

PUT GOD FIRST

Small Group Study Guide | May 12, 2024

GRACE
FELLOWSHIP

Today is Mother's Day! Take a few moments to share with your group about the godly influence your mom or a mother-figure has had on your life.

Discuss: Why do you think God gave Israel (and us) the 10 Commandments?

Introduction to Series: 3 Basic Facts about the 10 Commandments

1. God gave the 10 Commandments to show Israel (and us) how we are to relate to Him and to one another.

After freeing the Israelites from Egyptian slavery, God gave them 10 Commandments to govern their daily lives in Exodus 20:3-17. These 10 laws were intended for their personal and national well-being—following them would result in blessings and happiness. About 40 years later, after the first generation of Israelites passed away in the wilderness, God gave the 10 Commandments a second time in Deuteronomy 5:7-21 (the word “Deuteronomy” means “second law”) to instruct the new generation of Israelites on how to live in the Promised Land they were about to enter. The 10 Commandments reveal God’s loving and holy nature; thus, they continue to point us to God, showing us how we are to relate to Him and to one another today. Although given 3500 years ago, God’s “Relationships Top 10” will never go out of date!

Discuss: Which of the 10 Commandments (Ex.20:3-17; Deut.5:7-21) emphasize our relationship with God? Which ones emphasize our relationships with one another?

2. Obeying the 10 Commandments cannot provide salvation for us.

God gave the 10 Commandments to teach His people how to live, not to save them. The law is God’s way of telling us what sin is and revealing to us that we are sinful (Rom.7:7-9). Knowing that the Israelites could not obey His law perfectly, and thus would have to pay the penalty for sin which is death (Gen.2:17; Rom.6:23), God established a temporary animal sacrificial system through which they could be forgiven when they broke God’s law (see the Book of Leviticus). Years later, Jesus Christ, God’s Son, came to earth, obeyed God’s law perfectly (Mat.5:17-18) and died on the cross as our substitute (1 Pet.3:18). Christ’s once-for-all death did away with the animal sacrificial system forever (Heb.9:11-14). Now anyone—Jew or Gentile—who trusts in Christ will be justified by grace through faith (Eph.2:8-9). The 10 Commandments cannot save us; rather, they reveal the sin inside us and lead us to the One who can save us: Jesus Christ! John 1:17 says, *“The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”*

Discuss: How does Paul describe the purpose of God’s law in Galatians 3:23-26?

3. Although the 10 Commandments cannot provide salvation for us, they remain God’s life-instructions on how we are to relate to Him and to one another.

Discuss: How did Jesus summarize the 10 Commandments in Matthew 22:37-40? How does His statement encapsulate all of God’s law?

Today's Lesson: "Put God First"

Key Text: *"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. 7 You shall have no other gods before me."* (Deuteronomy 5:6-7)

In our "Relationships Top 10" series, we'll look at each of the 10 Commandments through three lenses: "What is God teaching us about Himself?" "What is God teaching us about ourselves?" and "How does God want us to live?"

1. Revelation – What is God teaching us about Himself in Commandment #1?

Through Commandment #1, God is teaching us that He is the only true and living God. As such, He alone has the incontestable right to demand and expect us to worship and obey Him as an expression of reverence and thanksgiving to Him.

Discuss: What does 1 Corinthians 8:4-6 say about false gods and the true God?

Discuss: According to John 4:23-24, what kind of worshippers is God seeking?

Discuss: What other truths do you think God is teaching us about Himself through Commandment #1?

2. Introspection – What is God teaching us about ourselves in Commandment #1?

Through Commandment #1, God is teaching us that we are designed to be worshippers; however, our hearts can easily drift away from God and turn toward false gods. We must choose—and keep on choosing—to put God first in our lives. There is no middle ground in our relationship with God!

Discuss: According to Romans 1:18-25, how do hard-hearted, nonbelieving people respond to the inner prompting to worship God, and how does God deal with them?

Discuss: What other truths do you think God is teaching us about ourselves through Commandment #1?

3. Transformation – How does God want us to live per Commandment #1?

The acrostic F.I.R.S.T. can help us remember to keep God first in our lives.

Finances – Keep God first in how we manage the money He entrusts to us.

Interests – Keep God first in our desires, dreams, hobbies, recreation, etc.

Relationships – Keep God first in our family, friendships, associations, etc.

Schedule – Keep God first in how we manage the time He entrusts to us.

Talent – Keep God first in how we use the abilities He has entrusted to us.

Discuss: How can we apply Commandment #1 to our daily lives in accordance with Exodus 23:13; 34:14; Deuteronomy 6:14; 8:18-19; 11:16; 28:14?

For Further Study:

Free online study tools (commentaries, dictionaries, etc.) at blueletterbible.org

Ten Secrets of Successful Living: A Perfect 10 for Families That Win by Adrian Rogers

"You Shall Have No Other Gods Before Me" article at gotquestions.org