

The Principles of Christian Religion

**A Study through the Baptist
Catechism using Benjamin
Beddome's *Scriptural Exposition***

Outline of the BC

- I. Introductory Questions: 1-6
- II. What We are to Believe: 7-43
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 - A. The Law and our Inability: 44-89
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Introduction to the Decalogue

- Numbering
 - There is some difference of opinion as to how the Ten Commandments are to be divided.
 - Some Jews treat the prologue as the First Commandment and combine the First and Second Commandments.
 - Roman Catholics and Lutherans combine the First and Second Commandments and divide the Tenth Commandment into two.
 - Protestants keep the First and Second Commandments separate and the Tenth Commandment united.

Numbering the Decalogue

Traditional Protestant

1. You shall have no other gods before me.
2. You shall not make a graven image.
...
9. You shall not bear false witness.
10. You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.

Roman Catholic/Lutheran

1. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make a graven image.
2. You shall not take the Lord's name in vain.
...
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's house.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, servants, animals, etc.

Introduction to the Decalogue

- Numbering

- Why is this disagreement significant?

- In defense of the Protestant numbering (cf. Ursinus's Commentary on the Heidelberg):

1. Each commandment expresses something distinct from the rest.

2. The wording and order of the Tenth Commandment is different in Exodus and Deuteronomy.

3. The NT seems to treat the Tenth Commandment as one (Rom. 7:7).

4. Most ancient Jewish and Christian scholars

Introduction to the Decalogue

- Interpretation

- J. Douma (cf. WLC 99)

1. “The Decalogue must be interpreted spiritually.”
2. “The negative commandments (‘You shall not . . .’) include positive commands, and vice versa.”
3. “. . . [W]here one sin is mentioned, the commandment intends to cover the entire range of related sins.”
4. “Those commandments concerned specifically with love toward God weigh more heavily than those commandments concerned specifically with love toward neighbor.”
5. “The starting point and goal of all the commandments is love.”