

Ten Commandments Study Guide

If people in our Christian fellowships today were to announce that they had decided to keep God's law, we would probably be skeptical and alarmed. We probably would take them aside for counseling and possibly alert other responsible people in the group to keep an eye on them. We would be sure nothing good would come of it. We know that one is not saved by keeping the law and can think of no other reason why one should try to do it.

This leaves us caught in a strange inversion of the work of the Judaizing teachers who dogged the footsteps of Paul in New Testament days. As they wanted to add obedience to ritual law to faith in Christ, we want to subtract moral law from faith in Christ. How to combine faith with obedience is surely the essential task of the church as it enters the twenty-first century.

The Centrality of God's True Law to Human Life

The law that God had truly given to Israel was, until the coming of Messiah, the most precious possession of human beings on earth. That law consisted of fundamental teachings such as the Ten Commandments, the "Hear, O Israel..." of Deuteronomy 6:4–5, the great passage on neighbor love in Leviticus 19:9–18, and the elaborations and applications of them by the Jewish prophets up to John the Baptizer.

"What great nation is there," Moses exclaims, "that has statutes and judgments as righteous as this whole law that I am setting before you today?" (Deut. 4:8). The ancient writers knew well the desperate human problem of knowing how to live, and they recognized the law revealed by Jehovah, Israel's covenant-making God, to be the only real solution to this problem.

God's true law also possessed an inherent beauty in its own right, as an expression of the beautiful mind of God. It is profound truth and therefore precious in its own right. In Psalm 119 and elsewhere, we see how the devotee of the law, Jehovah's precious gift, was ravished by its goodness and power, finding it to be the perfect guide into the blessed life in God. It was a constant delight to the mind and the heart.

We must understand that Jesus, the faithful Son, does not deviate at all from this understanding of the law that is truly God's law. He could easily have written Psalm 119 himself.

*~Dallas Willard,
The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*

I read Dallas Willard's *The Divine Conspiracy*, a study of the Sermon on the Mount, after I recorded these talks on the Ten Commandments. I wish I'd read it long before, for I'd have referred to it often and recommended it highly. So now I'm recommending it here. I can think of no better companion book to this study. Read it! God may very well use it to change your life.

—E. Calvin Beisner

Introduction—How to Use this Study Guide

This guide accompanies my video lectures on the Ten Commandments and is designed to enrich both group and individual study.

The guide for each unit begins with an individual assignment that will be of greatest benefit if completed before viewing the video for that unit. Individual assignments include readings in Scripture, the *Westminster Larger Catechism* (the questions on the Ten Commandments are available in another PDF on this DVD), and other sources, plus suggestions for personal thought and some memorization.

It then offers questions for group discussion. Individuals studying the Ten Commandments alone can still benefit from answering the group discussion questions on their own. Don't feel pressured to discuss *all* the questions offered for each session. You can pick and choose among them. Leaders and participants can also add their own questions.

Each unit's guide concludes with resources for further study that can be used for years to build an ever-growing understanding and appreciation of the Ten Commandments, Christian ethics, and Christian theology.

How to Organize the Course of Study

The 23 units can be completed in 23 or 13 sessions, making the course suitable for a semester or quarter.

The first four lectures (Units 1, 2A, 2B, and 3A) provide a foundation for studying the Ten Commandments—the worldview underlying them, their historical setting, their relationship to other types of law in the Bible, principles for interpreting them, and their three primary uses. Unit 3B focuses on the First Commandment, completing discussion that began in earlier sessions. After that, two units are devoted to each commandment.

Beginning with the second session, the units are numbered 2A, 2B, 3A, 3B, etc., to facilitate doing two units in a single session if desired. Aside from the first, introductory, lecture, which is longer, the lectures run from about 20 to about 30 minutes, leaving plenty of time in a one-hour meeting for group discussion. The lectures and discussion questions are designed to fit in meetings of 55 to 60 minutes if handled in 23 sessions, or in meetings of 85 to 90 minutes if handled in 13 sessions.

A Note on the Use of God's Name, *Yahweh*

Throughout these lectures, in quoting Scripture (usually from the *English Standard Version*), I substitute *Yahweh* (also spelled *Jahweh*) for the English LORD. Why? The word *LORD*, all uppercase, signals that the word represents the divine name *YHWH*, "I AM." Ancient Jewish readers, in an effort to avoid misusing God's name by mispronunciation, began the tradition of

substituting the Hebrew word *Adonai*, which translates as *Lord*, for *Yahweh*, and much of the Christian church has followed that tradition. But *Lord* is a title, not a name, and *Yahweh* is the personal *name* God used when He spoke to Moses (Exodus 3:14). I don't normally address my wife as "Wife" (her title) but as "Debby," her name. I have found that using God's actual name, *Yahweh* (however it was pronounced), reminds me that God revealed Himself *personally* to Moses and the rest of mankind through the Scriptures and the incarnation of Christ and has a *personal*, not merely a formal and official, relationship with me.

A Note on the Numbering of the Commandments

I use the familiar Jewish-Protestant-Reformed-Orthodox numbering of the Ten Commandments, which treats "You shall have no other gods before me" and "You shall not make for yourself a carved image ..." as two commandments (First and Second) and combines "You shall not covet your neighbor's house" and "you shall not covet your neighbor's wife ..." into one (the Tenth). The Roman Catholic and Lutheran traditions combine "You shall have no other gods before Me" and "You shall not make for yourself a carved image ..." into one (the First) and separate "You shall not covet your neighbor's house" and "you shall not covet your neighbor's wife ..." into two (the Ninth and Tenth). As a result, what the Jewish-Protestant-Reformed-Orthodox traditions call the Third through Ninth Commandments the Roman Catholic and Lutheran traditions call the Second through Eighth. This table shows the most common options for numbering the Ten Commandments:

Alternative Numberings of the Ten Commandments				
Commandment	Jewish (Talmudic)	Anglican, Reformed, and other Christian	Orthodox and other Christian	Roman Catholic, Lutheran
I am the LORD your God, who brought you ...	1	Preface	1	1
You shall have no other gods before me.		1		
You shall not make for yourself an idol ...	2	2	2	
You shall not take the name of the LORD in vain ...	3	3	3	2
Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy ...	4	4	4	3
Honor your father and mother ...	5	5	5	4
You shall not murder.	6	6	6	5
You shall not commit adultery.	7	7	7	6
You shall not steal.	8	8	8	7
You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.	9	9	9	8
You shall not covet your neighbor's house.	10	10	10	9
You shall not covet your neighbor's wife ...				10

Unit 1: Introduction to the Ten Commandments—Their Historical Setting

Individual Assignment (Reminder: The individual assignment, in each instance, is best done *before* viewing the lecture.)

1. Read Exodus 1–15 and imagine yourself as an Israelite. How would the events there have shaped your understanding of God and His relationship to you, to your fellow Israelites, and to non-Israelites? How would they have shaped your understanding of your relationship to your fellow Israelites and to non-Israelites?
2. Read the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Questions 91–98 (from the excerpt from the *Catechism* reproduced in PDF on this DVD), and the accompanying Scripture texts. What new things do you learn from them?
3. Consider how Christ exercises His kingship. How does it compare with your own exercise of authority, whether in your family, on the job, or in the church?

Questions for Group Discussion (Reminder: The questions for group discussion, in each instance, are best done *after* viewing the lecture.)

1. In what ways did the discussion of how God challenged the gods of Egypt through the plagues enhance your understanding of the relationship of Yahweh to the people of Israel and those around them?
2. How do people today choose substitutes for God as the Israelites did when they demanded a king? Are the consequences like those God told Samuel to warn of then?
3. The polytheism of the ancient world must have led to widespread conflicting value systems and hence to widespread social conflict. Do you see similar conditions in the world around you today? If so, what accounts for them?
4. What widespread practice in America today is like that of ancient worshipers of the god Molech? What does it indicate about the spiritual health of the American people? What are you doing to reduce its frequency and eventually end it?
5. How would you compare how the pagan gods of the Ancient Near East related to people with how the God of the Bible does?
6. What does the Bible’s teaching that God made men and women in His image imply for your understanding of social relationships—e.g., marriage, race, sexuality, economics, politics, entertainment, environmental stewardship, and more?
7. Compare the culture that surrounds you with the cultures that surrounded the Israelites in Moses’ and Samuel’s times. How do they differ? How are they alike?
8. How might greater attention to and reverence for the Ten Commandments help your culture?
9. Hebrews 10:5–10 says that in contrast to the priests of Israel, Christ *did* God’s will—and 5:14 implies that He never failed to do it—and thus could offer Himself once for all to atone for sin. How does this relate to His having a righteousness that can be imputed to us by faith for our justification, as Paul teaches in Romans 3:21–4:25?

Resources for Further Study

1. David Livingston, "The Plagues and the Exodus," <http://www.davelivingston.com/plagues.htm>.
2. For expanded understanding of the different gods and goddesses of the ancient Near East, and of the plagues and how they figure into Biblical history and imagery, see Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, and Tremper Longman III, eds., *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* (InterVarsity, 1999), under the entry "Gods, Goddesses." The source is available online:
3. Eugene H. Merrill, *An Historical Survey of the Old Testament*, 2d ed. (Baker Academic, 1992), chapter 2, "In the Beginning," especially the section "The Ancient Near Eastern World," and chapter 5, "The Theocratic Foundation."
4. Richard Pratt, *He Gave Us Stories: The Bible Student's Guide to Interpreting Old Testament Narratives* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1993).
5. Thomas Watson, "The Preface to the Ten Commandments," in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.

Unit 2A: Three Categories of Biblical Law

Individual Assignment

1. At 176 verses, Psalm 119, the longest Psalm and the longest chapter in the Bible (longer than 14 Old Testament books and 17 New Testament books!), is an elaborate acrostic poem in praise of God's self-revelation, especially through His law. Each of the eight verses of each of 22 stanzas begins with the same letter of the Hebrew alphabet, from *Aleph* through *Tau*—the careful design indicating the great care with which the psalmist expressed his love for God, His Word, and particularly His law, or Torah—a synonym for which appears in almost every verse. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:1–8 (the stanza *Aleph*), asking God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Read and pray over all Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:1–17) once each day from now to the next session.
3. Before the next session, memorize, in sequence, these two-word abbreviations of the Ten Commandments:
 1. No gods.
 2. No idols.
 3. No profanity.
 4. Remember Sabbath.
 5. Honor parents.
 6. No murder.
 7. No adultery.
 8. No stealing.
 9. No lying.
 10. No coveting.

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What are the three categories of Biblical law? Can you find a few examples of each in Scripture?
2. What were some ways that Old Testament ceremonial laws divided Jews from Gentiles? Are there New Testament ceremonies that distinguish Christians from non-Christians? If so, what are they? Why are Old Testament laws dividing Jews from Gentiles no longer binding?
3. Why was the Old Testament sacrificial system abolished in the New Testament? In light of this, what makes the new covenant better, as the Book of Hebrews puts it, than the old?

4. Why are the civil, or judicial, laws of the Old Testament no longer binding on any nation today except insofar as their general equity (underlying moral principles) may require? What does it mean for their “general equity” still to be applicable?
5. What are some moral principles (“general equity”) in some of the Old Testament civil laws that should still inform legislators today? Numbers 25:30, Deuteronomy 17:6–7, and Deuteronomy 22:8 are a few samples, but you might think of others. How would you apply their underlying moral principles in your time and place? As you consider them, keep in mind the distinction between Old Testament Israel as “a church under age” that was also “a body politic” and all other nations, none of which is a church at all (whether “under age” or not).
6. What does it mean to say that God gave Adam the moral law “as a covenant of works”? Is the law still a covenant of works today? Can anyone be saved by keeping the law as a covenant of works? Why or why not? How does the law as a covenant of works relate to the covenant of grace, and, in light of Romans 6, what relationship does the law have to us under the covenant of grace?
7. In what ways has God given human beings His law?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:1–8, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition* (Banner of Truth, 1987), pages 1-17.
2. Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Banner of Truth Trust, 1948, 2000), chapter 8, “Revelation in the Period of Moses,” section [C][1], “The Content of the Mosaic Revelation,” especially [C][4], “The Decalogue” (pages 129–143) and [C][5], “The Ritual (ceremonial) Law” (pages 143–182).
3. Dennis Duling, “Torah Orientation,” in *Handbook of Biblical Social Values*, edited by John J. Pilch and Bruce J. Malina (Hendrickson, 1998), pages 194–201.
4. Ezekiel Hopkins, “Understanding the Ten Commandments,” in *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*, ed. Walter C. Kaiser Jr. (Baker, 1972), pages 41–58, specifically 43–48; from Hopkins, *An Exposition of the Ten Commandments* (American Tract Society, n.d.), online at <http://bit.ly/2ikFsnL>, pages 20–29.

Unit 2B: Three Uses of the Moral Law

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:9–16 (the stanza *Beth*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the two-word abbreviations of the Ten Commandments listed in the study guide for Unit 2A.

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What are the “three uses of the law”?
2. Read Romans 3:20–31. In light of the discussion in this session of the three uses of the law, how does Paul’s teaching that “one is justified by faith apart from the works of the law” (verse 28) not “overthrow” but rather “uphold the law” (verse 31)?
3. Did you think before this of the moral law as a “mirror and pedagogue” to show you your sinfulness, Christ’s righteousness, and your need of Him as Savior? How does considering the law that way differ from considering it as a covenant of works?
4. Hebrews 4:15 says, “we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin,” and in John 8:46 Jesus challenged the Jewish religious leaders who opposed Him, “Which of you convicts me of sin?” If the Ten Commandments are in part a mirror in which we see our own sinfulness, they’re also a mirror in which we see Christ’s righteousness. What specific instances in the Gospels can you think of in which Christ kept one of the Commandments—particularly when doing so involved particular self-denial and self-discipline on His part?
5. The tendency toward legalism—whether thinking that we’re going to earn our way to Heaven by obeying the law, or substituting our own rules for God’s rules—has been strong throughout history, both before and after Christ came. In what ways are you most prone to legalism? How can you guard against it? How can you help others guard against it?
6. While we don’t want legalism, neither do we want antinomianism (a word stemming from Greek *anti*, “against,” and *nomos*, “law”)—the idea that the Christian has no obligation to obey God’s laws. How are you most prone to antinomianism? How can you guard against it in yourself and others?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:9–16, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 18–35.
2. R.C. Sproul, “The Threefold Use of the Law,” https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/sproul/threefold_law.html.

3. “Christian Ethics—Introduction,” <http://www.allaboutworldview.org/christian-ethics.htm>
4. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book II, Chapter 8, Sections 1–5.
(Various print editions; online at
<http://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books/Calvin%20Institutes%20of%20Christian%20Religion.pdf#page=234>)
5. Martin Luther, *A Brief Explanation of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer* (http://www.godrules.net/library/luther/NEW1luther_b7.htm)
6. Craig Vincent Mitchell, *Charts of Christian Ethics* (Zondervan, 2006)
7. David Clyde Jones, *Biblical Christian Ethics* (Baker Academic, 1994)
8. John Jefferson Davis, *Evangelical Ethics: Issues Facing the Church Today* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 1993)
9. R.K. Harrison, ed., *Encyclopedia of Biblical and Christian Ethics* (Thomas Nelson, 1987)

Unit 3A: Principles for Applying and Interpreting the Ten Commandments

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:17–24 (the stanza *Gimel*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Read the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, Questions 99–102, with the Scripture texts that accompany them. How will they help you understand and apply the Ten Commandments in your life?
3. Memorize the full text of the First Commandment from Exodus 20:3: “You shall have no other gods before me.”
4. The *Catechism* offers 2 requirements (with 7 how-to’s for the second) and 23 prohibitions implied by the First Commandment. Each day over the next week, study 4 or 5 of these, looking up the related Bible verses and thinking over how they relate, and praying for God to reveal your heart with regard to each.

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Compare the list of two-word abbreviations of the Ten Commandments you wrote at the early in this session (during the break in the lecture) with the list above. How did you do? What does that reveal about your love for God’s law, compared with the psalmist’s as seen in the opening prayer?
2. The lecture argues from Romans 13:10, “love is the fulfillment of the law,” that the moral law defines love. How does that insight expand or correct your understanding of what it means to love?
3. How do the five principles of application and two principles of interpretation of the moral law, discussed in the lecture, give you new insight into the use of the law in your life?
 - a. Principles of application:
 - i. The law is perfect and requires perfect obedience in every detail.
 - ii. The law is spiritual and addresses not only our words and deeds but also our thoughts.
 - iii. Though not every commandment explicitly promises rewards for obedience or threatens punishment for disobedience, still, the promises and threats are implicit in all.
 - iv. Although the law’s prohibitions bind everyone everywhere at every moment, and its requirements are always our duty, not every duty is to be done at every moment.
 - v. What the law requires of us it requires of all, and consequently it is our duty not only to obey but also to urge others to obey.
 - b. Principles of interpretation:

- i. The law’s prohibitions and requirements establish categories, so that not only a specific, narrowly defined action is prohibited or required but all actions of the same category.
 - ii. Each commandment has both positive and negative implications—requiring some things and forbidding their contraries.
- 4. In his classic *An Exposition of the Ten Commandments*, Bishop Ezekiel Hopkins (1634–1690) offered ten rules (summarized here) for the interpretation and application of the Ten Commandments. How does each rule help you to examine your own faith, values, and conduct?
 - a. Every rule of life and action in Scripture is implicit in at least one of the Ten Commandments.
 - b. Requirements imply the prohibition of the contrary sin, and prohibitions imply the requirement of the contrary duty.
 - c. Prohibitions bind at every moment, but duties, though never ending, do not require enactment at every moment.
 - d. The same rule that forbids outward acts also forbids inward affections that lead to them, and the rule that requires outward acts also requires inward affections suitable to them.
 - e. A rule forbidding a particular sin also forbids our willingly subjecting ourselves to the occasions and inducements to that sin.
 - f. The commands of the first table of the law (our duty to God) are not to be kept for the sake of the second (our duty to men), but those of the second are to be kept for the sake of the first.
 - g. Commands of the first table (our duty to God), insofar as they are purely moral, supersede those of the second (our duty to men) in circumstances in which they conflict. (See, for example, Luke 14:26 and Acts 5:29.)
 - h. The Fourth Commandment (“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy . . .”) contains both “moral and natural” and “positive and instituted” aspects, and “our obligation to the second table [our duty to men] often supersedes our obedience to [the positive and instituted aspects of] that command of the first table [our duty to God].”
 - i. Whatever is forbidden in any command, all the “signs and symptom of it, and likewise all the effects and consequences of it, are forbidden in the same.”
 - j. The commandments are so interconnected (by the authority and sovereignty of God—James 2:10) that whoever breaks one is guilty of breaking all.
- 5. How does the moral law point us to Christ, and to what purpose?
- 6. In a study we co-authored, Dr. R. Fowler White and I wrote:

... the old commandment of love for God and neighbor (Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18) is the new commandment as well (Matthew 22:34–40; John 13:34; 14:15; 15:10). The law taught at the beginning of the ages in Eden and thereafter at Sinai is the same law taught now at the end of the ages from Zion (1

John 2:7; 3:11–12 with Hebrews 12:18, 22). The tablets of the commandments housed in the tabernacle of Moses are the tablets of the commandments housed in the temple of Solomon. The words issued from the summit of Sinai and engraved on tablets of stone are the words placed in the ark at the summit of Zion and inscribed on tablets of flesh in the heart of the believer. The law of Moses, as the law of love (Romans 13:8–10), is the law of Christ. The ten words of Sinai are, thus, the ten words of Zion.

How does this shape your understanding of the role of the Ten Commandments as they relate to the covenant of grace in both the Old and New Testaments?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:17–24, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 36–55.
2. “The First Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/first-commandment/>. (Note: Ligonier Ministries has posted at least two devotionals about each of the Ten Commandments, so each lesson in this study will recommend a different one of those. Despite their identical titles and similar URLs, they aren’t the same.)
3. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book II, Chapter 8, Sections 6–12 and 51–59 (<http://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books/Calvin%20Institutes%20of%20Christian%20Religion.pdf#page=238> and <http://www.ntslibrary.com/PDF%20Books/Calvin%20Institutes%20of%20Christian%20Religion.pdf#page=265>)
4. Ezekiel Hopkins, “Understanding the Ten Commandments,” in *Classical Evangelical Essays in Old Testament Interpretation*, ed. Walter C. Kaiser Jr. (Baker, 1972), pages 41–58, specifically 48–58; from Hopkins, *An Exposition of the Ten Commandments* (American Tract Society, n.d.), online at <http://bit.ly/2ikFsnL>, pages 29–48.
5. Robert L. Reymond, “The Threefold Pattern of the Sanctified Life,” in *A New Systematic Theology of the Christian Faith* (Nelson, 1998), pages 770–781.
6. R. Fowler White and E. Calvin Beisner, “Covenant, Inheritance, and Typology: Understanding the Principles at Work in God’s Covenants,” in *By Faith Alone: Answering the Challenges to the Doctrine of Justification*, edited by Gary L.W. Johnson and Guy P. Waters (Crossway, 2007). This essay will help you understand the relationship among God’s covenants, especially between the Old and New Covenants.
7. Thomas Watson, “The Right Understanding of the Law,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.

Unit 3B: The First Commandment: You shall have no other gods before me.

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:25–32 (the stanza *Daleth*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of the First Commandment from Exodus 20:3: “You shall have no other gods before me.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the First Commandment (Questions 103–106). What new insights do you gain into the First Commandment? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?
4. Memorize the full text of the Second Commandment from Exodus 20:4–6: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.”

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Luke 4:5–8 says that when Jesus was fasting in the wilderness after His baptism, “the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, ‘To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me, and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.’ And Jesus answered him, ‘It is written, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.”’” This was one example of Jesus’ obeying the Ten Commandments—this time to have no other gods before Yahweh, His Father. Can you think of other instances when Jesus was tempted to violate the First Commandment? What tool did Jesus lean on in His response to the temptation? What can you learn from that about how you can prepare to meet and defeat temptation?
2. Of the 2 requirements (and 7 how-to’s for the second requirement) and 23 prohibitions the *Catechism* says are implied by the First Commandment, which do you find the most surprising, the most difficult, the most contrary to today’s culture, and why?
3. Have there been times when you could have gently but firmly informed someone you know that he was breaking the First Commandment? Did you do so? What happened? If you didn’t, can you imagine yourself doing it? How could you do it without seeming Pharisaical, condemnatory, legalistic, or proud?
4. Describe some times when *you* ’ve broken the First Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God’s forgiveness in Christ after you’d done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:25–32, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 56–79.
2. “The First Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-first-commandment/>
3. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 2, “The First Commandment,” pages 15–34.
4. Thomas Watson, “The First Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.

Unit 4A: The Second Commandment and Biblical Cosmology

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:33–40 (the stanza *Hē*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of the Second Commandment from Exodus 20:4–6: “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Second Commandment (Questions 107–110), together with the Scripture texts accompanying it. What new insights do you gain into the Second Commandment? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?
4. Review the *Catechism*’s list of requirements and prohibitions implicit in the Second Commandment, along with the Scripture texts associated with them. Do you disagree with the *Catechism* about any of them? If so, why? Remember, the *Catechism* isn’t infallible as Scripture is, so you needn’t submit to it as you would to Scripture.
5. Ask God to increase your understanding of and obedience to the Commandment.

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Dr. Beisner quoted Jochem Douma saying that worshiping even the true God through images (idols) misunderstands His freedom, His majesty, and His covenant. Idols also served to represent, or image, the gods. This implies that every image *through* which we worship even the true God serves not only, as Douma said, to “contain” Him, bring Him down, and put Him under the worshiper’s control, but also to represent God to the worshiper. That is, one function of idols, images used in worship, is to reveal God (or the gods) to worshipers. But what does resort to images imply about the sufficiency of God’s self-revelation in creation, in human nature (Genesis 1:26–28), in Scripture, and ultimately, especially, in Jesus Christ Himself, who is “the image of God” (2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15), indeed, the “radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature” (Hebrews 1:3)?
2. The answer to Question 108 of the *Catechism* says, “The duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath instituted in his word.” In light of the principles of interpretation and application discussed in our third session, how do you think the Westminster Assembly arrived at that conclusion?
3. The *Catechism* was written in the 1640s, before the idea of religious liberty became very widespread. What do you think of its saying that the Second Commandment forbids

“tolerating a false religion”? What is religious toleration? How does it differ from religious liberty? What are the distinct roles of church and state with regard to religious toleration and liberty? How might the Confession’s specification that the ceremonial and judicial laws were given to Israel as a “church under age” that was also a “body politic” (*Westminster Confession of Faith* 19.3–4) relate to this issue?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:33–40, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 80–100.
2. “The Second Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/second-commandment/>
3. E. Calvin Beisner and R. Fowler White, “Covenant, Inheritance, and Typology: Understanding the Principles at Work in God’s Covenants,” in *By Faith Alone: Answering the Challenges to the Doctrine of Justification*, edited by Gary L. W. Johnson and Guy P. Waters (Crossway Books, 2007).

Unit 4B: The Second Commandment and Worship

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:41–48 (the stanza *Waw*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Memorize the full text of the Third Commandment from Exodus 20:7: “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.”

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What part can architecture, art, and images properly play in individual and corporate worship consistent with the Second Commandment, and what uses of them would violate it?
2. In Exodus 25–30, God gave Moses instructions regarding the design and building of the tabernacle, which would become the center of Israel’s worship. In Exodus 25:18–20), God instructed Moses to make two images of cherubim (mighty angels) to overshadow the ark of the testimony and its mercy seat (where the high priest would present the highest sacrifice once a year). There were to be three-dimensional images of an almond tree and its blossoms (25:31–34) as a lampstand. The curtains and all the furnishings of the tabernacle, as well as the priests’ garments, were to have beautiful designs. Taken all together, the instructions for the tabernacle were for a place of beauty and splendor. Yet the tabernacle was to be splattered with blood and would reek of burning flesh all day every day. What should this have taught the Israelites about God, about human sin, and about worship? And how do you reconcile the instructions for the making of some images in the tabernacle with the Second Commandment?
3. Consider the building in which you worship. How does it contribute to, or detract from your ability to worship God? What changes would you make, if you could? Consider discussing these sometime with your church leaders.
4. Describe some times when *you’ve* broken the Second Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God’s forgiveness in Christ after you’d done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:41–48, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 101–121.
2. “The Second Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-second-commandment/>

3. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 3, “The Second Commandment,” pages 35–72.
4. Thomas Watson, “The Second Commandment,” in in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.

Unit 5A: The Third Commandment—Reverence for God’s Name, Word, and Works

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:49–56 (the stanza *Zayin*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of the Third Commandment from Exodus 20:7: “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Third Commandment, taking on a few pieces each day before the next session, looking up the Scripture passages as you go (Questions 111–114). What new insights do you gain into the Third Commandment from these questions and answers? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?
4. Consider your own speech patterns. What changes do you think you should make in light of the Third Commandment?
5. This lesson concluded by challenging you to consider carefully what you do, or should do, in preparing for, participating in, and reflecting on the Lord’s Supper. What do you think of your past practice? What changes do you intend to make—if any? What could your church do to help all its members to benefit more from the celebration of the Lord’s Supper?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How do these verses help you understand the Third Commandment?
 - a. Matthew 6:9, where Jesus teaches His disciples to pray, “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.” (Compare Luke 11:2.)
 - b. John 12:28, where Jesus prays, “Father, glorify your name.”
 - c. John 17:6, 26, where Jesus prays to the Father, “I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world” and “I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”
2. Every time Jesus used the figure of speech that John records in Greek as *Amen*, *amen*, *lego*, “Truly, truly, I say” (John 1:51; 3:3, 5, 11; 5:19, 24, 25; 6:26, 32, 47, 53; 8:34, 51, 58; 10:1, 7; 12:24; 13:16, 20, 21, 38; 14:12; 16:20, 23; 21:18), He was speaking in a way that every Jew around Him would have understood as His taking an oath. For the Jews, the phrase meant what we mean by “so help me God,” or “as God is my witness.” Thus it was an implicit appeal to God’s name to attest to the truth of what He said. How does that contribute to your understanding of the Third Commandment, particularly if the *Larger Catechism* is correct in saying that the Commandment implicitly prohibits sinful oaths?
3. The Commandment itself simply says, “You shall not take the name of Yahweh your God in vain.” Why do you think the *Catechism* says this requires “receiving, observing,

and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God has instituted in His Word” and forbids “ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious, or wicked mentioning ... [of] His titles, attributes, ordinances, or works”?

4. Think about the worship services in your church. In what respects do they show true reverence for God and His name, Word, and works? How could they do better? What about your own conduct in corporate and private worship? How could you be more reverent not just in worship but in every moment of your life?
5. In Exodus 32–34, it appears that Moses actually argues with God and persuades Him not to do some things He had warned He would do. How do you reconcile that with the Third Commandment’s requirement that we always show reverence to God?
6. If we ought not to take God’s name in vain ourselves, how should we respond to its being abused in entertainment?
7. Describe some times when *you’ve* broken the Third Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God’s forgiveness in Christ after you’d done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:49–56, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 122–140.
2. “The Third Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-third-commandment-2/>.
3. Thomas Watson, “The Third Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.

Unit 5B: The Third Commandment—Hallowing God’s Name

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:57–64 (the stanza *Heth*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Memorize the full text of the Fourth Commandment from Exodus 20:8–11: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”
3. When you hear people abuse God’s name or his ordinances, Word, and works, do you respond as the psalmist says he does in Psalm 119:136—“My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep your law”? If not, why not?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Think about your own everyday speech and, if you use social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), your everyday comments there. Assuming you’re not perfect, how might you conform your communications better to the Third Commandment?
2. What common speech practices in your surrounding culture—from friends to neighbors to colleagues to entertainers to public figures—strike you as violating the Third Commandment? How do you normally respond to them? Do you think that response is Biblically right, wrong, or indifferent? Why?
3. The Third Commandment addresses our speech in very specific terms by prohibiting our taking God’s name in vain, but the Bible teaches much more about speech. How would careful attention to the following verses affect your speech habits?
 - a. Psalm 19:14: “Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.”
 - b. Proverbs 4:24: “Put away from you crooked speech, and put devious talk far from you.”
 - c. Proverbs 8:13: “The fear of the LORD is hatred of evil. Pride and arrogance and the way of evil and perverted speech I hate.”
 - d. Proverbs 8:8: Wisdom says, “All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing twisted or crooked in them.”
 - e. Proverbs 10:19: “When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent.”
 - f. Proverbs 12:18: “There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

- g. Proverbs 16:24: “Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body.”
- h. Proverbs 17:27: “Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.”
- i. Proverbs 18:8: “The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body.”
- j. Proverbs 29:19: “Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”
- k. Ecclesiastes 5:2–7: “Be not rash with your mouth, nor let your heart be hasty to utter a word before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth. Therefore let your words be few. For a dream comes with much business, and a fool's voice with many words. When you vow a vow to God, do not delay paying it, for he has no pleasure in fools. Pay what you vow. It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay. Let not your mouth lead you into sin, and do not say before the messenger that it was a mistake. Why should God be angry at your voice and destroy the work of your hands? For when dreams increase and words grow many, there is vanity; but God is the one you must fear.”
- l. Ecclesiastes 6:11: “The more words, the more vanity, and what is the advantage to man?”
- m. Matthew 12:34–37: “You brood of vipers! How can you speak good, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”
- n. Ephesians 4:29–32: “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”
- o. Colossians 4:6: “Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”
- p. James 3:1–13: “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set

among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water. Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom.”

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:57–64, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 141–161.
2. “The Third Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-third-commandment-3/>.
3. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 4, “The Third Commandment,” pages 73–108.

Unit 6A: The Fourth Commandment—A Delightful Restriction

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:65–72 (the stanza *Teth*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of the Fourth Commandment from Exodus 20:8–11: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Fourth Commandment (Questions 115–121), reading the Scripture texts cited there. What new insights do you gain into the Fourth Commandment? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?
4. Read R.C. Sproul’s “Defining the Debate” (<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/defining-debate/>), a brief article on differing views of the Sabbath commandment, which particularly focuses on the difference between the “Continental view” and the “Puritan view” in the Reformed Protestant tradition. Which view do you better identify with—if either—and why?
5. What changes in your life do you intend to make to bring it more into line with the Fourth Commandment? How can you go about making those changes?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. In Matthew 12:1–14 and in John 5:1–18 and 7:16–24, Jesus did things that the Jews of His day thought broke the Fourth Commandment, yet He was without sin (Hebrews 5:14). How did He correct misunderstandings of the Sabbath commandment?
2. A common objection to setting aside a whole day for Sabbath observance is that we simply lack sufficient time—we have too much work or study to do. The *Catechism* says one way the Sabbath is to be set apart is “with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose and seasonably dispatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day.” It cites Luke 23:54, 56, Exodus 16:22–29, and Nehemiah 13:19 as supporting this idea. What could you do to organize your week to ensure that you could dedicate a whole day to corporate worship, fellowship, and prayer?
3. From colonial days to the mid-twentieth century, America as a whole generally observed the Sabbath. Few businesses, even stores, operated on Sundays, and sports and similar activities rarely did. In the last fifty years or so, all that has changed. Most stores are open seven days a week, professional and amateur sport leagues schedule games on Sundays, and all kinds of entertainment attract us on Sundays. How has this change affected our culture, the church, and family life?

4. The *Catechism* says that all kinds of work “except ... works of necessity and mercy” should be avoided on the Sabbath. What would you put in the categories of “works of necessity and mercy”?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:65–72, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 162–188.
2. “The Fourth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/fourth-commandment/>.
3. Joseph A. Pipa, *The Lord’s Day* (Christian Focus, 1996).
4. Richard D. Phillips, “Entering God’s Rest,” sermon on Hebrews 4:6–11, <http://www.sermonaudio.com/saplayer/playpopup.asp?SID=123012223122>.

Unit 6B: The Blessed Restrictions of the Sabbath Commandment

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:73–80 (the stanza *Yod*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Read R. Scott Clark’s “Are There Two Distinct Reformed Views of the Sabbath? Does the Continental View Really Exist?” (<https://heidelblog.net/2013/09/are-there-two-distinct-reformed-views-of-the-sabbath/>). What do you think of Clark’s argument?
3. Memorize the full text of the Fifth Commandment from Exodus 20:12: “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.”

Questions for Group Discussion

1. If you and your family were to set aside the Sabbath every week to rest from your ordinary activities and dedicate the time to worship, prayer, and fellowship, what would your typical Sabbath day look like? Would it—should it—be marked by extended silence and inactivity? Feasting and celebratory conversation with fellow Christians? Outreach to unbelievers? Conduct of your employment?
2. How can you “remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy,” but not become ensnared in a legalistic list of do’s and don’ts that become burdensome and Pharisaical?
3. For centuries, especially in countries heavily influenced by the Reformation, most businesses were closed on Sundays, and while recreational sports were common, professional sports avoided activity on Sundays. In many places, “blue laws” prohibited business operation on Sundays. Gradually, but increasingly rapidly from the middle of the twentieth century onward, these laws and traditions disappeared, though even today many nations still have laws prohibiting employers from requiring employees to work more than six days in a row, reflecting the human need for rest. How do different practices relating to Sunday (or any other Sabbath day) observance affect you, your family, and your society? What benefits were there to the traditional or legal restrictions of business on Sundays? What harms would come of restoring some?
4. What major businesses can you think of that close on Sundays? What do you think of their practice, and why?
5. Sabbath observance—aside from attending church—is unusual among many American Christians. What changes in your thinking have occurred in light of this study of the Fourth Commandment?
6. Describe some times when *you’ve* broken the Fourth Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God’s forgiveness in Christ after you’d done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:73–80, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 189–212.
2. “The Fourth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-fourth-commandment/>.
3. Thomas Watson, “The Fourth Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.
4. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 5, “The Fourth Commandment,” pages 109–160.
5. Billy Hallowell, “Here Are 5 Christian Companies that Join Chick-fil-A in Publicly Proclaiming their Bible-based Views,” <http://www.theblaze.com/news/2012/08/02/here-are-5-christian-companies-that-join-chick-fil-a-in-publicly-proclaiming-their-bible-based-faith/>.
6. An interesting analysis of Sunday shopping laws and traditions around the world is at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sunday_shopping.

Unit 7A: The Fifth Commandment—Honoring Father and Mother

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:81–88 (the stanza *Kaph*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the Fifth Commandment from Exodus 20:12: “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Fifth Commandment (Questions 123–133), with the Scripture texts that accompany it. What new insights do you gain into the Fifth Commandment?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How do Jesus’ words and actions in Luke 2:41–50, Luke 2:51, John 2:1–11, and John 19:26–27 help you understand the implications of the Fifth Commandment?
2. Review Genesis 9:20–27 together. What consequences to children’s dishonoring their parents stand out to you there and in the future relationship between the Canaanites and the Israelites—and for that matter, between the Canaanites and God?
3. What do Ephesians 6:1–4 and Colossians 2:20–21 teach about the relationship of children and parents? What’s your track record—how do you relate to your children, if you’re a parent, or to your parents, if you’re a child, so far as authority and obedience are concerned?
4. How would you distinguish honor from obedience in parent/child relationships? In what respects might they change—and in what respects might they remain the same—as a child grows into an adult?
5. Church leaders—pastors, elders, deacons—function toward the whole flock much as parents do toward children. What does Hebrews 13:17 teach about church members’ duties toward them? What could you do to improve in that regard?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:81–88, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 213–229.
2. “The Fifth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-fifth-commandment/>.
3. Thomas Watson, “The Fifth Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.
4. Robert Andrews, *The Family: God’s Weapon for Victory* (Winepress Publishing, 2002).
5. Jeff Pollard and Scott T. Brown, *A Theology of the Family: Five Centuries of Biblical Wisdom for Family Life* (National Center for Family-Integrated Churches, 2014).
6. Paul David Tripp, *Age of Opportunity: A Biblical Guide to Parenting Teens* (Presbyterian & Reformed, 2001).
7. Elisabeth Elliot, *The Shaping of a Christian Family* (Thomas Nelson, 1992).

Unit 7B: The Fifth Commandment, Civil Authority, and the Limits of Law and Liberty

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:89–96 (the stanza *Lamed*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Memorize the full text of the Sixth Commandment from Exodus 20:13: “You shall not murder.”

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What do Romans 13:1–7 and 1 Peter 2:12–17 teach about the implications of the Fifth Commandment for your relationship with civil rulers? What’s your track record—how do you relate to the civil rulers over you?
2. What do 1 Peter 2:18–19, Ephesians 6:5–9, and Colossians 2:22–25 teach about the relationships of employers and employees? What’s your track record—how do you relate to those in authority over you in the workplace?
3. Many people, even Christians, will admit to exceeding speed limits or cheating on taxes. In what areas of civil and criminal law are you most prone to bend—or break—the rules? What do these habits reveal about your obedience to the Fifth Commandment?
4. Describe some times when *you’ve* broken the Fifth Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God’s forgiveness in Christ after you’d done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:89–96, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 230–245.
2. “The Fifth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/fifth-commandment/>.
3. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 6, “The Fifth Commandment,” pages 161–206.
4. John Eidsmoe, *Christianity and the Constitution: The Faith of Our Founding Fathers* (Baker, 1987).
5. Daniel J. Elazar, *Covenant and Constitutionalism: The Covenant Tradition in Politics—The Great Frontier and the Matrix of Federal Democracy* (Transaction Publishers, 1997), and other works on the history of the idea of covenant in politics by Elazar.
6. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (Cambridge University Press, 1988).
7. Samuel Rutherford, *Lex Rex, or, The Law and the Prince* (Sprinkle Publications, 1982).
8. Francis A. Schaeffer, *A Christian Manifesto* (Crossway Books, 1981).
9. Samuel Blumenfeld, *Revolution via Education* (Chalcedon, 2009).

Unit 8A: The Sixth Commandment—Honoring God by Honoring His Image

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:97–104 (the stanza *Mem*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of the Sixth Commandment from Exodus 20:13: “You shall not murder.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Sixth Commandment (Questions 134–136). What new insights do you gain into the Sixth Commandment? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How did Jesus fulfill the Sixth Commandment? Discuss several examples from His life and words.
2. What does disrespect for human life imply about respect for God, and why?
3. How does Jesus relate murder and anger? Is anger always sinful, or might there be times when it’s justified—and if so, what are some examples?
4. How does disrespect for human life conflict with the dominion mandate of Genesis 1:28 and 9:1–3, and with the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19–20?
5. Why is “You shall not kill” an improper translation of this commandment? What confusions does it generate?
6. What three categories of killing does Biblical law prohibit?
7. For each of the following, indicate whether you consider it murder, whether you would judge it differently depending on differing circumstances, and why or why not:
 - a. Abortion
 - b. Euthanasia
 - c. Capital punishment
 - d. Killing in self-defense
 - e. Killing in warfare

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:97–104, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 246–261.
2. “The Sixth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/sixth-commandment/>.
3. John R. Ling, *Bioethical Issues: Understanding and Responding to the Culture of Death*, rev. ed. (Day One Publications, 2014).
4. Thomas Watson, “The Sixth Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.

Unit 8B: When Killing Is Permitted

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:105–112 (the stanza *Nun*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Memorize the full text of the Seventh Commandment from Exodus 20:14: “You shall not commit adultery.”

Questions for Group Discussion

1. What are the three categories of killing that Biblical permits?
2. Do you think the permission to kill in self-defense implies that there’s no need to seek some other means of defense instead of killing? Why or why not?
3. How might the moral responsibility of a pregnant woman and a doctor who aborts her baby at her request differ, and why?
4. Some people argue against capital punishment because some people convicted turn out to be innocent, or because conviction rates differ by race or ethnicity indicating bias in the application of capital punishment, or because *all* killing devalues human life, which is made in God’s image. What do you think of those arguments?
5. What five criteria does just war theory require for going to war, and what two for conduct in warfare? Do you agree or disagree with these, would you offer others, and why?
6. How can the Bible’s permission of killing as self-defense, capital punishment, and just warfare be reconciled with the requirement that we love everyone—even our enemies?
7. How does the Sixth Commandment apply to questions about whether we are obligated to do all we can medically to prolong life?
8. Describe some times when *you’ve* broken the Sixth Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God’s forgiveness in Christ after you’d done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:105–112, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 262–283.
2. “The Sixth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-sixth-commandment/>.
3. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 7, “The Sixth Commandment,” pages 207–242.

Unit 9A: The Seventh Commandment—Honoring Marriage

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:113–120 (the stanza *Samek*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of the Seventh Commandment from Exodus 20:14: “You shall not commit adultery.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Seventh Commandment (Questions 137–139), along with the accompanying Scripture texts. What new insights do these give you into this Commandment? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How did Jesus fulfill the Seventh Commandment? Discuss several examples from His life and words.
2. How does God’s having created man male and female relate to man’s being made in God’s image?
3. How has the lecture challenged and reshaped your understanding of marriage and its role in the growth of Christ’s Kingdom?
4. What does the Biblical teaching on distinctions—Creator/creature, human/animal, male/female—imply about homosexuality (both male and female), transgenderism (having a sense of personal identity contrary to one’s sex at birth), transsexualism (emotionally or psychologically feeling that one belongs to the opposite sex), transvestitism (dressing in a way traditionally associated with the opposite sex), same-sex “marriage,” polygamy (having more than one wife), polyandry (having more than one husband), and polyamory (being in love or romantically involved, especially married, with more than one person at a time)? What is the church called to do in response to these ideas and the movements and individuals who embrace them?
5. What are “oneism” and “twoism,” and how are they related to human sexuality?
6. Why is all sex (whether heterosexual or homosexual) outside of marriage sinful?
7. What does the Bible teach about marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian?
8. On what grounds does the Bible permit divorce, and what should a couple with a stressed marriage do before choosing divorce?
9. The lecture didn’t address the possibility that physical or emotional abuse could be grounds for divorce. What do you think about those?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:113–120, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 284–311.

2. “The Seventh Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/seventh-commandment/>.
3. Thomas Watson, “The Seventh Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.
4. Walter Wangerin, *As For Me and My House: Crafting Your Marriage to Last* (Thomas Nelson, 1987).
5. Timothy Keller, *The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God* (Penguin Books, 2011).

Unit 9B: Preserving Marriage and Its Contribution to the Growth of Christ's Church

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:121–128 (the stanza *Ayin*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Memorize the full text of the Eighth Commandment from Exodus 20:15: “You shall not steal.”
3. In light of Leviticus 18:22, and 20:13, Romans 1:18–28, 1 Corinthians 6:9–11, 1 Timothy 1:8–11, and Jude 7, does the Bible consider homosexuality sinful?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How would you respond to a couple who say they're seeking divorce *because* they love each other and don't want to force each other to remain in a conflictual marriage?
2. Why does God hate divorce?
3. In what ways is divorce always violent?
4. How seriously should churches take adultery and other sexual sin in light of Old Testament civil/judicial passages like Deuteronomy 22:13–27? Do you think civil governments should still execute such penalties for sexual sin? If not, should they impose *any* penalties? Why or why not?
5. Read Matthew 18:15–18 and 1 Corinthians 5:1–5. How should churches respond to unrepented sin?
6. Describe some times when *you've* broken the Seventh Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God's forgiveness in Christ after you'd done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:121–128, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 312–331.
2. “The Seventh Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-seventh-commandment/>.
3. Kevin Skogen, “From Generation to Generation,” Sandhills Presbyterian Church, November 20, 2016; audio online at <http://www.sandhillspresbyterian.org/sermons-1/>.
4. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 8, “The Seventh Commandment,” pages 243–285.
5. Diane Medved, *Don't Divorce: Powerful Arguments for Saving and Revitalizing Your Marriage* (Regnery, 2017) and *The Case Against Divorce: Discover the Lures, the Lies, and the Emotional Traps of Divorce—Plus the Seven Vital Reasons to Stay Together* (Ivy Books, 1990).
6. Jay Adams, *Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage in the Bible* (Zondervan, 1986).

Unit 10A: The Eighth Commandment—Honoring Property

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:129–136 (the stanza *Pē*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of the Eighth Commandment from Exodus 20:15: “You shall not steal.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Eighth Commandment (Questions 140–142), along with the accompanying Scripture texts. What new insights do these give you into this Commandment? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How did Jesus fulfill the Eighth Commandment? Discuss several examples from His life and words.
2. Do you agree that it’s possible for governments to break the Eighth Commandment by taking property from some and giving it to others to whom it doesn’t belong? Or do you think there is no limit to government’s authority over citizens’ property? How does the latter position differ from an idolatry of the state—from granting government God-like authority?
3. Think carefully about various government-sponsored programs that take property from some people and give it to others to whom it doesn’t belong. How are you implicated in those? How far can you extricate yourself, and by what means?
4. If everything belongs to God, how can we justify speaking of “private property”? What does “property” mean?
5. What makes something one person’s property and not another’s?
6. How would you respond to those who argue from Acts 2:44 (“... all who believed were together and had all things in common.”) and 4:32–35 (“Now the full number of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things that belonged to him was his own, but they had everything in common. And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.”) that the coming of Jesus abolished private property?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:129–136, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 332–362.

2. “The Eighth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/eighth-commandment/>.
3. Jeremy Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality: Christian Foundations in Locke’s Political Thought* (Cambridge, 2002).
4. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (Cambridge, 1988).
5. Gottfried Dietze, *In Defense of Property* (Johns Hopkins, 1975).
6. E. Calvin Beisner, *Prosperity and Poverty: The Compassionate Use of Resources in a World of Scarcity* (Crossway, 1988; Wipf & Stock, 2001).

Unit 10B: The Eighth Commandment and Mutual Service in Society

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:137–144 (the stanza *Tsadde*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Memorize the full text of the Ninth Commandment from Exodus 20:16: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”
- 3.

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Aside from its being a violation of God’s command, what is it about the nature of theft that makes it wrong?
2. What are the implications of Ezekiel 46:16–18 for whether there are limits to government’s authority over people’s property?
3. The lecture quoted John Calvin saying “... all those arts whereby we acquire the possessions and money of our neighbors—when such devices depart from sincere affection to a desire to cheat or in some manner to harm—are to be considered as thefts. Although such possessions may be acquired in a court action, yet God does not judge otherwise. For he sees the intricate deceptions with which a crafty man sets out to snare one of simpler mind, until he at last draws him into his nets. He sees the hard and inhuman laws with which the more powerful oppress and crush the weaker person. He sees the lures with which the wiler man baits, so to speak, his hooks to catch the unwary. All [of] these things elude human judgment and are not recognized.” What are some common business and government practices those words bring to mind? What conduct of yours could be described that way?
4. If the Eighth Commandment forbids theft, what does it require of us in regard to our neighbors’ property?
5. Describe some times when *you’ve* broken the Eighth Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God’s forgiveness in Christ after you’d done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:137–144, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 363–384.
2. “The Eighth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-eighth-commandment/>.
3. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 9, “The Eighth Commandment,” pages 285–312.
4. Thomas Watson, “The Eighth Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.

Unit 11A: The Ninth Commandment: Honoring Truth

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:145–152 (the stanza *Qoph*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of the Ninth Commandment, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Ninth Commandment (Questions 143–145), along with the accompanying Scripture texts. What new insights do these give you into this Commandment? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How did Jesus fulfill the Ninth Commandment? Discuss several examples from His life and words.
2. How do you know that God is love? And what does it mean for Him to be love?
3. “The Bible alone and the Bible in its entirety is the Word of God written and is *therefore* inerrant in the autographs” was the original doctrinal basis of the Evangelical Theological Society. (Since then the ETS has added a statement affirming the Trinity.) In light of that, what happens to our grounds for believing the Bible is without error if God is capable of lying (intentionally saying what is false) or being mistaken (saying what is false while believing it to be true)?
4. What is the theological foundation of the Ninth Commandment?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:145–152, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 385–400.
2. “The Ninth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/ninth-commandment/>.
3. Thomas Watson, “The Ninth Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.

Unit 11B: The Ninth Commandment—Living the Truth in a World of Lies

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:153–160 (the stanza *Resh*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Memorize the Tenth Commandment from Exodus 20:17: “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Questions for Group Study

1. How is the truthfulness of God relevant to our confidence in the gospel?
2. How does your speech image God? When does it inaccurately represent him?
3. The *Larger Catechism* says the Ninth Commandment requires (among other things), “preserving and promoting ... the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own; appearing and standing for the truth; ... a charitable esteem of our neighbors; loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name; sorrowing for, and covering of their infirmities; freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces, [and] defending their innocence; a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; [and] discouraging tale-bearers, flatterers, and slanderers.” Which of these do you find most lacking in your life, and how might you improve in respect of them?
4. The *Catechism* says the Ninth Commandment forbids “rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked; ... undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calls for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful and equivocal expressions, to the prejudice of truth or justice; ... misconstruing intentions, words, and actions; ... denying the gifts and graces of God; ... unnecessary discovering of infirmities; ... envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any, endeavoring or desiring to impair it, [or] rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy ...” Which of these do you find yourself most likely to do, and how might you guard against them?
5. If, as James 3:2–18 says, no one can “tame the tongue,” why should we even try?
6. Describe some times when *you’ve* broken the Ninth Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God’s forgiveness in Christ after you’d done it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:153–160, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 401–423.

2. “The Ninth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries,
<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-ninth-commandment/> and
<http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/ninth-commandment-2/>.
3. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 10, “The Ninth Commandment,” pages 313–336.

Unit 12A: The Tenth Commandment— Honoring God’s Providence through Contentment

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:161–168 (the stanza *Shin*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the Tenth Commandment from Exodus 20:17: “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”
3. Review the *Catechism*’s discussion of the Tenth Commandment (Questions 146–148), along with the Scripture texts accompanying it. What new insights do you gain into the Tenth Commandment? What new repentance should you undertake in light of these?
4. Review your memorization of the full text of all Ten Commandments from Exodus 20:3–17.

Questions for Group Discussion

1. How did Jesus fulfill the Tenth Commandment? Discuss several examples from His life and words.
2. What are some of the lessons you can recall the lecture’s having drawn from the parable of the laborers in the vineyard? Had you ever thought of those before?
3. How would you have felt had you been one of the lower-paid workers at Ansonia Metal Works? One of the higher-paid workers? Owner Reginald Ackridge?
4. What do you think of laws requiring equal or comparable pay for equal or comparable work? Are they just? What unintended consequences might they have, for instance, on the ability of people against whom an employer might hold prejudice to attain jobs under him by underbidding others?
5. What do you think about the huge gap between CEO pay and average worker pay? Why do you think it exists? What are good reasons for it? What are bad ones?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:161–168, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 424–455.
2. “The Tenth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/the-tenth-commandment/>.
3. Thomas Watson, “The Tenth Commandment,” in Thomas Watson, *The Ten Commandments*, <http://www.biblebb.com/files/TW/tw-commandments.htm>.
4. Jeremiah Burroughs (1599–1646), *The Rare Jewel of Christian Contentment* (Chapel Library, <http://www.chapellibrary.org/files/1113/7658/4062/rjoc.pdf>, or Banner of Truth, 1964).

Unit 12B: The Tenth Commandment and the Life of Christian Contentment

Individual Assignment

1. Each day before the next session, read, contemplate, and pray over Psalm 119:169–176 (the stanza *Tau*), and ask God to reproduce in you the admiration and thanksgiving for His moral law, and all of His Word, that the psalmist displayed.
2. Test your memorization of the full text of all Ten Commandments.
3. What kinds of things are most likely to provoke you to coveting, and what are you doing to learn contentment (Philippians 4:11–12)?

Questions for Group Discussion

1. Why is the Tenth Commandment the most difficult of all to obey?
2. Remembering that every positive commandment has negative implications and every negative commandment has positive implications, what are some of the positive implications of the Tenth Commandment you can think of, and how are you applying those in your life?
3. Jesus said murder and adultery, outward acts, begin with anger and lust, inward (mental) acts, so that someone who has been angry without cause or has lusted has already committed murder or adultery in his heart. The Tenth Commandment addresses an inward act (coveting). What are its outward manifestations? Are you tempted to minimize the importance of the inward sins by comparison with the outward ones? What is the likely spiritual fruit of doing so?
4. The First Commandment forbade worshiping other gods, and the second worshiping idols or even worshiping the true God through idols. Why do you think Paul says that covetousness *is* idolatry (Colossians 3:5)?
5. How do all of the Second through Tenth Commandments send us back to the First?
6. Describe some times when *you've* broken the Tenth Commandment—wittingly or unwittingly. What could friends have done to help you avoid that, or to help you repent and experience God's forgiveness in Christ after you'd done it?
7. Recall the lecture's discussion of Psalm 73 and Asaph's learning, when he thought of the future the wicked faced, that God was all he needed. How should Biblical eschatology—teaching about last things—affect your understanding of Biblical ethics, and especially of the Tenth Commandment?
8. The Apostle Paul said it was when he confronted the Tenth Commandment, “You shall not covet,” that he realized he was spiritually dead—under God's condemnation—and then recognized that his only hope was to embrace Jesus Christ by faith. Have you come to that point in your life? What have you done about it?

Resources for Further Study

1. For further insight into Psalm 119:169–176, read Charles Bridges, *Psalm 119: An Exposition*, pages 456–481.
2. “The Tenth Commandment,” devotional, Ligonier Ministries, <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/tenth-commandment/>.
3. J. Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life*, trans. Nelson Kloosterman (P&R Publishing, 1996), chapter 11, “The Tenth Commandment,” pages 337–354.
4. E. Calvin Beisner, *Prosperity and Poverty: The Compassionate Use of Resources in a World of Scarcity*, chapters 4 and 5.