

God's Law - Part One



Day 1

Sermon Sentence: God does not want you to just see the mountain; He wants you to climb it and experience true life like you could never imagine!

Exodus 20:1

And God spake all these words....

The Ten Commandments are probably the most well known part of the covenant given at Sinai. The Jews refer to them as the "10 Words" and believe that they were given on two tablets of stone. Most agree that logically the first four commandments that dealt with our relationship to God were on one tablet and the remaining six that were instructions for human conduct were on the other. However this is left to speculation and more important is to understand what man was receiving. These Ten Commandments reflect the very character of God and instruct man how to draw closer to God by remaining in His will for our lives.

- If we look back to the Garden and the instruction given to Adam, why do you think God told him not to eat of the Tree of Knowledge? Why was it preferable to God to have Adam living in the blissful state of innocence than to have knowledge of right and wrong? (Genesis 2:15)
- The Devil knew the destructive effect this knowledge would have on the relationship between God and man. What did this knowledge force God to do and what part of God's character could not be ignored because of this knowledge? (Genesis 3:4-5)
- In the period of time between Adam and Moses, God had not given a full revelation of His laws. Why? How did men conduct themselves during those years and what was the most significant event that happened as a result? (Genesis 6:11)
- What is the purpose of the Law and why should it be considered a gift to man rather than grievous? (Psalms 119:47 & Galatians 3:24)

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Day 2

Sermon Sentence: God does not want you to just see the mountain; He wants you to climb it and experience true life like you could never imagine!

Exodus 20:20

The Israelites don't know it yet but God's intention is to live with them! God is giving the Israelites instructions that tell them how to act. These rules and regulations were designed to keep the Israelites under a covenant agreement that would facilitate God residing with them (although still separated by barriers) and keep them safe from being destroyed by His holiness. Imagine a situation in which you are living with a roommate. It is not very often two people live together that are perfectly matched, rather most times you have a detail oriented person and a free spirit or a slob and a neat freak. Whatever the match, we don't often see ourselves as the problem no matter what our own characteristics bring to the relationship. Now imagine that roommate is God, and no matter what He is perfect in all things and one mistake could literally cause you to be destroyed by that perfection! Look at Exodus 19:18 & Exodus 20:18 to understand the fear of the Israelites in the presence of Holy God!

- Comparing Adam's walk with God to how Moses has to approach, can you imagine how it must grieve the heart of God to be separated from His creation by sin? Giving the law to man is intended to illuminate sin and help man to move away from it. Do laws always have this intended effect or just bring condemnation after the fact? (think about speed limits)
- God's covenant offered forbearance for sin (Romans 3:25), allowing a repentant heart to remain in His presence (even though the sin had not been punished) through ceremonial offerings mostly requiring the death of animals and application of the blood to the altar. Since the shedding of animal blood cannot actually remove sin, what allowed God to do this and still satisfy His just nature? What happened to the Israelites when they turned from this repentance and faithfulness to His covenant?
- How were the people under this covenant saved vs. people under the New Covenant? (Trick question! Ephesians 2:8)
- What shadows from this covenant are important for us to understand in our Christian walk under the New Covenant?

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Day 3

Sermon Sentence: God does not want you to just see the mountain; He wants you to climb it and experience true life like you could never imagine!

Exodus 20:3-7

The First Tablet

The first four commandments are relating to man's relationship with God. God expects man to serve Him and Him only. He will not tolerate the glory He is due to be given to another (idols), and since in reality there are no other gods you can see why this angers God so much! God does not want His name used to swear on oaths, be used to curse others, made into a joke or used as a cuss word.

- What does have no other god's before me mean to you? Do you only think of man made false gods or do you believe that this also includes other aspects of life? Explain and give examples.
- What is the second commandment warning us not to do and why? What is the danger of creating images?
- Why does God describe himself as a Jealous God? What does this concept of godly jealousy mean to you compared to sinful jealousy expressed by man? Why is God's jealousy justified and human jealousy a sin?
- What do we do to the name of God when we use His name in vain? Why should we always venerate God's name as part of our witness?
- How does it make you feel when yourself or others take the name of the Lord in vain? Do you feel convicted by the Spirit when this happens?

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Day 4

Sermon Sentence: God does not want you to just see the mountain; He wants you to climb it and experience true life like you could never imagine!

Exodus 20:8-11

The First Tablet cont.

Finally the fourth commandment concerns the Sabbath and is probably the most controversial of the commandments. The fourth commandment was given for two reasons, one as a mercy to man and offer him a rest each week from the toils of the curse he is under because of the fall and two by reminding the man to always seek to enter into God's eternal rest the same as God entered after creation. Hebrews chapter 4 explains that Christ is the reality of the ceremonial Sabbath given to the Israelites and is further explained by Paul in Colossians 2:14-17. Romans 14:5 leaves it up to the conscience of the believer to determine what day or days to set apart.

- The ceremonial Sabbath ordinances concerning the weekly Sabbath and the High Sabbaths were part of a covenant between Israel and God, this like many of the feasts and ceremonies found in the OC was a shadow pointing to the eternal reality of Jesus Christ. Why is Jesus said to be the realization of the Sabbath? Compare Hebrews 4 with Matthew 11:28.
- Various sects of believers claim different things about the Sabbath Commandment, some claiming that we are still expected to keep the Fourth Commandment on Saturday as a complete day of rest. What do you believe from the scriptures above? Why are we told not to argue about these things or cause division? (Colossians 2:14-17)
- The other purpose of the Fourth Commandment was to give man rest from toil each week. What are your thoughts on this and is this still a good idea for us today?

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Day 5

Sermon Sentence: God does not want you to just see the mountain; He wants you to climb it and experience true life like you could never imagine!

Life Application:

Exodus 20:18-21

In many ways these scriptures are an illustration of life. While God is calling, the majority of the people remain in place, expecting others to bring God to them. Only a few conquer their fear and climb the mountain attempting to get closer to God.

- What does God take a backseat to in our lives?
- What are we not surrendering to God fully?
- What does our actions say about our hearts?
 - ◆ The heart drives our words and actions.
 - ◆ Not to be considered a waste.
- What are we busying ourselves with that we can't take time for God?

By pondering God's law we can gain a greater understanding of who God is and start to move closer. Conversely, if we see God's Holiness and reject His law, we will remain far off and afraid to approach. We have been forgiven by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, this means we can boldly approach God without fear because we are covered by the righteousness of Christ. Jesus knows our weaknesses having experienced every temptation of man but having not sinned and mediates on our behalf for our sin. (Hebrews 2:18)

- So the question is, are you an Israelite remaining far off or a Moses climbing the mountain? If you fear, look over the points above and try to determine what you are holding onto that is preventing you from moving closer. If you are climbing, excellent! Think of ways that you can draw even closer and take the next steps to fully surrender to God's will for your lives.