

The Ten Commitments, Part 3

Why is it that most people view God through the lens of the LAW?

That's ironic, because if ever God has sent the world a message, it is this ... **you won't ever find acceptance with God through your behavior!**

God actually gave the Ten Commandments to a people that He had just RESCUED out of slavery! The nation of Israel had **NO HISTORY BUT SLAVERY!** They were a family when they went into Egypt and now they were a nation, but they had never been FREE. They had no laws up until this point, because **YOU DON'T NEED LAW WHEN YOU ARE A SLAVE, YOU ONLY NEED LAW WHEN YOU ARE A FREE PEOPLE.**

The Ten Commandments were not given to see if Israel could establish a relationship with God – they already had one! They were not given to see if God would be their God – He already was!

GOD'S RULES ARE NOT A CONDITION OF RELATIONSHIP, THEY ARE CONFIRMATION OF RELATIONSHIP!

Rules NEVER establish a relationship with your Heavenly Father – His rules are given because you already HAVE a relationship with Him! RULES WITHOUT RELATIONSHIP ALWAYS RESULT IN REBELLION!

That's why many people RESIST the rules of God that would bring His blessing on their lives, their homes, their marriages, and their future!

IF GOD EVER COMPLIMENTS YOU WITH A RULE, IT'S JUST EVIDENCE THAT YOU'RE ALREADY HIS CHILD. God only gives His LAW to those He LOVES. There is nothing in the Ten Commandments (or Exodus) about going to Heaven – that is decided differently!

You will hardly ever meet a Christian who made a major lifestyle change because of guilt, but you will meet thousands of them who would tell you their own personal "Exodus story." They were in bondage and couldn't get out ... but then God delivered them ... and they have made all of their lifestyle changes not out of GUILT, but out of GRATITUDE!

Commandment 1 – "Don't go to multiple gods for multiple needs; come to me for all of your needs!" (Make God the center of your everyday life.)

Commandment 2 – "Don't form anything with your hands that replaces me!" (Don't make God a "location" or make Him a "manageable size.")

These aren't really COMMANDMENTS, they are COMMITMENTS! (They answer "What is going to function as the God of your life?")

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.

This commandment is NOT talking about swearing! That topic is covered by lots of other Scriptures, but it is not addressed in this passage. The Jews took this commandment so literally that they wouldn't even pronounce or write certain forms of the name of God, lest they came close to breaking it. That's like your parents telling you not to say "Gee" or "Gosh" because they sound close to "Jesus" or "God."

Commandment 3 – "Don't misuse my name!" (Don't use the name of God to accomplish something God has nothing to do with!)

Breaking this commandment would be like someone buying something by using your name, your accounts, your credit – without your permission!

When Jesus came to earth, the religious leaders were doing this all the time! They used **GOD'S NAME** to support **THEIR LOOPHOLES** in His law – they came up with religious rules to get around the real meaning of God's commandments. Human beings have done this for eons – in the Crusades, the Inquisition, and many other black spots in Christianity!

The angriest Jesus ever got was when He walked into the Temple and people were abusing His system to take advantage of others. **They were leveraging God's name (and His law) for their own ends!**

Luke 19:45-46 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.

"You have broken and bypassed the eighth commandment which says not to steal – and you've done it by using my name!"

They also broke and bypassed the fifth commandment which taught them to honor their parents – by using the name of God!

Mark 7:9-13 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition. For Moses said, Honour thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death: But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free. And ye suffer him no more to do ought for his father or his mother; Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

This is "taking the name of God in vain" – using His name to do what YOU want to do!

HAVE YOU EVER BEEN HURT BY THE “RULES” OF A CHURCH?!

HAVE YOU EVEN BEEN PART OF THE “CHURCH POLICE”?!

The real thrust of this commandment is “**Thou shalt not establish RELIGION in My name!**” Don’t impose YOUR will on others in MY name! Many times our traditions violate the clear teachings of God.

IT IS EASY TO DODGE THE LAW OF GOD IN THE NAME OF GOD!

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Have you ever used a verse like that as a loophole?! (“I get to have my sin and God’s forgiveness too” – ABSOLUTELY NOT!) Forgiveness is for people who are WANTING TO LEAVE SIN, not for people who are leveraging God’s offer of forgiveness so they can STAY IN SIN!

That is exactly what the third commandment is addressing! By the way, did you notice the WARNING attached to this 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.**

If you get in the habit of dodging the LAW of God in the NAME of God, ultimately you will miss a RELATIONSHIP with God. That is what happened to the Pharisees – they missed their own Messiah!

BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF – YOU KNOW IF YOU ARE JUST “PLAYING THE GAME” WITH GOD. If you have a weekly religion but not a daily relationship with God, this commandment is talking to you!

Are you masking your sin with religion? Are you dodging the will of God and the Word of God by misusing the name of God?

CHURCH, PLEASE DON’T BECOME A RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY!
Church member, don’t spend your whole life talking about God and hanging out with godly people, but never knowing God for yourself!

Do you have a “personal relationship” with God? Really? Or are you breaking the third commandment and just misusing His name?

STOP PRETENDING! You’re always better off being REAL with God.