two prohibitions:

- (1) It forbids the making of any image which elicits devotion or religious worship. Examples of the worship of pagan nations are given: "any likeness of *any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth."
- (2) It forbids the worship of even the one true God through the use of outward, visible, material representations. God is a Spirit, invisible and incomprehensible. To form any visible representation of God is to adulterate true worship.

B. The essence of this commandment is the exclusion of all modes of worship that God has not prescribed.

3. I the LORD thy God *am* a jealous God

A. "Thy God"

God is jealous for His people. He is jealous lest they begin to run after other God's or to worship Him in a false manner

**Zechariah 1:14** – ". . . Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy."

B. God is jealous of His glory.

**Isaiah 42:8** – "I *am* the LORD: that *is* my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images."

4. "visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children

A. Sin shall not go unpunished

**Psalm 7:11-12** – "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry *with the wicked* every day. <sup>12</sup> If he turn not, he will whet his sword; he hath bent his bow, and made it ready."

- B. God visits the sins of the fathers upon their children
- (1) This is not to be seen as direct punishment but indirect  
**2 Chronicles 25:4** – "But he slew not their children, but *did as it is* written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin."
  - (2) A righteous parent teaches his children according to righteousness.  
**Proverbs 22:6-7** – "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."
  - (3) A wicked parent allows his children to follow the wickedness of their hearts and thus continuing in their condemnation.
5. "And shewing mercy unto thousands of them"
- A. God's mercy is foremost for His honor and glory  
**Isaiah 48:9** – "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger, and for my praise will I refrain for thee, that I cut thee not off."  
**Isaiah 48:11** – "For mine own sake, *even* for mine own sake, will I do *it*: for how should *my name* be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another."  
**Ephesians 1:5-6** – "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."
- B. Mercy is one of God's Divine attributes
1. It is manifested in His compassion upon fallen men  
**Psalm 103:4** – "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;"
  2. God's mercy is the indescribable demonstration of God's pity –  
 It manifests God's rich compassion upon those deserving of His wrath
  3. He demonstrates His mercy in providing a solution for sin by covering sinners with His own righteousness.
- C. For all of eternity God's elect people will stand in stark contrast with the condemned in hell. They will endure in holiness to the praise of God's mercy  
**Romans 9:23** – "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,"  
**Ephesians 2:4-7** – "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus."

- D. God's mercy is unmerited  
**Titus 3:5-6** – "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;"
- E. God's mercy is only found in Christ – this was demonstrated in the Exodus  
**Exodus 12:13** – "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye *are*: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy *you*, when I smite the land of Egypt."
6. "That love me, and keep my commandments."  
 A. God's mercy is given to those that love Him.  
 Our love for God is the outflow of regeneration. He has transformed us that we might love Him. It is a work of His grace.  
**1 John 4:10** – "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins."  
 B. The fruit of our love for God is obedience  
**1 John 5:1-3** – "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. <sup>2</sup> By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. <sup>3</sup> For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."  
**John 14:15** – "If ye love me, keep my commandments."  
**John 15:9-10** – "As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love. <sup>10</sup> If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love."

### The Third Commandment

**Exodus 20:7** – "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."

Spurgeon's Catechism:

*Question 48:* What is required in the third commandment?

*Answer:* The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles attributes, ordinances, word, and works.

1. The first four commandments contain our duty to God. They describe, in particular, how God is to be worshipped. The First Commandment states that God *alone* is to be worshipped. The Second Commandment states that God is to be worshipped in the manner He has prescribed to the exclusion of human invention or imagination. The Third Commandment states that God is to be worshipped with proper reverence and Godly fear.
2. What is meant by the "Name of God?"
  - A. The Hebrew word for name is **שֵׁם** {shame} can also be translated "reputation" For Israel the Hebrew name defined the character or nature of the person

**Gen. 3:20** – “And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living.”

Eve (חַוְּוָה Chavvah) means “life” or “living”

The name Adam (אָדָם) means “man” or “mankind”

**Gen. 17:5** – “Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.”

Abram means “exalted father”

Abraham means “father of a multitude”

**Genesis 25:25** – “And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.”

Esau means “hairy”

**Genesis 25:26** – “And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.”

Jacob means “heel holder” or “supplanter”

B. God's name is the essence of His being

1. God's name is synonymous with His person.

**Genesis 4:26** – “And to Seth, to him also there was born a son; and he called his name Enos: then began men to call upon the name of the LORD.”

**Proverbs 18:10** – “The name of the LORD *is* a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.”

2. This is why the Third Commandment means so much more than just using the name of God as a means of cursing – To use His name irreverently is an insult to God Himself which God will never allow.

**Leviticus 18:21** – “And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through *the fire* to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD.”

**Leviticus 19:12** – “And ye shall not swear by my name falsely, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I *am* the LORD.”

**Leviticus 24:16** – “And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death, *and* all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name *of the LORD*, shall be put to death.”

3. Where Adam gave names to all of the animals, man did not name God. God's name is His revelation of Himself

D. What is God's name?

1. Scripture gives many names for God

El – the Strong and Mighty – Elohim

El-Shaddai – God the Omnipotent One

Adonai – spoken in place of Jehovah or Yahweh – Lord in the lower case

2. God declares His chief name to be יהוה Jehovah – “The Existing One”

**Exodus 15:3** – “The LORD *is* a man of war: the LORD *is* his name.”

3. In the Hebrew this name was spelled with four consonants with no vowels. In English it is an equivalent of YHWH.  
These four letters are called the Tetragrammaton - the personal name of God and his most frequent designation in Scripture, occurring 5321 times.  
**Psalm 83:18** – “That *men* may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth.”
  4. God’s name is from a form of יהוה hayah – The Hebrew form of “to be” which is translated in Exodus 3:14 – I AM THAT I AM – God is the Existing One
    - a. It is in the present tense - He IS,  
He is not the God that was or the God that will be – He IS
    - b. This is consistent with the words of Jesus  
**John 8:58** – “Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.”
  5. It was a name that was so high that it was seldom spoken by the Jews – They usually used the name Adonai (Lord) in their devotions.
3. What is meant in this Commandment’s prohibition against taking God’s name in vain?
- A. This Commandment prohibits all dishonoring thoughts and words that dishonor God.
    1. This includes all flippant, profane or blasphemous mentions of His name. God’s name should not be mentioned unless it is for His glory and the edification of ourselves and others.  
**Ephesians 4:29** – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”
      - a. This would surely include those who blaspheme the holy name of God in their common discourse. Radio, television, novels and movies are all to be condemned that use God’s name irreverently.
      - b. God’s name must be spoken with the highest of reverence.
    2. It prohibits all murmurings against His Providence.  
**Numbers 14:27** – “How long *shall I bear with* this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me.”
    3. It includes all irreverent use of His Word through which God is made known.
  - B. This Commandment prohibits the use of God’s name hypocritically  
**Isaiah 48:1** – “Hear ye this, O house of Jacob, which are called by the name of Israel, and are come forth out of the waters of Judah, which swear by the name of the LORD, and make mention of the God of Israel, *but* not in truth, nor in righteousness.”
    1. This would include the false use of oaths, calling upon God as our Witness and then failing to uphold the oath.  
**Zechariah 8:16-17** – “These *are* the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates: <sup>17</sup> And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these *are things* that I hate, saith the LORD.”

2. This would include the false statement of wedding vows.
3. This would also include perjury.
- C. This Commandment also prohibits any false empty profession of the name of Christ.
  1. Jesus demands absolute allegiance to Him  
**Luke 9:23-24** – “And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. <sup>24</sup> For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.”  
**Luke 14:33-35** – “So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. <sup>34</sup> Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned? <sup>35</sup> It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.”
  2. To vainly take upon ourselves the name “Christian” without submitting to the Lordship of Christ is to take His name in vain.  
**Titus 1:16** – “They profess that they know God; but in works they deny *him*, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.”
4. What does it mean that God will not hold them guiltless that take His name in vain?
  - A. This is intended to strike fear in the hearts of any who would not use His name with the highest of reverence.
  - B. Sometimes God punishes blasphemy in this life.  
**Acts 12:21-23** – “And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. <sup>22</sup> And the people gave a shout, *saying*, *It is* the voice of a god, and not of a man. <sup>23</sup> And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.”
  - C. Thomas Watson – “If God should justify a man, who shall condemn him? But if God condemn him, who shall justify him?”

### The Fourth Commandment

**Exodus 20:8-11** – “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. <sup>9</sup> Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: <sup>10</sup> But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: <sup>11</sup> 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. 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.”

Spurgeon’s Catechism:

*Question 50:* What is required in the fourth commandment?

*Answer:* The fourth commandment requires the keeping holy to God such set times as He has appointed in His Word, expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy Sabbath to Himself.

*Question 51:* How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

*Answer:* The Sabbath is to be sanctified by a holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days, and spending the whole time in the public and private exercises of God's worship, except so much as is taken up I the works of necessity and mercy."

## **Part I – The Perpetuity of the Sabbath**

It must be established that the Sabbath is one of the commandments of God and that it is binding upon all men in every generation unto the end of the world.

- I. The necessity of proper Biblical interpretation - hermeneutics  
Which OT laws continue into the NT?
    - A. The Old Testament should be read through the filter of the New Testament
      1. Both the Old Testament and the New are the Word of God.  
The New Testament affirms the importance of the Old Testament  
**2 Timothy 3:16-17** – "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."  
(At the time Paul penned these words All Scripture consisted primarily of the Old Testament)
      2. All of the Old Testament is binding except that which is expressly abrogated by the New Testament  
For example, Jesus clearly fulfilled and replaced the Old Testament sacrificial system—the Ceremonial Law.
    - B. Many New Covenant theologians hold that unless it is repeated in the New Testament, the Old Testament law is abrogated and since the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment is not repeated it is no longer binding.
      1. In reality, only the 5<sup>th</sup> through the 9<sup>th</sup> Commandments are actually repeated. Are we to annul the entire first tablet of the Ten Commandments?
      2. There is no Biblical basis for holding this position.  
"It is simply not true that only those things from the Old Testament repeated in the New are still binding. Where is the exegetical basis for such a claim? There is none" (Bruce A. Ray, Celebrating the Sabbath, [Phillipsburg, P&R Publishing, 2000], 86).
- II. Arguments against the perpetuity of the Sabbath - Romans 14:5-6; Gal. 4:9-10; Col. 2:16
    - A. Romans 14:1-6 - Paul is almost certainly speaking of the various feast days and fast days consistent with the ceremonial law. Notice in Verse 14 Paul is dealing with things "unclean" obviously pointing to the ceremonial law
      1. Hendriksen says that since the language in verses 2-4 & 6 brings up the idea of fasting this probably refers to fast days
      2. Had Paul meant the Sabbath day he would have been clear - notice the number of times Paul mentions food here compared to the days mentioned only in verses 5-6

3. Matthew Henry - "We must understand it with an exception of the Lord's day, which all Christians unanimously observed; but they made no account, took not notice, of those antiquated festivals of the Jews."
- B. Gal. 4:9-10 - The whole purpose of Galatians is Paul warning against the Judaizers who were trying to add works of the law to the finished work of Christ. Verse 10 refers to ceremonial observances
- Days - the various one day feasts
  - Months - the new moon rituals mentioned in Numbers 10:10
  - Times - or seasons pointing to great annual feasts
  - Years - Year of Jubilee and Sabbatical years
- This would in no way abrogate the 4th Commandment
- C. Col. 2:16 - Paul is warning against those who would add to the work of Christ.
1. Verses 6-10 - we are complete in Christ - adding anything to the finished work of Christ is V.8 vain deceit after the tradition of men.
  2. Paul is once again clearly speaking of the festival days and feast days - the many Sabbath days (σαββάτων – plural) - ceremonial  
Paul is certainly not speaking of the Sabbath day - nowhere do we find the Ten Commandments equated with the ceremonial law -
    - a. The Sabbath was in force and being observed before the giving of the Law on Sinai
    - b. The Sabbath was to be observed by both Jews and Gentiles  
"nor thy stranger that is within thy gates"  
Foreigners were excluded from Levitical worship - for example they were forbidden to partake of the Passover, yet they are commanded to keep the Sabbath
    - c. Violating the Sabbath was a capital offence - no ceremonial law carried this weight
    - d. The Sabbath is part of the Ten Commandments all of which are moral
- III. New Testament Evidence for the change of day and its perpetuity
- A. It began the very day of the Resurrection  
**John 20:19** – "Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you."
  - B. In verse 26 we find them together again and Jesus, once again, met with them. According to the Jewish way of counting days this again the first day of the week  
**John 20:26** – "And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you."
  - C. Pentecost in Acts 2 occurred on the first day of the week - the day God chose for the great outpouring of His Spirit - (See Lev. 23:15-16; Deut. 16:9)
  - D. **Acts 20:7** – "And upon the first *day* of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."

- E. **1 Corinthians 16:1-2** – “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first *day* of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as *God* hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come.”
- F. **Revelation 1:10** – “I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day”

## Part II – The Purpose of the Sabbath

- I. The four distinct stages of the Sabbath
  - A. The Creation Sabbath
    1. The Fourth Commandment does not introduce something new but rather points back to something already in existence  
**Exodus 20:8** – “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.”
    2. It originated with God at the time of creation
    3. The reason for the Sabbath was to take time off from work to celebrate God's power and authority demonstrated in creation  
It frees us to perform spiritual acts of worship and service
    4. The Sabbath precedes the Fall – it is a creation ordinance  
Like marriage and work, the Sabbath was ordained to continue as long as men live upon the earth
  - B. The Exodus Sabbath
    1. The 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment in Deuteronomy adds another aspect  
**Deuteronomy 5:12-15** – “Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee. Six days thou shalt labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou. And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and that the LORD thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: therefore the LORD thy God commanded thee to keep the sabbath day.”
    2. God's people were now to spend a day of rest celebrating both God's power in creation *and* His power in redemption.
    3. Thus, it became a sign of the Covenant of God with His elect people  
**Exodus 31:13** – “Speak thou also unto the children of Israel, saying, Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it *is* a sign between me and you throughout your generations; that ye may know that I *am* the LORD that doth sanctify you.”
      - a. Anyone who worked on the Sabbath in effect denied God as Creator and rejected Him as Redeemer – they were covenant breakers
      - b. This was punishable by death because it was high treason against God.

- C. The Resurrection Sabbath – The Lord's Day or Christian Sabbath
1. For the Christian, the Sabbath becomes unto us a celebration of Almighty God as Creator, Almighty God as Redeemer, and Almighty God in the finished work of Christ demonstrated in the resurrection.  
It has become unto us a sign of the New Covenant
  2. Jesus as God incarnate declared His lordship over the Sabbath  
**Mark 2:28** – "Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath."  
It was Jesus who instituted the Creation Sabbath and who appointed the Sabbath as a covenant sign
  3. Sabbath breakers today in essence deny God as Creator and Redeemer and they deny the authority of the Resurrected Christ in the New Covenant
- D. The Final Sabbath (Our eternal Sabbath rest)  
**Hebrews 4:9-11** – "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God *did* from his. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."
1. This will ultimately be fulfilled through the work of Christ
  2. This will be the end of all of our earthly toils and the full and perpetual enjoyment of the praise and worship of God.
  3. Sunday is a celebration of the resurrection of Christ and an anticipation of our resurrection - an anticipation of the full accomplishment of our redemption
  4. Will those who despise one day in seven as a day of praise and worship enjoy the perpetual day in eternity?

II. The Sabbath is a celebration of God's Sovereignty

- A. It is a declaration of God's sovereignty over time and our use of time
1. Time began at creation according to God's design  
**Genesis 1:3-5** – "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that *it was* good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day."  
**Genesis 1:14** – "And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years:"
  2. By Divine appointment God established a week to consist of seven days and then declared the seventh day to be holy (*or set it apart*)  
**Genesis 2:2-3** – "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."  
**Exodus 20:11** – "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."

3. Since the fall man has sought to exercise his authority over the use of time
  - a. Man resents God's authority over time but he cannot control it
  - b. Man declares his sovereignty over the Sabbath day but to his own detriment
  - c. The Sabbath keeps man from playing God
- B. It is a declaration of God's sovereignty over work
 

**Exodus 20:9** – "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:"

  1. From the beginning, man was created to work - God declared the he would manage the earth
 

**Genesis 1:26** – "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."

**Genesis 2:15** – "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."

Bruce Ray – "We live in a world where people think that the less work you can do, the better off you are. But God, who made the world, says that the meaning of our existence is inseparable from the work we do. To deny the importance of work is to deny ourselves and eventually to destroy ourselves" (Bruce A. Ray, Celebrating the Sabbath, [Phillipsburg, P&R Publishing, 2000], 18).
  2. Being created in His image we are to imitate Him in work and rest
 

**Exodus 20:11** – "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."
  3. The Fourth Commandment recognizes God's authority over work
    - a. We are to recognize that God ordains our vocation through which we are to glorify Him
    - b. We are to recognize that God ordains the parameters of our work of which we must obey (six days of work)
- C. It is a declaration of God's sovereignty over rest
  1. The Sabbath is an appointed day of rest
 

**Exodus 20:9-10** – "Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: 10 But the seventh day *is* the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates:"
  2. The Sabbath is God's appointed refreshment to all the earth
 

"thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger"
  3. God has appointed a day where we can be refreshed physically and spiritually

## Part III – The Practical Application of the Sabbath

- I. There are several truths which govern obedience to the Sabbath.
- A. Necessity may overrule the Sabbath - **See Matthew 12:1-7** –
1. The showbread consisted of twelve loaves of bread which were laid in two rows and displayed before the Lord. They represented Israel's 12 tribes and symbolized their constant fellowship with God and His continual provision for them.
  2. The showbread was changed for fresh loaves every Sabbath. The old loaves were eaten by the priests and no one else.  
**Leviticus 24:8-9** – “Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the LORD continually, *being taken* from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it *is* most holy unto him of the offerings of the LORD made by fire by a perpetual statute.”
  3. Yet when Abiathar the high priest saw that David and his men were hungry and that David was anointed by God as Israel's future king he gave David the bread.
  4. Did not Jesus as God's anointed have he right to provide for Himself and His disciples? Not to mention, the Pharisee's restrictions were man-made regulations.
  5. The Old Testament ceremonial laws (the showbread) were meant to be obeyed but a higher law of the preservation of human life must take priority.
- B. The Law sometimes has certain exceptions - **Matthew 12:5-6**
1. On the Sabbath the priests were very busy. One of the busiest days of the week for a Pastor is the Lord's Day. Making possible the worship by God's people demands that some be permitted to abandon the regulation of a Sabbath rest.
  2. The Pharisees were guilty of placing such rigid application to the Law as to disregard God's higher will and purposes.  
For example God permits us to take another person's life in the defense of our own life.
- C. Acts of mercy are always allowed on the Sabbath – **Matthew 12:7-8** –
1. The Pharisees were strict in obedience to the Law but they lacked pity and kindness. At the sight of Jesus and His disciples who were in need of food the Pharisees had no desire to help.
  2. If they had studied their own Scriptures they would have known that God desires mercy.  
**Micah 6:7-8** – “Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn *for* my transgression, the fruit of my body *for* the sin of my soul? He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?”

## II. Some Basic Principles for keeping the Sabbath

### The 1689 Baptist Confession

"The Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering their common affairs aforehand, do not only observe an holy day rest all day from their own works, words and thoughts, about their worldly employment and recreations, but are also taken up the whole time in the public and private exercises of His worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy."

- A. "A holy rest all day"
  1. A whole day
  2. A day set apart from the other six
 

"Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work"

    - a. It is a different day - a holy day, set apart
    - b. For the Child of God it is never seen as an arduous duty but as a wonderful gift from God
    - c. It is a taste of our heavenly rest - eternal Sabbath
- B. A matter of Christian liberty - the believer orders the day as to best benefit his soul and his family
  1. Yet, It is binding upon all people - it is the moral law
  2. There are some principles that should guide us as we order the day
- C. Principles for the Sabbath – The area of discipline
  1. It should be void of all secular labor - "six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work"
    - a. Exclusion - works of necessity and mercy  
Fire, Police, medical, power plants etc.
    - b. We should seek employment which does not require us to break the day
    - c. Employers should not cause their employees to break the day - examples of Godliness: Chick Filet
    - d. We should not contribute to those who would break the Law  
restaurants, gas, stores, malls etc.  
**Romans 1:32** - "Who knowing the judgement of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them."
  2. According to Spurgeon's Catechism we must also rest from "such recreations as are lawful on other days"
    - a. Most television serves no practical function on the Lord's Day - it does not nurture the soul by drawing us to meditate upon our Creator and Redeemer
    - b. Sports have become our god - can't we refrain for one day  
Allowing these things to distract us reveals divided heart
- D. Other Positive admonitions from 1689 Confession
  1. "After a due preparing of their hearts"
    - a. It takes preparation to properly spend the day
    - b. Preparation for worship
  2. "After a due ordering of their common affairs aforehand"
    - a. Most people plan to break the Sabbath

- b. We need to order our lives to take full advantage of the day
- c. The Lord's Day should be spent in worship, the reading of God's Word, Prayer, and meditation

- III. The positive advantages of keeping the Sabbath
  - A. The positive blessings of God for obedience
    - 1. R.L. Dabney - "It is historically true that the vitality and holiness of the church are usually in proportion to its reverence for the Sabbath."
    - 2. We've seen the moral decline of our nation demonstrated by our disregard for the Sabbath.
  - B. The positive benefit of nurturing our soul
  - C. The witness to the world
  - D. The nurturing of our children - they see from an early age that we are a peculiar people

## ***The Second Tablet – Our Duty to Man***

### **The Fifth Commandment**

**Exodus 20:12** – “Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”

Spurgeon’s Catechism:

*Question 53:* What is required in the fifth commandment?

*Answer:* The fifth commandment required the preserving the honour, and performing the duties belonging to every one in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

Spurgeon’s Catechism:

*Question 54:* What is the reason annexed in the fifth commandment?

*Answer:* The reason annexed to the fifth commandment is, a promise of long life and prosperity—as far as it shall serve for God’s glory, and their own good—to all such as keep this commandment.

1. Many tend to disregard this commandment as unimportant—that it only applies to children. The word for "honour" is (כָּבֵד) – "to be heavy, be weighty, be grievous, be hard, burdensome, to be heavy." This demonstrates the weightiness of this commandment.
2. As stated earlier, the Ten Commandments are a summary of the God's standard of righteousness. The commandments cover various categories of sins. The fifth commandment commands a respect for all authority—a reverence for all whom God has placed in over us. We should render them honor, obedience, and gratitude. We must give due weight to their position.
3. This is most difficult for the natural man who by nature despises authority. Calvin: “But as this command to submit is very repugnant to the perversity of the human mind (which, puffed up with ambitious longings, will scarcely allow itself to be subject),

that superiority which is most attractive and least invidious is set forth as an example calculated to soften and bend our minds to the habits of submission” (*Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 2.8.35).

4. Authority can be divided into various types.
  - A. Familial – Children are to obey their parents
    - Because God commanded it
    - Because it is good and pleasing to God  
**Colossians 3:20** – “Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.”
    - Because parents are the instrument of their being  
**Proverbs 23:22** – “Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old.”
    - Because it provides harmony in the human relation. God has ordained the family as the foundation of social order. When the family fails society fails  
**Isaiah 3:12** - “*As for* my people, children *are* their oppressors, and women rule over them.”
    - Because it provides a picture of our submission to God's authority – the greatest example is Christ.  
**John 5:30** - "I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me."  
**John 6:38** - "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."  
**Philippians 2:8** - "And being found in fashion as a man He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."
  - B. Spiritual – pastors are to be honored with respect to their office.
    1. They are the ambassadors of Christ  
**2 Corinthians 5:20** – “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ”
    2. They are to be honored for their work’s sake.  
**1 Thessalonians 5:12-13** – “And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; <sup>13</sup> And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. *And* be at peace among yourselves.”
    3. They have oversight over Christ’s church  
**Acts 20:28** – “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”  
**1 Peter 5:2** – “Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight *thereof*, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind;”
    4. They have watch over the souls of men  
**Hebrews 13:17** – “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that *is* unprofitable for you.”

- C. Political – we are commanded to obey the civil authorities.  
**Romans 13:1-2** – “Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.<sup>2</sup> Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.”  
**1 Peter 2:13** - "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well."  
 1. God has promoted kings and magistrates who in turn promote justice. God has given them the power of the sword.  
 2. We are to submit to them and pray for them.  
**1 Timothy 2:1-2** – “I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks, be made for all men;<sup>2</sup> For kings, and *for* all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.”
- D. The Fifth Commandment also regulates our work. We are to give due honor to our employers
5. Father's have been given particular authority in the home
- A. The Bible clearly teaches the principle of male headship
1. Adam was created first – God could have done it differently, but He chose this way according to His purpose for humanity. Sexual distinctions were irrelevant with the animals – but not so with man.
  2. Eve was created as a companion and helper for Adam  
**Genesis 2:18** – “And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”
  3. Eve was created as a weaker vessel – Adam was to be her protector  
**1 Peter 3:7** – “Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with *them* according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.”
  4. The male was created to exercise headship – clearly seen in creation
    - a. This can be seen in God’s terminology for humanity  
**Genesis 1:27** – “So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”  
**Genesis 5:2** – “Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.”  
 “Adam” - אָדָם - man, mankind
      - (1) God called humanity man, not woman or even persons
      - (2) God did not use gender neutral language – He used specific language to teach specific things
    - b. The headship of Adam is seen in God giving *him* the command not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil
    - c. The headship of Adam is seen in Eve being formed from the body of Adam –

- d. The headship of Adam is seen in Adam's authority to name the animals  
God had Adam name each of the animals according to their identity so that he could see that none were suitable for him.
  - e. In keeping with his headship Adam named or identified the woman  
Adam interpreted her identity in relation to himself  
**Genesis 2:23** – “And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”
  - f. The headship of Adam is seen in his responsibility for the original sin
    - (1) Adam *and* Eve sinned but it was Adam’s sin that was passed down to all mankind
    - (2) Adam *and* Eve hid themselves but God called out to Adam  
**Genesis 3:9** – “And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where *art* thou?”
- B. The father exercises this headship with his children
- 1. He oversees their instruction in Christ  
**Ephesians 6:4** – “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”
  - 2. He helps in the selection of a bride for his son and gives away his daughter to a suitable groom.  
**Ezra 9:12** – “Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may”  
**Nehemiah 13:25** – “Ye shall not give your daughters unto their sons, nor take their daughters unto your sons, or for yourselves.”
6. What is meant by the promise annexed to the fifth commandment – “that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”
- A. Spoken first to the Jews - promise of God’s blessings in the land of promise
  - B. Extended to the Gentiles promising temporal blessings  
**Ephesians 6:1-3** – “Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. <sup>2</sup> Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) <sup>3</sup> That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.
- 1. We must be careful about interpreting this in a mechanical way—a brief life is not necessarily indication of God’s judgment
    - a. David Brainerd - 29 years old
    - b. Charles Spurgeon - 53 years old
  - 2. It has much to do with quality of life. A brief life in the presence of God is far greater than a long life apart from Him. It speaks more of divine favor and God’s blessings that accompany obedience.
  - 3. There are also consequences for disobedience. The Bible gives us examples of those whose life ended prematurely due to their sinful actions.
    - a. Example of Ananias and Sapphira.
    - b. Paul spoke of those who had died because they came to the Lord’s Table unworthily.

**1 Corinthians 11:29-30** – “For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. <sup>30</sup> For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”

## The Sixth Commandment

Exodus 20:13 – “Thou shalt not kill”

Spurgeon’s Catechism:

*Question 56:* What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

*Answer:* The sixth commandment forbids the taking away of our own life, or the life of our neighbor unjustly, or whatsoever tends thereunto.

The Sixth Commandment summarizes our duty to respect and safeguard human life. It demands that we place a high value upon all human life.

### I. Exceptions to the Sixth Commandment

A. This commandment does not apply to the taking of animal life

1. It is lawful for us to kill and eat animals.

**Genesis 9:3** – “Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.”

2. The New Testament affirms the killing of animals for meat. Jesus himself partook of animal flesh. It was also affirmed by Paul

**Romans 14:14-15** – “I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* unclean.”

B. This commandment does not apply to the magistrate who exercises capital punishment in the administration of justice

**Romans 13:4** – “For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil.”

**Genesis 9:6** – “Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.”)

(Note: this commandment was given not to the Jews but to Noah, the second father of the human race.

C. This commandment does not prohibit a nation from raising up an army for the defense of its population. This is consistent with God's life preserving principle behind this commandment.

D. This commandment does not forbid us from taking the life of someone who is seeking our life, i.e. self-defense

**Exodus 22:2** – “If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, *there shall* no blood *be shed* for him.”

## II. Prohibitions of the Sixth Commandment

- A. The Sixth Commandment forbids the deliberate taking of human life.
1. This Commandment forbids murder and all that leads to it.
  2. Although this commandment commands the preservation of human life it must be done through lawful means. "We may not lie, or steal, or swear falsely, or deny God's truth, even to save life, our own or that of others. Honour, truth, and conscience are worth more than life" (Plumer, *Law of God*, 396).
- B. The Sixth Commandment includes a prohibition against suicide which is self-murder.
1. This includes placing ourselves in needless danger.
  2. This also includes carelessness in the preserving of our lives. With our modern understanding of nutrition it is sinful to neglect our bodies. It would also be negligent not to seek proper medical remedies. (Watson: "Many dig their own graves with their teeth")
- C. Another violation of this command is soul murder—the disregard of the importance of our eternal soul. Those who neglect the means of saving their souls are guilty of soul murder.
- Matthew 16:26** – "For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

### Other ways to commit soul murder

1. By not instructing our children
  2. By living hypocritical lives before the lost - poor example
  3. By presenting false gospel – error
  4. By using improper methods – the Bible defines not only the message of the Gospel but also the method of presenting it.
- ## III. Positively, we must do all that we can to protect human life.
- A. We have a duty to exercise caution with anything that might prove dangerous to others.
- Deuteronomy 22:8** – "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence."
- Exodus 21:28-29** – "If an ox gore a man or a woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox *shall be* quit. But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death."
- B. We must guard our hearts from attitudes and feelings that diminish our regard for others.
1. Jesus stressed the matter of the heart with regards to anger or hatred which are the seeds of murder
- Matthew 5:21-22** – "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: <sup>22</sup> But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:

and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."

2. We must guard our hearts from feelings of discontent. Discontentment breeds impatience and a quarrelsome disposition.
3. We must guard against feelings of bitterness. Bitterness eats at our heart causing us to hate others.
4. We must guard against sinful ambition which seeks to exalt ourselves above others.

**Philippians 2:3-8** – "*Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.* <sup>4</sup> Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. <sup>5</sup> Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup> Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: <sup>7</sup> But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: <sup>8</sup> And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

5. We must guard against sinful pride
- D. We must maintain a spirit of forgiveness  
**Matthew 18:21-23** – "Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? <sup>22</sup> Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven."
- E. We must maintain a spirit of mercy  
**Matthew 5:7** – "Blessed *are* the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy."
- F. We must maintain a high regard for human life
1. In our contemporary society, abortion is a direct disregard of this commandment. It is the taking of human life—it is murder. In our lawless society that has disregarded God's Law we have increasingly become a culture of death.
  2. The safety and security of human life must always be a top priority

### The Seventh Commandment

**Exodus 20:14** – "Thou shalt not commit adultery."

Spurgeon's Catechism:

*Question 58:* What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

*Answer:* The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts, words, and actions."

The Seventh Commandment declares God's sovereignty over our body as He declares the proper exercise of sexual expression.

**1 Corinthians 6:19** – "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? <sup>20</sup> For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

1. The Seventh Commandment covers the category of sexual purity.
2. Some of the commandments of God are less heinous than others. For example, although covetousness is a terrible assault upon the goodness of God, it is less heinous than murder. As we will see, adultery is a high crime. "The sin of adultery is scarcely less enormous than that of murder. The later destroys man's temporal existence, and the former destroys all that makes existence a boon. Were all to make the license of the adulterer men would in due time be reduced to the degradation of wild beasts" (R.L. Dabney—quoted by A.W. Pink, *The Ten Commandments*, 49).
3. The Seventh Commandment also stresses the importance of marriage. Marriage is the creation of a new family. Faithfulness within the family is essential.
 

**Genesis 2:24** – "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

**1 Corinthians 7:2** - "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."

**Hebrews 13:4** - "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

  - a. Strong families, where the honor of Christ is the goal, are the key to the strength of any society. Historically, when the family is weakened society as a whole is weakened.
  - b. The family is the foundation through which children are raised in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.
  - c. The perfect picture of marriage in all love, honor and purity is seen in Christ and His church.
 

**Ephesians 5:25-27** – "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; <sup>26</sup> That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, <sup>27</sup> That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."
4. God blessed human sexuality within the bounds of the marriage bed.
 

**Hebrews 13:4** – "Marriage *is* honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

**Proverbs 5:15-19** – "Drink waters out of thine own cistern, and running waters out of thine own well. <sup>16</sup> Let thy fountains be dispersed abroad, *and* rivers of waters in the streets. <sup>17</sup> Let them be only thine own, and not strangers' with thee. <sup>18</sup> Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. <sup>19</sup> *Let her be as* the loving hind and pleasant roe; let her breasts satisfy thee at all times; and be thou ravished always with her love."
5. Adultery breaks the marriage covenant. It breaks the divine oneness created in the marriage vows.
 

**Genesis 2:24** – "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh."

**Matthew 19:5-6** – "And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? <sup>6</sup> Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."
6. Adultery steals another man's wife or another woman's husband. David stole the prized possession of Uriah the Hittite.

7. Adultery creates such a breach in the marriage bond that the innocent party is free to put away the mate in divorce and remarry.  
**Matthew 5:32-33** – "But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."
8. Adultery is so serious that it was punishable by death under the old covenant.  
**Leviticus 20:10** – "And the man that committeth adultery with *another* man's wife, *even he* that committeth adultery with his neighbour's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death."
9. Adultery destroys the reputation. Even in a society where it is not considered a great act of moral impurity God sees it as a great sin. It destroys families and is a curse upon society. A pastor who commits this act is permanently disqualified from shepherding God's people.  
**Proverbs 6:32-33** – "*But* whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he *that* doeth it destroyeth his own soul. <sup>33</sup> A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away."
10. Adultery is particularly heinous because marriage fidelity is a picture of our relationship with God. Christians are the bride of Christ. Just as a couple give themselves unconditionally to each other Christians have given themselves to Christ. Unfaithfulness is spiritual adultery.  
**Jeremiah 3:1** – "They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD."
11. The Seventh Commandment prohibits all sexual impurity.
- A. It prohibits sexual lust with anyone with whom we are not married.  
**Matthew 5:28** – "But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart."
  - B. It prohibits inappropriate intimacy or flirtation. Young people must maintain purity during courtship.
  - C. It prohibits a woman from seeking emotional support from someone who is not her husband.
  - D. It prohibits all unmarried expressions of sexuality including homosexuality, bestiality, incest, prostitution etc.
12. Continued unrepented adultery is consistent with the life of a lost man.  
**1 Corinthians 6:9-11** – "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, <sup>10</sup> Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."
13. The Godly man or woman must guard themselves against this sin.  
**1 Thessalonians 4:3-4** – "For this is the will of God, *even* your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: <sup>4</sup> That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;"
- A. We must guard our thoughts
  - B. We must guard our eyes - We must be careful what we read or watch on television or movies.

- C. We must not place ourselves in a place that will lead to temptation. Men and women should not be alone where lusts can lead to sin.
- D. We must watch how we dress – We must not draw attention to our bodies.

### The Eighth Commandment

**Exodus 20:15** – “Thou shalt not steal”

Spurgeon’s Catechism:

*Question 60:* What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?

*Answer:* The eighth commandment forbids whatsoever does or may unjustly hinder our own, or our neighbour's wealth, our outward estate."

1. The Eighth Commandment recognizes and protects the private ownership of goods. Negatively it prohibits the taking of anything that belongs to our neighbor. Positively, we must protect and preserve that which belongs to our neighbor.
  - A. To call any property our own we know belongs to someone else is stealing. This includes the finding of goods that belong to others.
  - B. To treat the property of others in such a way as to cause them loss is to break this commandment.
2. Often the Commandments are interrelated.
  - A. For example, adultery is a failure to recognize the ownership of husbands and wives in marriage. Adultery is a form of thievery.  
**1 Corinthians 7:4** – "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife."
  - B. Likewise, the Eighth Commandment is the fruit of the failure to obey the Tenth Commandment against the sin of covetousness. It begins with a heart of discontentment. The cure against this sin is contentment with our estate.
  - C. Stealing, like all sin is a failure to obey the First Commandment – a failure to trust God – both the trusting of God's Providence for our estate as well as trusting in God's Providence in the lives of others..
3. This sin comes in countless forms. It demands absolute honesty in every course of life.
  - A. If a man does not put in a full day's work he is guilty of stealing from his employer.
  - B. If he doesn't pay his taxes in full he is guilty of stealing from the civil authorities.
  - C. Breaking a contract for personal gain is stealing. This includes defaulting on a loan.
  - D. Unjust buying and selling. To falsely represent a product and sell it for more than it is worth is stealing. Or, to malign the value of a product in order to buy it as cheaply as we can. Both practices are dishonest. Both buying and selling should be done in a fair and honest manner. The Eighth Commandment demands honesty in every business transaction.

- E. Other Examples:
- Insurance fraud is stealing.
  - An illegitimate lawsuit is stealing. In general a litigious mind is contrary to the spirit of the Gospel.  
**Matthew 5:40** – "And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloke also."
  - A student who claims someone else's writings as his own is guilty of stealing.
  - Begging when a man is able to work is stealing  
**2 Thessalonians 3:10-12** – "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. <sup>11</sup> For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. <sup>12</sup> Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."
4. The worst type of this sin is theft from God.  
We rob Him of His glory when we do not worship and serve Him.  
We rob Him of His day when we break the Fourth Commandment.  
We rob Him of His proper due when we withhold the tithe.  
**Malachi 3:8** – "Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings."
5. A man can also be guilty of robbing himself.
- A man robs himself when he wastes his earthly estate. Gambling is self-theft.
  - A man robs himself through idleness. He robs himself of the precious time given as a gift from God.
6. Philip Ryken quotes Jerry Bridges concerning the three attitudes of men concerning their possessions (*Written in Stone*, p.176):
- What is yours is mine, I'll take it – this is the heart of the thief
  - What is mine is mine; I'll keep it – this is attitude most people have most of the time
  - What is mine is God's; I'll share it – this is the godly attitude
7. How to Avoid Stealing - take on the Christian work ethic
- A. Honest Work -
1. We were place upon the earth to work  
**Genesis 2:15** - "The Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and keep it."
  2. The 4th Commandment- "Six days shalt thou labor & do all thy work"
  3. God said unto Adam - "By the sweat of thy face shalt eat bread, till thou return unto the ground"
- B. The sin of idleness  
**Proverbs 10:4** - "He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand."  
**Proverbs 20:4** - "The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing."  
**Proverbs 20:13** - "Love not sleep, lest thou come to poverty"  
**2 Thessalonians 3:10** - "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."

## The Ninth Commandment

Exodus 20:16 – “Thou shalt bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

Spurgeon’s Catechism:

*Question 62:* What is required in the ninth commandment?

*Answer:* The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man, and of our own, and our neighbour's good name, especially in witness-bearing.”

1. In a literal sense this commandment forbids perjury – being a false witness, giving false testimony.
  - a. Two witnesses were required for the death penalty  
**Deuteronomy 17:6** – “At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; *but* at the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death.”
  - b. There were severe penalties for committing perjury in an effort to bring harm to another  
**Deuteronomy 19:16-19** – “If a false witness rise up against any man to testify against him *that which is wrong*; <sup>17</sup> Then both the men, between whom the controversy *is*, shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges, which shall be in those days; <sup>18</sup> And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, *if* the witness *be* a false witness, *and* hath testified falsely against his brother; <sup>19</sup> Then shall ye do unto him, as he had thought to have done unto his brother: so shalt thou put the evil away from among you.”
2. As with the other commandments this command goes much further. As with the other commandments this commandment is a summary of a particular category of God’s law. Specifically, this commandment requires all that promotes truth and prohibits every form of falsehood and dishonesty.
3. This commandment stresses the importance of the careful guarding of the tongue.  
 (Note: the pen is subject to the same laws as the tongue)  
**Proverbs 18:21-22** – “Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”  
**James 1:26** – “If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion *is* vain.”  
**James 3:2-8** – “For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same *is* a perfect man, *and* able also to bridle the whole body. <sup>3</sup> Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. <sup>4</sup> Behold also the ships, which though *they be* so great, and *are* driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. <sup>5</sup> Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! <sup>6</sup> And the tongue *is* a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. <sup>7</sup> For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: <sup>8</sup> But the tongue can no man tame; *it is* an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.”

- Ephesians 4:29** – "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."  
**Matthew 12:36-37** – "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. <sup>37</sup> For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."
4. The Ninth Commandment forbids every use of our tongue that would bring injury to our neighbor. The tongue can cause great damage to others.
    - a. This commandment forbids malicious gossip, backbiting and rumor.  
**Proverbs 20:19** – "He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips."
    - b. This commandment forbids all misrepresentation of products. The Bible condemns unjust measures.  
**Deuteronomy 25:14-15** – "Thou shalt not have in thine house divers measures, a great and a small. <sup>15</sup> *But* thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have: that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee."
    - c. This commandment forbids all flattery – either of ourselves or others  
**Ephesians 4:15** – "But speaking the truth in love . . ."
    - d. We are guilty of breaking this command when we withhold the truth instead of coming to the aid of our neighbor.
    - e. It should be noted that *how* we say something can be just as important as *what* we say.
  5. The Ninth Commandment forbids speaking all that is untrue, misleading.  
**Zechariah 8:16** – "These *are* the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:"
  6. Lies and deceit are consistent with the character of Satan  
**John 8:44** – "Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it"
  7. Truth is the epitome of Christ  
**John 14:6** – "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."
  8. A lying tongue is consistent with our fallen nature and is consistent in the heart of the condemned.  
**Revelation 21:8** – "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."  
**Psalms 15:1** – "LORD, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? <sup>2</sup> He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and **speaketh the truth in his heart.**"
  9. Two of the seven abominable sins of **Proverbs 6** deal with the matter of the tongue.  
**Proverbs 6:16-19** – "These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto him: <sup>17</sup> A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, <sup>18</sup> An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, <sup>19</sup> A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

## The Tenth Commandment

**Exodus 20:17** – “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that *is* thy neighbour's.”

Spurgeon's Catechism:

*Question 64:* What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

*Answer:* The tenth commandment forbids all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbour, and all inordinate motions and affections to any thing that is his.

1. Negatively, this commandment forbids lusting after that which belongs to our neighbor. Positively, it demands that we rest content in our lot as assigned by Divine Providence.
2. Covetousness is closely related to the sin of idolatry. Both involve the setting of our affections upon something apart from God. It is directly opposed to the First Commandment.  
**Colossians 3:5** – “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:”
3. This is the fruit of human depravity. He worships and serves that which is created more than the Creator.  
**Romans 1:25** – “Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.”
4. The human eye sees and the human heart lusts. The fruit is covetousness.  
**James 1:14-15** – “But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. <sup>15</sup> Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”  
**1 John 2:16-17** – “For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. <sup>17</sup> And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”
5. The ultimate cause of covetousness is a dissatisfaction with Christ. The only cure is to be content with Christ.
  - a. Sin has caused within humanity a spiritual death. It is described as blindness and enmity with God. All sin is the result of this spiritual death. Human beings disregard God's Law because they believe it will bring them happiness. They covet this world's goods because they are in love with them. We have a bad heart.  
**Mark 7:21-23** – “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, <sup>22</sup> Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: <sup>23</sup> All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”
  - b. Only regeneration will result in a new heart in communion with God

6. For human beings it is difficult to obtain wealth without loving it. Great caution must be exercised.
- Mark 10:23-25** – "And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! <sup>24</sup> And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."
- 1 Timothy 6:9-10** – "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and *into* many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. <sup>10</sup> For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."
7. It is great foolishness and sin for parents to teach their children that earthly gain or riches is more important than gaining Christ.
8. Thomas Watson describes six particulars of what it means that a man is covetousness (*The Ten Commandments*, Pages 176-177).
- When a man's thoughts are wholly taken up with the world. "A good man's thoughts are in heaven; he is thinking of Christ's love and eternal recompense. A covetous man's thoughts are in the world; his mind is wholly taken up with it. . ."
  - When a man takes more pains for getting earth than for getting heaven. "He will turn every stone, break his sleep, take many a weary step for the world; but will take no pains for Christ or heaven."
  - When all his discourse is about the world. "It is a sign of godliness to be speaking of heaven, to have the tongue turned to the language of Canaan."
  - When he so sets his heart upon worldly things, that for the love of them, he will part with heavenly things. "He would rather part with Christ than with all his worldly possessions."
  - When he overloads himself with worldly business. "He has many irons in the fire; he takes so much business upon him that he cannot find time to serve God."
  - When his heart is so set upon the world that to get it he does not care what unlawful means he uses to acquire it.
9. Like most of God's commandments, breaking one leads to the breaking of others. Covetousness leads to other sins
- We will kill to acquire another person's possession
    - David provided for Uriah's death
    - Ahab and Jezebel had Naboth killed for his vineyard
  - We will commit adultery to fulfill our covetousness for another's mate.
  - We will steal in order to have what we covet after
  - We lie to cover up our true desires