

The Ten Commandments: A Guide to Being Light and Life for the City
GTW Winter 2021
January 6 - March 17, 2021
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Purpose of the Class: We are called to be “Light and Life for the City.” How do we go about that? What does it look like? The Ten Commandments were given by God to the people he had rescued from slavery and were supposed to give them an identity that would bear witness to the character of God and his people. This was the identity that would enable them to live out God’s promise that they would be “blessed to be a blessing.” Living according to these commands would bring light and life to those around them.

As we reflect on the Commandments, we will also look at how Jesus interested them in the *Sermon on the Mount*.

Biblical Texts: Deuteronomy 5: 1-21; Matthew 5-7

January 6	The First Commandment: <i>You shall have no other gods before me.</i>
January 13	The Second Commandment: <i>You shall not make any graven image.</i>
January 20	Third Commandment: <i>You shall not take my name in vain.</i>
January 27	Fourth Commandment: <i>You shall observe the Sabbath and keep it holy.</i>
February 3	Fifth Commandment: <i>Honor your father and mother.</i>
February 10	The Sixth Commandment: <i>Do not commit murder.</i>
February 17	NO CLASS: <i>Ash Wednesday</i>
February 24	The Seventh Commandment: <i>Do not commit adultery</i>
March 3	The Eighth Commandment: <i>Do not steal.</i>
March 10	The Ninth Commandment: <i>Do not bear false witness.</i>
March 17	The Tenth Commandment: <i>Do not covet.</i>

Resources: These are the **primary** resources I will be using. I have listed them in case you wish to do further study.

The Ten Commandments

Smoke on the Mountain, Joy Davidman

The Cost of Discipleship, Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Keeping the Ten Commandments, J. I. Packer

The School of Faith: The Catechisms of the Reformed Tradition, Thomas F. Torrance, translator and editor. This book is available in e-form from the Theological Commons of Princeton Seminary at this site: <https://commons.ptsem.edu/id/schooloffaithcat00torr>

Most catechisms deal with the Ten Commandments. In the *School of Faith*, they can be found at the following places:

Calvin's Geneva Catechism, Questions 130-232 (Section II: The Law)

The Heidelberg Catechism, Questions 86-115 (Section III: Thankfulness)

Craig's Catechism, THE SECOND PART OF GOD'S HONOUR IS OBEDIENCE

The New Catechism (1644), Questions 74-118

The Larger Catechism (Westminster), Questions 91-153

The Shorter Catechism (Westminster), Questions 39-85

Our denomination has a brief description of the Ten Commandments in its *Essential Tenets*. They may be found at www.eco-pres.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/eco_constitution_online6.14.19.pdf

Scroll down to page 8, "Living in Obedience to the Word of God."

The Sermon on the Mount

The Message of the Sermon on the Mount, John Stott

Sermon the Mount, Sinclair Ferguson. This is 12-episode lecture series, available to stream on *Amazon Prime*. Ferguson is a Scottish theologian and professor at Reformed Theological Seminary

The Sermon on the Mount, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Matthew: A Commentary: Volume One, The Christbook, F. Dale Bruner

E. Living in obedience to the Word of God (From the *Essential Tenets* of the Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians)

Progress in holiness is an expected response of gratitude to the grace of God, which is initiated, sustained, and fulfilled by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. The first response of gratitude is prayer, and the daily discipline of prayer – both individually and together – should mark the Christian life. The life of prayer includes praise to God for His nature and works, sincere confession of our sin, and intercession for the needs of those we know and for the needs of the world. As we practice the discipline of regular self-examination and confession, we are especially guided by the Ten Commandments. We therefore hold one another accountable to:

1. worship God alone, living all of life to His glory, renouncing all idolatry and all inordinate loves that might lead us to trust in any other help;
2. worship God in humility, being reticent in either describing or picturing God, recognizing that right worship is best supported not by our own innovative practices but through the living preaching of the Word and the faithful administration of the Sacraments;
3. eliminate from both speech and thought any blasphemy, irreverence, or impurity;
4. observe the Sabbath as a day of worship and rest, being faithful in gathering with the people of God;
5. give honor toward those set in authority over us and practice mutual submission within the community of the church;
6. eradicate a spirit of anger, resentment, callousness, violence, or bitterness, and instead cultivate a spirit of gentleness, kindness, peace, and love; recognize and honor the image of God in every human being from conception to natural death.
7. maintain chastity in thought and deed, being faithful within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman as established by God at the creation or embracing a celibate life as established by Jesus in the new covenant;
8. practice right stewardship of the goods we have been given, showing charity to those in need and offering generous support of the Church and its ministries;
9. pursue truth, even when such pursuit is costly, and defend truth when it is challenged, recognizing that truth is in order to goodness and that its preservation matters;
10. resist the pull of envy, greed, and acquisition, and instead cultivate a spirit of contentment with the gifts God has given us.

In Jesus Christ we see the perfect expression of God's holy will for human beings offered to God in our place. His holy life must now become our holy life. In Christ, God's will is now written on our hearts, and we look forward to the day when we will be so confirmed in holiness that we will no longer be able to sin. As the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, Jesus leads us along the path of life toward that goal, bringing us into ever deeper intimacy with the Triune God, in whose presence is fullness of joy.