

Founding & Senior Pastor Dr. David Anderson
Bridgeway Community Church
Series: Living a MAKE IT BETTER Life
October 23, 2022

**Living a MAKE IT BETTER Life:
“10 Commandments to Make You Better” (Part II)**

A. OPENING COMMENTS

Today is the final message in our 6 week series on *Living a Make-it-Better Life*.

Question:

Have you'll enjoyed the word of God?

Next week, Kevin Turpin II, Bridgeway partner and bible teacher will preach a 2-week series on the Excellence of God & how we can be 10 times better because of it, entitled *His Excellency*. I'm excited to introduce him to you next Sunday. I will be here! Please come back for that.

I also want to thank Pastor Scott Garber for his years of service and teaching at Bridgeway. As he and his wife, Cindi, get involved in a church that is closer to them in Washington DC where they live we wish him the best. Bridgeway will always be their home away from home.

Can we put our hands together for all of our Bridgeway Clergy ministers and pastors who serve our church so faithful? It is my joy to serve alongside each and everyone of you and I praise God for your calling to serve God's people here at Bridgeway.

Last week's sermon moved many of us very deeply as we responded to the call of God in our lives. Like Moses going to the top of the mountain and hearing from God, many of you heard

from God last week. We talked about the Call of God last week. Today, we will talk about the Commandments of God!

Main Idea:

**A BETTER LIFE begins and extends when we accept the call of God and obey
the commands of God!**

B. INTRODUCTION

Moses heard from God at the top of the mountain and now he is instructed to go back down the mountain with these commandments from God to instruct the people. We find this in **Exodus 20:1-17.**

Question:

**What happens when Moses comes down from the mountain to talk with the people? I think
it went something like this...**

- **Moses** - “Hey everybody, gather around. God met me at the top of the mountain.”
- **People** - “Wow, Moses. What did He say to you? Did He say anything to you about us?”
- **Moses** - “As a matter of fact, He did. **He told me to tell you to Love Him.**”
- **People** - “What? How do we love God?”
- **Moses** - “This is what God said:

‘If you’re going to love me, then you have to forsake all the other gods in your life.’”

Well, this is exactly how He put it:

COMMAND #1 - “I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before (besides) me.”

(v. 1-2 NIV84)

- **People** - “Moses, we don’t have any other Gods but the Lord our God.”
- **Moses** - “Well, the Almighty doesn’t see it that way. You say these things with your mouth, but you have all kinds of images of other gods. You are still fiddling around with some of the religious practices you learned while in Egypt.
- **People** - “What should we do?”
- **Moses** - “The Lord Almighty said for me to tell you that if you really desire to worship me alone, **then prove it.**”
- **People** - “How”?

COMMAND #2 - 3 ”You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. ” (v. 3-6 NIV84)

This is what scholars would call a **3 Tier Hebrew Cosmology**. The Hebrews viewed the world in 3 levels (“Heaven above, earth beneath, and waters below”). Basically what God is saying is this - If you Love me then put me first and destroy the second, third, and all the rest.

Whether they are the gods of the sun, moon, and stars (**Tier 1**),

or trees, rocks, animals, or humans on the earth (living or dead) (**Tier 2**),

or creatures underground (**Tier 3**).

God says He wants you to WORSHIP NO ONE ELSE AND NOTHING BUT HIM!

NO IDOLATRY.

COMMAND #1 is about PREEMINENCE

- *God is saying “I want to be you number ONE!”*

COMMAND #2 is about POLYTHEISM

- *God is saying, “I want to be your ONLY ONE!”*

Bottom line:

God is saying in the first two commandments that, “I want to be your ONE & ONLY!”

This is a good place to pause.

Question:

Is God your one & only god?

Do you have anything or anyone *above Him, before Him, or besides Him* that you worship, prioritize, or who holds a higher place in your heart than Him?

If so, God is saying to you today to **PUT HIM FIRST**.

Cast down all other idols in your life that are sitting on the throne!

There is only one throne!

Either God is sitting on the throne of your life, or *your job is...your money is...your spouse is...your parents are...your children or grandchildren are...your passions* for something or someone else are...

God is saying, Love Me. Serve Me only.

Question:

Did you know that even FEAR can be an idol in your life above God?

**Did you know that your PAIN can be an idol that your nurse and bow down to as an idol,
even if it were 10 or 20 years ago?**

C. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Back in those days there were many “other gods” that the Israelites would encounter as they continued to spread throughout the land. Many other ethnic groups had many other religions and most people of that day believed in multiple gods.

This was called “Polytheism” - *Many gods*

They believed in the gods of the sun, the rain, their ancestors, etc.

This is why the mantra of Deuteronomy 6 was so important for the Hebrews to learn:

- “*Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.*”
- (Deuteronomy 6:4-5 NIV84)**

I ran into a guy at the oil change place the other day. He had some wooden stones around his neck which I thought were cool at first. I asked him about them and he told me he and his family were into the spiritual faith of “Animism” - where they call out on their ancestors....etc.

I was like, NOPE! Just put air in the tires!

I am grateful for my ancestors, but I ain't talking to them. And I ain't letting them talk to me!
NO THANK YOU!

I'm thankful for the stars and all the configurations of the constellations, but I am not talking to them and they're not talking to me.

I don't have any Lucky Stars!

Horoscopes are fun, but NOPE!

Fortune cookies are fun, but NOPE. I'm eating the cookie, but I'm not believing the fortune.

Yes to the cookie; no to the fortune. The only fortune I'm playing with is the "Wheel of Fortune"! Wouldn't it be a funny twist to have insulting fortune cookies though?

- *Your breath stinks*
- *You're going to be broke for the rest of your life*
- *He ain't your daddy*

People will stop believing you in fortune cookies quickly, if these were the kind of messages that came through! :-)

Chinese food joints can have on their placemats that this is the year of the monkey or the pig or whatever, but NOPE! I ain't believing, engaging, or promoting that ridiculousness.

Carnivals may have a palm reader who wants to read my palm, but NOPE! Don't touch me. Don't look at me. I ain't the one. Crystals, tarot cards, or any other method that is trying to tap into the underworld or outer world is a big NOPE from me!

I am only interested in tapping into the upper world, and that's heaven with the King of Glory, Jesus!

GOD WANTS TO BE FIRST!

- Jesus said, “*Seek FIRST the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all of these things shall be added unto you.*” (**Matthew 6:33 NIV84**)

GOD WANTS TO BE YOUR ONLY!

- “*You shall have no other gods before (besides) me.*” (**Exodus 20:3 NIV84**)

Prayer-point:

If God has not been first in your life and you have allowed something or someone else to sit on the throne of your life and priorities, then please stand up so I can pray for you.

Through prayer, you can place Jesus back in his rightful place of prominence in your life.

- **People** - “*Moses, what else did He say?*”
- **Moses** - “*The third thing GOD said is that if you are going to Love Him well, then don't blaspheme his name with curses. Also He wants you to reflect on how good God has been to you.*”
- **People** - “*How do we do this?*”
- **Moses** - “*I'm glad you asked...*

COMMAND #3 - *You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.” (v.7 NIV84)*

If you don't mean it, then don't call on His name. Don't call His name if you are playing. Definitely don't assign God's name to something evil. That's blasphemy! To give God credit for something that is done by Satan is blasphemy. When you curse, some of you even give God the last name "DAMN"!

God's last name is NOT "DAMN"! STOP SAYING THAT! *Satan* is damned, not GOD!

- God is Good
- God is Love
- God is Holy
- God is Righteous
- God is Just

When you say, "Oh my GOD", *you'd better mean it*. Otherwise use other slang like "Oh my goodness." Or say, "Oh my gosh"

- "*The NAME of the Lord is a strong tower and those that run to it are safe.*"
(Proverbs 18:10 NIV84)

GOD'S NAME is majestic and sovereign and all powerful.

When you hear the misuse of God's name when someone screams out of anger, "JESUS"! Just Add to it - "*is Lord*"!

Just like you wouldn't want anyone *misusing or abusing* your name, stop doing it to God. Just like you wouldn't want anyone lying on your name or slandering your name, stop lying on God's name by saying that he said something when He didn't. Don't say "God said it" or "God did it" if you're not sure God said it or did it.

Bottom Line:

REVERE GOD'S NAME - this is called REVERENCE!

- **Moses** - “*You want to know how to Love God.*

FIRST - start with Eliminating your Idolatry and misusing the name of the one true God.

NEXT - have communion with God.

- **People** - “*What do you mean, Moses? How do we have communion with God?*”
- **Moses** - God said it this way...

COMMAND #4 – 8 “*Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*” (**Exodus 20:8-11 NIV84**)

I could do an entire message on this topic.

The bottom line is that *God wants us to take time to rest and reflect on his goodness.*

He wants us to pause and worship him, reflect on him, and have communion with him as we see how he has used us and carried us through the week.

Moses is telling the people to take the last day of the week and stop working long enough to meditate and commune with the Lord.

- It's like having a weekly date with God.

- This is why church is important.
- *This is your time to have a weekly DATE with God!*
- The reason some people don't love God anymore is because they stop dating him a long time ago,
- They don't come to church to worship him.
- They don't give to the lord anymore.
- No wonder you can't feel the Love of God.
- It is not that He stopped loving you.
- You stop loving him!
- If God feels distant to you, the real question is WHO MOVED!?

Transition statement:

Friends, as Moses is talking to the Israelites, He tells them that God wants them to love Him. Then Moses tells them that God wants them to Love ONE ANOTHER.

- **Moses** - “*Hey y'all, God also wants you to love one another!”*
- **People** - “*How, Moses? We already love each other don't we?*”
- Moses - “Well, let's start with your parents!”

COMMAND #5 – “Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.” (v. 12 NIV84)

In other words, be respectful to your parents. They are your first relationship on earth. They are the ones who brought you into this world. Make sure to obey them when you are young and honor them when they are old. If you can't honor your parents at home at a young age then you will have a hard time honoring those in authority over your life at an older age. Do your best to take care of them until the day they die.

- **Moses** - “*Speaking of Dying...*”

COMMAND #6 – “You shall not Murder!” (v.13 NIV84)

As God's people, we honor life and grieve death. Don't kill other people. Don't be violent toward one another. God created life and wants us to uphold, value, and support life in all forms! FROM THE WOMB TO THE TOMB! In fact, Jesus said in the New Testament that if you even hate your brother or sister, you have committed murder. (**Matthew 5:21-22**)

- **People** - “*Did God say anything else?*”
- **Moses** - “*Yes. God said...*”

COMMAND #7 – “You shall not commit adultery?” (v.14 NIV84)

- **People** - “*What's adultery?*”
- **Moses** - “*When you have sex with someone you are not rightfully married to before God, then you are committing adultery.*”

It is wrong and dishonors God. Sex is the *beautiful engagement of intercourse designed by God* for a man and a woman to enjoy within the secure commitment of marriage.

Jesus said that if a man even lusts after a woman then he has committed adultery in his heart
(Matthew 5:27-28 NIV84)

- **Moses** - “*While we are speaking about sleeping with the wrong person, God wants you to make sure you express love to one another by not stealing from each other, lying on each other, and coveting each other’s stuff. Let me put it to you plainly. Finally, God said...*

COMMAND #8 - “*You shall not steal*” (v. 15)

Taking what is not yours that belongs to another

COMMAND #9 - “*You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor*” (v.16 NIV84)

Don’t lie to, on, or about other people

COMMAND #10 - “*You shall not covet your neighbor’s house. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.*” (v. 17-18 NIV84)

COVET - means to YEARN TO POSSESS

Don’t yearn to possess your neighbor’s *house or spouse* or anything else he owns, **or it may lead to stealing, murdering, and giving false testimony.**

APPRECIATE what others have.

CELEBRATE what others have with them.

DON’T LUSTFULLY YEARN TO HAVE WHAT OTHERS HAVE.

OTHERWISE, *Your covetousness will turn into discontentment, unhealthy competition and comparison, jealousy, envy, and a lack of gratefulness to God of what you do have!*

Stop trying to keep up with the Jones!

Friends, God gave Moses the commandments to make the Israelites better and to make us better.

All the commandments are repeated in the New Testament, except the command to keep the Sabbath day holy.

Why?

Because Jesus is the *Lord of the Sabbath* (Matthew 12:8) and when we are in Him, we are at rest.
(Matthew 11:28 NIV84)

It is still wise to observe the Sabbath for reflections, a weekly time of worship, communion with God and others, and experience rest before the Lord. This is indeed a gift that God has provided for all of us, so much so that he put it in the order of creation.

I could preach 10 sermons on each command, but suffice it to say, they are very straight forward. You don't need the Hebrew and the Greek to understand them. You don't need a biblical scholar to comprehend them. You simply need to obey them...

- *Love God* by putting him first
- *Love Others* by serving them like Christ would

Done! It's not complicated. It's simple - Love God; Love people. I didn't say it was EASY! This is exactly why God sent his son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to help us!

D. REVIEW

- *Love GOD*
- *Love PEOPLE* (the last 6 commandments)
 - Honor your parents (Ex. 20:12)
 - You shall not murder (Ex. 20:13)
 - You shall not commit Adultery (Ex. 20:14)
 - You shall not steal (Ex. 20:15)
 - You shall not give false testimony (Ex. 20:16)
 - You shall not covet (Ex. 20:17)

God's Commands are like "guard rails" to protect us!

- TESTIMONY FROM ELDER DON RAJALA

Conclusion:

A BETTER LIFE begins and extends when we accept the call of God and obey the commands of God!

The *Call of God* and the *Commandments of God* are all about our **CONNECTION WITH GOD** and our **PROTECTION IN GOD**.

This is why God the Father sent Jesus Christ His son into the world. He sent Jesus to connect us to God, the Father. Get connected and stay connected to Jesus so that we can experience and exude God's love. AMEN & AMEN!

Prayer time:

As you look at the six commands that God gives us regarding the way we love one another, and if you haven't loved people the way God requires, please stand for prayer.