

Life Lesson 29
The Ten Commandments Part II
Text: Exodus 19 and 20

Introduction

God had an important message for the Israelites – and for us! It was so important that He called Moses up to Mount Sinai and told Him the message. God even wrote it down on a stone tablet and gave it to Moses. If God has a message so important that He writes it down Himself, we certainly should listen, shouldn't we? The instructions He wrote down for us are called The Ten Commandments.

The Story

God's message was about how to live to please God. When we please Him, we also are happy and we get along with others, too. We looked at the first four commandments last week. They tell how God wants us to act toward Him. Let's review them together:

1. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.
2. Thou shalt not make any graven image.
3. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

The next six commandments are about how to treat other people. Commandment number five says, "Honor thy father and mother that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

How can you honor your parents? One way is by obeying them. You can also honor them by treating them respectfully. You shouldn't have to be told to do what you ought or your parents shouldn't have to threaten you to make you obey. You should do what you know is right because you love your parents and want to please God by honoring them.

You can show honor to your parents by the way you speak to them. Talking back to them, yelling at them, or giving them orders instead of asking politely are all things that do NOT show honor to our parents. Do you think you will get along better with your parents and be happier with them if you speak to them respectfully?

Commandment number six says, “Thou shalt not kill.” In Hebrew this actually says, “Thou shalt not commit murder. It’s terribly wrong to take someone’s life. The Bible says that murderers should be punished by death. The Bible also says that if we hate someone, we are committing murder in our hearts. I hope you won’t break this commandment by being bitter and refusing to forgive someone.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery,” is the seventh commandment. This means husband and wives should love each other and be faithful to one another and never leave their partners for someone else. People on television and in the movies do this all the time and act like it is no problem and everyone is happy when they “follow their hearts.” That’s just make-believe, though. In real life it doesn’t work that way. Everyone gets hurt and no one is happy when men and women don’t stay faithful to their marriage partners. It’s best not to “follow your heart” or “emotions,” as the TV people really mean. If you follow God and do what He says, your emotions will catch up.

\ Commandment number eight says, “Thou shalt not steal.” You should respect other people’s property and never take something that belong to another person. Some people think that taking little things doesn’t count. God sees even the little things, though, and He cares. It may be a piece of gum out of your mom’s purse you know she wouldn’t want you to have, or a

quarter you know someone wouldn't miss – but God sees it as stealing. Little things lead to big things – so don't steal!

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor,” is the ninth commandment. This means you should never lie or tell something about your friends that isn't true. It particularly means not lying to get someone else in trouble. Sometimes people say, “He did it!” to keep out of trouble themselves. God knows the truth and knows when you are lying.

The last commandment says, “Thou shalt not covet.” That means that you shouldn't be envious and wish you had the things your friends have. When we start wanting what others have, it never stops – because there will always be someone else with more! God knows that if we are covetous, we will never be happy because we will always want the next thing and will never be satisfied. We can be happy with what God has given to us, because He always gives us just what is best for us. The easiest thing to do is not start coveting, but be content with what you have.

The Life Lesson

I hope you will learn the commandments and follow them. Obeying the Ten Commandments won't get you into Heaven, because we are saved by the grace of God, not by what we can do. But obeying the Ten Commandments will keep you out of the kind of trouble that leads to heartbreak. God gives us directions because He loves us and wants us to have the best. Let's listen to Him!

Review Questions

What is the fifth commandment?

Honor thy father and thy mother.

What promise comes with obedience to this commandment?

It will be well with you and you will have a long life.

How can you honor your parents?

By obeying, by speaking respectfully, by your attitude.

What is commandment six?

Thou shalt not kill.

How do we commit murder in our hearts?

When we hate someone.

What is commandment seven?

Thou shalt not steal.

Does God care about big thefts, or do little ones count?

Stealing is stealing to God.

What is commandment eight?

Thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor.

What does “bearing false witness” means?

It means lying to get someone else in trouble.

What is the tenth commandment?

Thou shalt not covet.

What does covet mean?

To want what someone else has.

Why should we not covet?

Because we will never be happy if we are not content with what we have.

Will keeping the Ten Commandments get you into Heaven?

No. Only faith in Jesus and His death on the cross can save us.