

Good morning and thank you for joining us. Would you please turn in your bibles to Deuteronomy chapter 5? We're continuing our study as Moses gives the OT law to the new generation of Israelites. Remember the entire nation is camped out on the edge of the promised land, getting ready to enter in. But before they enter in, God needs to give them some reminders.

We're gonna study both chapters 5 and 6 together.

The title of this morning's message is God's Desire for Us.

Would you please stand as we read verses 1-3 together?

1 And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them. 2 The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. 3 The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive.

LETS PRAY

In chapter 5 we see Moses repeat the 10 commandments to the Israelites. And you may be wondering-why should we study the 10 commandments? As Christians, aren't we bound by grace, and not the law? And the answer is yes-we're not bound by the OT law. Galatians 3:23 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Although we're no longer under the OT Law - if we ignore the wisdom in the Ten Commandments - we'll do so at our own peril.

We live in a world today that shies away from truth. Sadly, our society likes to determine its own set of standards.

But morality is not a moving of the target where we get to lower the bar anytime we want. Right and wrong do exist, and God's truth is absolute. A customized morality that serves humanity's sinfulness is a disaster not only for the individual, but for the society.

In Deuteronomy chapter 5 Moses reminds the second generation of Israelites of God's non-negotiables.

1 And Moses called all Israel, and said to them: "Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing today, that you may learn them and be careful to observe them. 2 The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. 3 The LORD did not make this covenant with our fathers, but with us, those who are here today, all of us who are alive. Moses is referring to the covenant the 1<sup>st</sup> generation agreed to with God in **Exodus 24:3** So Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the LORD has said we will do."

Yet that covenant was made with the previous generation which died in the wilderness.

This current generation, whom Moses is speaking to, had to understand and embrace the same covenant if they were to enjoy the blessings of God.

4-7

4 The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire. 5 I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to declare to you the word of the LORD; for you were afraid because of the fire, and you did not go up the mountain. He said: 6 'I am the LORD your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

## 7 'You shall have no other gods before Me. #1

Notice, the first commandment is in response to God's grace and deliverance. God says "I saved you... I ended your slavery... now come and follow Me alone."

Despite their covenant, we see in the Bible countless times where the Israelites turned from worshipping almighty God and turned to worship false gods.

But these false gods weren't only worshipped in ancient Israel, these false gods are still worshipped today.

Baal was the god who supposedly hurled lightning down from heaven, he was celebrated as the god of power.

Today there are many who are still bowing at the altar of Baal. It just looks different as folks today are worshipping footbaal, basebaal, and basketbaal. Even among Christians more attention is given to how many points are scored in fantasy football than in loving other people for Jesus' sake.

Ashtaroth was the goddess of sensuality, of pleasure, a goddess who is still worshipped in our society today by those who say 'if it feels good, do it'. For lots of folks today life is all about pleasure.

Mammon was the god of money, the god of prosperity. Anyone who places a priority on money or lives to gain more possessions is worshipping the false god of Mammon today.

You remember the name of Moloch; he was the god where people would heat up the bronze statue then place their children on it to be burned alive.

Sadly, many parents do virtually the same thing today when they ignore their children in the name of advancing their career, having fun, or building more wealth.

It's uncommon in America to see folks bowing their knee at a physical idol, yet clearly idol worship is rampant around us, and it still breaks God's heart.

Commandment number 2 tells us...

8 'You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; #2

The first commandment tells us who to worship. The second emphasizes how God wants to be worshipped.

God prohibits introducing any physical representations of Him into our worship - icons, or trinkets, or even crucifixes. God forbids it because He knows as time goes on, the symbol overshadows the substance, and folks start worshipping the creation instead of the creator.

9 you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, Pause here...God is not jealous of us, but rather jealous for us. He doesn't want to share our love. He wants our unrivaled allegiance.

...9 visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, Tragically, we see the fulfillment of this promise throughout the OT, because Israel worshipped false Gods.

Now this doesn't mean God punishes people directly for the sins of their ancestors, because look at the end of 9-of those who hate me. As we read the next verse we see if the descendants love God, they will not have the iniquity of the fathers visited on them.

10 but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. It's possible for everyone to receive God's mercy; if they will only turn to Him in love and obedience.

By the way, we can measure our love for God, by our willingness to be obedient to God. Lots of folks profess to love the Lord, but refuse to do what He instructs. If we love the Lord, then we'll follow His instructions.

### Commandment #3

11 'You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

The third commandment instructs us not to trivialize, or disgrace the name of God. We need to take God seriously and always treat His name with reverence.

Today if you mock Buddha you'll hear from the ACLU. Make fun of Mohammed and you'll risk an uprising, boycotts and claims of ignorance. Yet mock the name of Jesus Christ and nobody says a word, nobody raises an eyebrow.

In the Lord's prayer we see what the purpose of this commandment is: God wants us to hallow, or honor as holy, the majesty of His name. We should never say the name of God disdainfully or irreverently.

### Commandment #4

12 'Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, as the LORD your God commanded you. 13 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 14 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your ox, nor your donkey, nor any of your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, that your male servant and your female servant may rest as well as you. Remember the Israelites just spent 400 years as slaves to the Egyptians. These guys didn't have a day off in 400 years!

Now if you've been with us in our studies of the gospels, we see that Scripture makes it clear that under the New Covenant, no one is under obligation to observe the Sabbath. Galatians 4 tells us that Christians are not bound to observe days and months and seasons and years.

The rest we enter into as Christians is something to experience every day, not just one day a week – the rest in knowing we don't have to work to save ourselves, but our salvation is accomplished in Jesus.

I believe these verses also point to the evidence of a literal 6-day creation. God ceased from His creation activity on the seventh day back in Genesis chapter 2. If the miracle of creation was not finished within six literal twenty-four-hour days, then there is no foundation for commanding or keeping the sabbath.

15 And remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.” The 1<sup>st</sup> 4 commands of the 10 commandments emphasize a person's relationship with God. The last 6 commands emphasize a person's relationship with other people.

16 'Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be long, and that it may be well with you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you. The 5<sup>th</sup> commandment is very unique. It's the only one with a promise attached to it!

If a child won't honor their parent who they can see, how will they ever obey their heavenly father who they can't see?

#6

**17 'You shall not murder.** God alone gives life, so only God has the authority to end life.

Yet scripture clearly indicates that fighting in the military does not make one a murderer. Several times in scripture God commands war against His enemies.

The Bible also doesn't classify capital punishment as murder. In fact, God mandated capital punishment back in Genesis 9:6.

Now most of us would say I'm not guilty of breaking this commandment, I'm no murderer. But look at what Jesus said **Matthew 5 21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder,[fn] and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause[fn] shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire.**

Jesus emphasized it's not just the physical acts, but the condition of the heart that violate God's commands.

**18 'You shall not commit adultery.** Sex outside of the marriage covenant is a violation of the seventh commandment.

And just as it's possible to commit murder in your heart – in the same way we can commit adultery. Jesus said in **Matthew 5:27 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."** Always remember the adage: "Adultery begins in the head long before it ends in the bed."

**19 'You shall not steal.** To steal is to take something that belongs to another person without their permission. This includes

everything from burglary to shoplifting to employee theft to even music and software piracy - and even stealing from God which Malachi 3 talks about specifically.

#9

20 'You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. The ninth command instructs us to be truth tellers – to be men and women of our word.

If I can't trust what you say, and you can't trust what I say, then it's impossible for us to have a meaningful relationship.

The 10<sup>th</sup> commandment....

21 'You shall not covet your neighbor's wife; and you shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, his male servant, his female servant, his ox, his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.' There's nothing wrong with wanting nice things The Bible teaches us that God "gives us richly all things to enjoy" In 1 Timothy 6. But we should be content with what God gives us.

1 Timothy 6:6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.

BTW we read in Romans 7 Paul said it was this commandment that convinced him of his sinfulness

22-33

22 "These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly, in the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and He added no more. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

23 "So it was, when you heard the voice from the midst of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, that you came near to me, all the heads of your tribes and your elders. 24 And you said: 'Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and



His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he still lives.

25 Now therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, then we shall die.”

26 For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? 27 You go near and hear all that the LORD our God may say, and tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do it.’ They’re asking Moses to intercede for them

28 “Then the LORD heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me: ‘I have heard the voice of the words of this people which they have spoken to you. They are right in all that they have spoken. 29 Oh, that they had such a heart in them that they would fear Me and always keep all My commandments, that it might be well with them and with their children forever! 30 Go and say to them, “Return to your tents.” 31 But as for you, stand here by Me, and I will speak to you all the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments which you shall teach them, that they may observe them in the land which I am giving them to possess.’

32 “Therefore you shall be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. 33 You shall walk in all the ways which the LORD your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess. We see the heart of God as chapter 5 ends. He’s full of mercy and grace, and righteousness. God’s desire is that His people would fear Him, and keep His commandments, so that it would be well with them.

## Chapter 6

1-4

1 “Now this is the commandment, and these are the statutes and judgments which the LORD your God has commanded to teach you, that you may observe them in the land which you are crossing over to possess, 2 that you may fear the LORD your God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments which I command you, you and your son and your grandson, all the days of your life, and that your days may be prolonged. 3 Therefore hear, O Israel, and be careful to observe it, that it may be well with you, and that you may multiply greatly as the LORD God of your fathers has promised you—‘a land flowing with milk and honey.’<sup>[fn]</sup>

4 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!<sup>[fn]</sup> The word “hear” in Hebrew is “shema”. This is why Jews call verse 4 “the Great Shema”. The Shema is the Jewish creed, their declaration of faith.

Remember every culture around them were polytheistic, which simply means worshipping many Gods. Yet the Shema declared the monotheistic nature of God, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!"

But the Shema holds an even a deeper revelation. The word translated “one” is the Hebrew word “echad”, which speaks of a compound unity. When the rabbis explain the word “echad” they hold up one fist, then point out that this one fist is also made up of five fingers – it’s a compound unity. This is a beautiful way to describe the Trinity. God is a compound unity. He is one God, who exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. In Mark 12 one of the Jewish

scribes came to Jesus, testing Him... "Which is the greatest commandment?" Jesus quoted him this verse.

According to Jesus, Deuteronomy 6:5 is the greatest of all the commandments. We're to love God with all we've got. We're to love Him passionately!

Do you fervently love God with all you've got? If not confess it to Him, and make Him the priority of your life!

And parents, we're to pass on our passion for God to our children. Verse 6-7

6 "And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. Too many Christians today send their kids to youth groups or children's ministry as though that's the only necessary teaching their kids need to receive about God. Not so!!

Moms and Dads, Grandma's and grandpa's- are we following Gods instructions here? God should be the center of our conversations-is He the center of yours?

Here's a question to ponder this week. What subject is talked about most in your household? Maybe it's school, or sports, or Covid or politics. Or is it God? If it's not God, your family is missing out, but you can change that today!!

" 8 You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. **SHOW PIC 1** The Jews literally had boxes, or phylacteries, which were worn on their head or on their wrists containing this verse, the Shema. **CLOSE PIC 1**

9 You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. **SHOW PIC 2** The mezuzah is a box containing the Shema, attached near the front door of one's house.

Now the Jews took verses 8-9 literally, but God's intent was that His Word be written in the fabric of their homes and minds.

**CLOSE PIC 2**

10 "So it shall be, when the LORD your God brings you into the land of which He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give you large and beautiful cities which you did not build, 11 houses full of all good things, which you did not fill, hewn-out wells which you did not dig, vineyards and olive trees which you did not plant—when you have eaten and are full—  
Pause here. All their blessings are unearned and undeserved. This is what we experience in Christ.

Now look at the warning

12 then (when you get all of these blessings by God's grace) beware, lest you forget the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. " it's sad how prosperity can hinder the believer. Things start going well, and we shift our focus to the blessings, and not the Lord who blesses us. Quickly bible reading can take a back seat, and prayer becomes a luxury, not a necessity when we're experiencing God's grace.

We need to remember what God has done.

13 You shall fear the LORD your God and serve Him, and shall take oaths in His name. Jesus tells us in Matthew 5 not to take oaths in His name, so is this verse a contradiction? Not at all—the most common oath we take in His name is our marriage vows.

14 You shall not go after other gods, the gods of the peoples who are all around you 15 (for the LORD your God is a jealous God

among you), lest the anger of the LORD your God be aroused against you and destroy you from the face of the earth.

16 “You shall not tempt the LORD your God as you tempted Him in Massah. What happened in Massah? Exodus 17:2 Therefore the people contended with Moses, and said, “Give us water, that we may drink.” So Moses said to them, “Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the LORD?”

Israel tempted the LORD by doubting His love and concern for them. The people cried out and complained they had no water, and God had Moses strike the rock, and water gushed out.

Anytime we deny God's love for us, or demand He do something for us, we are testing Him as if He must answer to our standards, and tempting Him to judge us.

This is the passage of Scripture which Jesus quoted back to Satan in the wilderness, when Satan told Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the temple in Matthew 4.

17 You shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, His testimonies, and His statutes which He has commanded you. 18 And you shall do what is right and good in the sight of the LORD, that it may be well with you, and that you may go in and possess the good land of which the LORD swore to your fathers, 19 to cast out all your enemies from before you, as the LORD has spoken. Under the Old Covenant, Israel's blessing was based on their obedience. When they obeyed, they would be blessed; when they disobeyed, they would be cursed.

This is not the source of blessing in the New Covenant. In the New Covenant, we are blessed by faith in Jesus, since He fulfills the law in our place.

But this does NOT mean that our disobedience to God doesn't have consequences.

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life

20-23

20 "When your son asks you in time to come, saying, 'What is the meaning of the testimonies, the statutes, and the judgments which the LORD our God has commanded you?' 21 then you shall say to your son: 'We were slaves of Pharaoh in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand; 22 and the LORD showed signs and wonders before our eyes, great and severe, against Egypt, Pharaoh, and all his household.

23 Then He brought us out from there, that He might bring us in, to give us the land of which He swore to our fathers. Verse 23 is one of the most important verses in the Bible. God always brings us out, so that He can bring us in. Just as the Israelites had to go to battle, so do we in this world in which we live!

24 And the LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes, to fear the LORD our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is this day. 25 Then it will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to observe all these commandments before the LORD our God, as He has commanded us.' Following God's commands aren't a drag. Following God's instructions isn't suffocating.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.