

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown
Bible Study Notes
5-18-22

Deuteronomy 5

Setting Of The Ten Commandments – Verses 1-5

5 Moses summoned all Israel and said: Hear, Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. ² The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. ³ It was not with our ancestors that the LORD made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today. ⁴ The LORD spoke to you face to face out of the fire on the mountain. ⁵ (At that time I stood between the LORD and you to declare to you the word of the LORD, because you were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain.) And he said:

5:1 The people had entered into a covenant with God, and Moses commanded them to hear, learn, and follow his statutes. Christians also have entered into a covenant with God through Jesus Christ and should be responsive to what God expects. Moses' threefold command to the Israelites provides excellent advice for all God's followers. Hearing is absorbing and accepting information about God. Learning is understanding its meaning and implications. Following is putting into action all we have learned and understood. All three parts are essential to a growing relationship with God.

The First Commandment: No Other Gods Before Me – Verses 6-7

⁶ "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ⁷ "You shall have no other gods before me.

5:7 A god is whatever people use as a driving force in their lives. Some people literally worship other gods by joining cults or strange religions. In a more subtle way, many of us worship other gods by building our lives around something other than the one true God. If your greatest desire is for popularity, power, or money, you are devoting yourself to something other than God. To put God first, (1) recognize what is taking his place in your life; (2) renounce this substitute god as unworthy of your devotion; (3) ask God for forgiveness; (4) restructure your priorities so that love for God is the motive for everything you do; (5) examine yourself daily to be sure you are giving God first place.

The Second Commandment: You Shall Not Make For Yourself Any Carved Image...You Shall Not Bow Down To Them – Verses 8-10

⁸ "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁹ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ¹⁰ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

5:8-9 How would you feel if someone took a picture of you, framed it, stared at it a lot, showed it to others, but completely ignored the real you? God does not want to be treated this way either. He wants a genuine relationship with us, not mere ritual. He wants us to know him. God knows that if we put anything other than him at the center of our lives, we will not reach our potential and become all that he wants us to be.

The Third Commandment: You Shall Not Take The Name Of The Lord Your God In Vain – Verse 11

¹¹ “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

5:11 We are familiar with the sin to be avoided in this commandment, that we should not misuse the name of the Lord by saying it in an empty or worthless way. But there is also a good work that is commanded: to use God’s name to praise him and ascribe to him glory. This is the opposite of misusing his name. While you might be able to keep yourself from swearing, how have you done at finding time to praise God and honor his name?

The Fourth Commandment: Remember The Sabbath Day – 12-15

¹² “Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. ¹³ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁴ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do. ¹⁵ Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

5:12 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy: The seventh day (Saturday) was commanded to be respected as a day of rest. This rest was for all of Israel - servants and slaves as well as visitors. This is an important principle that might be too easily passed over. Here God declared the essential humanity and dignity of women, slaves, and strangers, and said they had the same right to a day of rest as the free Israeli man. This was certainly a radical concept in the ancient world.

5:13-15 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth: God established the pattern for the Sabbath at the time of creation. When He rested from His works on the seventh day, God made the seventh day a day of rest from all our works (Genesis 2:3). But the most important purpose of the Sabbath was to serve as a shadow of the rest we have in Jesus.

5:13-15 Some claim that Christians are required to keep the Sabbath today. But the New Testament makes it clear that Christians are not under obligation to observe a Sabbath day (Colossians 2:16-17 and Galatians 4:9-11), because Jesus fulfilled the purpose and plan of the Sabbath for us and in us (Hebrews 4:9-11). However, though we are free from the legal obligation of the Sabbath, we dare not ignore the importance of a day of rest - God has built us so that we need one. Like a car that needs regular maintenance, we need regular rest - or we will not "wear" well. Some people are like high mileage cars that haven't been maintained well, and it shows.

The Fifth Commandment Honor Your Father And Your Mother – Verse 16

¹⁶ “Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

5:16 Obeying our parents is our main task when we are young, but honoring them should continue even beyond their death. One way to honor parents is to provide for them in times of financial need or when they are ill and unable to care for themselves. Perhaps the best way to honor them is to pass on their Christ-honoring values to our children. Honoring involves all that sons and daughters do with their

lives—the way they work and talk, the values they hold, and the morals they practice. What are you doing to show respect to your parents? Are you living in a way that brings honor to them?

The Sixth Commandment: You Shall Not Murder – Verse 17

17 “You shall not murder.

5:17 “But I don’t murder people,” you may say. Good. That fulfills the letter of the law. But Jesus explained that hateful anger breaks this commandment (Matthew 5:21-22). Have you ever been so angry with someone who mistreated you that for a moment you wished that person were dead? Have you ever fantasized that you could get rid of someone? Jesus’ teaching concerning this law demonstrates that we are capable of murder in our hearts. Even if we are legally innocent, we are all morally guilty of murder and need to ask God’s forgiveness. We need to commit ourselves to the opposite of hatred and anger—love and reconciliation.

The Seventh Commandment: You Shall Not Commit Adultery – Verse 18

18 “You shall not commit adultery.

5:18 You shall not commit adultery: Recognize that the act itself is condemned. God allows no justification for the ways that many people often seek to justify extra-marital sex, such as saying "my partner doesn't understand me" or "we are in love" or "God led us to be with each other" or any other excuse.

5:18 You shall not commit adultery: The New Testament clearly condemns adultery: Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication uncleanness, licentiousness ... (Galatians 5:19). But more than the act itself, Jesus carefully explained the heart of this commandment. It prohibits us from looking at a woman to lust for her, where we commit adultery in our heart or mind, yet may not have the courage or opportunity to do the act (Matthew 5:27-30). We aren't innocent just because we didn't have the opportunity to sin the way we really wanted to.

The Eighth Commandment: You Shall Not Steal – Verse 19

19 “You shall not steal.

5:19 Not steal: This command is another important foundation for human society, establishing the right to personal property. God has clearly entrusted certain possessions to certain individuals, and other people or states are not permitted to take that property without due process of law.

5:19 Not steal: We can also steal from God. Of course, this demands we honor God with our financial resources, so we are not guilty of robbing Him (Malachi 3:8-10). But we can also rob God by refusing to give Him ourselves for obedience and His service, because He bought us and owns us: knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold ... but with the precious blood of Christ (1 Peter 1:18-19); For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's (1 Corinthians 6:20). Ephesians 4:28 gives the solution to stealing. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

The Ninth Commandment: You Shall Not Bear False Witness – Verse 20

20 “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

5:20 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor: We can break the ninth commandment through slander, talebearing, creating false impressions, by silence, by questioning the motives behind someone's actions, or even by flattery.

"Slander ... is a lie invented and spread with intent to do harm. That is the worst form of injury a person can do to another. Compared to one who does this, a gangster is a gentleman, and a murderer is kind, because he ends life in a moment with a stroke and with little pain. But the man guilty of slander ruins a reputation which may never be regained, and causes lifelong suffering."

5:20 "Talebearing ... is repeating a report about a person without careful investigation. Many, many times I have known what it is to suffer with that. To repeat a story which brings discredit and dishonor to another person without making sure of the facts, is breaking this commandment ... How many people, especially Christian people, revel in this, and delight in working havoc by telling tales about others. To excuse the action by saying they believed the report to be true, or that there was no intention to malign, is no justification."

5:20 What about inappropriate silence? "When someone utters a falsity about another and a third person is present who knows that statement to be untrue but, for reasons of fear or being disliked, remains quiet, that third person is as guilty of breaking this law as if he had told a lie."

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor: The New Testament puts it simply. Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds (Colossians 3:9) "How very strange that we have ever come to think that Christian maturity is shown by the ability to speak our minds, whereas it is really expressed in controlling our tongues." Satan is always there to encourage a lie (John 8:44; Acts 5:3); and Jesus Himself was the victim of false witness (Mark 14:57); in some ways, we might say this was the sin that sent Jesus to the cross.

The Tenth Commandment: You Shall Not Covet – Verse 21

21 "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. You shall not set your desire on your neighbor's house or land, his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

5:21 To covet means to ardently desire another person's prosperity. We are not to set our desires on anything that belongs to someone else. Not only can such cravings make us miserable, they can also lead us to other sins such as adultery and stealing. Envyng others is a useless exercise because God is able to provide everything we really need, even if he does not always give us everything we want. To stop coveting, we need to practice being content with what we have. The apostle Paul emphasizes the significance of contentment in Philippians 4:11-12. It's a matter of perspective. Instead of thinking about what we don't have, we should thank God for what he has given and strive to be content. After all, our most important possession is free and available to everyone—eternal life through Christ.

The Response Of Israel: Shrinking Fear – Verses 22-27

22 These are the commandments the LORD proclaimed in a loud voice to your whole assembly there on the mountain from out of the fire, the cloud and the deep darkness; and he added nothing more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me. **23** When you heard the voice out of the darkness, while the mountain was ablaze with fire, all the leaders of your tribes and your elders came to me. **24** And you said, "The LORD our God has shown us his glory and his majesty, and we have heard his voice from the fire. Today we have seen that a person can live even if God speaks with them. **25** But now, why should we die? This great fire will consume us, and we will die if we hear the voice of the LORD our God any longer. **26** For what mortal has ever heard the voice of the living God speaking out of fire, as we have, and

survived? ²⁷ **Go near and listen to all that the LORD our God says. Then tell us whatever the LORD our God tells you. We will listen and obey."**

5:22 In the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice: The whole scene was indeed awesome: The LORD spoke; there was fire, a cloud, thick darkness, a loud voice; and it all made such an impression on Israel that they asked Moses to not have God speak to them so directly any more.

Why should we die? ... if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, then we shall die makes it plain. The Mount Sinai experience was not one of sweet fellowship with God. The message of Mount Sinai was not "come unto Me," but "stay away, for I am holy and you are not."

5:27 Tell us all that the LORD our God says to you, and we will hear and do it: Israel was far too confident in their ability to keep the law of God. Their experience at Mount Sinai convinced them of God's glory, but not of their own corruption and inability.

God Responds With Hopeful Pleasure In Israel – Verses 28-33

²⁸ **The LORD heard you when you spoke to me, and the LORD said to me, "I have heard what this people said to you. Everything they said was good. ²⁹ Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever! ³⁰ "Go, tell them to return to their tents. ³¹ But you stay here with me so that I may give you all the commands, decrees and laws you are to teach them to follow in the land I am giving them to possess."** ³² **So be careful to do what the LORD your God has commanded you; do not turn aside to the right or to the left. ³³ Walk in obedience to all that the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will possess.**

5:29 God told Moses that he wanted the people to incline their hearts to fear him—in other words, to want to respect and obey him. There is a difference between doing something because it is required and doing something because we want to. God is not interested in forced religious exercises and rulekeeping. He wants our hearts and lives completely dedicated to him. If we love him, obedience will follow.