

PATHWAY TO PEACE: BIBLE STUDY GUIDE – LESSON 15**Loving God: Part 1 [1st and 2nd Commandment]**

Remember that the foundation of God's Ten Commandment Law is love. In the previous lesson we learned from the Bible that the first four commandments demonstrate our love toward God and the last six commandments demonstrate our love towards our fellowman. Jesus says in John14:15 that If ye love me, keep my commandments. If we truly and sincerely love God we will express our love toward Him by keeping His commandments, not in our own strength, but in the strength of God living within us. We also learned by comparing scripture with scripture last Bible study that God's Ten Commandment Law is a perfect reflection of His character. God and His law is love, perfect, unchangeable, and holy.

In Exodus 31:18 reveals that God wrote His Ten Commandment Law on two tables of stone written with His own finger. Did you know in **Hebrews 8:10** it says that God wants to permanently place His Law in your mind and write them on the fleshy tables of your heart. In other words, with the leading of the Holy Spirit your conscience mind will be guided by the principles of God's Holy Ten commandment Law. These principles will guide every action and transaction of your life. And those who invite Christ in their lives and have the law of God written in their heart will obey God rather than men.

This Bible study lesson is the beginning of a thorough examination of God's Ten Commandment Law in **Exodus 20:1-17**. Remember from our previous studies that the Ten Commandments, according to **First John 3:4** defines sin. We must go to the mirror of God, His ten commandments and examine ourselves thoroughly to see how much sin we have in our lives. When we see how much sin we have in our lives. We will see how desperately we really need the cleaning agent, Jesus Christ to cleanse us from our sin so we can have eternal life. But before we start our thorough examination of the Ten Commandments we MUST answer this question first.

1. Can we truly keep God's law as commanded in our own strength?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Romans 8:7; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9

Write Bible Answer:

Romans 8:7 says ⁷Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. Psalm 51:5 indicates that we are born in sin and shaped into iniquity because we all were birthed into a sinful world. In other words, we are all subject to sin. Our carnal mind is our natural tendency to do sin. The carnal mind is our sinful natural. Jeremiah 17:9 indicates that our hearts our deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. So as sinful beings we are not **naturally** inclined to truly keep God's Ten Commandment Law.

2. Realizing that we can not naturally keep God's Ten Commandment Law what promise does God give us that gives us the ability to keep His Law?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Ezekiel 36:26-27; Philippians 2:13; Galatians 2:20

Write Bible Answer:

Remember God's Law is the transcript of His character. His Law perfectly reflects Him. We must allow Christ to live in us to perfectly reflect His Law. You can not naturally keep God's Law, but if you invite Christ to live in your life you will freely keep His Law. And it would be a joy to keep His Law because it is the Spirit of God dwelling within you enabling you to keep it. We will not treat His Ten Commandment Law like a buffet only picking and choosing the commandments that we like. We will treat His Commandments as a whole meal all by itself obeying all Ten of God Commandments.

Now that we have a clearer understanding that we can not naturally keep God's Law and that we must have Christ living in us to do so let's begin our thorough examination of God's Ten Commandments found in **Exodus 20:1-17**.

3. How is God's Ten Commandment Law introduced?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Exodus 20:1, 2; Psalm 19:7

Write Bible Answer:

Exodus 20:1 says, "And God spake all these words, saying." Not only did God write the Ten Commandments with His own finger but He spoke them with His lips. When Exodus 20:1 says "and God spake" the Hebrew word there for God is Elohim. Now, Elohim is a general title for "God," which occurs more than 2,500 times in the Bible. The root of this word Elohim implies "strength," and "power." Elohim is first used for God as Creator in Genesis 1:1. God's creation tends to arouse in man awe, reverence, and a sense of utter dependence. The name Elohim represents the God who has revealed Himself by His mighty acts in creation. The same God who spoke the world into existence also spoke His law and we all know that there is power in the word of God. That's why Psalms 19:7 says "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul:" because there is creative power in the law since God spake them and that creative power is to create within us a new heart to do His will. But the introduction or prelude of God's Law does not stop in verse 1 it continues in verse 2. Exodus 20:2 says, "I am the Lord thy God." Let's stop right there. Where as Elohim is a general title, here God gives us a specific name, "the Lord thy God". The Hebrew word here for Lord is Jehovah. Jehovah is the living God, the Source of Life who distinguishes Himself from any other "gods" that are just illusions in the minds of its worshipers and are not the source of life. Verse 2 continues to say, "which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." The end of verse 2 gives us here the reason for God authority. Not only is God Elohim mighty, powerful and creator of all things, He is the deliverer who freed the Israelites from bondage of several hundred years of slavery in Egypt and frees us today from the bondage of sin through the plan of salvation. Exodus 20:1 & 2 summarizes the reason why we are to worship God.

Now let's go to the spiritual mirror, God's Ten Commandment Law, to see how much of the mud of sin that we have on our faces. But praise the Lord, when we find we have the mud of sin on our face we can go to Jesus and He will clean the mud of sin from our faces. Let's go ahead and examine the first two of the Ten Commandments.

4. What is the first commandment and its meaning in God's Law?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Exodus 20:3; Matthew 6:24 & 33; Matthew 6:21; James 1:8; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Philippians 3:17 – 19; Luke 14:26;

Write Bible Answer:

Again it is clear from our examination of the introduction of God's Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1&2 that God is the authority, author, originator, and true God of the only legal document recorded in the Bible that was written with His own finger. So in the first commandment of God He clearly states His authority over all that of His creation. Our very existence is because of Him. He wants us to recognize Him as Creator the only true God. So anything, anybody, or any imaginary illusion of a god that takes precedence, primacy, or priority over God the Creator in a person's life he or she is breaking God's first commandment. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ who came to magnify His Law, clarifies the meaning of the first commandment in **Matthew 6:24 and 33**. Matthew 6:24 makes it clear that we can only have one master. There is no in between, either it is God the Creator that is first in your life or not. And if God is not first in your life Satan is by default. We can not be double minded. Serving God and Satan. The Bible in **James 1:8** says that "a double minded man is unstable in ALL his ways." Jesus commands us in Matthew 6:33, to "seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.". To add to that in **First Corinthians 10:31** says that ³¹Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. So, in all things God must be first. He must be first even before your family members, wife, husband, children, mother or father. Matter of fact Jesus says in **Luke 14:26** that "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." Hate is the context meaning "love less." In other words if you love them more than God, you can be a disciple (student) of Jesus.

So how do you know that you are putting something or somebody before God and breaking His first commandment? Remember there are only two choices God or Satan. **Matthew 6:21** says that "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." "Your treasure" in this text is not just money, it can be anything that you revere as being valuable. That can be either time or money or both. Ask yourself some personal questions that are only between you and God, where do you put God in your life? Is He first in your life? Now, if you wrote down how much time you spend thinking about God, praying to God, serving others, having personal Bible study and how much money you spend in spreading the gospel of Christ compared to the many other activities in your life, what would it look like? Does it appear that TV, job, sports, entertainment or family have priority over God? This is very serious. Many may emotionally feel that God is a primary in their lives, how you spend your time and money really tells the truth of the matter. Where do you spend most of your time or money? Do you know that where you spend the most time and/or money mentally or physically that is your god? So, if God is not primary, or the number one priority in your lives we are breaking His first commandment. If you are guilty of breaking or disobeying God's first commandment, go to Jesus and ask Him to cleanse you from your sin. And God will help you make Him number one in your life only if you allow Him totally in your life.

Now, that we have a clear understanding of God's first commandment, let's examination the next commandment.

5. What is God's second commandment and its meaning?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Exodus 20:4 - 6; Revelation 22:9; Romans 1:21-25; Jeremiah 17:5 – 8; Matthew 4:10; Revelation 14:6 & 7

Write Bible Answer:

Now in the first commandment found in verse 3, we saw that God clearly establishes His authority to be primary or number one in our lives because He is our Creator and deliverer and we worship Him by not worshiping anything else. Here in God's second commandment we see that God gives even more specifics about how we should worship Him. God says that we are not to make any graven images nor bow now to them. Now, bowing down to an image in the second commandment is an act of worship and reverence to an image or idol. Let's make it simple. A graven image or idol can be anything or anybody, that is worshiped or held at a high regard and reverenced rather than God. An image is usually physical replica of the imagination! Idolatry is worshiping anything that is made by man or created by God. Because anything made by man or created by God is inferior to God. Only God is Superior. He is Supreme and nothing else. The second commandment makes it clear that nothing in earth, around earth, or above earth should be worshiped that includes all the beautiful things that God created. So that includes the sun, moon, and stars are not to be worshiped even though they are magnificent in beauty, they should cause us to worship the One who created them. To take that a step further, the Bible also teaches that not even God's powerful and beautiful angels are to be worshiped because they are created beings as man are created beings. In fact in Revelation 22: 9 after John fell down to worship an angel the angel said "See that thou do it not for I am thy fellow servant...worship God." True worship at its core involves a man directing his thought to a being greater than himself and only God is Greater. How can anything made especially by made man be greater than himself if he made it. Paul even mentioned in Romans 1:20 - 25 of the foolishness of worshiping the creature more than the Creator. It is also clear that we are not to worship things created by God or things that were carved or are the made by man. We are not to bow down to worship or reverence anything or anybody even if it is suppose to represent God. We do not need a religious image to worship God or show our awe and reverence before God. Whenever man worships anything or any person, rather than God that man is violating God's Law. We should not even lift ourselves up or our ideologies or ideas that are contrary to the Word of God. To do so is to make yourself, your ideology and/or imagination into a god. We should only use our talents and gifts that God gives us to glorify Him and not ourselves. Even when we trust ourselves instead of God is also a violation of the second commandment. Jeremiah 17:5 & 7 says, "⁵Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD. ⁷Blessed is the man that trusteth in the LORD, and whose hope the LORD is." Trust and worship God only.

When Satan suggested Jesus to fall down and worship him in order to gain the world we must remember the Words of Jesus in Matthew 4:10, he said, "thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou worship.

In conclusion of the question must be repeated, where or how do you spend your time and money? This will not only determine who your god is but it will also determine who you worship. As you look into the law of God do you see the mud of sin on your face? Confess to God and the blood of Jesus will clean you up.