

August 25, 2019

“A Different Lifestyle”, Exodus 20:7-11

In the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1-17), God calls His people to live differently in a way that reflects His own character as Yahweh and later through His Son Jesus Christ. This Sunday we look at commandments 3 and 4. (Ex. 20:7-11) about the way we use God’s name, and about the way we look at work, and wealth, and the rhythm/pace of life.

I. Commandment Three: Do not misuse God’s name (Exodus 20:7)

God’s name is extremely important, e.g.: Hebrew “Yahweh” means “He is”, and “I Am” spoken to Moses suggests God is self existent & unchanging, and “Hallowed be thy name” in the Lord’s Prayer proclaims God’s holiness/being set apart. God’s people should certainly not use His name as a reference in coarse language, but they should also not use His name for wicked or useless purposes. As God’s people, we need no oath for other people to believe us. We are just to say “yes” or “no”.

II. Commandment Four: Trust God enough to worship and rest. (Exodus 20:8-11)

As the longest of the Ten Commandments, this explains in much detail how we need to trust God enough to worship and rest.

A. The Sabbath is about work, not just worship (which is discussed elsewhere in Scripture).

The main focus of this commandment is to cease working. Sabbath literally means to “stop/cease”. As Americans, we now work far more hours than any other culture on earth (even Japan). God wants us to choose His path of rest (modeled by Himself in creation, and commanded to Israel weekly/every 7th year, and the 50th year of Jubilee (Lev. 25). Although this commandment is not repeated in the New Testament, Paul teaches believers in Rom. 14:5,6 to prayerfully consider this issue of Sabbath, and “be fully convinced in their own mind” what God shows them in practicing God’s rest in their lives.

B. The Sabbath points to Jesus.

Jewish laws, celebrations, and even the Sabbath are “a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality however, is found in Christ” (Col. 2:16,17). As the “Lord of the Sabbath” (Mtt. 12:8), Jesus is larger than the Sabbath law and can put it aside because because His work on earth of redemption for humans is more important. Jesus Himself is our spiritual rest. For us as Christians, the fourth commandment to “remember the Sabbath” calls us to trust God, and lean in rest on the finished work of our Savior. The Lord of the Sabbath has provided redemption for all His people who can now give up their striving and find true rest in Him.

C. The Sabbath calls us to trust God.

Although we are not directly under the Jewish law of the Sabbath, its principle still applies and is good for our lives. God wants us to trust Him enough to rest from our striving/stressful lives and worship Him. We may not be richer in accumulating the world’s wealth and experiences, but we will be saner. God knows our innermost being and as we turn to Him through His Son in rest, He will help us to cease from trying to “measure up” to everything around us by self effort and good works (Mtt. 11:28). In trusting Him, we will find true grace with safety and rest, giving us happiness and joy.

Discussion Questions:

1. Is speeding down the road, yelling at other drivers with a fish on the back of your car, misusing God’s name? How else do we misuse or diminish His name?
2. Would it be fair/helpful to rephrase the 3rd command in a positive way by saying “as Christians, we are always to value, fear, & respect God’s name to treat it with the holiness it deserves? What would help us to do this more?
3. For you, is Christianity just one more thing to do or have you found true Sabbath rest?
4. Where specifically do you find Sabbath rest? church gatherings, devotions, on way to work? What things do you set aside as holy and special for God? How can you improve this?
5. How is a striving lifestyle based on unbelief? Does striving really dishonor God?