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***"Restoring truth in a world of confusion"***



**BIOGRAPHY/BACKGROUND:**

**Biography/Background for Ed Van Buskirk, Executive Director of** [***IfULoveMe.org***](https://ifuloveme.org/)**:**

For the first 47 years of my life, the Ten Commandments really didn’t mean that much to me. They were just one of the teachings of the church that I had learned along the way. They were referred to in sermons or in Scripture from time to time. Then, in 2009, I was sitting with 180 other men at a men’s program called “That Man is You.” Steve Bollman was the presenter and he told a story that changed my life, and hopefully will change yours too. Steve and a group of colleagues, who were very successful in the financial world, were meeting for dinner one night. When Steve arrived, the conversation was already underway. They were talking about whether one of the men at the table was a “good guy.” Let’s call him Tim. Tim had claimed to be a good guy and the other men, being competitive in nature, challenged him and asked how he knew he was a good guy. As any good finance professionals would do, they decided they needed a good way to measure just how good of a guy Tim was. After some discussion someone suggested they use the Ten Commandments, and everyone agreed. What happened next was what really caught my attention. To measure Tim, they needed a list of the Commandments. This was before cell phones, so it was up to the men to come up with the list themselves. They looked at each other asking, “Do you know the Ten Commandments.”

As I sat watching, I chuckled nervously along with the other men in the room because, even though I attended Catholic schools from kindergarten through college and had been active at church my entire life, I wouldn’t have been able to get through all the Commandments.  Eventually, someone asked Steve if he knew them. He said, “Yes, I know the Ten Commandments.” And then they asked, “Do you know them in order?” He said, “Yes, I know them in order.” So, starting with the first commandment, “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall not have other gods beside me,” they put Tim to the test. Immediately Tim claimed the first Commandment was an easy one and that he knows God and doesn’t have other gods. But his competitive friends pushed back and asked, “What do love more, God or money?” Tim looked back at them like a deer in the headlights and stammered a bit. Then someone asked, “Which do you spend more time doing, praying or playing golf?” Now Tim was somewhat rattled and said, “Yeah, but that doesn’t mean anything. I know who God is, I pray and sometimes I go to church.”  From there, the conversation went into a debate about whether Tim deserved a point for the First Commandment. Finally, someone said, “Let’s just give Tim the point. He is going to need it because he isn’t going to get many of the rest.” They went through all ten Commandments and Tim’s score was four. I sat there in silence with the other 180 men, as each of us looked in the mirror asking ourselves, “Would I have fared any better than Tim? Could I claim that I was a good guy?” I wasn’t proud of my answer.  In a person’s life there might be, at most, a handful of moments that abruptly set a new course for the rest of their lives. That morning was one of those moments for me. It really bothered me that I didn’t know and wasn’t really living the Ten Commandments as I should have.

Then, like when you buy a new car and suddenly spot the same model car everywhere you go, references to the Ten Commandments started popping up everywhere. I became amazed at how frequently the Ten Commandments appeared in the readings at church and in homilies. Books that I read made references to them and most importantly I became more aware of how well I did—or didn’t—obey the Ten Commandments. I began to read about the Ten Commandments and talk with my friends about them. One day it dawned on me that the Ten Commandments are the solution to many of the problems of our day. I went through them one at a time and wrote a letter about how each of them, if fully embraced, would solve the vast majority, or maybe even all, of the problems we face personally, in our families and in our society. Once a week, for about six months, I sent a copy of the letter to then-President Barrack Obama, encouraging him to bring the Ten Commandments back into the spotlight as a solution to various problems. Of course, all I ever got back were form letters.

Then, one day I heard a “still small voice” say to me, “What is stopping you from bringing the Ten Commandments into the spotlight?” I was petrified! I tried to silence the voice by getting busy with work and family and other “good things.” But it didn’t work. That voice continued and got louder. I began sharing Steve’s story with friends and testing some of my ideas to promote the Ten Commandments. Along the way, I formulated a plan to get things situated in my life so I could focus on what that still small voice was telling me. I feel I have waited much too long but I’m learning to trust that God’s hand is in all of this and His timing is just right.

Recently, I have been working to establish a non-profit called IfULoveMe.org. The mission of IfULoveMe.org is “To discover joy and freedom through the Ten Commandments.” As I work on this non-profit, I am discovering the richness of the Ten Commandments and how they are refreshing in their simplicity and amazing in their completeness for living a joy-filled life. To say that I am nervous and excited about what lies ahead in this endeavor is putting it mildly. But I am compelled to try. Please pray for me and join me in bringing God’s gift of the Ten Commandments back into the spotlight and into the hearts of families, our communities, our nation and the world. Without God’s Commandments we face calamity and heartache. With them, God promises harmony, joy and true freedom!