

The First Use of the Ten Commandments

INTRODUCTION

God spoke the Ten Commandments and carved them in stone at Mount Sinai in the time of Moses, in the establishment of the Old Covenant with Israel. But now that the Old Covenant is ended, and the New Covenant instituted in the blood of Jesus Christ, what are we Christians to do with the Ten Commandments today? Last week, I posed that question to you, and offered answers to it from Martin Luther and other early leaders from the Reformation in Germany in the 1500s. They said:

Teach the Ten Commandments to everyone, especially children

Use the Ten Commandments to show sinners their need of the gospel of Jesus Christ

Use the Ten Commandments to tell the Christian how rightly to live the Christian life

Use the Ten Commandments to help the Christian resist false doctrine

One of those uses of the Ten Commandments: to show sinners their need of the gospel of Jesus Christ, has come to be called, in Theology, “The First Use of the Law,” sometimes referred to as the pedagogical use of the law; referred to by Calvin as the use of the law as a mirror. Consider that with me today.

TEXT

Matthew 19:16-26

BODY

- I. See the First Use of the Law in Jesus’ Dealing with the Rich Young Ruler - Matthew 19:16-26
 - A. When the subject is a man having eternal life v. 16
 - B. Our Lord Jesus quotes from the law
 1. see that it is recognizably from the second table of The Ten Commandments
 2. along with the summary of those commandments
 3. but without the tenth commandment
 - C. The young man claims to have kept them, obviously influenced by the Pharisees
 - D. The Lord Jesus then puts God’s law to the rich young man in a way that is the obvious application of it
 1. possibly the tenth commandment
 2. possibly the summary, love for the neighbor
 - E. So, the young man’s sinfulness was discovered or uncovered or revealed or made known
 1. note that the young man stopped saying how he was going to do something to gain eternal life; how he had kept all the commandments

- II. See the First Use of the Law in Paul's Doctrine and Testimony - Romans 3:19-26; 7:7
- A. That rich young ruler was typical of how people are. People think and say things that reveal they consider themselves good enough to go to heaven; or don't believe in God
 1. I'm not that bad of a person
 2. my grandpa was a preacher
 3. I went down front and prayed the prayer
 4. I always go to church
 - B. They need all of that self-justification cut off if ever they are to see their need to be saved
 - C. The law does that, especially as preached by Jesus Christ
 - D. See in Romans 7:7 that the law to which Paul is referring is specifically the tenth of The Ten Commandments
- III. See the First Use of the Law in Peter's Preaching
- A. Acts 2:22-24 "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him in your midst, as you yourselves also know-- (23) Him, being delivered by the determined purpose and foreknowledge of God, **you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death;** (24) whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.
 - B. Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, **whom you crucified**, both Lord and Christ."
 - C. Acts 2:37-38 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (38) Then Peter said to them, "**Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins;** and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - D. Note that Peter has preached these men's breaking of a commandment from the second table of the law, those about loving your neighbor
- IV. See the First Use of the Law in Paul's Preaching
- A. Acts 17:22-25 Then Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things you are very religious; (23) for as I was passing through and considering the objects of your worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Therefore, the One whom you worship without knowing, Him I proclaim to you: (24) God, who made the world and everything in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands. (25) Nor is He worshiped with men's hands, as though He needed anything, since He gives to all life, breath, and all things.
 - B. Acts 17:29-31 Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, **we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, something shaped by art and man's devising.** (30) Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now **commands all men everywhere to repent**, (31) because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."
 - C. Note that Paul has preached these men's breaking of a commandment from the first table of the law, those about loving God

CONCLUSION

What about you, then? Have the Ten Commandments given you a look in the mirror? Do you see there a sinner, a breaker of God's law? Do you realize you have not come close to loving God as He deserves, and loving people as they deserve, being created in God's image?

What about Jesus Christ? Jesus Christ has not broken the Ten Commandments, or any of God's law, but has obeyed it all perfectly. He has not failed to love God or love His neighbor, but has loved both in the most profound and perfect ways. But He, the righteous, suffered and died for the unrighteous; the just for the unjust, to bring us to God. He died for our sins on the cross, was buried, and on the first day of the week, rose again. Now He commands all men everywhere to repent and believe the good news.

Repent of all your law-breaking; turn from it; return to God with all your heart; and be forgiven all your sins. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved from God's wrath that is sure to come on the wicked.

The first use of the law, the pedagogical use, is to use the law as a mirror, showing the sinner an accurate picture of his moral state before God. The particular part of the law used like this by our Lord Jesus and His apostles is The Ten Commandments.

- quoted verbatim

- paraphrased

- expounded, applied, preached

So, learn the Ten Commandments with me, and teach them to your children.

Learn to quote them verbatim, and teach the children to.

Learn what they mean and imply, so you can paraphrase them and use them.

Matthew 19:16-26 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? (17) And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. (18) He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, (19) Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (20) The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? (21) Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. (22) But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions. (23) Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. (24) And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. (25) When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? (26) But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

Romans 7:7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

Romans 3:19-26 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. (20) Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. (21) But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; (22) Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: (23) For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; (24) Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: (25) Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; (26) To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Alex - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 116:1-2

Alvin - Scripture Reading - Psalm 116:3-19

Thad - Congregational Prayer

Benediction - Philippians 3:8-9a

Angie - Prelude

Rita - Trinity 699 "Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus" - Andrew lead

Haven - Trinity 537 "What Shall I Render?"

Rita - Trinity 217 "Look, Ye Saints"

Peter Waldo...a native of Lyons

[in the mid 1100s]

...became a strenuous opposer of popery; and from him the reformed received the appellation of...Waldenses.

Peter Waldo...asserted that the pope was antichrist, that mass was an abomination, that the host was an idol, and that purgatory was a fable.

[in the 1400s]

...the king of France...sent his master of requests, and his confessor, to examine into the affair. On their return they reported that the Waldenses...lived with perfect honesty...had taught them [their children] the Lord's prayer, creed, and ten commandments; expounded the scriptures with purity, kept the Lord's day sacred, feared God, honoured the king, and wished well to the state. "Then," said the king, "they are much better Christians than myself, or my catholic subjects, and therefore they shall not be persecuted."

Tenets of the Waldenses

1. That holy oil is not to be mingled in baptism.
2. That prayers used over things inanimate are superstitious.
3. Flesh may be eaten in Lent ; the clergy may marry and auricular confession is unnecessary.
4. Confirmation is no sacrament ; we are not bound to pay obedience to the pope ; ministers should live upon tithes ; no dignity sets one clegyman above another, for their superiority can only be drawn from real worth.
5. Images in churches are absurd ; image-worship is idolatry ; the pope's indulgences ridiculous ; and the miracles pretended to be done by the church of Rome are false.
6. Fornication and public stews ought not to be allowed ; purgatory is a fiction ; and deceased persons, called saints, ought not to be prayed to.
7. Extreme unction is not a sacrament ; and masses, indulgences, and prayers, are of no service to the dead.
8. The Lord's prayer ought to be the rule of all other prayers.

p. 233 [1500s in England under King Henry VIII]

...six men and women were burnt in Coventry...only for teaching their children the creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the ten commandments in English.

According to the monument in Coventry, a widow was discovered to have a document up her sleeve, with the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Creed in English.

...George Browne...was consecrated archbishop of Dublin...1535...caused all the relics and images to be removed out of the two cathedrals in Dublin, and the other churches in his diocese; in the place of which he caused to be put up the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments.

The Norfolk Supplication [under Queen Mary]

...afore the blessed reformation, (begun by the most noble prince of godly memory the queen's good father, and by our late holy and innocent king her good brother finished,) it is not unknown what blindness and error we were all in, when not one man in all this realm unlearned in the Latin, could say in English the Lord's prayer, or knew any one article of his belief, or [could] rehearse any one of the ten commandments. And that ignorance, mother of mischief, was the very root and well-spring of

all idolatry...whoredom, drunkenness, covetousness, swearing, and blasphemy, with all other wicked sinful living...

p. 273 [1600s in England under Oliver Cromwell]

There were some injunctions given out by [Oliver] Cromwell...All churchmen were required...to preach against the pope's power...They were forbidden to extol images, relics, or pilgrimages; but to exhort to works of charity. They were also required to teach the Lord's prayer, the creed, and the ten commandments in English, and to explain these carefully, and instruct the children well in them.

The Lollards

Or Some Account of the Witness for the Truth in Great Britain, Between the Years 1400 and 1546; with a Brief Notice of Events Connected with the Early History of the Reformation
Religious Tract Society 1826

"Patrick's Places" by Patrick Hamelton; translated by John Frith

http://media.sabda.org/alkitab-8/LIBRARY/HISTORY/FOX/FOX_AM04.PDF

The law is a doctrine that biddeth good, and forbiddeth evil, as the commandments do specify here following. (Then the 10 commandments are listed.)

It is not in our power to keep any one of the commandments of God.

The law was given us to show our sin.

Romans 3 By the law cometh the knowledge of sin.

Romans 7 I knew not what sin meant, but through the law...

The law biddeth us do that thing which is impossible for us.

Wherefore doth God bid us do what is impossible for us?

I answer, to make thee know that thou art but evil, and that there is no remedy to save thee in thine own hand: and thou mayest seek remedy at some other...

The nature and office of the law and of the gospel

The law showeth us our sin. Romans 3

The gospel showeth us remedy for it. John 1

The law showeth us our condemnation. Romans 7

The gospel showeth us our redemption. Colossians 1

The law is the word of ire. Romans 4

The gospel is the word of grace. Acts 20

The law is the word of despair. Deuteronomy 27

The gospel is the word of comfort. Luke 2

The law is the word of unrest. Romans 7

The gospel is the word of peace. Ephesians 6

A Disputation Between the Law and the Gospel; where is shown the difference or contrariety between them both

The law saith, 'Pay thy debt.' The gospel saith, 'Christ hath paid it.'

The law saith, 'Thou art a sinner; despair, and thou shalt be damned.' The gospel saith, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee, be of good comfort, thou shalt be saved!'

The law saith, 'Make amends for thy sins.' The gospel saith, 'Christ hath made it for thee.'

The law saith, 'The Father of heaven is angry with thee.' The gospel saith, 'Christ hath pacified him with his blood.'

The law saith, 'Where is thy righteousness, goodness, and satisfaction?' The gospel saith, 'Christ is thy righteousness, thy goodness, thy satisfaction.'
 The law saith, 'Thou art bound and obliged to me, to the devil, and to hell.' The gospel saith, 'Christ hath delivered thee from them all.'

Wickliffe's Wicket
 ten commandments Richard Smart

The Lay Folks Catechism - 1357
 Wycliffe p. 20-22 (lines 52-75)

The Lay Folks' Catechism, or the English and Latin Versions of Archbishop Thoresby's Instruction for the People Together with a Wycliffe adaptation of the same, and the corresponding canons of the council of Lambeth. With introduction, notes, glossary, and index, by the late Thomas Frederick Simmons...and Henry Edward Nolloth
 London 1901

The lawe and the lore to knawe god all-mighten,	The law and lore to know God almighty
That principali may be shewed in this sex thinges:	that principally may be shown in these six things:
In the fourtene poyntes that falles to the troughe,	In the fourteen points that pertain to Truth
In the ten comandementez that god has gyven us,	In the Ten Commandments God has given us
In the seuen Sacrementz that er in halli kirke,	In the seven sacraments that are in Holy Church
In seuen dedis of merci until oure euen-cristen;	In the seven deeds of mercy to our fellow-Christian
In the seuen virtues that ilk man sal use,	In the seven virtues that such a man shall practice
And in the seuen dedely sinnes that man sal refuse.	And in the seven deadly sins that man shall avoid.

The lawe and the lore to knawe god all-mighten,
That principali may be shewed in this sex thinges:

In the fourtene poyntes that falles to the troughe,
In the ten comandementes that god has gyven us,
In the seuen Sacrementes that er in halli kirke,
In seuen dedis of merci until oure euen-cristen;
In the seuen virtues that ilk man sal use,
And in the seuen dedely sinnes that man sal refuse.
And he commands and biddes in al that he may,
That all that hayes keypyng or cure undir him
Enioygne thair parochiens and thaire sugettes,
That thai here and lere this ilk sex thinges,
And oft sithes reherce tham til that thai kun thaime,
And sithen teche tham thair childir, if thai any haue

And forthi that nane sal excuse tham
Thurgh unknalechyng for to kun tham,
Our fadir the Ercebisshop of his godenesse
has ordayned and bidden that thai be shewed
Openly on inglis o-monges the folk.

The secund thyng of the sex to knawe god almighten
Is the ten comandements, that he has gyuen us

pe secunde thyng of pe syx to know god almy3ty ys pe ten commaundementys pat he has geuyn to vs

The Lay Folks Catechism

The third is, that we sal hald and halowe our halliday,
The Sonoday, and all othir that falles to the there,
That er ordayned to halowe through halikirk

Wycliffe

Kepe py halyday in clene lyf
with alle py meyne and py wyf

David Clyde Jones, Covenant Theological Seminary
"The Ten Commandments in Church History" 2015

Irenaeus (c. 130- c. 200)

...defends the permanence of the Ten Commandments in *Against Heresies*.

In his *Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*, ch. 86-96, Irenaeus proposed the Decalogue for the early state of Christian instruction...

Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274)

Aquinas provides a complete account of Christian ethics, including a detailed exposition of the Decalogue, in his masterful *Summa Theologicae*, "the highest achievement of medieval theological systematization and the accepted basis of modern R[oman] C[atholic] theology" (ODCC). Both Aquinas and Bonaventure produced model sermons on the Decalogue.

John Wycliffe (c. 1330-1384)

John Thoresby, archbishop of York (d. 1373) issued his *Instruction or "Lay Folks' Catechism"* in both Latin and English in 1357. John Wycliffe (c. 1330-1384) issued an adaptation, expanding the exposition of the Ten Commandments and providing a rhymed version to assist the memory.

Jan Hus (c. 1372-1415)

Hus begins his *Exposition of the Decalogue* by rehearsing Exod. 19, and concludes with the blessings and curses in Dt 26 and 28. He proceeds with a well-organized plan through the two tables, freely citing Augustine and other church fathers, cross-referencing many scriptures, and addressing contemporary issues such as usury and false indulgences.

John Calvin (1509-1564)

Institutes of the Christian Religion, 1536. The first five chapters follow the standard catechetical format: Decalogue, Creed, Lord's Prayer, Sacraments

In 1555 Calvin preached sixteen sermons on the Ten Commandments as part of a nearly year-and-a-half series on the book of Deuteronomy.

Heidelberg Catechism (1563)