



Exodus 20:1-2

INTRODUCTION TO THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

Once the idea of a divine lawgiver is removed and we are left with just human observation, reason, and intuition, there is no satisfactory way to prove that something is, in fact, morally right or wrong... If there is no God (as many people believe today), then it follows that all claims about “moral values” are merely human inventions. And if all our claims about moral right and wrong are just human inventions, then how can any one person have the right to say that his moral values are better than anyone else’s? ... The Bible has a clear answer. It teaches us that when people assume that nothing exists in the world except human beings and the material creation that we perceive with our senses, they have an incorrect assumption about what “is” in the universe. That is because they have excluded from consideration the most important thing that exists in the universe, the most important being that “is,” namely, God himself... His moral character is part of what “is” in the universe, and always has been and always will be.

—Wayne Grudem, *Christian Ethics: Living a Life That Is Pleasing to God*

In Exodus 20, the people of Israel hear the voice of God speaking from Mount Sinai with absolute power and authority. The sound of God’s voice and the physical manifestations of His holiness grip the people with fear (20:18-19). This is the setting of the giving of the Ten Commandments, also known as the Decalogue (i.e., the “ten words”).

WHY ARE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IMPORTANT?

- They reveal the _____ character of God.
God spoke all these words... (20:1)
- They reveal the _____ character of God.
I am the LORD your God... (20:2a)
- They reveal the _____ character of God.
Who brought you out of the land of Egypt... (20:2b)
- They reveal the basic _____ laws that govern humanity’s relationship to God and to one another.
You have commanded Your precepts to be kept diligently. (Ps. 119:4)
- They reveal the _____ character of us all.
By the law is the knowledge of sin... (Romans 3:20b)

*Central to the book of Exodus—
and indeed the entire Pentateuch—
is the covenant made between
Yahweh and Israel at Sinai.*

—Peter J. Gentry

*At Sinai, everything changes... The
Hebrews discovered who they are
and, more importantly, whose they
are.*

—Carmen Joy Imes

*The Decalogue, by revealing the
Lord’s moral nature, is a theologi-
cal explanation of the significance
of the name of YHWH.*

—R. Alan Cole

*The law of God reflects the charac-
ter of God.*

—J. Alec Motyer

Law. Heb., *torah*, “law, direction,
instruction; what God requires.”

*The giving of the law **followed** the
salvation of Israel. Thus obedience
signified Israel’s grateful response
to the redemption accomplished
by the Lord. The pattern...redemp-
tion followed by obedience...func-
tions as a type for NT believers.*

—Thomas Schreiner

WHAT ARE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

<i>You shall have no other gods before Me</i>	<i>You shall not murder</i>
<i>You shall not make for yourself an idol</i>	<i>You shall not commit adultery</i>
<i>You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain</i>	<i>You shall not steal</i>
<i>Remember the Sabbath day</i>	<i>You shall not bear false witness</i>
<i>Honor your father and mother</i>	<i>You shall not covet</i>

- A **Relationship to God—Heart** (20:3-6)
 - B Relationship to God—Words (20:7)
 - C Relationship to God—Deeds (20:8-11)
 - D **Relationship to Family—Heart, Words, Deeds** (20:12)
 - C Relationship to Others—Deeds (20:13-15)
 - B Relationship to Others—Words (20:16)
- A **Relationship to Others—Heart** (20:17)

HOW DO WE APPLY THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

- **Traditional Approach**



- **Biblical Approach**

You are not under law but under grace. (Rom. 6:14b)

You have become dead to the law through the body of Christ. (7:4a)

Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. (10:4)

The law was our tutor to bring us to Christ. (Gal. 3:24a)

In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. (Heb. 8:13a)

- **Practical Approach**

1. The law teaches us about _____ character.
2. The law teaches us about _____ character.
3. The law teaches us principles that can help us discern our hearts as we seek to follow after Jesus Christ.

Delivered by God upon Mt Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two tables: the first four commandments containing our duty towards God; and the other six, our duty to man ...

—Westminster Confession of Faith

If we are to think biblically about the Ten Commandments, we do not have two "tables" or sections but three. God comes first, family comes second, and the community around us third. —J. Alec Motyer

The tenth commandment, with its emphasis on the attitude of mind and heart, is a summary commandment, a prohibition of an attitude that precedes the violation of any or all of the other commandments. —John Durham

The entire Mosaic covenant is no longer in force for believers.

—Thomas Schreiner

The Mosaic covenant was terminated when Christ died, and Christians now live instead under the provisions of the new covenant. However, the OT is still a valuable source of ethical wisdom.

—Wayne Grudem

Moses has nothing to do with us. If I were to accept Moses in one commandment, I would have to accept the entire Moses.

—Martin Luther (1483-1546)

The three uses of the moral law:

1. To restrain sin in society
2. To show man's need for Christ
3. To teach believers how to obey

—John Calvin (1509-64)

*To see the law by Christ fulfilled
And hear His pardoning voice,
Changes a slave into a child
And duty into choice.*

—William Cowper