

Lesson 7 Addendum

The following are the 10 Commandments spelled out along with Martin Luther's explanation to each.

Commandments 1-3 govern the relationships between God & humans.

Commandments 4-8 govern public relationships between people.

Commandments 9-10 govern private thoughts.

The First Commandment

You shall have no other gods.

What does this mean?

We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

A Christian does not want to:

1. Worship, honor, or serve any false god (idol) or fail to honor and acknowledge the Triune God or any person of the Trinity as God. (Open idolatry) (Isaiah 42:8; John 5:23)
2. Revere, love, or trust things or people more than the true Lord God (Close idolatry) (Matthew 6:24; Matthew 10:37)

A Christian wants to

1. Fear (respect, revere) God and his will above all things (Psalm 33:8)
2. Love God above all things and gladly devote himself to him (Matthew 22:37)
3. Trust God and his promises above all things (Proverbs 3:5)

The Second Commandment

You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not use His name to curse, swear, lie or deceive, or use it superstitiously, but call upon God's name in every trouble, pray, praise and give thanks.

God's Name: Every word or title he uses to reveal himself to us. Also everything he says and does (reputation). He has revealed himself to us so that we may know him and be saved.

A Christian does not want to

1. Curse anyone in God's name without God's command (James 3:10-11)
2. Swear (take an oath) falsely by God's name (perjury); swear in trivial matters when not asked to by one of God's authorities in the government, church, or state; swear when we don't know what we are swearing to do (Leviticus 19:12; Matthew 5:33-37; Mark 6:21-28)

3. Use God's name to support a lie or deception, or follow those who lie and deceive by God's name (Jeremiah 14:14 & 23:31; Matthew 15:7-8 & 23:27-28)
4. Practice superstition/witchcraft by dabbling in the occult, astrology, fortune telling, palm reading, tarot cards, mediums & spiritists, etc. (Leviticus 19:31; Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Isaiah 8:19-20)
5. Reject what God has proclaimed and done for them (John 3:16-18)

A Christian wants to

1. Call upon God for our every need (Psalm 50:15)
2. Pray to him with confidence (John 16:23)
3. Praise and honor God's name in joyful worship (Psalm 100; Acts 4:20)
4. Give thanks to God and his saving name (Psalm 118:1; Ephesians 5:19-20)

Here's a cool illustration about the content of our praise:

"I have three daughters. Suppose a young man is dating my daughter and I'm talking to him about her. I ask, "What do you think of my daughter?"

He answers with words that describe his affections. "I just love her. I think so highly of her. I admire her. I am so taken by her."

I have to say as a father that I would not be impressed with this answer no matter how sincere. What does the guy even know about my daughter? Nothing that I can tell.

Let's try again. I ask, "What do you think of my daughter?"

He answers this time with adjectives, "What a nice young lady. What an elegant creature. What a lovely woman. She's wonderful, she's marvelous, she's beautiful, and she's fabulous."

I'm still not impressed. The young man is improving, but he still hasn't overwhelmed me with his understanding of my daughter.

I try a third time. "What do you think of my daughter?"

He answers with verbs. "I love her because she stops what she is doing to talk to you. I love her because she thinks of me and gives me presents for no reason. I love her because she works so hard and won't let anything get in the way of her goals. I love her because she loves her family and values them highly. I love her because she trusts Christ."

I would tell my daughter to marry a guy like that. He knows her. He loves her. Our praise and love of Jesus should be the recounting of His verbs for us."¹

¹ Preus, Klemet. "The Fire and the Staff—Lutheran Theology in Practice." St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004, p. 147

The Third Commandment

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but regard it as holy, and gladly hear and learn it.

Sabbath = (a Hebrew word meaning) Rest

“Keep holy” = Set apart for God

Old Testament believers were to set apart the seventh day (Saturday) as a time of rest from their labors to focus on spiritual matters. This was so important that God even included this required day of rest in the list of the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments as they were given to Moses were a form of God’s moral law that applied specifically to the Israelites—particularly the 3rd commandment. The requirement to worship on Saturday was meant for God’s Old Testament people, and them alone. New Testament believers are given the freedom to choose any day for worship. Because of Christ’s resurrection, the first day (Sunday) was chosen. Also, by choosing one, specific day, it allowed God’s people to organize their schedules and lives around worship. The Old Testament Sabbath was a “shadow,” or symbol, pointing ahead to the spiritual rest Jesus brought by the forgiveness of sins. So we, in our freedom and thankfulness, honor the “Lord’s Day” and his Word as God instructs us. (Exodus 35:2; Leviticus 23:3; Colossians 2:16-17; Matthew 9:2 & 11:28-29)

A Christian wants to honor God’s Word

1. God wants us to gather together for worship and encouragement (Hebrews 10:25)
2. God wants us to hear and learn his Word gladly in Bible Study and private devotion (Luke 10:38-42; John 8:47; Psalm 1:1-2)
3. God wants us to study and share his Word for spiritual growth (Colossians 3:16; II Peter 3:18)
4. God wants us to obey and gladly do his Word in our new life (James 1:22)

The Fourth commandment

Honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not dishonor or anger our parents and others in authority, but honor, serve and obey them, and give them love and respect.

God’s Representatives

1. God places his representatives over us in the home (parents), church (pastors, teachers, elders, etc.) and in the government. (Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20-21; Hebrews 13:7,17; I Timothy 5:17; Romans 13:1-7)

2. Through these representatives God wishes to bless us and train us as his people (II Timothy 4:1-2; Proverbs 13:24; Hebrews 12:5b-11)

Our attitude toward God's representatives

1. In love for God and his will, we honor and obey our parents and leaders in church and government. In so doing we honor and obey God. (Colossians 3:20; Titus 3:1)
2. One exception: If they tell us to go against God's will (Acts 5:29)

Fifth Commandment

You shall not murder.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and be a friend to him in every bodily need.

God protects his gift of body and life

The ending of human life

1. Only God has the inherent right to end human life (Job 1:21-22; Psalm 31:15)
2. He delegates this right also to the government (capital punishment, just wars) (Romans 13:4)
 - a. Exception: Self-defense

A Christian does not want

1. Sinful actions (murder; suicide; personal vengeance; abortion when the life of the mother isn't at risk; mercy killing; improper use of food, drugs, drink; anything that harms the health of the body God has given; anything that causes anyone unnecessary harm in body or mind)
2. Sinful attitudes (hatred) (I John 3:15)

A Christian wants to

1. Love one another (I John 4:7; Matthew 5:43-47)
2. Be kind and forgiving, as God forgave us in Christ (Ephesians 4:32)
3. Encourage others, help the weak, be patient (I Thessalonians 5:14-15)
4. Do good to all people as we have opportunity, especially to our fellow believers (Galatians 6:10; Luke 10:33-35; Romans 12:20)

The sixth commandment

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we lead a pure and decent life in words and actions, and that husband and wife love and honor each other.

God protects his gift of marriage and sex

Basic truths concerning sex and marriage

1. God created us biologically male and female. He gave us natural desires for the opposite sex to be realized in the covenant of marriage. He instituted marriage. (Genesis 1:27-28 & 2:18-25)
2. The purposes of marriage are mutual companionship, God-pleasing sexual union, and procreation (Genesis 1:31)
3. God protects his precious gifts of sex and marriage by forbidding “adultery,” which is the spoiling of God’s gift of sex and marriage. God speaks in this commandment to those already married and to those who are not married. He warns us against taking the blessings of marriage without assuming the responsibilities.

A Christian does not want to misuse God’s gifts of sex and marriage

1. By sinful actions (adultery; fornication—sexual intercourse between two persons not marriage to each other; improper entertainment of a sexual nature, such as strip clubs and pornography; thoughtlessly marrying an unbeliever; homosexuality; cohabitation; wrongly seeking a divorce; being harsh with our spouse; tempting others to sin sexually by our actions, our words, the clothes we wear, etc.; not fleeing from sexual immorality) (Ephesians 5:1-8; Hebrews 13:4; I Corinthians 6:9-11; II Corinthians 6:14-18; Romans 1:24-27; Matthew 19:4-6; Malachi 2:16; Colossians 3:19; Luke 17:1-2; I Corinthians 6:18; John 4:16-18)
2. By sinful words (telling or listening to improper stories, dirty jokes) (Ephesians 5:1-8)
3. By sinful thoughts (lust is adultery in the heart) (Matthew 5:28)

A Christian wants to

1. Honor God with the body, the temple and possession of God (I Corinthians 6:19-20)
2. Cultivate a godly thought-life and flee from temptations (Philippians 4:8)
3. Establish a Christ-centered home life when married (Ephesians 5:21-33)

The seventh commandment

You shall not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not take our neighbor's money or property or get it by dishonest dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and business.

God protects his gift of property and possessions

Basic truths concerning money and possessions

1. All things really belong to the Lord, who permits us to have and use them. He gives them to use through honest work, trade, gifts, and inheritance (Psalm 24:1; II Thessalonians 3:10-12; I Kings 21:3; Matthew 2:11)
2. God gives us possessions for specific purposes, specifically to support and provide for
 - a. Our families, households (I Timothy 5:8)
 - b. The poor and needy (I John 3:17)
 - c. The government (taxes) (Romans 13:6-7)
 - d. The work of the church (I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:7)

This makes us “stewards” or “caretakers” of God’s things on earth.

A Christian does not want to

1. (In attitude) be greedy, which is idolatry, and which leads to other sins (I Timothy 6:6-10; Colossians 3:5)
2. (In actions) steal (including robbery, theft, cheating, fraud) (Ephesians 4:28)
3. Be wasteful of what God has given us (Matthew 14:20)

A Christian wants to

1. (In attitude) be content with what God has given us, recognizing that we already possess the greatest treasure—the Lord (I Timothy 6:6-7; Hebrews 13:5; Psalm 73:25)
2. (In actions) be generous in sharing what we have (II Corinthians 9:6-8)
3. (In actions) be faithful in using what we have (Matthew 25:14-30)
4. (In actions) be faithful in our employment (Daniel 6:1-4)
5. (In actions) be concerned with helping to protect our neighbor’s property and possessions (Genesis 13:5-12, 14:12-16; I Corinthians 10:24)

Related subjects worthy of further discussion/consideration: Gambling; welfare; laziness; communism

The eighth commandment

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him or give him a bad name, but defend him, speak well of him and take his words and actions in the kindest possible way.

God protects his gift a good name/reputation (Proverbs 22:1)

The use of the tongue

1. The gift of speech comes from God, and we are responsible to him for how we use it. The power of the tongue is great! (James 3:1-12)
2. God's will is that we "speak the truth in love." Both what we say and how we say it are important (Ephesians 4:15)

A Christian does not want to

1. Slander, gossip, or lie to or about anyone... basically anything that hurts our neighbor's good name or shares confidential information (Proverbs 19:5; Proverbs 11:13; Leviticus 19:11,16)

A Christian wants to

1. Speak the truth and seek to defend and protect others' reputations (Ephesians 4:25; Proverbs 31:8-9)
2. Lovingly and privately correct a wrongdoer as long as possible (Matthew 18:15-18)

The ninth commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house or obtain it by false claims, but do all we can to help him keep it.

The tenth commandment

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his workers or his animals or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not force or entice away from our neighbor his wife, workers or animals, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

The 9th Commandment deals with our neighbor's property

The 10th Commandment deals with our neighbor's family, workers, and possessions

Coveting is

1. Having a sinful, obsessive desire for anything that isn't ours.
2. Serious, because it also leads to sinful acts and damnation (James 1:14-15; I Kings 21:1-16)
3. The opposite of being content with what we have from God (Hebrews 13:5)

God closes the loopholes

1. By adding the words "or anything that belongs to your neighbor" in Exodus 20:17, God closes whatever loopholes the human heart may attempt to find.
 - a. ex. A teacher tells her students to clear their desks before a quiz. One student says, "What about the floor?"

A Christian wants to

1. Be content with what we have, since we already possess the greatest Treasure of all, the Lord, who promises to bless us with everything we truly need (Psalm 73:25; Matthew 6:33)
2. Serve one another in love, putting their interests above ours (Galatians 5:13; Philippians 2:4)
3. Encourage others to remain faithful to their spouses/employers (Genesis 39:8-10; Philemon 12; Exodus 23:4)