

Making Life Make Sense (Transformed by the 10 Commandments)

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments. **1John 5:2**

Session 1:

“You shall have no other gods before me.” Exodus 20:3

The Commandment of Loyalty

Many say the Ten Commandments are ancient and in great need of re-evaluation or simply need to be re-tooled to have a place in the modern world. Those who think this way fail to understand God, who when he speaks has already considered the long-term consequences of his words. If that was true, then Jesus would not have said the following in **Matthew 5:17-18**;

17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. Matthew 5:17-18

No, the commandments are not only relevant, they exist as they did back then to provide Israel with a great social order. The initial commandment establishes respect and loyalty to the one true God because no one learns from whom they cannot respect.

The Greatest Commandment:

The greatest commitment we could ever establish, develop and maintain is with the one true God. When Jesus was asked which of the laws was the greatest he responded by saying:

37 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. Matthew 22:37-38

Why did Jesus respond this way?

- Jesus knew the guiding power of our lives -which determines our beliefs and ideals ultimately becomes the focus of our worship.
- To override this with anything else is to replace God with something else as the primary object of our affection.
- Jesus responded this way because he knew wherever our treasure is our heart follows.

Engage:

Can you think of other possibilities why Jesus would respond this way?

Other Gods

Israel was surrounded by other cultures, which had their own social order determined by their gods of worship. The Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites to name a few, all inhabited Canaan. They also had their forms of worship and many deities. Today we are encouraged to do as Israel, **(1 Corinthians 10:14)** with the same concern being our loyalty to God, which is the key to opposing the influence of other gods.

Relationship Idols

14 Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? 15 What accord has Christ with Belial? Or what portion does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; as God said, "I will make my dwelling among them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. 2 Corinthians 6:14-16

Engage:

You have a Christian friend who is dating an unbeliever, based on these verses, what would you tell them?

Where or what is the idol here?

Astronomy Idols

Many place their faith and confidence in astrology. When this happens one ultimately places faith in creation. One way to exalt creation is to look to the stars for guidance. God spoke to Israel about this and Paul in the New Testament reiterated this call. When creation is exalted this becomes key to a materialistic, secular view of the universe, without the intelligence of a Creator.

And beware lest you raise your eyes to heaven, and when you see the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of heaven, you be drawn away and bow down to them and serve them, things that the Lord your God has allotted to all the peoples under the whole heaven. Deuteronomy 4:19

Engage:

If Christians look to astrological charts for direction, could we call this a form of idolatry?

Self-Idolatry

If we are to be loyal to God which is the basis of the first commandment, we must learn to govern ourselves. The core of idolatry is found in 3 lusts, flesh, eyes and pride of life. If we are going to escape idolatry, we must first denounce what it attempts to convince us, that it will fulfill. This was the first human's problem and how they engaged in the dramatic shift of affection. Unfortunately, we are still falling for this because happiness and fulfillment cannot be found focusing on ourselves.

For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life—is not from the Father but is from the world. 1 John 2:16

Engage:

What are some of the answers to dealing with Self-Idolatry?

Engage:

Can you point out the 3 issues (flesh - eyes - pride of life) during the first sin in Genesis 3:6?

Engage:

Since analysis of the first sin is vital for us to understand, what would you determine to be the key to Satan's dialogue, that encouraged them to sin?