

Ten Points on the Ten Commandments

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[0:00] I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything, in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me.

But showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but on the seventh day, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.

On it you shall not do any work, neither you nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day.

[1:23] Therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God has given you.

You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain and smoke, they trembled with fear.

They stayed at a distance and said to Moses, speak to us yourself and we will listen, but do not have God speak to us or we will die. Moses said to the people, do not be afraid.

[2:25] God has come to test you so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning. The people remained at a distance while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.

Thirty five hundred years ago, the Lord audibly spoke the Ten Commandments to the trembling Israelites at the foot of Mount Sinai. And then he handed a copy of those Ten Commandments that he had inscribed with his own finger to Moses.

Four weeks ago, a six foot granite monument of the Ten Commandments was erected on the Capitol grounds of Arkansas. It was paid for by private donations.

It was approved by the state legislature. And yet early the next morning, a 32-year-old man crashed his car into the monument, shattering it into pieces. Just before impact, he shouted, freedom!

That's a metaphor on life in the world, isn't it? His freedom ride landed him behind bars. That's just the latest battle in the war over the Ten Commandments that's been raging in our nation for the past several decades in a very public manner.

- [3 : 47] The debate continues over the meaning of the Religious Establishment Clause and the First Amendment to our Constitution. And without belittling the importance of that debate for our country's future, a far more important battle being waged today is whether we as individuals will submit our lives to those Ten Commandments and be governed by God.
- We saw last week in Psalm 2 that all the nations together are conspiring against God and his anointed king. And the very point of contention are his commandments, which they view as chains and handcuffs to be broken and to be thrown off, to be done with, to be out from under God's authority over them.
- Well, at the end of the day then, what really will matter for you is not whether the Ten Commandments are on display in the county courthouse, but whether you know the Savior of lawbreakers and whether those commandments have been written on your heart by the Holy Spirit and are being displayed in your life.
- There is so much confusion, both inside and outside of the church, on this whole matter of keeping God's commands, that before we launch into a study of the Ten Commandments themselves, I want to give some important introductory teaching on you and God's commands.
- And the first thing I want to do this morning is to point out two very serious errors about obeying God's commands. Indeed, they are damning delusions, taking millions to hell.
- [5 : 37] They are lies from the devil. And the first lie is simply this. You can be saved by your law keeping. You can be saved by your law keeping.
- Now, this idea comes quite naturally to human nature. It's almost like it's written into the DNA of fallen sinful man to believe that somehow salvation depends on what I do.
- That's the way that seems right to a man, but ends in destruction. All the world religions, with only the exception of the religion of the Bible, teaches that you save yourself.
- It's something that you do yourself to make yourself right with whatever the God, whatever the situation is. You are the one who, by your own efforts, brings yourself to peace, to nirvana, to heaven, whatever.
- And that view has found its way right into the Christian church itself. Researcher George Barna found that 50% of those who call themselves born-again Christians believe that a life of good works will enable a person to get to heaven.
- [6 : 53] That good works are as a ladder by which we ascend into a right relationship with God. We earn that salvation by keeping God's commandments.
- Now, of course, this is nothing new. It's the lie that was predominant in the church back in the 1500s, when 500 years ago the Protestant Reformation was God's work of reviving the true gospel on the earth.
- And Martin Luther and John Calvin and hundreds of others preached again the truth of the gospel, that we are saved by grace through faith, and that is not of yourselves.
- It is the gift of God, not of works, so that no one can boast. And, of course, it was the prevailing idea in Israel 2,000 years ago, held by the religious leaders of the day, the Jews, the Jewish scribes and Pharisees and the chief priests.
- They, too, were teaching salvation by keeping the law. And Christ and his apostles exposed and condemned that as the lie that it is.
- [8 : 07] The Bible gives no support for this legalism, either in the Old Testament or in the New. The apostle Paul tells us that he once believed this lie, but then his eyes were opened to salvation by grace alone in Christ alone.
- That no one, and this is what he writes in Romans 3, 20, no one will ever be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law. And again, in Galatians 2, 21, he asks the question that I've yet to hear an answer for.

If righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing. If you could be declared righteous on the basis of your obeying the law, then why has Jesus died the death that he died under God's wrath?

Was that all in vain? Was that just a waste? God forbid. He would not have put his son through the torments of the cross if it was not necessary, since after all, in the end, you just need to work a little harder at keeping God's commands.

No, that substitutionary death was the death that every one of us lawbreakers should have had and that Christ bore in the place of those who repent and believe in him.

[9:31] Well, this then is no small mistake to make, to think that you can be right with God by your obedience to God's commands. Galatians 3, 10 says, All who rely on observing the law are under a curse.

So if you hold to this view, and I don't mean necessarily just theoretically, even practically, it's amazing how many people in churches that preach the gospel still, practically speaking, if you press, you find that their weight is leaning on what they've done, rather than on Christ alone.

And if you hold to this view, you're under a curse. Galatians 3, 10, All who rely on observing the law are under a curse. For it's written, Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the book of the law.

So if you're relying on your obedience to God's commands, you better be really good at it. In fact, you better be perfect at it. You must obey everything that His law commands, and always continue to obey.

No slip-ups, no bad days, no exceptions. The very next verse says, Clearly, no one is justified before God by the law.

[10:48] That's just evident, isn't it? Nobody's that good. No, we're justified by faith in Jesus Christ. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law.

Yes, we're all under the curse for breaking the law, and Christ redeemed us, that is, those who trust in Him, from the curse of the law, by becoming a curse for us, as it's written, Cursed is everyone who is hanged upon a tree.

So, you know your Bibles, folks. You know how much the apostles and Jesus and even the prophets of the Old Testament are forever driving people away from resting on their own doings for salvation.

That we wonder, how is it that professing Christians could ever say, actually think that this is the way to be right with God? And surely it shows to us that we have a whole host of professing Christians that don't know this book.

They don't know what the Bible says. They don't know the true gospel, though they sit and sing the very hymns that we sang this morning. I'm going to say an awful lot in this series for obeying commandments, because the Bible does.

[12:02] But I want to start by saying, don't ever trust in your obedience to the commandments to make yourself right with God. Well, that's only one error to avoid in the matter of obedience to God's commands.

There's another error just as damning as the first. And according to Jesus, there are many in the church and professing Christendom who believe it. And it's this teaching that you can be saved without repenting of your law breaking.

You can be saved without repenting of your law breaking. You know, there's a lot of people in the world who want to be saved from hell that don't want to be saved from sin.

I want to say that again. There are many, many people in the world and in churches today who want to be saved from hell that don't want to be saved from sin. In other words, they want heaven and their sins too.

But Jesus never offered that to any man or woman. No. In fact, his name is called Jesus. Why? Because he will save his people from their sins.

[13:13] Not just from the penalty of sin. He will save his people from their sins. Particular ways that they break God's law. Jesus saves his people from law breaking to a life, a new life in Christ of law keeping.

Now, sadly, commandment keeping is out of style with many professing Christians today and even among many who would call themselves grace preachers.

They would cry, we're not under law but under grace and then they would twist that verse to mean I don't have an obligation to keep God's commands anymore. You see, Jesus obeyed the commands for me so I don't need to be concerned about obeying myself.

Jesus' blood covers all my law breaking so that's not a problem for me. He's taking care of it. To all such devilish logic, Jesus says, unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

He says it twice. None are saved who don't repent of their law breaking. Who don't renounce it as a thing of the past and turn to follow Christ walking in his ways.

[14:28] commandment keeping. That's legalism. No, it's not. Listen to what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 7, 19.

Circumcision is nothing. Uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts. 1 Corinthians 7, 19.

You see, carefulness to keep God's commands is not legalism. It's rather a characteristic mark of all whom Jesus has freely saved by His grace. So that Hebrews 5, 9 is able to say that Jesus Christ became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey Him.

doesn't say that's how they got saved by their obeying Him. No, that's the mark of those whom He saves by His grace.

How will you know them? They are the ones that obey Him. Hebrews 5, 9. James says the same thing, doesn't he? He says it's true that we're saved by grace through faith and not by our works, but the proof of true saving faith is that it works.

[15:43] It obeys God's commandments. Otherwise, it's dead faith. It's useless faith. It's the faith that the devils have. No, a faith that works.

That's how you know. That's how you can know for sure that you belong to the family of God because you're not just a hearer of the Word. You're a doer and that marks you out as different as one who has the Spirit of God within you.

Jesus said, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, not everybody who professes me to be their Lord and Savior will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but only he who what?

Does the will of my Father in heaven. And what is the will of the Father in heaven? It is that we keep His commandments. That's the mark of all those who know Christ, who have received salvation as a free gift through His work, His obedience, not their own.

And so, Jesus says that He will say to many religious people in the last day who will be saying, but Lord, we preached in Your name. We did many wonderful things in Your name and He will say, depart from me.

[17:01] I never knew you. You workers of iniquity. You lawbreakers. You showed Your true character by what You did to my laws.

So, if you're thinking this morning, again, you may be saying, I'm so far from trusting in my own good works. No, I don't do any of that. But you might be clear over in this ditch and saying, well, I'm going to pick and choose which of God's commands I will obey and I'm still going to be a child of God.

You're deceiving yourself. Now, all real children of God show their family pedigree by a life of obedience to God's commands because Jesus always saves His people from a life of law-breaking to a new life in Christ, which is a life of law-keeping.

Some make too much of the law and trust in it to save them. Others make too little of the law and think themselves saved without it. The devil doesn't care which ditch he's got you in because he's got you either way.

So there we have the two serious errors to avoid about law-keeping. Those are the two lies. I want to give you ten truths now, ten points about the Ten Commandments.

[18:16] We're only going to get the first five this morning. Lord willing, we'll cover the other five next week. And what we see as we come to the Scriptures is that as we study the Ten Commandments, we're doing a lot of other things at the same time.

And I want to show you ten things that we'll be doing as we study the Ten Commandments. First of all, as we study the Ten Commandments, we're learning the moral character of God.

The moral character of God. His commandments are a mirror that reflects God and His nature, His moral nature, His moral character.

If I had a mirror up here, kids, and I held it in an angle, and I would see in that mirror this piano over here.

It's a real piano. And I would see a reflection of it in the mirror. Well, God's commandments are a mirror that reflect to us the holy nature of God.

[19:19] What is God like? We see it reflected in His law. In other words, His laws aren't arbitrary. They're not unrelated to Him.

He doesn't just say stand on your head for ten seconds every morning. No, there's always a connection between the law and the God of the law. It reflects His character.

So, for instance, we find in Romans chapter 7 and verse 12 that the commandments are holy, righteous, and good.

The commandments, God's law, they are holy, righteous, and good. And by the way, God Himself is holy, righteous, and good, isn't He?

Is that just a coincidence? No, not at all. It's that the law is reflecting the God who is, who's commanding. His nature is holy, righteous, and good.

[20:21] And so, we shouldn't be surprised that when we study the commandments, we find them to be holy, righteous, and good. Because in studying them, we're studying the moral character of God.

The one who gives us these commandments is holy. And He commands us to be holy because He is holy. and His commandments spell out what that holiness is.

So to obey His commandments is to become more like Him, more like His moral likeness. And that's why you've probably heard us speak of the Ten Commandments as being moral absolutes.

They're not, well, this is right in some situations, in some ages, and with some people. No, when something's a moral absolute, it's always right, or it's always wrong.

So coveting is wrong. It's wrong on Monday. It's wrong on Tuesday. It's wrong on Sunday. It's always wrong. And so it is with honoring your parents. It's always right.

[21:24] It's right on Mother's Day. It's right on Father's Day. It's right today. It's a moral absolute. And that's because it's based on the God who gives the command.

His moral character. Now, whenever Christians erect monuments to the Ten Commandments, there's always people that come out of the woodwork to kick against the rock, aren't there? Some do it with their cars, others with their commentary.

Roy Speckert does it with his commentary. Let me read. It's time religious and political crusaders wake up to the fact that the Ten Commandments were written in ancient times.

And as such, they reflect ancient values that are largely obsolete in the modern age. The Ten Commandments are simply outdated.

They should be shelved for something better. Well, Roy, you can't get better than God. You can't improve on God's moral character. And that's what the moral law of God is.

[22 : 25] It's the reflection of God's perfection. This is the way holiness acts in human form. God's nature is reflected in the creatures that he's made.

You see, if the values of the Ten Commandments are outdated, if they are out of step with the values of the modern age, it only proves how far men have fallen from the image of God.

How far they've got in their rebellion against him. You see, because God's moral laws never change to keep up with the changes of men. His commands aren't anchored to changeable men or the changing times.

They're anchored to the unchanging God. So however old they are, they remain absolute. So as we work our way through the Ten Commandments, if you think, wow, these are demanding, well, don't forget what they are reflecting.

They're reflecting the moral character of God. that's something awesomely high. Secondly, when we study the Ten Commandments, we're learning our duty to this God.

[23 : 42] Our duty to God. Not only are we learning about God, what he's like, but we're also learning what we owe him. Our duty. In Ecclesiastes chapter 12 and verse 13, it's 12 chapters that the wise man has gone on giving us counsel and lessons on life.

And now he comes to the end and here's his conclusion. Now all has been heard. Here is the conclusion of the matter. Fear God and keep his commandments for this is the whole duty of man.

The commandments. Spell out your duty to God, your obligation to him, what you owe to him as your maker and king. So the Ten Commandments are spelling out for us our duties to our God.

And as someone has noted, these are not ten suggestions, they are ten commandments. And a commandment is a word of authority, isn't it? A commandment comes to us with the authority of the person giving it.

So kids, if your little sister comes up to you and says, you better go clean your room, you don't need to really worry about that too much, do you? Because she's not in authority over you.

[25 : 01] But if she comes and says, mom says, go clean your room, now that's a different matter because mom does have authority to command you. And when God says to you, you shall not lie, that comes to you with his authority over you.

And now your duty to him is to fall under his authority and to render obedience to that commandment. He speaks with all the authority of heaven and earth behind his commandments and his commands spell out then what we owe to him.

These commands, these ten commands are what we as his creature owe to our creator. It's part of the honor that we owe to him. And this duty is rooted in creation.

It's because he made us that he has authority to command us. And that duty is only increased by redemption. You see, sometimes we hear Christians say, well, I've been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb so I don't need to worry about commandment keeping.

No, the blood of Jesus doesn't take away your duty to obey God. It only increases it. I mean, if you owe God obedience just because he's your creator, how much more do you owe him obedience because he's bought you with his own blood?

[26:31] You're not your own, you're his. Therefore, glorify God in your body. So, we shouldn't think, well, because I'm a redeemed one, therefore I don't have any more duties or obligations.

We just read it in Exodus chapter 20, didn't we? I'm the God who redeemed you from Egypt. Therefore, have no other gods and the Ten Commandments follow.

Because I've redeemed you, obey these commandments, you see. So, redemption doesn't lessen our obligation to God to keep his commandments. It's just, it enforces it all the more, infinitely more.

The blood of Jesus has been shed. How much more should we love him and keep his commandments? If that which was foreshadowed in Israel being redeemed from Egypt is true, how much more are we who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb?

Thirdly, when we study the Ten Commandments, we're not only learning about the moral character of God and about our duty to him, but thirdly, we are learning a summary of God's moral law.

[27:42] A summary of God's moral law. You know, there are over 600 commandments in the Bible and some of them were temporary laws for Israel, for the Jews, until the coming of Christ.

Such were the ceremonial laws. They deal with the worship of God in the temple, the priesthood, the sacrifices, the clean and unclean laws. These were laws that pointed forward to the coming of Christ who by his death on the cross would make one final sacrifice for sin that would accomplish the business of saving sinners eternally.

And so when he came, all those temporary laws about priests and sacrifices that were given, they were abrogated, they were finished. The book of Hebrews makes that clear for us.

So some of the 600 plus laws were ceremonial laws. Others were judicial laws that dealt with the political nation of Israel. Old Testament Israel was the one and only nation that God chose out of all the nations to be in special relationship with him where he was their God and they were his people.

And so he gave them judicial laws so that they could know how to govern themselves as this political, religious nation under God. One nation literally under God.

[29:04] who was their king. And so there were laws of if someone breaks this commandment, this is the punishment that's to be meted out and how they set up judges and kings and all the rest that was connected to this particular nation of Israel.

But there is no more political nation that is the nation of God. We, 1 Peter 2 says, we, the people of God, the chosen ones of God are now the nation, the holy nation.

So those laws, though they have general principles of righteousness that our nation would be wise to listen to, they no longer are laws to the governments that they must set up a government as if they were Israel of old.

They aren't Israel of old. They can learn principles, but those commandments too, the judicial, the ceremonial laws, they fulfilled their purpose. But there are a third set of laws in the Bible that are moral laws.

And that means they're not tied to any people, any one nation, any period of time. But they set forth what man as man owes to God his creator, how he's to treat his fellow man.

[30:23] And so these laws are timeless. And they apply to all people and all nations at all times. Now there are many of these moral commands in the Bible, but God summarizes them for us in the Ten Commandments.

Kids, do you know what a summary is? So there's a very long story, and you might just have a summary of that story. It just tells the high points, just the main points.

It's a summary of the whole story. So 50 gallons of sap from a maple tree can be boiled down into one gallon of maple syrup.

It's a condensed form of those 50 gallons. Put all of God's moral commands, if you will, onto the kettle, into the kettle and boil them down.

And they could come down to these Ten Commandments. Jesus says that you could put them back on the stove and boil them down even further to two commandments, to loving God with all your heart and loving your neighbor as yourself.

[31 : 29] A summary of the law. So in these Ten Commandments, we're learning the summary of our moral duty to God. Now that's what we find when we come to the New Testament, that the New Testament writers refer to the, when they refer to the law of God, they often take us to this summary of the Ten Commandments.

So we have Jesus, his kingdom sermon, the Sermon on the Mount in which he's saying, here's what my citizens look like. And here's the righteousness of their lives.

And he sends them, sends us right away to the sixth and seventh commandment. You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery. And he clears away all the filth and the wrong teaching of the Pharisees and scribes of what they said that means.

And he gets right back to what God meant on Mount Sinai. And they found out that God's commandments are a whole lot broader in their application than what they thought. Jesus says, my kingdom is built upon the righteousness of God's character.

And that's expressed in his law. Namely, his Ten Commandments. So in Mark 7, when Jesus is showing the scribes and Pharisees how they had set aside the commandments of God for their own traditions, he cites the fifth commandment.

[32 : 52] And he shows them what they'd done to the command to honor father and mother. You've set that aside and set up your own traditions. And when he's talking to the rich young ruler in Matthew 19, and Jesus is pressing this man with his duty to his creator, he speaks of his duty to obey the commandments, and the man says, which one?

Jesus takes them right away to the summary of God's law and cites to him the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, and fifth commandments. Clearly for Jesus, the Ten Commandments summarize God's moral law for man.

It's true of the Apostle Paul. When speaking of the moral law and man's duty to his neighbor, he quotes from the Ten Commandments. He says that love fulfills the law.

But then he talks, he spells out, what law does love fulfill? Well, it fulfills the seventh and sixth and eighth and tenth commandment and any other commandment there may be. Paul sees the Ten Words as a summary of the law.

And even though he's writing to the church at Ephesus, made up chiefly of Gentiles, he still tells children to obey their parents, and he cites the fifth commandment as the end of all argument.

[34 : 06] The reason that I tell you children to obey your parents is because the fifth commandment, the first commandment with a promise says, honor your father and mother. For Paul, the summary of the Ten Commandments, the Ten Commandments summarized man's moral obligation to God.

And it was the same for the Apostle James. James chapter 2, he says, whoever keeps the whole law and yet offends in just one point, he's guilty of breaking it all.

What law are you talking about, James? For he who said, do not commit adultery, also said, do not murder. Now, if you commit no adultery, yet if you murder, you are convicted of the law as a lawbreaker.

Again, the Ten Words are a summary of God's moral law. Two more. Number four, as we study the Ten Commandments, we are learning of our own sinfulness and need for a Savior.

Paul said it in Romans 3.20, through the law is the knowledge of sin. Through the law. How do you become aware, conscious of your sin?

[35 : 16] Paul says, through the law. That's the instrument the Holy Spirit uses in bringing conviction of sin. The instrument of the law. And what is sin?

It's everyone who breaks the law. Everyone who sins breaks the law. That's what sin is. It's law breaking. And so God's commands reveal God's standard of righteousness.

This is what God requires. Every one of his commandments is a requirement. This is what's right. There it stands. And something happens whenever we come into contact with God's law.

Whenever we're brought in close to that law, it judges us, doesn't it? And it shows us whether or not we've measured up or whether we've come short from the glory of God's holiness and actually sin.

And that coming short is sin. It's breaking the law. Now, kids, I know you're aware that some of the rides at amusement parks have a minimum requirement for how high you must be.

[36 : 25] So, for instance, at Six Flags Great America, you'll not get on the Batman ride unless you are 54 inches tall. Well, how do they do that? How do they determine all these thousands of kids coming through there every day?

Who gets on the ride and who does? Well, they've got a mark. There it is, 54 inches. It doesn't budge. It doesn't go up or down for you or anybody else.

It's just there. There it is, 54 inches. And whenever somebody gets up close to that mark, it shows right away whether or not you measure up.

Now, you may never have even thought of how tall you are. You may never know. You may have never known that you were 54 inches tall. But as soon as you step up beside that mark, you know whether you're 54 inches or not.

God's commandments are His marks, you see, His requirements. This is what's right. This is what's right in my eyes. This is what God requires. And as those commandments are preached, as they're opened up and explained, as they're proven to be much broader than just some outward obedience but that they make demands upon us that are far wider than we've ever thought, it becomes obvious if we've sinned against them.

[37 : 47] If we've come short of God's holiness. That's what sin is. It's not measuring up to God's standard.

The law exposes our sin. It shows us how far we come short. And oh, how we need this work of God in our hearts because the world is lying to us.

It's saying, you're okay, I'm okay, we're all okay. The devil's lying to you. You're not as bad as her. Come on, you go to church. Come on, you pray, you read your Bible.

And worst of all, we lie to ourselves. We deceive ourselves. I think I'm good to go. I'm good with God. But the mark doesn't lie.

As we come up to that mark, we see the truth. All shades upon the truth fall away. There it is. I either measure it or I don't.

[38 : 45] That's the gracious work of God through the law. Through the law is the knowledge of sin so that the apostle Paul says, in fact, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law.

Romans 7, 7. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, do not covet. And so Paul says, you know, it was the law that showed me my sin.

I thought I was pretty righteous. And then I bumped into that commandment that says, you shall not covet. We're not talking about some outward deed and word. We're talking about something that happens in the heart.

And Paul says, my heart was searched and I thought I was doing fine and then I saw myself. Why? Because of the law. I stood beside it and I was found wanting.

The law shows us our sin. It's like an MRI machine. Don't you just hate the guy that invented the MRI machine? I mean, all it does is takes pictures of those nasty diseases inside of people's bodies.

[39 : 57] Can you think of a more despicable machine? It's never healed anybody. You say, no, no, I don't hate that guy and I'm actually thankful for his machine. Granted, it doesn't heal the diseases.

It does discover and expose those inward hidden diseases in order that once known they might be treated and good health restored to the sick person.

Is that not a blessing? And after all, how many people are dying simply because they don't know about the disease or they find out too late about it? And so it is with the commandments of God.

They search the heart and they detect sin and shortcomings and expose what's inside so that we might see our fatal disease of sin and find a remedy for it before it's too late.

Forever too late. Now, the law is not the remedy. Never claimed to be. It's the MRI machine that finds it.

[40 : 59] There it is. Do you see it? You've come short. This is what's going to judge you. This is what's going to leave you coming short of heaven. This law that you have broken, it condemns us and it gives us no power to obey it.

It's exposing our sin. And I, only heaven will show how many people are dying and going to hell because they don't know.

They don't know that they are the sinners that the Bible's talking about that are under condemnation. it's so crucial that we know the sickness if we're ever to seek a remedy in Christ because it's not the healthy who take chemotherapy.

You're not taking chemo? No. I don't have cancer. That's right. It's not the healthy that take chemotherapy. It's not the healthy that go to the doctor. They don't seek out doctors.

It's the sick and those who know they are sick. In the same way, none will seek out the great physician to save them from their sin until they know that they are the sinners that Christ came to save.

[42 : 18] they must first see their sin their loss their condemned and desperate need of the Savior. What a kind work of God the Holy Spirit to take up this instrument of the commandments and to shove it home to our hearts like a spear.

Yesterday, we visited the grave of my brother Rob down in Indianapolis and it brought back memories of the months before his death as he knew it was coming due to pancreatic cancer and he was giving me instructions for preaching his funeral message and he said, John, there will be a lot of people at my funeral and I can tell you this, most of them don't even know they're lost let alone how to be saved.

so you must get them lost and then show them the way to be saved all in the same message. You've got one shot at it. And he pressed that home to me.

You see, Rob understood something. He spent many years himself thinking well of himself but in the far country of sin and yet he had done something when he was earlier younger in life and always hanging his hat on that and as long as he did not know himself to be the sinner that he was he yawned at the gospel.

He yawned at Christ. Once God took the law and shoved it home to his heart he saw I'm the sinner. I'm condemned.

[44 : 00] I don't measure up. He saw in the gospel that Jesus Christ does. He measures up. He has offered himself as the savior for sinners.

And then Christ became everything to him. Oh, what a blessed thing to have our sins exposed that we might run to the true remedy for it.

By the law is the knowledge of sin. It shows us how lost we are and that's why we must preach the commandments. why we must preach the law as well as the gospel.

That soul winner Spurgeon said it the law is the sharp needle that prepares the way for the threat of the gospel. Next time you pick up a needle ladies you remember the law is that needle that prepares the way for the threat of the gospel.

The law is that bad news that says you've come short. You haven't measured up. And it's preparing the way for the good news. There is one who is the savior for those who haven't measured up.

[45 : 05] The Puritan Thomas Watson says the ten commandments are the first thing the sinner needs to be taught and their daily concern to the very end as a Christian.

John Elliot was an early British missionary to the American Indians who knew nothing of the Bible nothing of the God who's revealed himself in scripture. John Elliot started with creation and the ten commandments.

By the way doesn't the Bible start there? Genesis creation Exodus the ten commandments.

Do you see what Elliot had seen in the Bible? that these Indians need to know that God made them this God of heaven made them therefore he has the right to command them and by the way he has given you ten commandments.

how do you measure up? Oh we've come short and now these American Indians knew nothing before they've learned of a creator that made them to whom they're accountable and he's given these ten words and they expose my heart as sin and now they're ready to hear of a savior who died for lawbreakers and has a righteousness to give.

[46 : 27] Well that's what the law does. That's what we'll be doing as we study this series of the commandments. We'll be learning of our own sinfulness and of our need for a savior.

That's where the apostle Paul starts in his epistle to the Romans when he's exegeting the gospel. First three chapters are all about the law that condemns us and then he brings in the gospel that saves us.

The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. That brings us to our last point for today. When we're studying the ten commandments we're learning how Jesus Christ perfectly meets our need as sinners.

How he perfectly meets our need. Because the law has just shown us that we come short when we come to this law it shows us how perfectly Jesus Christ meets our need.

Because in studying the ten commandments we are learning of the spotless righteousness of Jesus Christ. Christ. And that's what we need to be right with God.

[47 : 32] A perfect record in heaven. And this is the law that Jesus was born under. Jesus is the eternal God and so he's the law giver and yet Galatians four, four and five says in the fullness of time God sent his son born of a woman born under law to redeem those who were under law in becoming man Jesus the law giver who is over the law became under the law with the rest of us.

Why? That he might save us who are under the law. He came under the law. The same law we're under with the same consequences for obeying or disobeying it.

But he came that he might save other law breakers and though he was tempted in every way just as we are. Yet unlike us, he alone could, he alone was without sin.

So in studying the Ten Commandments we're studying the way Jesus lived for 33 years of his life. And children, that means that Jesus was once your age. And he never once dishonored his mother or father in his thoughts of them, his words about them or to them.

His behavior. Never once. It means teenagers that Jesus Christ was once your age. He never once had an impure thought. Never once had a rebellious word, a rebellious act, a covetous desire.

[49 : 09] Men and women, he was once where you are under the law. Under the law. And yet he's the only one of whom the Ten Commandments can say, we find no fault in this man.

We find nothing to charge him. He's done everything we've asked him to do. We've examined him. He stepped up to our mark. And we find nothing wrong.

He never once slipped. He obeyed us perfectly. He alone can say, I do exactly what my father has commanded me. John 14, 31. And so the law was put in charge to lead us to this Savior who has a perfect righteousness, who has kept this law perfectly.

Well, we can say these words so easily, can't we? He was without sin. He was without sin. He was without sin. When I come and study these commandments and I see that they are much broader than what I have thought, that they make demands of my heart, of my thoughts, of my desires, of my will, of my words, of my actions, I suddenly see just how exceedingly broad is God's commands.

And what is this Savior? That he kept it perfectly. And it's that perfect obedience that qualified him to stand in for me on Calvary and take God's wrath.

[50 : 40] And it's that perfect obedience that is put to the account of any sinner, any lawbreaker who casts all of his weight on Jesus to save him.

All this perfect obedience goes to our account. Believers, believers, please don't shy away from the study of God's law, God's commands.

We are studying the perfect righteousness that God has put to our account for Jesus' sake. This is something that ought to endear Jesus to us, ought to make him precious to us when we see just how far these commandments reach and how hard they are for us to obey, to think that our Savior has kept them all and dressed in his righteousness alone.

Faultless, I stand before the throne. So let this study of the Ten Commandments make Jesus precious to you. My friend, how are you and the lawgiver?

How are you and his commandments? How are you and his Savior? Don't make a Savior out of the law. It's never meant to be. It's just an MRI machine showing you why you need this Jesus.

[51 : 59] He's kept it. Run to him. It's meant to lead you to Christ. The law is meant to lead you to Christ. Is it leading you to him? Are you following it? That's what it's doing.

That's what God is saying to you. Turn away from yourself. There's no help here. There's no salvation. It's over there. It's in Jesus. Are you listening? Are you following? Run to the remedy.

Christ alone. He stands willing and ready to receive any even now. Amen.