



Bible Commandments

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

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These lessons were written for the Emmanuel Pentecostal Sunday School by the pastor, Robert D. Kalis. This series is now complete. The titles are listed below and are available to any and all:

The Men and Women of Genesis
Lessons From Exodus
The Ten Commandments
Wilderness Examples
Possessing the Land of Promise
The Days of the Judges
Israel's Early Kings
Lessons From the Kings
The Captivity and Return
The Miracles of Jesus
The Parables of Jesus
The Personal Ministry of Jesus
According to Luke - I & II
We Beheld His Glory (John - I)
Full of Grace and Truth (John - II)
Holy Ghost Acts - I & II
Matthew: The King and His Kingdom - I & II

WHY GOD GAVE THE LAW

Read: Exodus 19:1-25; Romans 3:19-31; Galatians 3:1-29;
Matthew 5:17-20; and Deuteronomy 6:1-9.

Memory Verse: If ye love me, keep my commandments. (John 14:15)

Aim of Lesson:

1. *To show the place the Law fills in the eternal plan of God.*
2. *To show that Christ fulfilled the Law for us.*
3. *To learn what our attitude should be toward the Law.*

I The Law Before Sinai: Every country is known by its laws. The laws of a land are the essence of that land. The Kingdom of God is also known by its laws. The law of God given at Sinai was not something new. The law of God, "Thou shalt not kill," was in effect in the beginning when Cain slew his brother. The sabbath was kept by God on the seventh day of creation. Pharaoh of Egypt was punished for ignorantly contemplating adultery (Gen. 12:14-20). Abimelech was warned in a dream not to sin by committing adultery (Gen. 20:2-11). Joseph recognized the temptation to uncleanness as a sin against God. All this happened long before the ten commandments were given at Mount Sinai.

II The Law and Israel: But there was something new and progressive about the law at Mount Sinai. Never before had the law of God been written down. God, Himself, with His finger wrote the ten commandments on tables of stone. Moses wrote them on the rolls which included the first five books of our Bible. So Israel became the custodian of the greatest treasure on earth at the time: The oracles of God. The promise was made to Israel that they would be God's own unique treasure and would become a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:5, 6) if they would obey the commandments. Israel

responded, "All that the Lord hath said will we do, and be obedient" (Ex. 24:7). But, before forty days had passed, Israel had horribly broken the covenant. They made a molten calf and worshipped it as God, and indulged in wicked uncleanness (Ex. 32:1-6). Thereafter, the history of Israel is a story of alternately forsaking the law and repenting to return to the law of God. The failure of Israel to keep the commandment did not surprise the Lord. The law was not a failure. The purpose of the law was to show the universal depravity of the human heart (Rom. 3:19, 20). It was beyond the power of humanity to fully obey the holy law of God. Only by supernatural intervention could man satisfy the holy standard of God.

III *The Law and Christ:* Jesus, the Son of God, became that supernatural intervention. He, Himself, declared that He had not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. Not a dot or comma of the law was deleted. All had to be fulfilled (Matt. 5:17, 18). Though Jesus was tempted in all points like as we are, He remained guiltless. He totally fulfilled the requirements of the Law. What was done away in Christ included the types and foreshadowings of His atonement and work. The animal sacrifices, the washings, the burning of incense, and the yearly visit to the Holy of Holies, these were done away in Christ.

IV *The Law and the Believer:* The greatest offer of the gospel of Jesus Christ is not only that it provides forgiveness of sins committed, but also, that it offers us, as our own possession, the perfect fulfillment of the law of God as accomplished by Jesus. We are recognized by God to be as righteous as Jesus was in His life if we only believe the gospel promise. It is only so if we believe it. It seems too good to be true. Reason says it is hard to believe. Abraham is our example. God said that he would be the father of many nations. It was impossible. He was too old. His wife was too old. Yet he believed. This faith in God's promise was counted as righteousness by God. Even so, believing this too-good-to-be-true promise of Christ's righteousness being reckoned as ours makes us true children of Abraham. Still there is more. The glorified Son of God sends forth His Holy Spirit, power from on high, to enable us to fulfill the righteousness of the law. This is the ultimate amazing grace of God.

No OTHER GODS

Read: Exodus 20:1-6; 32:1-6; Deut. 6:10-15; II Kings 17:1-23;
II Chron. 29:1-11; 27-30; Matt. 4:8-10; John 4:19-26.

Memory Verse: Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image. (Exodus 20:3)

Aim of Lesson:

1. *To show that rebellion against God results in delusion and increasing darkness.*
2. *To recognize the connection between seeking the only true God and experiencing the blessing of God.*
3. *To be warned that contemporary man still finds substitutes to worship in place of the Lord our God.*

I The Gods of the Heathen: When our first parents rebelled against God, they lost the beautiful fellowship which they had enjoyed with Him. Succeeding generations departed ever further from the Creator until He destroyed the corrupt and violent society with the flood. After the flood, Ham the son of Noah was punished for his uncleanness. His oldest son was cursed. That son was Canaan, the father of the inhabitants of the land of Canaan. They were the worst idolaters. Their idolatry had its roots in immorality. Such acts of fornication were performed by these descendants of Canaan, the cursed son of Ham, that their "cup of iniquity" overflowed and God sent Joshua and the children of Israel to destroy them from off the face of the earth. God's children were sternly warned not to intermarry with these unclean idolaters or to adopt any of their ways.

The children of Israel had come out of Egypt where they had been severely oppressed. There plagues had been sent upon the Egyptians and these were especially

directed against the gods of Egypt (the river, the sun, etc.) Pharaoh found out who the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was.

II *The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:* Abraham came from Ur of the Chaldees. There the sun, moon, and the host of heaven were worshipped. Laban had idols in his house. Rachel took one when she left with her husband Jacob, but Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshipped only Jehovah the Creator. While others worshipped the created things, they worshipped only the Creator. They were men who built altars not idols. The result was that God revealed Himself to them in a greater way than was previously known. It is a law of the Kingdom: the more we seek the only true God, the more He reveals Himself to us.

III *Israel and Idolatry:* The golden calf in the wilderness was only the first in a long history of departure from the worship of the true God. In the days of the Judges, worship became corrupt and every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Jeroboam set up calves in Dan and Bethel, and the ten tribes worshipped there for many years. Ahab married Jezebel, who introduced Baal worship to Israel which brought the wrath of God upon them. Judah also had idolatrous leaders who led the people astray only too willingly. Wicked fornication always accompanied the idolatry. Although Hezekiah (2 Chr. 29) as well as several other kings of Judah attempted to uproot idolatry, in the end the children of Israel, including Judah, did worse than the Canaanites whom the Lord had cast out before them. Accordingly, the Israelites were cast out of the land (2 Kings 17) and held captive in Babylon for many years.

IV *Worship Today:* The great enemy of our souls will rejoice at any substitute for the sincere worship of God through Jesus Christ. He tempted the Savior with the glory and power of the kingdoms of this world if He would only worship Satan. Worship of Satan is on the increase and is a deadly substitute for worship of God. Secret societies endeavor to worship God with nature as the mediator. But there is only one mediator, Christ. Perhaps the greatest rival for worship today is the god of materialism. The things of this world have such charm that men are willing to dedicate body and soul to obtain them. Many today seek much more diligently for pleasure than for the only living God. National politicians are not alone in their fierce quest for power. Every level of society has its seekers for power.

Idols are made by the hands of men. Our sophisticated society does not bow
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GOD'S SACRED NAME

Read: Exodus 3:11-15; Lev. 19:12; 24:10-16; Jer. 28:1-17;
Psalm 139:17-24; Matt. 5:33-37; 23:16-22; James 5:12; Rom. 2:21-29

Memory Verse: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain. (Exodus 20:7)

Aim of Lesson:

1. *To learn how we should use the name of the Lord properly.*
2. *To learn what it means to use the name of the Lord in vain.*
3. *To show how we may honor the name of our Lord.*

I God's Name: The first four commandments are concerned with our religious obligations. The first two forbid any rivals of our Almighty God. The third requires a sacred respect for His name. The name of our God in all of its forms is to be used only with sincere respect. This commandment is followed by a stern warning: God will not hold guiltless anyone who uses His name in vain. "From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the name of the Lord is to be praised."

II How Israel Profaned the Name of the Lord: If any man spoke his own thoughts from his own heart and then claimed them to be the words of the Lord, this was the worst offense of using the name of the Lord in vain. In the days of Jeremiah, a pretending prophet named Hananiah forecast the return from the Babylonian captivity within two years. He used the name of the Lord, saying, "Thus saith the Lord" (Jer. 28:2,11). Jeremiah rebuked the false prophet and forecast his death. Hananiah was indeed not held guiltless for his vain use of the name of the Lord, for he died the same year (ch. 28:17).

The more common sin of using the name of the Lord carelessly was the greatest

danger to the Israelites. it was acceptable to use the name of the Lord for an oath for matters of great importance, but the children of Israel began to use it too frequently in common conversation. Perhaps there is a suggestion of this abuse in the books of Samuel where the words, "As the Lord liveth," are used about fifteen times and often in conversation not requiring an oath (see I Sam. 24:26, 34; 26:10, 16 etc.).

The abuses of the name of the Lord became so bad, and the use of oaths so corrupt, that Jesus recommended abstinence from all oaths. James also forbids oaths by believers.

III *Modern abuse of His Name:* Although it should not be necessary to state that the use of the name of the Lord in any form to curse someone or something is prohibited by this commandment, it is safer to do so. The son of an Israelitish woman who had an Egyptian father was not held guiltless when he blasphemed the name of the Lord as he fought with a man in a field. God's judgment was pronounced through Moses, and the young man was accordingly executed (see Num. 15:32-36). Also, the use of such ejaculations as "Honest to God!" "For God's sake," "God is my witness!" "Oh, God!" etc., should be obliterated from the Christian's vocabulary. Many of the slang expressions are simply substitutes for the profane use of the name of the Lord. For example, "Gee whiz," "Gosh," "Doggone" is "God damn" turned around, and so on. For every idle word we must give an account; therefore, we should choose our words wisely and avoid any possible profaning of the holy name of our Lord. The word "profane" means common. The definition of "in vain" is "falsely" or "lightly." We must use the name of the Lord only in sincerity and then always reverently.

Paul warned the Jewish teachers of the Law in Rome that they were causing the name of the Lord to be blasphemed among the Gentiles by their hypocrisy (Rom. 2:24). David also was told by Nathan that his sin had given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme (II Sam. 12:14). We bear the name of Christ since we are called Christians. So we must live in such a holy manner that we bring honor to the name of Christ and not dishonor. Wherefore let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity (II Tim. 2:19).

Incidentally, provision is made in the Constitution of the United States that those with convictions against taking oaths may be excused from the practice. Such individuals may *affirm* to be telling the truth rather than swear. The grounds for such a conviction are that it is taken for granted that a Christian will tell the truth at *all* times and therefore does not need an oath to reinforce or guarantee it. (See James 5:12)

A DAY TO KEEP HOLY

Read: Ex. 16:23-30; 20:8-11; Gen. 2:1-3; Heb. 4:1-10;
Num. 15:32-36; Neh. 13:15-21; Psalm 92; Matt. 12:1-13

Memory Verse: Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. (Exodus 20:8)

Aim of Lesson:

1. To help us understand the necessity of setting aside one day in which worship is the foremost duty.
2. To better realize the benefit man receives from a day without physical labor.
3. To help us understand why we set aside the first day of the week instead of the seventh.
4. To make guidelines for properly observing the Lord's Day (Sunday) today.

I God's Rest: After the six days of Creation, God saw that all of His work was good. On the seventh day, He rested. This rest is an illustration of the rest that God has for His people who believe Him. The rest of God is the portion of those who "cease from their own works as God did from His" (Heb. 4:10). The point is that the day of rest and worship predated the Law at Mount Sinai. Before the Children of Israel ever came to the holy mount, God had forbidden them to gather manna on the seventh day. To keep one day in seven holy was in God's economy from the beginning.

II Israel's Sabbath: The rebellious nature of the Israelites was revealed at the time when the very first instruction regarding the seventh day was given. Some attempted to gather fresh manna on the sabbath the very first time that they were forbidden to do

so. Shortly after the Ten Commandments were given, a man was found gathering sticks on the sabbath. After inquiring of the Lord, he was executed for his rebellion against this commandment of the Lord. Although we do not desire to see sabbath-breakers executed or deceitful pretenders smitten dead, these severe judgments of these particular sins ought to teach us the seriousness of disregarding these commandments. Let us take heed.

The history of the Jewish people is filled with careless observance of this day which was intended to be one of the unique characteristics of the people of God. Their experts in the Law devised loopholes and developed traditions regarding the sabbath which made its ritualistic observance more important than the true reason for its existence. God ordained the sabbath for man's benefit. A day in which man drew near to God made him a better man the other six days. The day of rest renewed his strength and spirit, but the Jews missed the point of the sabbath.

Finally, Nehemiah testified that great judgment had befallen Israel because of its abuse of the sabbath. Seventy years in Babylon had still not taught them the importance of the day to be kept holy. He had to shut the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath day and remonstrate with the Jews so recently returned from captivity. Nehemiah suggests that by the disregard of the sabbath their forefathers had brought the captivity upon Israel (Neh. 13:18).

III *Jesus and the Sabbath:* The hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day is especially revealed in their ritualistic demands for observing the sabbath. Often they watched whether He would heal on the sabbath. They would have condemned Him to death for healing on the sabbath had He not shamed them by His beautiful and logical retorts (see Matt. 12:3-8, 11-13; Mark 2:27; Luke 13:15-17; 14:1-6; John 7:21-24). The summary of these wise arguments is that it is proper to do good on the sabbath. Jesus, however, did observe the sabbath. It was His custom to attend the synagogue on that day (Luke 4:16). There is certainly no record of His travelling further than that which was allowed on the sabbath or performing manual labor for His own profit. His "offence" was to loose those bound by Satan even as the farmer loosed his donkey or oxen for watering.

IV *The First Day:* We must show good reason for the changeover from observance of the seventh day to setting apart the first day of the week. There are two Biblical grounds for the change beside the mention of the Apostolic Church meeting on that

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HONORING PARENTS

Read: Deut. 5:16; 27:14-16; Lev. 19:3; Luke 2:21-52; 18:18-25; John 19:25-27;
Eph. 6:1-3; Col. 3:20; Prov. 3:1-3; 4:1-4; 5:1-2; 6:20-25; Matt. 5:1-9

Memory Verse: Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. (Exodus 20:12)

Aim of Lesson:

1. To show the importance of proper attitudes toward one another as well as toward God.
2. To illustrate how to obey this commandment.
3. To make clear the relationship between obedience to the commandment and claiming the promise.

I Personal Relationships: The first four commandments all concern man's relationship with God. The last six teach us what God expects of us in our social relationships with our fellowman. Tradition holds that the first four commandments were written on one table of stone and the last six on the other table. When Jesus was asked by the Jewish expert of the Law which commandment was greatest, His response corresponded to this traditional division, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matt. 22:37). The "first and great commandment" summarizes the first four of the Ten Commandments written, according to tradition, on the first table of stone. "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 22:39), the second and equally important commandment, summarizes the last six of the Ten Commandments which, according to tradition, were inscribed on the second table.

II The Most Sacred Earthly Relationship: God is revealed to us in the Scripture as our Father (see Mal. 1:6; Matt. 6:9, etc.). Our earthly parents are our first example of this

God-man relationship. The natural inclination of every offspring is to love and trust his parents. The believer must not allow this relationship to deteriorate, but rather should develop attitudes that exemplify real honor toward mother and father for the glory of God. Obviously, this lesson must be learned early in life. Boys and girls in our primary departments must know how to obey this commandment and how to guard against disobedience to it. The deterioration of honor for parents in our generation is directly related to the breakdown in family unity. With the children in school for 35 hours a week and with both parents working full-time, with separate recreation and entertainment, very little opportunity is left for the "togetherness" so vital to healthy family development which makes it quite natural for children to honor their father and mother.

How shall we obey this commandment? First of all, it must be done **now**. Many sons and daughters have experienced bitter remorse because they did not see the importance of honoring their parents until they were dead. We must do it now! The New Testament underlines obedience to parents in connection with this commandment (see Eph. 6:1-3).

Jesus in His earthly child-life, even though He recognized that the ultimate purpose of His life was to be about His heavenly father's business, was subject in His Nazareth home to His earthly father and mother. He is our great example. In the midst of His excruciating pain on the Cross, He arranged for the care of His mother Mary (probably Joseph had died).

Boys and girls honor their parents most by obeying them. No Christian boy or girl should ever speak disrespectfully of or to his parents as is so commonly done today. Calling your Dad "my old man," or Mom, "the old lady," is a blatant disobedience to the fifth commandment.

We also honor our parents when we share our plans and problems with them, asking for their prayers and advice. The breakdown of this type of conversation is the main cause of the modern problem referred to as the "generation gap." In New Testament times, the children were expected to care for the needs of elderly parents and provide the necessities of life for them. The Scribes and Pharisees taught the people that if they declared that their goods were devoted to God they need not do anything more for their father or mother. Jesus denounced this covetous hypocrisy, explaining that by their tradition they made void the Law of God. Today, this area of the commandment is as relevant as ever. Though social programs and pensions may provide the money necessary for living, the care and help and interest of children for

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REVERENCE FOR HUMAN LIFE

Read: Gen. 4:1-16; 9:5,6; Num. 35:16-22, 30-33; Deut. 21:1-9;
II Sam. 12:1-14; Psalm 51; Matt. 5:21-26; Gal. 5:19-21; I John 3:10-18.

Memory Verse: Thou shalt not kill. (Exodus 20:13)

Aim of Lesson:

1. To make clear that life is sacred because we are made in the image of God.
2. To illustrate the horror of war: murder on a wholesale scale.
3. To teach the words of Jesus regarding anger and violent temper outbursts.
4. To present the sure antidote for hatred and murder.
5. To consider the question of abortion.

I Made in the Image of God: When God created man in the beginning, He made him in His own image. Man was created a triune being with spirit, soul, and body, just as God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Although the God-likeness was marred by the Fall, the promise of God's Word is that once again we shall "bear the image of the heavenly," that "we shall be changed," "who shall change our vile bodies and fashion us like unto His glorified body." Since our bodies are potentially the dwelling place of Almighty God, any violence which mars or destroys the body is a grievous sin against God.

Jesus said of Himself, that He came that we might have abundant life. He rebuked the disciples when they wanted to bring fire down to kill the Samaritans who were inhospitable to them. "I am not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them," He declared. When the Scribes and Pharisees began to plot to kill Jesus, He denounced them and declared that they were not true children of Abraham, but rather, children of the devil who was a murderer from the beginning.

The very first offspring born to Adam and Eve became a murderer when he slew his brother Abel. The blood of Abel cried for vengeance from the ground. Multitudes of the descendants of Cain have followed his horrible example, and the history of humanity is stained with blood from the beginning to the end. The pronouncement of God concerning the punishment for murder is "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Gen. 9:6).

The Law of Moses very carefully describes the different types of murder and provides cities of refuge for the one who committed murder accidentally. There are numerous types of murder. The cold-blooded, premeditated type is most cruel, but the sudden, passionate murder is just as deadly. Suicide also is nothing but self-murder. The Law instructed builders to install "battlements" (railings) on the roofs of houses to prevent accidental death by fall. Negligence and disregard of safety rules which cause death is another form of murder. The use of nicotine, drugs, and alcohol is incipient (slow) murder.

Abortion also must fall into the category of murder. Since God has taken such pains to insure reverence for human life, it is only logical to assume that this should include reverence for the prenatal life. No Christian dare favor legalized and liberalized abortion.

War is the culmination of murderous evil. It is wholesale death. The beastly nations reward with honor their most prolific murderers. While the Christian is adjured to render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's (tax money, prayer for leaders, etc.), he is also instructed to give God the things which belong to God. Our bodies do not belong to our native land, but to God. The Christian must not give his body to the bloody war machine which promotes death on a wholesale scale and seals the eternal doom of millions of victims. Our bodies belong to God, for we are bought with a price. After every war, there has been an increase in violence in time of peace because of the hardening of the hearts of those participating in the slaughter of war.

God did not allow David to build the temple because he had been a man of war. The bloodshed in which he was so much involved cheapened life so that David could conspire to have the life of Uriah cut off. War is of the devil.

Jesus explained that murder is conceived in the heart (Matt. 15:19). In the Sermon on the Mount, He instructed His disciples to get rid of anger and to overcome intemperate outbursts toward others. John wrote in his epistle that "he that hateth his brother is a murderer." The seed of hatred if destroyed will never bear the full-grown fruit of murder. Let us replace the seed of envy, hatred, harsh words, etc., with the seeds

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UNDEFILED BODIES

Read: Gen. 2:18-25; Num. 25; Matt. 5:27-32; 19:3-15;
John 8:1-11; Rom. 1:22-32; I Cor. 6:13-20; 10:8

Memory Verse: Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)

Aim of Lesson:

1. To prove the holy origin of marriage and the approval of Jesus regarding marriage.
2. To make clear the scriptural teaching concerning divorce and remarriage.
3. To underline the necessity of eliminating all manner of uncleanness.
4. To show that purity of heart prepares us as a bride for our heavenly Bridegroom.

I The Origin of Marriage: When God saw that it was not good for man to be alone, and that no created creature was fit to be a companion to man, He made woman of Adam's own rib. She was flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. When God brought her to Adam, He uttered the first words to be quoted directly in the New Testament: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh" (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5). So marriage is a holy relationship instituted by Almighty God Himself.

Whatever the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge was, it is apparent from the punishment imposed on the guilty pair that their sin was in the area of sexual uncleanness. The marriage relationship is a sacred one and must be maintained in holiness in order to keep the blessing of God upon it. Modern Balaams and Jezebels are teaching that any perverse act not specifically forbid-

den by the Scriptures is permissible between married partners. "And all uncleanness..., let it not once be named among you, as becometh saints" (Eph. 5:3). The marriage relationship bears its best fruit when both partners' bodies are filled with the Holy Spirit and animal lust is displaced.

Jesus performed His first miracle at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. His presence at the wedding is an example of His recognition of the sanctity of marriage. While He Himself did not marry during his thirty-three years on earth, yet He did not teach that His disciples should not marry. Though He extolled the virtues of celibacy for the Kingdom of God's sake, He immediately thereafter took little children (the fruit of marriage) in His arms and blessed them. Both states, married and unmarried, are thus sanctioned by the Lord.

II *Concerning Divorce and Remarriage:* The Pharisees tempted Jesus with questions regarding divorce. Jesus explained that Moses allowed divorce because of the perverse hardness of the hearts of the children of Israel. But this was not intended from the beginning. Jesus quoted the words of Adam and corroborated God's attitude that marriage relationships took precedence over parental attachment, and that husband and wife shall become "one flesh."

Jesus specified that anyone who divorces his partner for any reason other than infidelity causes him to commit adultery. Also, whoever marries a divorced person commits adultery (see Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12; Luke 16:18). The purpose of teaching these scriptural truths is certainly not to bring under condemnation those who have made mistakes in the past and to break up homes and relationships that are contrary to the standard set forth by Christ, but to inspire great carefulness in those as yet unmarried to seek the will of God in marriage and then stick to it. Also, Christian partners with unhappy marriage relationships are urged by the Scripture to endure and thereby perhaps win the unsaved partner or at least sanctify by obedience and faith the children born to them (see I Cor. 7:10-17).

Finally, no Christian with more than one living partner is allowed an office in the local church. The bishops (ministers) and deacons (teachers and helpers) must meet this qualification (see I Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:6).

III *All Manner of Uncleanness:* The commandment forbidding adultery has a broader scope than the protection of the marriage relationship. The Savior taught that the lustful look is adultery in the heart. He urged severe measures on His followers

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REGARDING PROPERTY RIGHTS

Read: Ex. 22:1-15; Deut. 25:13-16; Josh. 7:10-21; Ezek. 45:10; Mal. 3:8-12;
Prov. 11:1; 16:11; 20:10; Luke 19:1-10; Eph. 4:28; Titus 2:10; Philem. 1-25

Memory Verse: Thou shalt not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

Aim of Lesson:

1. *To teach that God has given people the right to own property and expects His people to honor those rights.*
2. *To show that God expects repentance and restitution when robbery has occurred.*
3. *To make clear that we must not rob God, but render to Him what is due.*
4. *To illustrate that the Christ-like grace of generosity is the antidote for the temptation to steal.*

I Recognizing Property Rights: It was to the Christians at Ephesus that Paul wrote, "Let him that stole steal no more" (Eph. 4:28). While at first we might be inclined to think that a lesson on stealing ought to be unnecessary for believers, on second thought, we realize that so varied and so subtle and so common is this sin that indeed it demands careful consideration. Someone has described the contemporary, materialistic American philosophy in these words: "Get the most you possibly can for the least you can possibly pay, and he who gets the most for the least is the smartest." The follower of Christ must reject such a philosophy and remind himself often of the absolutes of the Ten Commandments and their implications.

"Thou shalt not steal" is a simple yet exceedingly broad prohibition. Moses listed many examples of stealing (see Ex. 22). Carelessly causing a neighbor's field to burn; not caring properly for a borrowed beast; selling a neighbor's sheep for meat;

allowing one's flock to eat a neighbor's field; taking a maiden's moral honor, are listed in the lawgiver's writing. To this list might literally be added pages and pages of treacherous dishonesty conceived by the deceitful human heart.

Early in life, this temptation begins. A nickel or a dime that "will never be missed," the change from a purchase "forgotten about," and taking the playthings of playmates, are the harbingers of a life of crookedness. The stealing of test questions or of answers at school, and cheating and copying are temptations to be overcome by followers of Jesus. Claiming more time worked than actually put in is another devious form, and, of course, many business dealings include this sin. To be sure, the consumer must be wary of the devious tricks of the merchant, but the merchant, too, must be wary of the shoplifter. False balances and divers weights are an abomination to the Lord. No list would be complete without including the temptation to claim false deductions on income taxes. "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things which are God's."

II Robbing God: Malachi warned Israel that they had gone so far in their dishonesty as to rob God. "How so?" they asked. "In withholding tithes and offerings." A great proportion of Christians rationalize this terrible theft by claiming that tithes were a part of the Old Testament economy which is now done away in Christ. They often say, "All I have belongs to God," while in reality 99% is appropriated for self. The grace of tithing predates the Mosaic Law, for Abraham, four hundred years earlier, paid tithes of all his possessions (see Gen. 14:20). Jesus also recognized the principle of tithing although He rebuked the Pharisees for their unbalanced practices of carefully tithing the smallest things but omitting the weightier matters of mercy and judgment. "This ought ye to have done (that is tithing), and not to leave the other undone" (Matt. 23:23). We also may rob from God the glory that is due to Him alone. Let us be sure we never accept for ourselves praise and glory which are due only to Him.

III Repentance and Restitution: Moses specified the restitution which must go with the repentance for theft---in some cases, five oxen for one ox (see Ex. 22:1); in other cases, double (Ex. 22:4); still in other cases, simply one for one. Zacchaeus proved the sincerity of his repentance and conversion when he restored fourfold that tax money which he had stolen by false accusation. Parents have done well when they insisted on their children's confessions and fourfold restitution of things stolen in youth. That repentance is incomplete which makes no attempt to restore that which was unlawfully

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Telling the Truth

Read: Lev. 6:1-7; Psalm 15; Prov. 6:16-19; Eph. 4:21-32;
Acts 5:1-11; Mark 14:66-72; John 8:31-45

Memory Verse: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. (Exodus 20:16)

Aim of Lesson:

1. To show the satanic origin of lies.
2. To make clear the value of the truth in all circumstances.
3. To warn Christians how they are likely to be tempted to untruth.

I *The Father of Lies:* Jesus said that the devil abode not in the truth, indeed that there is no truth in him. He also called the devil the father (originator) of lies (see John 8:44). No doubt, the deceitful career of Satan began before the Garden of Eden. Of that, we know little, but in the garden we do know that his first activity was to deceive Eve into thinking she could be like God if she would disobey Him. Six thousand years later, Satan is still inventing lies to deceive humanity into forsaking or neglecting the truth of the gospel. Today, the false doctrine of reincarnation is deceiving many into believing that many lifetimes will bring them nearer to God. The father of lies is still at his ancient mischief.

II *Christ the Truth:* God is truth. His Word is truth. Jesus, the Son of God, declared Himself to be "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). The people of God must be true. The Apostle John saw that all liars would have their part in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 21:8).

The ninth commandment forbids all false witness. This applies not only in the court of law, but in the court of life; that is, in all our dealings. The Lord listed some of the instances wherein an Israelite might be tempted to lie: he might lie concerning

finding something that was lost, or concerning something given him to take care of, or regarding a thing he might have taken without permission (see Lev. 6:1-7). For such lies as these, the Lord demanded repentance and restoration.

These examples are not without relevance today. How many children have assured their parents that the pen or pencil or ball which they took from somewhere by stealth was found on the way home. No teaching of the Scriptures can be more important than that concerning the truth. It is absolutely basic to the Christian life. There is hope for the individual with a violent temper if he will confess his need. There is help for the drunkard and addict who comes to Christ confessing all and calling on Him for help. There is deliverance for the thief who confesses and restores that which he took. But for the liar who denies his guilt in whatever area, there can be no help. No liar shall enter the holy city of God (see Rev. 21:27).

David assures us that those who speak the truth in their heart, those who swear to their own hurt, yet change not, will find their abode in the tabernacle of God and dwell in His holy hill (Ps. 15). Solomon lists the lying tongue as one of the seven things which the Lord hates and which are an abomination to Him (Prov. 16:17).

III Examples in the New Testament: When Jesus was seized at Gethsemane, the disciples at first attempted to protect Him. Later, at Jesus' request, the disciples were set free. Most forsook Him and fled. John alone remained near, and Peter followed "afar off." Jesus had warned Peter that he would deny the Savior before morning, but he would not believe it. While warming himself at the fire in the courtyard where Jesus was being accused, Peter denied that he knew Jesus. The third time he even cursed and swore as he lied that he did not know the man, Jesus. Then the rooster crowed, and Peter belatedly remembered the warning. He went out and wept bitterly. Thank God, there was forgiveness, and his sinful lie was cleansed by the blood of the Savior.

The first judgment which fell on the newborn church after Pentecost was caused by an attempt to lie to God. Ananias and Sapphira his wife conspired to deceive the church and its leaders into thinking that their donation was the whole price of the land which they had sold. Their deceitfulness cost them dearly, for both of them died instantly before the Lord because of their lie. Surely, it is evident to all that this severe judgment on those who conspired to deceive is a warning that the lie is a great abomination to God and must not be tolerated in our midst.

IV Temptation to Lie: Paul admonished the Ephesian Christians to put away lying. It
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DON'T COVET

Read: Luke 12:13-34; 16:1-31; II Sam. 11:1-27; Num. 22;
I Tim. 6:1-21; II Pet. 2:12-16; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14

Memory Verse: Thou shalt not cover thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife,...nor anything that is thy neighbor's. (Exodus 20:17)

Aim of Lesson:

1. *To show that this commandment deals with inward attitudes.*
2. *To warn how materialism contends for our affection.*
3. *To emphasize the necessity of ridding our minds of every inordinate desire.*
4. *To make clear the way to fight the temptation to covet.*

I A Commandment Regarding Attitudes: The first four commandments deal with our relationship with God. We are commanded in them to recognize no other deity, or make any likeness representing deity; we are commanded not to use His name carelessly, and to keep holy the day He has set aside for Himself. The last six commandments deal with our relationships with our fellowman. In them, we are told to honor our parents, commit no murder, or adultery, and to abstain from stealing and from lying to our neighbor (fellowman). The final commandment deals with the root of many of the actions forbidden in these last commandments. It is covetousness, which leads to stealing. Often, covetousness is also the prime motive for murder. Coveting, secretly in the imagination first, often leads to the overt act of adultery. It is against the depraved desire of man that this commandment is directed. It is in harmony with the teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, where He deals with the roots of transgression, rather than with the fruit of outward sinful action.

And it is not without significance that in writing to New Testament Christians the Apostle Paul specifically mentions covetousness **more than any other single sin or lust of the flesh** which the believer is to beware of and to mortify. The importance of this unique commandment, therefore, cannot be overemphasized. It is only logical to conclude that by dealing with the root of disobedience to several of the Ten Commandments we are directing our energies efficiently against the works of darkness in our lives.

II Coveting Material Things: The two great contenders for the affection of the human heart are: the love of material possessions and the desire to gratify fleshly lusts. Some Bible teachers have suggested that the golden calves at Dan and Bethel, which Jeroboam the son of Nebat set up, represent these two hateful sins. The tenth commandment specifically covers both of them. Achan caused the death of thirty-six choice men of Israel when he saw, coveted, and took the accursed silver and gold and apparel from the cursed city of Jericho. Balaam also coveted the silver of King Balak and so treacherously conspired to lead the Israelites into temptation. His covetousness is set forth in the New Testament as tremendous wickedness (see II Pet. 2:15,16; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14).

Two of the Lord's parables are specifically directed against material covetousness. This vice was a besetting sin of the Pharisees, and we do well to take heed to the teaching of Jesus and the tenth commandment. The rich fool (Luke 12:13-21) felt secure when he determined to bestow his abundance in new and larger storehouses. But Christ reckoned him a fool because all was left behind when his soul was required of him that night. The teaching is clear that all who labor to lay up earthly treasure, but are not rich toward God, are like this rich fool.

The rich man and Lazarus are set forth by our Lord as another lesson to the covetous. When the rich young ruler turned away sorrowfully from following the Lord, Jesus warned His disciples that riches were a great hindrance to entering the Kingdom of God. The teaching of Paul is in complete harmony: "They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition (I Tim. 6:9).

III Lustful Covetousness: We have a very strong example of disobedience to this commandment in the life of King David. The fact that the godly king fell into this sin is a warning to every follower of Christ. Danger lurks close by seeking to give occasion

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THE NEW COMMANDMENT

Read: Matt. 5:38-48; 6:9-15; 18:21-35; John 13:1-17;
I Cor. 13; Gal. 5:13-26; I John 2:5-11; 4:7-21

Memory Verse: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. (John 13:34)

Aim of Lesson:

1. To define the Christian virtue of love.
2. To emphasize the importance of practising forgiveness.
3. To show how Christian love works in the daily life.

I The New Commandment: On several occasions, Jesus summarized the Old Testament commandments in two sentences: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind," and, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (see Matt. 22:37,38; Luke 10:27,28). This pure love for God and man is to be the single, most important mark of the Christian believer (see John 13:35). This love like a coin has two sides. The first side is love for our God, the Creator and Redeemer; the other side is the pure love for our fellow man.

Moses, by the inspiration of God, gave to the children of Israel the law of limited retribution (Ex. 21:24,25; Lev. 24:17-22). The gospel teaching of the Lord Jesus enlarges this principle to the ultimate attitude of forgiveness. The teaching of the Old and New Testaments are not diametrically opposed one to the other as is often taught. Rather, the Old Testament limits the retribution or punishment that could be administered against one who injured another. For example, if a man in anger punched another in the mouth, knocking out his two front teeth, the punishment for such an offense could not be to knock out all of the offender's teeth! Vengeance was limited to a like number: eye for eye; tooth for tooth.

The New Testament carries this limitation to the logical ultimate: forgiveness without demanding retribution.

The New Testament further enlarges the teaching of love for our neighbor to include love for our enemies. Jesus urged His disciples to develop a response of love toward those who cursed and abused and persecuted them. It is easy and natural to love those who love us and treat us lovingly, but it takes a dynamic rebirth of the Holy Spirit to respond instinctively to abuse and persecution with positive love. While the Old Testament adjures the people of God to love their neighbor as themselves, the New Testament teaches us to love one another as Christ loved us.

This Christian love is not related to the love of opposite sexes; that love has its seat in the desires of the body. Neither is the Christian love like the love of children for mother or father, or vice versa; that love has its natural base in the emotions. The Christian virtue of love for every believer wills deliberately to love everyone on earth with pure Christ-like love. Jesus perfectly exemplified this characteristic that is to be the identifying mark of every true disciple.

II *Love and Forgiveness:* Peter admonishes his readers to see that they love one another with a pure heart fervently (lit. boilingly). Before this is possible, the ice of an unforgiving spirit must be melted. Peter had asked the Lord on one occasion how many times he had to forgive his brother. (Perhaps Andrew, Peter's brother, had forgotten for the eighth time to clean and put away the net after fishing!) In response to Peter's question, Jesus told the story of the unforgiving servant. This parable contains one of the strongest warnings in all of the gospel. The gist of the warning is that if we, who have been forgiven all our sins through Christ's death, cannot forgive the wrongs of our fellowman, we are in danger of suffering dire consequences (read Matt. 18:32-35).

The only comment following the Lord's Prayer, as taught to the disciples, was an admonition to forgive wrongs and a warning of the consequences of an unforgiving attitude. Not only is the teaching of our Lord strong on this subject, but His example is perfect. While being nailed to the cross, He prayed the Father to forgive His tormentors because they knew not what they did. None of us has come anywhere near such unjust treatment, and yet we try to justify our grudges and ill-will towards those who mistreat us. If love is the identifying mark of the true Christian, an unforgiving spirit in a so-called Christian must be the distinguishing characteristic of a hypocrite. From forgiveness, we are ready to go forward into fervent love with a pure heart.

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POWER FOR OBEDIENCE

Read: Romans 3:21-31; 4:1-25; 7:1-25; 8:1-17;
Galatians 3:1-25; Colossians 2:6-3:4

Memory Verse: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. (Romans 8:4)

Aim Of Lesson:

1. To show the weakness and wickedness of the natural heart.
2. To emphasize the power of the Holy Spirit which enables us to obey the law of God.
3. To explain how righteousness is imputed to us by faith.

I *The Deceitful Human Heart:* The children of Israel agreed to observe all of the law which God spoke to them. "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do," they said (Ex. 19:8; 24:7). But, in just a matter of several weeks, they had flagrantly broken the very first two commandments. Their spirits, like those of the disciples in Gethsemane, were willing, but their flesh was weak. This example of weakness and inability to carry out what they knew to be right was not an isolated incident. Nor is it confined to the children of Israel in their wilderness journey. This inborn weakness and deceitfulness are common to the human heart everywhere since the Fall in Eden. One of the main purposes of the law of God was to reveal this weakness to mankind so that he would recognize his great need for regeneration and power from on high.

Paul vividly describes this innate weakness in his letter to the Romans. The good that he wanted to do, he was unable to perform; and the evil which he disdained, he committed anyway. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members" (Rom. 7:22,23). But, thank God,

Paul experienced the deliverance from this despicable helplessness. That deliverance he found in Jesus Christ, who through the Holy Spirit strengthens the believers so that they may overcome every weakness.

II *The Power of the Spirit:* Before the advent of the Holy Spirit, the disciples were a miserably weak group. It seemed foolish to entrust these men with the work of taking the word of the Lord to the ends of the earth. Peter's denial and Thomas's doubting and slowness of heart to believe were evidence of the weakness of the hearts of these chosen men. Jesus explicitly forbade them to begin their preaching until they had received the **power** of the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49). This **power**, more than tongues, prophecies, and other manifestations, is the most important characteristic of the Holy Spirit. It is a two-fold power: power to obey the Word of God and overcome temptation, and power to serve the Lord as His witnesses. It was this divine power that changed the disciples and fitted them for the great work of evangelism.

The weakness of the flesh, which made obedience to the Law impossible, is absolutely overcome by the power brought to us by the Holy Spirit. It is, after all, the very same Spirit which enabled Jesus to overcome every temptation without sin that fills us as we claim the promise of the Father. What mankind could never do because of the weakness of the human heart now becomes possible because of the power which is communicated to us through the Holy Spirit. Often, the initial baptism of the Holy Spirit is accompanied by such a manifestation of the power of God that long-standing bondages are broken and great changes made. But the flow of the power of the Holy Spirit is an ongoing experience. New and greater power is given for new challenges. This power for obedience and service makes the single greatest difference between the Old Testament people of God and the New Testament church. Every believer needs this power. Without it, we are powerless to overcome weakness and to please God.

III *Righteousness through Faith:* Abraham was considered to be a righteous man by God. The ground for this recognition is found in Abraham's faith. He believed exactly what God said. God told Abraham something that seemed impossible. In fact, it seemed doubly impossible. God told Abraham that he and his wife Sarah were to have a son. Abraham knew his own physical deadness forbade that possibility. This difficulty was compounded by his wife's advanced age which was far beyond the age for child-bearing. So ridiculous did the promise seem to Sarah that she laughed at the idea. (She later named the baby laughter: Isaac). But Abraham refused to consider the difficulties. He

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LOVE IN ACTION

Read: Mark 16:1-20; Luke 2:1-20; 15:1-32; John 1:1-14; 3:1-21;
Galatians 6:1-10; II Corinthians 5:12-6:10

Memory Verse: Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. (Galatians 6:2)

Aim of Lesson:

1. *To show how God's love moved Him to send His Son into the world.*
2. *To make clear that Jesus' love caused Him to seek and to save those who are lost.*
3. *To emphasize that the love of God in us must motivate us to serve God and one another.*

I God So Loved the World: John tells us that God is love. God's love for His crowning work of creation---man in His own image---has never waned. Despite man's rebellion, God's love has actively sought to redeem humanity, and win back man's allegiance, and restore him to his glorious dominion for which he was created. God's love for mankind moved Him to reveal Himself to Abraham. The same love caused the Almighty One to give His Law in written form to the children of Israel. It was His love that sent the Prophets to bring Israel back to God and foretell the great salvation in His plan. The grand culmination of that love sent His only begotten Son to be born of Mary, amongst a subservient people, and to suffer all the temptations of humanity. That love was great enough to make God willing to see His well-beloved Son die in anguish in the most cruel death known to man. Finally, God's love for man moved Him to glorify the Son of man by resurrection and ascension so that at the right hand of God Almighty Jesus Christ might intercede for mankind. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things" (Rom. 8:32).

II Greater Love Hath No Man: We read of Jesus' love, "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end" (John 13:1). The love of Jesus for His fellowman found countless means of expression. It was compassionate love that so often moved Him to minister to the sick and oppressed. It was His indiscriminating love which enabled Him to risk the enmity of scribes and Pharisees to befriend and save the publicans and sinners. Despite the hostility of these religious leaders, in love Jesus delivered the woman taken in adultery from imminent execution. He ignored their murmuring and entered the house of Zacchaeus and brought salvation to that house that day. Although, to be sure, the Lord hated sin, yet He loved sinners and sought to save them.

Jesus told three stories to teach the scribes and Pharisees how that their God and all heaven rejoiced at the salvation of a sinner. The parable of the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the prodigal son, were told expressly to illustrate the love of God for sinners and the joy of all heaven at their salvation. Ultimately, the love of Jesus enabled Him to lay down His life, and for the joy of knowing that man so would be reconciled to God, He endured the Cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends, (John 15:13).

III By Love Serve One Another: The love of God in us must cause us to act. Love must find a means of expression. So we are admonished to bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2). We are taught from the Parable of the Good Samaritan to be neighbor unto stricken humanity. The divine love of God in us cannot be an abstract theory to talk about or to write about. It has to work.

The example of Paul is inspiring. In order to lead lost ones to the Savior, he was willing to suffer the loss of all things. He was willing to become all things to all men so that by any means he might win some. He went so far as to say that he could wish himself accursed if that would bring salvation to his own countrymen. Nothing but an all-consuming love for Christ and humanity could have enabled him to endure and indeed to glory in the afflictions and hardships listed in his letter to Corinth (II Cor. 6:1-10).

It is love for all men everywhere, inspired by the Spirit of Christ, that has sent the missionaries to the ends of the earth to lead those held captive by error into the glorious liberty of the children of God. We love because God first loved us. Nothing less can be satisfactory.

May the love of God that found its greatest expression in sending His only
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to adore an ugly idol carved from the trunk of a tree, but many people devote themselves more to the works of their hands (homes, lawns, gardens, hobbies) than to seeking after God.

We must joyfully devote ourselves to worship God through Jesus Christ, as He explained to the Samaritan woman: true worshippers worship in Spirit and in truth.

(Lesson 4 - Continued from page 8)

day and gathering offerings for relief of suffering Christians, etc. (Acts 20:7; I Cor. 6:2). Two Jewish holidays were observed on the first day of the week. One was the feast of firstripe fruits or the barley harvest. This date corresponds with the first day of the week on which our Lord rose from the dead. That first day, Jesus' resurrection day, was the greatest day in the history of the world up to that time. The second holiday celebrated on the first day of the week was Pentecost or Feast of Weeks. This holiday was dated fifty days after the passover sabbath and so naturally fell on the first day of the week. It was, of course, on that day, fifty days after the sabbath when Jesus lay in the tomb, that the Holy Spirit fell on the hundred and twenty and the church of Jesus Christ was born. It is in honor of these two monumental occurrences: the resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit to take residence in the believers, that we now observe the first day as the day to keep holy rather than the seventh.

V *The Sabbath Today:* Finally, we dare not pass by this lesson without underlining some guidelines for our observance of the Lord's Day in our modern society. Many Christian teachers today condone recreation on the Lord's day. For this, there is no basis in Scripture. Here are some guidelines for consideration:

1. The primary reason for the day of rest is that we might worship. Attendance at worship services is our first obligation on the Lord's Day.
2. Six days are given for work, only one for rest. We should do no work which exhausts us or brings us personal profit. The only work permissible is the occasional charitable help offered to someone in need; for example, to fix a lady's flat tire on the way to church, visiting the sick and shut-ins, etc. In other words, our works should consist of only those of mercy and necessity.
3. The Christian should not travel long, tiring distances on the Lord's Day.

4. Those who profane the sabbath guiltlessly: ministers, missionaries, etc., should endeavor to observe another day of rest for their own personal benefit.

The testimony of those who have endeavored to observe the Lord's Day in this manner is unanimous: it brings the blessing of God to the spirit and renews the strength of the body, thereby warding off many bodily afflictions and breakdowns. And it is not without significance that one of the prime targets of atheistic governments, such as that of France at the time of the French Revolution and that of Russia at the Communist Revolution of 1917, has been the religious observance of Sunday. The other two targets are the Bible and the Church. This reveals the satanic opposition to that which God has commanded.

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their elderly parents is necessary for obedience to the commandment. Dear old Mom and Dad need help with gardening, spring cleaning, painting, snow shoveling, etc. Finally, in last illnesses, if at all possible, loving care by son or daughter in familiar surroundings is so much better than the ministrations of Medicare and treatment often times from unrelated nurses and godless doctors in the cold medical institutions.

Solomon honored his father by laying up his words and recording them. He followed his father David's instructions carefully in regard to the building of the temple. For forty years, he reigned in peace and prosperity in great measure because of the wisdom he showed in honoring his father.

III Claiming the Promise: Paul makes note of the fact that the fifth commandment is the first commandment that has a promise connected to it. If we obey the command, we may claim the promise. Consider how disobedience to the command can affect our faith in time of sickness. It would increase any difficulty in having faith for healing so that our days will "be long upon the land" if we have not honored father and mother. Let every son and daughter with living parents do everything possible now to honor them in obedience to God's Word. And, of course, let every Christian father and mother so live and love that they may be worthy of that honor.

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of forgiveness, kindness, and love. We are to set our wills in harmony with the will of God to love positively everyone on earth in pure Christian love.

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to combat this temptation. The experience of young Bernard of Clairveaux illustrates this Scripture well. He had wholeheartedly consecrated himself to live by the Word of God. But, at one time, he caught himself turning to gaze lustfully after a passing maiden. Realizing the danger, he punished himself by plunging into an icy pond and forcing himself to remain in its cold grip for more than an hour. A stern measure, to be sure, but not unrelated to the Lord's recommendation to pluck out the offending eye or cut off the perverse hand. We ought not to be unwilling to cut off things which lead us into lustful temptation. The following are some things that might be suggested to be cut off: visiting public beaches where scanty attire arouses lust; magazines which publish obscene or suggestive pictures; television shows and even commercials which glorify uncleanness; reading material which defiles the imagination, and even fellowship with people whose conversation tends toward the unclean. To absolutely lay the axe to the root of the tree is not too violent an action to be taken by the disciple of Christ who desires to please the Savior.

IV A Pure Bride: The Lord wants us to be a pure and spotless bride for Himself. He expects us to be clothed in the wedding garments of absolute purity so that He may present us as His beloved bride to His Father at His return. Temptations to impurity are increased. The spirit of uncleanness is everywhere, even finding place in the teaching of so-called Christian churches. We need a super-defense against this onslaught of Satan. The fire of the Holy Spirit alone can bring to us that passion for purity that will keep our garments unspotted by the flesh and prepare us as a bride adorned for her husband. Keep us pure, Lord Jesus.

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taken. It is an effective testimony when converted individuals return tools and goods or pay for things used unethically. Restitution is a greater proof of repentance than tears.

IV The Grace of Generosity: The Lord gives a wonderful antidote to the believer to make him absolutely overcome any tendency toward dishonesty. The Christian philosophy is diametrically opposed to the modern materialistic ethic. Paul expressed

it well when he quoted our Lord as saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). The Spirit of Christ within surely will enable us to cultivate this beautiful grace. Then our chief concern will not be for grasping the things of earth for ourselves but rather for giving to God the things that are God's and sharing with the less fortunate the things with which God has entrusted us.

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is clear that believers today must be alert to overcome every temptation to untruth. The lie has so many devious forms that we cannot be too vigilant. Consider the habit of exaggeration; it is nothing but lying. Flattery also belongs in this category, as does misrepresentation of merchandise, gossip, slander, innuendo, distortion and many, many more borderline sins.

If we are children of the Father in heaven, we will speak and do the truth, but if the truth is not in us, we may, like the lying Pharisees, be children of the Devil. God forbid. "I would be true."

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to the enemies of God to blaspheme because of yielding to lustful covetousness. This lustful coveting of his neighbor's wife began by accidentally (?) seeing her bathing. It ended in adultery, murder, and the death of the offspring. David's thorough repentance restored his relationship with God, but the consequences brought about by the yielding to this covetousness for fleshly gratification ruined the circumstances of David's home life and of his kingdom. The tragic affair of Ammon and Tamar (II Sam. 13), the treason of Absalom (II Sam. 15), the unfaithfulness of Ahithophel (II Sam. 17), and the relentless domineering of Joab, were all direct results of David's sinful excursion into adultery. No amount of tears and repentance could avert these disastrous consequences of sin. However, one determined act of turning his eyes from the fleshly, covetous temptation could have saved years of agony and remorse.

If tempted Christians could foresee the grief, the disease, the jealousy, the murder, the ruined lives and destroyed usefulness which can result from one moment of weakness, surely they would be willing, as Jesus suggested, to pluck out the eye rather than to covet their neighbor's wife.

IV *Overcoming the Temptation:* Paul quotes words of Jesus which are not found in the Gospels: "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35). The Christian is to cultivate an attitude of generosity to supplant the natural desire to acquire. Those to whom riches are given are to use them for the glory of God, for the help of the truly needy, and to make friends of spiritual benefit with the unrighteous mammon.

In the light of all the teaching in the New Testament regarding the danger of riches and the hindrances they present to entering the Kingdom of God, it is indeed paradoxical that so many Christians are laboring to be rich.

The prevalence of obscenity in our contemporary society is constantly arousing covetousness for unclean fleshly gratification. The child of God, destined to be the pure bride of Christ, must fight fiercely with every spiritual weapon provided, against every unclean thought. How much simpler to kill the root than to go after all the windblown seeds of this devastating weed of lust. God puts it so simply: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife...nor anything that is thy neighbor's." Let us obey it.

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III *Christian Love in Daily Life:* Jesus spoke to His disciples of the **new commandment** after He had washed their feet. Real love always finds a way to express itself. Someone has said, "You may give without loving; but you cannot love without giving." This Christlike love that is the rightful portion of those filled with the Spirit of Christ cannot be bottled up in ideals and abstract theories. It must find a way of expression. Many men and women have come to know the reality of Christ through the sincere kindness of Christians. Sincere interest and kind deeds may penetrate where sermons can never reach.

Yet this love cannot be a honey-coated manner which never displeases its object. Real love is willing to risk offending its object for the sake of the long-range benefit of that one. The Christian virtue of love must sometimes reprimand and teach so that there might be no eternal loss to the one loved.

We would all do very well to minutely study out the "love chapter," (I Cor. 13), and put our foot down on every single thing in our lives that is contrary to its description of love. Those who have made this chapter the subject of diligent prayer have reaped abundant benefit from it.

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chose rather to consider the truth of God's word and His power to do anything. It was this faith in Abraham that God counted as his righteousness.

Now God asks us to believe the promises of the gospel. This promise is: through the atoning work of Jesus, we who were sinners are forgiven and regenerated and brought into the family of God as His sons and daughters, and that, when our Lord returns, we shall be like Him. This promise, like that to Abraham, seems impossible. But our attitude of faith is counted unto us for righteousness. The same God who worked out the fulfillment of this promise to Abraham will work out the fulfillment of the gospel promise in us. We must believe God and have patience. Twenty-five years elapsed until the promise was fulfilled in the birth of Isaac. We must allow the Lord to work in us, changing us into His likeness from glory to glory by His Spirit, no matter how long it takes.

IV *Christ our Righteousness:* Finally, we must consider the perfect fulfillment of the righteousness of the Law in the life of Jesus. Right at the beginning, He declared that He had not come to destroy the Law, but to fulfill it. This Jesus did down to the last jot and tittle. This perfect fulfillment of the Law by Christ is offered to us as we believe. Not only did Jesus take our place as sinners when He died on the cross, but He also offered us His place of glory through His fulfilled righteousness.

Let us be sure to claim all the power for obedience which is offered to us in the Word of God. The power of the Holy Ghost makes us strong where we have been weak. The power of faith in the promises of the gospel is imputed unto us as righteousness. Our place in Christ identifies us with the One who has perfectly fulfilled the Law of God.

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begotten Son to the Cross for us, and the love of Christ which moved Him to minister to the sick and to save the outcast, inspire us to acts of self-sacrifice in order that we might bring the light of life to a condemned humanity.