



2020-2021 STUDY

The Ten Commandments

HOLY, JUST, GOOD (ROMANS 7:12)

**Digging Deep 2020-2021 Men's Bible Study Guide
By Ben Giselbach and Caleb Colley**

Quarter Two (December through February)

- December: “You shall not make for yourself an idol”
- January: “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain”
- February: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy”

Instructions for using this material:

1. The Digging Deep study material is designed to facilitate in-depth group Bible study, and not to merely dispense information from “teacher” to “student.” As you go through the study, you will want to have separate paper or a computer on which to record your thoughts. (We do not leave space in this document for your answers to discussion-oriented questions.)
2. There are many tools that will help in digging, such as Bible encyclopedias, Greek and Hebrew lexical books, commentaries, etc. Many are available for free on-line. If you need help accessing such materials, ask others in your group or ask Ben or Caleb. There is a document listing some free resources at calebcolley.com/diggingdeep (see the document titled “On-line resources for Men’s Digging Deep Bible Study”).
3. The Facebook group is an interactive portion of the study. Find it at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1564776240335067/> (or search “Digging Deep Men’s Bible Study” on Facebook). If you don’t have Facebook, you can still contribute to the discussion by emailing your comments to calebcolley@gmail.com or ben@plainsimplefaith.com.
4. As we go through the study together, please provide questions and comments to the nationwide study group on Facebook. It will be great to have an ongoing discussion about the material.
5. A monthly video podcast will be posted on the Facebook page.
6. Glenn Colley will assist us by preaching a sermon each month on the topic for that month’s Digging Deep study. The sermons will be posted at calebcolley.com/diggingdeep.

Month Four: “You shall not make for yourself an idol”

Introduction

- A. Read Exodus 20:2-5; Deuteronomy 4:12-20; 26:2-7, noting that the second and the fourth commandments are the two longest commandments of the ten.
- B. Compare the commands you just read to what we find in Judges 2:11-23, Jeremiah 2:28; 11:10, and 2 Kings 17:17-23. What does the Bible say about Israel’s failure to keep the second commandment?

I. The restrictions in the commandment.

- A. There are three restrictions in the commandment: First, the second commandment forbids the *making* of a “carved” (NKJV, ESV) or “graven” (KJV) idol.
 1. With some lexical tools, research the Hebrew word translated “image” or “idol.” What does this word mean?
 2. “Any likeness” (v. 4b) encompasses any image or idol that might not be covered by the precise meaning of *pesel*, but is nonetheless covered by the spirit of the commandment. Think about the “works of the flesh” in Galatians 5:19-21, which ends with the phrase, “and things like these.”
 - a) Must God specifically condemn an activity in order to prohibit it? To support your answer, consider the article here: <https://www.christiancourier.com/articles/1307-the-bible-doesnt-say-dont-do-it-does-it>.
 - b) What sins are not explicitly forbidden in the Bible but nonetheless are forbidden due to implications of the biblical text? List at least five, with references to the Scriptures where the sin is implicitly forbidden.
 - (1) _____
 - (2) _____
 - (3) _____
 - (4) _____
 - (5) _____
 - c) Would it have been wrong for the Israelites to make any artwork pictures or statues representing natural objects or animals *per se*, such as a sculpture of a lion? In formulating your answer, consider Numbers 20:6-20 and 2 Kings 18:1-6.

3. Consider John 4:24. Why do you think God forbids portraying Himself with something that is material?
 - a) James Burton Coffman wrote on this passage: “The reasons for this are profound. By its very nature any religious image is false, being a lying presentation of what is allegedly represented. How can that which is material represent anything spiritual? How can that which is helpless represent eternal omnipotence? How can that which decays represent life eternal? How can that which is not intelligent represent omniscience? How can that which is dumb, unfeeling, blind, and dead represent any of the vital realities of God and holy religion?”¹
 4. Verse 4c further clarifies what is forbidden: anything above the earth, on the earth, or under the earth. What is the significance of mentioning these three categories? In your answer, draw parallels to Genesis 1:26, 28 and Romans 8:37-39.
- B. Second, the second commandment forbids *bowing down* to the carved idol.
1. Could a person justify bowing down to a graven image if he did not worship in his heart? Find a biblical example that would help clarify this matter.
- C. Third, the second commandment forbids *servicing* the carved idol.
1. Do we tend to worship those things which we serve? Is there a distinction between bowing down and serving an idol? In your answer, consider Romans 12:1, and particularly the word translated “service.” (Some translations use the word “worship,” which is a misleading translation). Do a lexical study of this word, and consider the article are:

II. The relationship of the commandment.

- A. Notice how the second commandment is inseparable from the first commandment. The first commandment tells us *whom* to worship; this commandment tells us *how* to worship.
- B. Practically speaking, how does the violation of the principle behind the *first* commandment manifest itself in the violation of the principle behind the second commandment today? Use Romans 1:22-23 in your answer.

III. The rejection of the commandment.

- A. Historically, mankind frequently ignored the biblical principle behind this commandment.

¹ *Commentary on Exodus*, Abilene, TX: ACU Press, 1985, p. 273.

1. Find at least three occasions in the Bible when Israelites broke the second commandment:
 - a) _____
 - b) _____
 - c) _____
 2. The city of Athens in Paul’s day was filled with idols (Acts 17:16). Using a Bible encyclopedia, research the idolatry Paul encountered in Athens.
- B. What religions violate the principle of this commandment today, and how? Discuss an example from within Christendom, and two examples from outside Christendom.

IV. The retribution of the commandment.

- A. “...visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me” (Exodus 20:5, NASB). Here we find the promise of divine retribution for those who break God’s laws, and a reminder that when we sin, we harm not only ourselves, but also other (innocent) people—potentially for years to come.
1. In what way(s) do our sins affect others? Consider 1 Corinthians 15:33 and Matthew 18:5-6 in your answer.
 2. In what way(s) do our sins not affect others? Consider Romans 14:12 and 2 Corinthians 5:10 in your answer.
- B. Consider God’s jealousy: Modern English-speakers often use “jealousy” and “envy” interchangeably, but there are two attitudes in the Bible—one godly and one sinful. What is the difference between godly jealousy and sinful envy? Write a paragraph explanation of the difference, noting the following passages: Exodus 34:14; Numbers 12:1-16; Deuteronomy 32:16; 1 Kings 19:10; Song of Solomon 8:6; Ezekiel 8:5-6; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Matthew 20:1-16; 1 Corinthians 3:3; 13:4; Galatians 5:19-21.
1. In light of Deuteronomy 24:16 and Ezekiel 18:20, in what sense could we say that God punishes children for their fathers’ sins?

V. The recompense of the commandment.

- A. “...showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments” (Exodus 20:6, NASB). This commandment reminds us that it is of great benefit to obey.

1. Notice that love for God is to be the motivating factor behind their obedience. What does lack of obedience to God communicate? Furthermore, what would disinterest in keeping God's will with *precision* signify? Back up your answer with Scripture.

Month Five: “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain”

Introduction

- A. Begin this study of the Ten Commandments by re-reading Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:1-21.
- B. If you have not yet completed the third month’s study, which included a discussion of some of the name of the Lord (in both the introduction to the November study guide and in the November podcast), please review that section.

I. Taking the Lord’s name in vain.

- A. The words “take” and “vain” are critical for understanding what is being forbidden. Do a lexical study of these words. Based upon what you find, write a brief statement explaining how these words prohibit more than just verbalizing the name of God in an insincere way.
- B. The prohibition against taking the Lord’s name in vain is part of a larger context of sanctification or holiness: Throughout the Bible, we see God expects what is holy to be treated in a way that is different from the way in which people would treat objects that are profane or common. Make a list of at least four passages (two from the Old Testament, and two from the New Testament) that make this point.
 - 1. _____
 - 2. _____
 - 3. _____
- C. The broader meaning of “profanity” refers to treating anything deserving of respect as being trivial or totally disregarded.
 - 1. According to the cognitive psychologist Steven Pinker of Harvard University, who has written extensively on language, there are five possible functions of swearing.²
 - a) *To offend or cause emotional harm.* (I intended to offend or intimidate or cause emotional or psychological harm to you.)
 - b) *To respond to pain or misfortune.* (I hit my thumb. I drove the car into the ditch.)
 - c) *To convey opposition.* (I want to convey that I think negatively about something and want you to do the same.)

² *The Stuff of Language* (New York: Penguin, 2007).

- d) *To heighten the significance of something.* (I want you to pay more attention to some matter.)
 - e) *To convey informality or ease.* (This is idiomatic swearing, where I want to show that you and I have a good relationship. We understand each other. “This is just how we talk.”)
2. A person is being profane when he takes the Lord’s name in vain.
 - a) In order to take God’s name in vain, must a person use language indicating that God is or should be going to hell? Why not?
 - b) Profanity is very similar to blasphemy. Find some Bible passages that forbid blasphemy, and use a lexical source to find the meaning of the Greek verb translated “blaspheme.”
 3. Find each passage in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) where Jesus said something that regulated human speech. It will help to review your study of the Sermon on the Mount (if you were a part of the 2019-2020 Digging Deep study).

II. The holiness of the Lord’s name.

- A. Find a dozen passages that comment on how the name of the Lord should be regarded. For example, 1 Chronicles 16:29; Isaiah 29:23, etc.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____

12. _____

- B. Reviewing the list in II.A, and perhaps adding to it, make a list of at least three practical ways in which one could take the Lord's name in vain today. As you make your list, consult the following passages: Leviticus 22:2; Amos 5:21-22; Matthew 7:21-23; 15:7-9; Acts 19:13-15; Isaiah 48:1; 2 Timothy 2:19.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

- C. Adapt the results of your study in II.B-D above into an outline for a sermon or Bible class. Start by asking yourself, "What are major lessons that people need to know about the name of the Lord?"

III. Reasons to treat the name of the Lord as holy.

- A. Find a passage that teaches each of the following principles:

1. Salvation is only by the name of the Lord: _____

2. The Holy Spirit was sent in the name of the Lord: _____

3. Baptism is in the name of the Lord: _____

4. First-century miracles were performed in the name of the Lord: _____

5. Those in heaven glorify the name of the Lord: _____

6. Remission of sins is through the Lord's name: _____

7. We are saved by calling on the name of the Lord (in obedience): _____

8. God saves His people for the sake of His name: _____

IV. The penalty: The Lord will not leave him unpunished.

- A. Where in the Bible does God promise to punish all those who are deserving of punishment? Find an Old Testament passage and a New Testament passage.

- B. A person may think he is innocent and not deserving of punishment, but the only judgment that matter ultimately is the Lord's judgment.

1. Find some biblical examples of those who presumed that the Lord would approve them, and who found out (or will find out) otherwise.

Conclusion: Practical application.

- A. Is it possible for people to control their tongues, and avoid taking the Lord's name in vain? Why or why not? Consider 1 Corinthians 10:13 in your answer.
- B. If there is a noticeable increase in how often people in society use the Lord's name in a profane way, what would this suggest about the spirituality of that society?

Month Six: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy”

Introduction

- A. Begin this study of the Ten Commandments by re-reading Exodus 20:1-17 and Deuteronomy 5:1-21.
- B. Find an *Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* by W.E. Vine (available on-line for free at: <https://www.studylight.org/dictionaries/vot.html>). According to Vine, what is the origin and meaning of our English word “sabbath”?
- C. According to those in the Seventh-Day Adventist denomination, God always has required sabbath keeping. In discussing Exodus 20:8-11 and Deuteronomy 5:12-15, adventists focus on the use of the word “remember” in various translations (e.g., KJV) and argue that one cannot “remember” the special nature of the sabbath if it did not already exist. Thus, they trace the keeping of the Sabbath back to Adam.³ In response to the adventists’ argument on this point, consider:
 1. Do a word study of *samar*, the Hebrew word translated “remember.” Is the primary meaning of this word memory of the past, or on observation of some significance (to “keep” or “guard”)?
 2. Is it logical and practically plausible for God to command people to remember some event that is yet future at the time of the command? Consider Exodus 13:3 in your answer.

I. The design of the commandment.

- A. The purpose of the sabbath day, practically speaking, was rest. Old Testament law prohibited the Israelites from doing work on the sabbath (see Mark 2:27). Write a brief summary of what sabbath rest was like for the Israelites. In creating your response, consider the article here: <http://apologeticspress.org/apPubPage.aspx?pub=1&issue=1189&article=2507>.
- B. The sabbath was the last day of the week, based on the fact that the cosmos was created in the first six days, and God ceased from His creative work on the seventh day (Exodus 20:11; cf. Genesis 2:1-3). Comparing Exodus 20:8-11 with Deuteronomy 5:12-15, what are the two functions the Israelites were to fulfill on the sabbath day?
 1. _____
 2. _____

³ *Seventh-day Adventists believe...: A Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines* (Hagerstown: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1988), p. 251.

II. The duties in the commandment.

- A. Exodus 20:13 commands the principle of work. God intended that men work, as Adam and Eve were assigned chores in the Garden of Eden before they sinned (Genesis 2:15). List three New Testament passages that command men living today to work and provide for their families:
1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
- B. Does the command to “remember the sabbath day to keep it holy” imply the responsibility to do so “every” sabbath day? Similarly, does the authority to “break bread” on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7) imply the obligation of doing so every first day of the week? Consider 1 Corinthians 16:1-2 and 1 Corinthians 11:26 in your answer.
- C. What do the Ten Commandments say about worshipping on the sabbath?
1. When did sabbath worship begin? (You may need to consult a Bible encyclopedia.)
 2. What, then, did keeping the sabbath day “holy” mean? Consider the Hebrew word *qadash* that is used in this commandment.

III. The desecration of the commandment.

- A. According to Exodus 31:12-17, what happened to those who violated this commandment?
- B. Give Scriptural examples of at least two different ways in which the sabbath was violated or perverted, and give Scriptural examples of each.
1. _____
 2. _____

IV. The dissolution of the commandment.

- A. Read Colossians 2:8-14, and compare it with Ephesians 2:14-16. This is part of a discussion of the all-encompassing authority of Jesus. He was the Messiah whose coming was prophesied by Old Testament prophets and, with His coming, He fulfilled the purpose of the Old Testament (Galatians 3:24). Verse 14 teaches that, when Jesus died on the cross, He took the Old Law out of the way, nailing it to the cross. Ephesians 2:14–16 is a parallel passage stating that Jesus abolished the “law of commandments contained in

ordinances,” thereby putting to death the enmity between the Jews and Gentiles. So, with Jesus’ death on the cross He fulfilled the purpose of the old law (the Old Testament), instituted His own new law (the New Testament), and took the old law out of effect, as it was no longer needed (Galatians 3:24–25).

- B. Nine of the Ten Commandments in the Decalogue are re-stated as part of the law of Christ. The sabbath, however, is not sanctified in the law of Christ. Nowhere in the New Testament do we find Christians observing the sabbath, nor is there instruction to do so.
1. Sometimes it is suggested that, while the old law as such has been annulled, the Ten Commandments are unique in that they continue to apply. To answer this argument, consider Romans 7:1-7, where Paul specifies the law that was annulled. Did this law include the Ten Commandments?
 2. It is always right (on any day of the week) to pause and remember what the Lord has done for us, but are we permitted to obey the Old Testament sabbath law as a means of fulfilling God’s law for us? Consider Galatians 5:4.
- C. Fill in the chart on the next page with summaries of Paul’s teachings in the various passages mentioned:

Conclusion: Practical application.

- A. Paul wrote that the sabbath day is a “shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.” So, the Old Testament sabbath law for Israel should teach us something about Christ and His relationship to His people today. Read Hebrews 4:1-13 and describe the symbolic significance of the sabbath concept for the Christian. Answer the following questions:
1. What is God’s sabbath rest, as described by the Hebrews author, for the Christian?
 2. Will a church member who is not working for the Lord “during the six days” of his life enjoy the sabbath rest described by the Hebrews author?
 3. Is there a sense in which faithful Christians enjoy the sabbath rest during this present life?

Issue	Paul's position
Status of the old law	<p data-bbox="862 365 1084 401">Romans 7:4-6:</p> <hr data-bbox="492 443 1458 447"/> <hr data-bbox="492 485 1458 489"/> <hr data-bbox="492 527 1458 531"/> <p data-bbox="802 564 1146 600">Galatians 3:24-25; 5:4:</p> <hr data-bbox="492 642 1458 646"/> <hr data-bbox="492 684 1458 688"/> <hr data-bbox="492 726 1458 730"/>
Circumcision	<p data-bbox="867 800 1079 835">Galatians 5:6:</p> <hr data-bbox="492 877 1458 882"/> <hr data-bbox="492 919 1458 924"/> <hr data-bbox="492 961 1458 966"/> <p data-bbox="787 1001 1161 1037">Acts 16:3; Galatians 2:3:</p> <hr data-bbox="492 1079 1458 1083"/> <hr data-bbox="492 1121 1458 1125"/> <hr data-bbox="492 1163 1458 1167"/>
Food choices and special days, including the sabbath	<p data-bbox="737 1276 1211 1312">Galatians 4:10; Romans 14:1-6:</p> <hr data-bbox="492 1354 1458 1358"/> <hr data-bbox="492 1396 1458 1400"/> <hr data-bbox="492 1438 1458 1442"/> <hr data-bbox="492 1480 1458 1484"/>
Animal sacrifices	<p data-bbox="829 1625 1118 1661">Galatians 4:21-5:6:</p> <hr data-bbox="492 1703 1458 1707"/> <hr data-bbox="492 1745 1458 1749"/> <hr data-bbox="492 1787 1458 1791"/> <hr data-bbox="492 1829 1458 1833"/>