

THE WORD OF GOD

FOR THE

PEOPLE OF GOD

THE SERMONS IN DEUTERONOMY



Lesson 5: How to Love Others

Deuteronomy 5:16-21

Lesson Summary and Objectives

Summary

Moses tells a new generation of people what God expects of them.

Learning Outcomes

- Participants can explain the covenant between God and his people.
- Participants can explain the relationship between love/faith/obedience.
- Participants can evaluate the importance of individual vs. communal responsibility to God.
- Participants can discuss with clarity what it means to be the people of God.

Teaching Outline

Invite

- What was the hardest rule you had to follow as a kid?

Inform

This week we continue our study of the second instance of the Ten Commandments in scripture, the first being Exodus 20.

We looked at the first part of the Commandments last week. Those Commandments dealt mainly with how to love *God*. Today, we look at the second set of Commandments, which tell us how to love *others*.

Read Deuteronomy 5:16-22

- **Command #5:** We pick up with the command to honor parents (16).
 - This isn't just about little kids honoring their parents while still at home. We know from other passages (e.g., Mark 7:9-13) that this command included a mandate for adult children to take care of their aged parents.
 - Notice that this command has a rationale: "...so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land..."
- The next four commands are short and to the point:
 - **Command #6:** Don't murder (17).
 - The word here is "kill," but Hebrew had several words for "kill," and this one most accurately means "kill one of your own people" (as opposed to "kill an enemy in battle").

- The stories of war in Joshua-Judges are certainly troublesome, but they do not violate this command.
- Command #7: Don't commit adultery (18).
- Command #8: Don't steal (19).
- Command #9: Don't give false testimony (20).
- Command #10: The final command is about coveting (21).
 - Covetousness, jealousy, and envy are closely related, but they have different meanings:
 - Jealousy has to do with being protective (maybe overprotective) of something that is yours. (*He wants my car and might take it from me.*)
 - Envy has to do with keeping up with the Joneses and wanting the equivalent to what someone else has. (*I want a car just like his!*)
 - Covetousness has to do with taking the actual thing that belongs to someone else, as opposed to having something just like it. (*I want his car!*)
 - The command is against coveting a neighbor's wife, house, land, servant, animals, or anything that belongs to a neighbor.
 - Coveting often leads to an action, but it is not itself an action. (Otherwise, coveting a neighbor's wife and committing adultery would be repetitive prohibitions.) Coveting is an attitude or thought.
 - So the Old Testament cares about the *heart* and *attitude* too, not just the outward actions (as some occasionally mischaracterize the differences between the Old and New Testaments).

Investigate

- How many of these commands are related to honesty and integrity? What do you make of that?
- Which commands are probably most misunderstood today? How have you understood them?
- Is stealing always physically taking an object from someone else? Are there other things that would fall under "don't steal"?
- What do you think the tenth command is doing here? Why a list of nine actions and then one attitude?

Illustrate

- How do you think Christians today honor the command to honor parents? Are we good at that? Do we even have to do that anymore?
- What kind of community is God trying to create by giving these commands?
- Is loving others as simple as following these commands? Or is there more to it?

New Testament Ties

- How does Jesus help us better love God by his following these six commandments?
- Scan through the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5-7). How many of these commands does Jesus refer to, and what does he do with them?

Inspire

Ideas for closing:

- Sing "Thy Word."
- Read Psalm 119:17-32.

For next week, read Deut 6:4-9 and think about the importance of passing on God's teachings to future generations.