

The Ten Commandments of Love

Preface

Does the Christian world need another book on the Ten Commandments? I doubt it. Great and godly Christian writers have been writing books for twenty centuries, and the Ten Commandments aren't exactly niche.

Then why this book? Quite simply, I knew it would be good for me, and I thought it could be edifying to some of the Lord's people. The discipline of writing will help me be more articulate on this fundamental portion of Scripture, and a closer inspection of these ten laws could help some saints love God and neighbor more - they are laws of love.

This book is little more than the output of sermons preached to Sovereign Redeemer Community Church in Youngsville, NC in the first half of 2020. Preaching those sermons helped me. I trust hearing those sermons helped our church. And I hope you are refreshed, encouraged, and maybe occasionally reproved by the book.

Chapter 1 The Bible's Framework for the Commandments

Rather than immediately undertaking a commandment by commandment study, it is essential to *erect a framework* for an overall understanding of what the Ten Commandments *are* and *aren't*. Without a pre-established framework, we are very susceptible to *moralizing*, ending up with little more than "Do this," "Don't do that," "Work harder," "Stay away from more." And with that mentality, we either crumble under the weight of the never-ending requirements, or we never grasp the truth that we haven't actually obeyed the commands at all. Not as we should have. Not from the heart. So the right beginning point is to build a framework from how the Bible itself positions the law of God.

Let's begin with the number one principle of Bible interpretation: The Bible interprets the Bible. Matthew Henry is wonderful, eminently quotable, and the preacher's friend, but the best commentary on Scripture is *always* Scripture. So we will begin with Jesus, the center and pinnacle of Scripture. Often the words of Jesus get to the heart of things even better than other portions of Scripture. That doesn't make His words more true than other places in Scripture, but Jesus *is* the Word, and He is the ultimate revelation of God.

I would like to draw out six texts of Scripture to erect our framework. Five of the six will be from the New Testament, but I want you to know that all the points could have been made from six Old Testament texts, or from six New Testament texts, making exactly the same points. The whole Bible presents a *unified perspective* on the law of God. The whole Bible, from Genesis to Revelation, Old Testament and New, presents a unified perspective on the

law. What is the law of God? The whole Bible agrees on the answer to that question. What can the law of God *do* and *not do*? The whole Bible agrees on the answers to those questions too. So pitting Old Testament against New is a fool's errand. Pitting Moses against Jesus is a fool's errand, because Moses was simply Jesus' mouthpiece for the Old Testament law.

1. The first text for erecting our framework is Matthew 22:34-40.

34 But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. 35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 36 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" 37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

Jesus is teaching that **the law makes it clear what it means to truly love God and to love people**. The question put to Jesus is which is the great commandment in the law. Which is the foremost commandment? Which one is the most important? Which is the most representative of what God desires when he commands people, requiring certain things of his creatures? In answer, Jesus simply quotes Deuteronomy 6:5. This is another reason why it is madness to pit Moses against Jesus. Jesus quotes Moses because Moses was inspired by God to give the law. It isn't Moses' law. It is God's law given through Moses. Jesus is God. He is quoting Himself! Then, as the second greatest commandment, Jesus quotes Leviticus 19:18b, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." So Jesus quotes the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 6 and Leviticus 19. He is not overthrowing anything. He is *framing* how we ought to think about the law. Jesus is erecting a framework through which we view how to truly love God and people.

Jesus makes this breathtaking statement: "On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." That means I don't understand any commandment - I'm ignorant of every commandment - until I understand how it is an expression of love. Until I understand how the keeping of a commandment is an expression of love, I don't understand it at all. This is intensely *internal*. This is law-keeping according to Jesus. It is an expression of something which begins in the heart. *Affection in the heart*, the starting point of all true law-keeping.

This is the structure which Jesus gives us. Commandments show us how to express love for God, or to express love for people. And this is actually easily discernible in the Ten Commandments. The first four have to do, primarily, with loving God, and the final six have to do, primarily, with loving people.

So in 1 John 5:3, when John says, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." - John is only affirming what Jesus taught. Think about that. Keeping the commandments is an expression of genuine affection in the heart for God, and therefore it is not burdensome. And real love is not identified by profession, but by demonstration. Real love expresses itself by the keeping of

the commandments. Real love leaves tracks. So the commandments aren't burdensome to the believer, because obeying them is simply *loving God*. When put it in those terms, it ceases to be a burden.

Now, how do we think of this? We have warm feelings towards it, don't we? We cheer Jesus on for His answer. Which is the great commandment? Love God. Which is the second? Love people. No wonder we have warm feelings towards those answers! Who doesn't want more love? Who doesn't want to become more loving?

But our unconquerable problem is this: Jesus says my love for God must be *all consuming*. All my heart. All my soul. All my mind. Affection at full intensity in every part of my being. It cannot be played at. It is full-on love. In another place, Jesus says, "If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple." (Luke 14:26). Now, is Jesus overthrowing the rest of Scripture, which says you should actually honor and love your father and mother? No, Jesus isn't not overthrowing. It is *comparative*. If the affection in your heart for your father, your mother, your wife, your children, your brothers, your sisters, is on the *same plane* with your affection for God, your love for God fails the test. You are not a disciple! You cannot be.

The affection of your heart, for the God in heaven who made you, must be so preeminent, it must so clearly have the place of honor, that *by comparison*, your love for your spouse seems like hatred. This might as well be Deuteronomy 6 again - all the heart, all the soul, all the mind. An *all consuming* love is the standard for loving God. How can I stand against this standard? It is all well and good to say the great commandment is to love God. But when the standard for loving God is that it must be full-on love in every part of my being, and then I compare myself to that standard, I'm a million miles away. And so are you. That, friends, is our problem. So I understand coming to Jesus' answer and having warm feelings about it. I do want more love. And I do want to become more loving. But understand the problem, the unconquerable problem. The standard is all consuming love, and so often, you know that your heart is cold and hard.

And my love for people has to rise to the level of the love I have for myself, which hardly ever takes a break. I find myself so self-loving, so self-serving. But the standard is to love my next door neighbor that way, love my siblings that way, love my co-workers that way, love my spouse that way, even love strangers that way. Oh, my love for all of those categories of people falls so far short of the *intensity* and *persistence* of my self-love! I can't stand against that standard.

Those standards create a devastating problem for me. Love God. Yes, that sounds like a good idea. Okay, love Him with all the heart, soul and mind. Oh. Love neighbor. Yes. We all want to live in a world of love. Love your neighbor as you love yourself. Oh. We have a massive problem.

So what does the law do? It *defines* and *describes* love in *concrete terms*. If your idea of love doesn't transcend a sentiment which may or may not work its way outward, you aren't talking

about Bible love. Sentiment which goes nowhere doesn't meet the standard for Bible love. Bible love is defined and described in concrete terms. The Ten Commandments simply command us to love, so breaking them is actually a failure to love. It is a violation against love, either not loving God or not loving your neighbor, and often it is both, all rolled into one.

2. The second text for erecting our framework is Deuteronomy 10:12-13.

12 "And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?"

In each one of these six texts, there are many very profitable things being passed over to simply focus on a few points which are relevant for the task at hand, and such is the case here, as I pass over everything else to get to the final phrase, "His statutes which I command you today *for your good*."

The commandments are for our good. ***The law is our friend, not our enemy.*** These are God's laws, and what He requires of us actually reflects His *kind intentions* towards us. The law is not our enemy. It is for our good.

Think about the garden. God creates. There is no inclination in His creatures - in Adam and Eve - towards sin. They were completely free to obey, and completely free from an inclination towards disobedience. The command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was *for their good*. In the garden narrative we learn that God is not holding us back *from* good things, He is holding us back *for* good things. But we have to train our minds to think that.

What happened in the garden? "It's beautiful fruit." "It's desirable to make me wise." "I'm being held back from something good." "God is stingy and is holding out on me." Eve believed that lie. She ate the fruit. Adam did too. The rest is history. And to this day, we often feel like God is holding us back from something good. That's not true. It is the old lie. God is holding me back for something good, but if I plunge myself into disobedience, even though it looks desirable to me, I will essentially be walling myself off from the things which are *actually* good.

The commandments are for our good. They are our friends. They are not our enemies. We aren't being held back *from* good things, we're being held back *for* good things. It is God's kindness that he requires these things of us.

3. The third text for erecting our framework is Matthew 5:21-30, from the Sermon on the Mount.

21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in

danger of hell fire. 23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift. 25 Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 Assuredly, I say to you, you will by no means get out of there till you have paid the last penny. 27 “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart. 29 If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you; for it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish, than for your whole body to be cast into hell.

In this passage, we learn that **mankind has become absolutely expert in shrinking the law.**

Jesus gives us two cases which both follow the same formula: “You have heard that it was said of old... but I say to you...” The first case involves the Sixth Commandment, the commandment against murder. You have heard that people who unjustly take a human life are in danger of the judgment. But Jesus says that there is *heart murder* and *lip murder*, and they also make you worthy of hell. The second case involves the Seventh Commandment, the commandment against adultery. You have heard that it is against the law of God to have sex outside of marriage. But Jesus says that if you *envision* those interactions *just in your thoughts*, only within your mind, you are guilty of breaking that same command. And just envisioning that also makes you worthy of hell, so much so that you must not spare anything which leads you into those thoughts, because those thoughts can and will drag you into hell!

Now, what is Jesus doing here? He is *not* changing the law. He is saying what was always true, all the way back to when Moses gave the law and before. He is correcting a prevalent but wrong, law-shrinking, law-minimizing understanding.

It was always a violation of the law against murder to *hate* and to *speak evil*. It was always a violation of the law against adultery to *lust* and to *envision* those interactions which are only to be enjoyed in marriage. And those violations were always enough to make you worthy of hell. All of that didn't *become true* with Jesus saying it in Matthew 5. It was always true, and He is correcting this wrong understanding which shrinks the law. Jesus is waging war against a minimalistic view, a law-shrinking view which makes law-keeping *manageable* and *doable with only externals*.

That is what we've become so good at - shrinking the law so that we can say we have kept it and think that we're righteous. The law of murder is whittled down to just physically taking the life of my neighbor, while I put myself at liberty to hate him in my heart and speak evil of him. I'm innocent. I kept that law. I can withhold myself from physically having sex outside of marriage, while I put myself at liberty to let my mind run wild. I'm innocent. I kept that law. I

can think of myself as righteous. But Jesus is teaching that the law has always transcended external conduct to include the thoughts of the heart and the words of the mouth.

How else do we so expertly shrink the law? Well, there are things which God commands us *not* to do. *Don't* murder. *Don't* commit adultery. *Don't* lie. But there are also things He commands us *to* do. He expects us to do good. So it breaks the commandments to do things which God said, "Don't do that." But it also breaks the commandment *not* to do good to your neighbor. You have the opportunity to do good, but you bypass that opportunity. This is often referred to as sins of *omission*. God told you to do good to your neighbor, but you passed by on the other side. You held back from doing good which God said He expected of you.

Jesus addresses sins of omission in Matthew 25. There Jesus describes the day of judgment. The sheep are on His right hand, and the goats are on His left. The sheep are those who feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, take in strangers, clothe the naked, visit the sick and go to prisoners. In short, they are doing good to their neighbors. And the goats are those who don't do those things. They could have but didn't. They passed by their opportunities to love their neighbors. Jesus is not teaching that law-keeping makes you fit for heaven, having *earned* heaven. Jesus is simply teaching that there is real evidence in the lives of people who actually have a new heart. They they do things because they have *new affections* when God gives them a *new heart*. There is nothing to be afraid of in that chapter, as if those sheep have earned heaven through doing things. They simply have evidence in their lives that God has given them a new heart.

All of this is devastating even to the most expert law-shrinkers. Law-breaking isn't just external in actions which the eye can see, but extends to your thoughts and your words. And law-breaking includes not only doing things God told you not to do, but also *not doing good* which you could have done to love your neighbor as yourself.

So Jesus has something to say to law-shrinkers who have whittled the law down to something very manageable and externally doable. He blows up their system of externals and forces them to think of all the things imagined in their minds which are defiled, to think of all the words they've said against their neighbors, to think of all the good they could have done and should have done but didn't. Jesus presses on them that each of those things was a violation of the commandments, worthy of eternal separation and punishment.

4. The fourth text for erecting our framework is Matthew 23:23.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."

In this verse, we learn that **there are weightier matters of the law which undergird individual laws**. There are fundamental foundation stones which undergird and support individual laws.

In Matthew 23, Jesus is pronouncing a series of woes, a series of warnings and condemnations against hypocrites, against people who *teach* one thing while they *do* the opposite. And in verse 23, He says it is hypocrisy to give careful attention to very specific minutia, the little stuff, while ignoring the heart matters, the big stuff, which are the point of the laws. What are the heart matters, undergirding and supporting the individual commandments? *Justice* and *mercy* and *faith*.

Why do we tithe? God said to. Yes. Okay. But underneath God's saying to is *justice*, and *mercy*, and *faith*. God has people He wants to set aside to give attention to serving and teaching and leading His people, and this tithe will provide for them. This tithe will make it possible to set them aside for these things. It is *just* to give the laborer his wages through the tithe. And it is *mercy* to give the poor tithe, so that those who don't have what they need will have resources to draw on. Giving that tithe is intended to be an act of mercy. And your tithe should be an act of *faith*. It is intended to be an expression that all that you have came from God, as you give back just a fraction. It should be an expression of gratitude, and that you recognize that it came from God.

But it is *very* possible to comply with the individual law, down to dotting the i's and crossing the t's - you can go out to the garden and tithe on the spices! - and pass right over *justice* and *mercy* and *faith*. And consider yourself righteous. And consider yourself to have kept that law.

Is Jesus teaching anything new? Not at all. Micah 6:8 says, "He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?" Jesus is practically quoting Micah 6:8.

So the the scribes and Pharisees were meticulously tithing, down to the garden spices, while at the same time cheating widows, and jockeying for positions of honor, and abandoning *justice* and *mercy* and *faith*. They weren't keeping the commands. They might have been giving painstaking attention to the minutia, but they were not keeping the commands. They abandoned the weightier matters.

5. The fifth text for erecting our framework is Galatians 3:10-14, 19-25.

10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them." 13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), 14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith... 19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly

righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

In this precious section of Scripture, we learn that **the law teaches you who God is in His perfect righteousness, and who you really are as a transgressor of the law, not how to be saved.**

Verses 10 and 11 destroys law-keeping as a means to be justified before God. What exactly is Paul saying in those verses? That if you want righteousness through law-keeping, you must continue in all the works of the law, ad infinitum. *Forever*. Do *all* the works of the law *all* the time. That is righteousness through law-keeping, the absolute absence of guilt from law-breaking, with a single breach ruining the whole scheme, because of the utter holiness of God.

I hope when you read that, you know with the greatest certainty that the hope of righteousness through law-keeping was obliterated so long ago in your life. Even if only today counted, you would have obliterated that scheme of righteousness more times than you even suspect. The just live *by faith*, and only by faith.

Paul condemns law-breakers and then sets forth Jesus as one willing and able to bear your curse. There is one who has offered Himself as a willing and able curse bearer. Jesus will hang on the tree for you, or you will bear your own curse because you haven't continued in all things that are written in the book of the law. But He *did* continue in *all* things that are written in the book of the law, so Jesus is not only *willing* to bear the curse of all who come to Him by faith, He is also *able*.

In verses 19-25, Paul declares the law to be devoid of power to give life. Look again at the second half verse 21, "... if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law." The implication is that there is no law which can impart life. Then what is its function? Not to give you life, but to teach you that you deserve death for your crimes, so that sin might appear to us to be what it truly is - *exceedingly sinful* (Romans 7:13).

You have rebellion ingrained so deeply in your heart. You are filled with constant self-love and self-serving. The law is a mirror. It says, "Look! Look at you!" It is the perfect standard of righteousness, forcing you to look at yourself as you really are and begging the question, "Now what?" "Now what, now that you've earned hell?" You did this! Loving yourself, serving yourself, in rebellion to the God who is infinitely worthy of your love and your service, not just *acting* contrary to Him but *being* contrary to Him in your thoughts and words and deeds, doing the things He told you not to do, and not doing the things He expects you to do. Day in and day out. Now what? The law *throws you upon Jesus* for mercy! It is designed to *chase* you to Christ!

Before salvation comes by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, the ministry of the law is a ministry of condemnation. Its job is to convince you that you stand condemned. It is a tutor to drive you to Jesus, just as verse 24a says, “Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ...” It is a teacher that sends you to the Savior, that you might be justified through faith in His saving work.

So the law doesn't exist to justify, but to teach us of our desperate need, so that we will run to Christ, having forsaken the false hopes. It doesn't give us a scheme by which you can be righteous, *self-righteous*, before God. It convinces us of our desperate need, so we will abandon every false hope of self-righteousness, and run to Christ out of that desperation. And when we abandon all false hopes and run to Him, we find Him a willing Savior who washes away every last stain of defilement.

6. The sixth text for erecting our framework is Romans 7:22-25.

22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Paul is speaking of the *internal warfare* which seasoned Christians know well, the warfare between the redeemed spirit and the not-yet-redeemed flesh.

In these verses we learn that **the law has irreplaceable value for the believer, who is nevertheless no longer under the law**. If you are a believer, you aren't done with the law. It is better than gold to you (Psalm 119:72), and sweeter than honey and the honeycomb (Psalm 19:10), even though you are no longer under the law. This is not about reverting back and trying to law-keep your way into anything. It is about the continuing instruction, help, and benefit of the law in the lives of the redeemed.

Though much could be said about this text, let me focus in on one phrase in verse 22, “I delight in the law of God”. Only a Christian can do that. Paul writes elsewhere, in 1 Corinthians 2:14, that the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, so this cannot be an unbeliever. This is Paul, in his believing state - and more sanctified than you - saying these things. He delights in the law of God in the inward man, but he also finds another law at work in his flesh.

There is a war happening, all day, every day. This is Paul, born again, but still inhabiting a body of death, with its remaining corruptions. Paul has been *spiritually reborn*, but he is still *physically* in a body with remaining corruptions, so there will be a war until the end of his life in this body. Then there will be a physical resurrection, and both spirit and body will be free of all corruption, and he will be free from this war, enjoying heaven. Praise God! Paul knows that the Lord Jesus can and will rescue him from this body of death, but he is still experiencing the

current reality of war. He is looking to Christ. Who can free him from this body of death? Jesus.

In spite of the war, Paul can say what the Psalmist, “Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.” (Psalm 119:97). Paul isn’t turning his back on the law, as if it is something to be regretted. In his inward man, he delights in the law of God, *because it reflects the righteousness of his Savior!* Paul doesn’t despise the law, he delights in it, even though he finds it is at war with the corruptions in his members.

The Psalmist wasn’t one of those professing believers who says, “I am born again by faith, so now the law has nothing to do with me.” Paul wasn’t one of those either. Professing believers who say that the law has nothing to do with them are commonplace now, but their view was foreign to Paul. That is not what he believed or how he felt. That isn’t what we should believe or how we should feel. Both the Psalmist and Paul found the law of God revealing the God of the law to them. They relished that. They wanted to know Him, and be conformed to Him. “Teach me about Yourself!” was their cry. “Reveal Yourself to me!” “I love the vision and beauty of Your righteousness!” “Make me more like You!” So they didn’t despise being brought face to face with their remaining corruptions, because it made them gaze on their Savior and rejoice. Hopefully, as we work our way through the Ten Commandments, we will gaze on our Savior and rejoice.

Here is a summary of the framework we have erected for understanding the commandments:

1. The law makes it clear what it means to truly love God and to love people. (Matthew 22:34-40).
2. The law is our friend, not our enemy. (Deuteronomy 10:12-13).
3. Mankind has become absolutely expert in shrinking the law. (Matthew 5:17-30).
4. There are weightier matters of the law which undergird individual laws. (Matthew 23:23).
5. The law teaches you who God is in His perfect righteousness, and who you really are as a transgressor of the law, not how to be saved. (Galatians 3:10-14, 19-25).
6. The law has irreplaceable value for the believer, who is nevertheless no longer under the law. (Romans 7:22-25).

As we now undertake a commandment by commandment study of the Ten Commandments of love, a pattern will become apparent. A systematic approach will be utilized in an attempt to access the depth and breadth of what each commandment is meant to communicate. As few as four words comprise a commandment (“You shall not murder”), yet the brevity of the command should not satisfy us with just skimming the surface, missing the breathtaking depth and breadth of each commandment. They truly reveal the beauty and righteousness of the eternal Law-Giver, the God of Scripture.

Here is the pattern which will be followed, more or less:

1. What the commandment requires. Most of the commandments are *framed negatively* (“You shall not...”). They tell us what we *must not do*. However, those negatively framed commandments also encompass things which are *positively required*, because love requires much more than *not doing*, and these are commandments of love.

2. What the commandment forbids. God is an utterly holy God, so His creatures are commanded to flee from everything that defiles. This God, in His kindness, keeps us *from* things to keep us *for* the best things.

3. What the commandment teaches about God. The commandments reveal the Law-Giver to mankind. His eternal character is displayed in what He loves and what He hates, and those things are set forth in the commandments. This is theology - the study of God - at its best. As we study the Ten Commandments, our prayer should be, “Show us Your glory!”

4. How we have failed to keep the commandment. A study of the commandments is a dry, academic exercise until we peel back the layers and attack our own self-righteousness. By expanding the law to include what it has always included - our thoughts, our motives, our words - we can own our breaking of His perfect commands, repent, and grow in Christlikeness.

5. How the Lord Jesus has perfectly kept the commandment. Finally, the Word became flesh and dwelt among us. The Lord Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God. He *is* God’s righteousness. We should take time to revel in His perfect law-keeping on our behalf, qualifying Him to take the place of sinners, and winning our salvation. Watching Him perfectly keep each of the commandments in the gospel accounts gives believers a pathway to growing in Christlikeness.

On to God’s own preface to His Ten Commandments of love, found in Exodus 20:1-2.