

“Law of Love and Liberty: The Ten Commandments”

Exodus 20: 1-21

(notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 6/14/20)

It appears that some people in our country believe that we don't need the rule of law. They feel that each person can decide for himself how to live. God has a better idea: His moral law is His instruction model for behavior. But wait a minute... Aren't we saved by grace and NOT the law?! Let's look into this a bit, after we read today's scripture. (Q1)

Jesus said three key words in John 14:31: love, command, do. He said much the same thing in John 14:15. Jesus' love for the father took the shape of obedience. To love God is to love His law and obey it from a willing heart. Look at Psalm 119:93. Obedience to God's law energizes us! (Q2)

“The 10 Commandments” can also be translated as “The 10 Words” or “The 10 Sayings”. Whichever title you choose, these laws still guide us and reveal to us. God's moral law guides His people in loving Him. These laws reveal the infinitely wide gap between us and perfectly following the law. They reveal God's nature. Man was in fact created to live out the nature of God reflected in His law. Sin, law breaking, is a distortion of the image of God in man. (Q3)

Did Israel become God's people by keeping the law? NO! He loved them and called them BEFORE He gave them the law. The law does not create relationship with God; the law does describe relationship with God.

The Hebrew word for law is “torah”. It describes the loving instruction given a child for her benefit (see Prov. 1:8-9). The 10 Commandments express God's parental love for His children. God's law leads those he loves into His best. God's law is a prescription for living as His liberated people. It's as if He is saying, “I got you out of Egypt, now I'm going to get Egypt out of you!” Matthew Henry said, “A golden thread of gospel grace runs through the whole Old Testament.” (Q4)

The 10 Commandments are words of restoration (see Exodus 19: 5-6). After the golden calf, God allowed for forgiveness through blood sacrifice, foreshadowing Jesus' blood sacrifice for us. Thank goodness, because we all sin! Ask yourself... have you ever been an idolater? A liar? Discontent with what you have compared with what your neighbor has? Need I go on?

“The wages of sin (any sin) is death, but the gift of God is eternal life.” The law leads us to the cross of Jesus. He took our punishment upon Himself. We are NOT justified by keeping the law; we are justified by faith. But we desire to keep the law because of our love for God and our gratitude to Him. To love God is to love His law and to trust Him to enable you to live it out. Rest in the promises of Heb. 10: 14-17: “Their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.” (Q5)

Now read Titus 2:11-12 to hear how Paul summarizes this Bible study. J.I. Packer summarized it this way: “... the 10 Commandments are God's edict to persons He has loved and saved.” “And for Christians today, as for the Jews at Sinai, law-keeping... is not an attempt to win God's admiration and put Him in our debt, but the form and substance of grateful personal

response to His love." God's law invites sinners to their Savior, then guides God's redeemed people to love Him and others.

The law is not a ladder to climb to God. You've already fallen off and knocked that ladder over! Our sanctification is the process where we become more and more like Jesus, by His power, not by our own striving. Father, let us relate to Your law rightly. Thank You for Your grace and thank You for Your loving commands.

QUESTIONS

- 1) I have a hard time with some traffic laws (ask my wife...) Why do we have traffic laws, anyway?
- 2) What is the connection between love and obedience between you and your dog? You and your child? You and your God? (notice that I didn't include cats...)
- 3) We were all created in God's image, right? Does that make us all God's children? Discuss
- 4) Who remembers other parts of that golden thread?
- 5) Put the promises of these verses into your own words, then share them with your group.

"HOLY, HOLY, HOLY" (Heber and Dykes)

- Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!
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- Holy, holy, holy! All the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea;
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Who was, and is, and evermore shall be.
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- Holy, holy, holy! Though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see;
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in pow'r, in love, and purity.
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- Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy Name, in earth, and sky, and sea;
Holy, holy, holy; merciful and mighty!
God in three Persons, blessed Trinity!