

The Big Picture: Finding Jesus in the Old Testament:

Week 6– The Ten Commandments: More Than Rules

Exodus 19:1–6; Exodus 20:1–17; Jeremiah 31:31–34

Opening Prayer:

Gracious God, thank You for bringing us together today. Open our hearts and minds as we study Your Word. Help us to see beyond rules and discover the relationship You desire with us. Through Your Holy Spirit, teach us to love You more deeply and to live in ways that reflect Your grace. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Theme:

The Ten Commandments were never intended to be a checklist for earning God's love. They were given to a people God had already rescued, teaching them how to live in covenant relationship with Him and with one another. Ultimately, the law points us to Jesus, who fulfilled it perfectly and now writes God's law upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Secular Quote:

*"Discipline is choosing between what you want now and what you want most."
—Abraham Lincoln (attributed)*

Starter Question:

When you hear the words "The Ten Commandments," what is the very first thought or memory that comes to mind?

Digging Deeper Questions

Read Exodus 20:1–2.

Notice that before giving any commandments, God reminds Israel that He has already rescued them from slavery.

- Why do you think God begins with grace instead of commands?
- How does this change the way we should understand the Ten Commandments?

Read Exodus 19:4–6.

God says He carried Israel "on eagles' wings" and brought them "to Himself."

- What does this passage teach us about God's desire for a relationship with His people?
- How is a covenant different from simply following rules?

Read Matthew 22:34–40.

Jesus summarizes the entire law with two commandments.

- Why do you think Jesus reduces all 613 Old Testament laws to loving God and loving our neighbor?
- How do the Ten Commandments reflect these two great commandments?

Read Jeremiah 31:31–34.

Jeremiah promises that God will write His law upon people's hearts.p

- What does it mean for God's law to be written on our hearts rather than on stone tablets?
- How is that promise fulfilled through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit?

Read Matthew 5:17–20.

Jesus says He came to fulfill the Law.

- What do you think it means that Jesus fulfilled the law instead of abolishing it?
- How does Christ's fulfillment of the law affect the way Christians should live today?

Reflect Together

Many Christians struggle with one of two extremes. Some believe Christianity is mostly about keeping rules. Others believe grace means rules no longer matter. How does the gospel help us avoid both extremes? How can obedience become an expression of love instead of an attempt to earn God's approval?

Actionable of the Week:

This week, choose **one** of the Ten Commandments and intentionally view it through the lens of **love instead of obligation**. Ask yourself each day: What does this command reveal about God's character? How can obeying this command help me love God or love someone else more faithfully today? At the end of the week, spend a few minutes reflecting on how that perspective changed the way you viewed God's commands.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank You for rescuing us through Jesus Christ before asking us to follow You. Thank You that Your commandments reveal Your love and guide us toward lives that honor You. Write Your Word upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit, and help us to obey not out of fear, but out of gratitude and love. May we leave this place seeking to love You with all our heart and to love our neighbors as ourselves. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

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Monday – A God Who Rescues First

Scripture: Exodus 20:1–2

Focus Verse: *"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." (Exodus 20:2)*

Reflection: Before God gave Israel commandments, He reminded them of His grace. God's relationship with His people always begins with rescue, not rule-keeping. How has God first shown His grace to you?

Tuesday – Loving God Above All

Scripture: Deuteronomy 6:4–9

Focus Verse: *"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might." (Deuteronomy 6:5)*

Reflection: The commandments begin with loving God above everything else. What competes for first place in your life, and how can you intentionally place God at the center today?

Wednesday – The Greatest Commandments

Scripture: Matthew 22:34–40

Focus Verse: *"'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart... and your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." (Matthew 22:37–40)*

Reflection: Jesus summarized the entire law in one word: love. Consider one practical way you can demonstrate love for God and love for another person today.

Thursday – The Law as Our Mirror

Scripture: Romans 3:19–26

Focus Verse: *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift..." (Romans 3:23–24)*

Reflection: The law shows us our need for a Savior, but God's grace meets us where we fall short. Spend time thanking Jesus for doing what you could never accomplish on your own.

Friday – A New Heart

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:31–34

Focus Verse: *"I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts." (Jeremiah 31:33)*

Reflection: God desires more than outward obedience—He desires inward transformation. Ask the Holy Spirit to continue shaping your heart to reflect Christ.

Saturday – Living by the Spirit

Scripture: Galatians 5:16–26

Focus Verse: *"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." (Galatians 5:22–23)*

Reflection: The Christian life is not about trying harder but walking with the Holy Spirit. Which fruit of the Spirit do you most want God to cultivate in your life this week?

Weekly Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for fulfilling the law on our behalf and for giving us Your Spirit to transform our hearts. Help us to love You more deeply, love our neighbors more faithfully, and live each day as people who have been set free by Your grace. May our obedience always be a joyful response to Your great love. Amen.