

Exodus 20 - The Ten Words: The Image of God

I. Introduction

A. Last week, we started the fifth story set in Exodus, looking at the covenant that God made with Israel at Mount Sinai, and we considered the purpose of the covenant in chapter 19

1. We saw that the Mosaic Covenant most closely matches a marriage covenant and the purpose of the covenant is to give Israel the rights and responsibilities of a wife to YHWH
2. At the center of the purpose of the covenant were two statements that outlined these rights and responsibilities: 'treasured possession' and 'kingdom of priests/holy nation'
3. We saw that these were the roles of a wife, that Israel was YHWH's beloved and that Israel took YHWH's name and therefore represented Him to the nations
4. And not only does God call Israel as a bride, but by calling Israel as a bride He is restoring the roles that Adam lost in the fall
5. The two wifely roles given to Israel restore the two roles given to Adam at creation: to be God's image and God's likeness, to be God's beloved and God's representative, these are the roles that in covenant God is giving to Israel - they were lost by Adam in the fall, but restored to humanity in marriage by God

B. As we continue on this week, we are coming to a very familiar passage in the Old Testament, the Ten Words

1. We are all familiar with the Ten Commandments given to Israel at Sinai, but this morning, I want us to look at them in a little different light than we sometimes do
2. Because we are so familiar with the Ten Commandments, sometimes, I think, we can strip them out of their context and make them Ten Universal Commands with no connection to the covenant that they are centered in
3. But these Ten Words from God are intimately associated with the covenant that God made with Israel and they need to be understood and interpreted in the covenant as part and parcel of the covenant and not as isolated statements from God
4. So, this morning, I want to consider how the Ten Words are central to the Mosaic Covenant, and as central to the Mosaic Covenant, how do they point to Jesus Christ?
5. Only after we have answered these questions, how are they part of the covenant and how they point to Christ, can we begin to understand what and how they teach us, otherwise we are ripping them out of context and may misunderstand and even misuse these powerful words from God
6. So, as we look at chapter 20 and the Ten Commandments, I feel like I am going to rush through them, but I'm doing this partially on purpose because I want us to get the big picture of what's going on here and not get bogged down in each commandment and forget why these commandments exist - I want to understand them as central to God's covenant with Israel

C. And the Ten Words are central to the covenant of God

1. We can see this by going back to the purpose of the covenant given in chapter 19 - Israel was supposed to be a Kingdom of Priests and a Holy Nation, representing God to the world, displaying the image of God for all to see
2. But, if Israel is to fulfill her role, the image that they display must be described - how does Israel display God for the nations to see? How will Israel represent God to the earth?
3. If Israel is to fulfill her role as a kingdom of priests, the Adamic role of representing God to the earth, then Israel must know God and pattern themselves after God's character.
4. And this is where the Ten Words come in, the Ten Words describe God's character to Israel in ways that Israel can represent God - by abiding in God's directive words, Israel will know and represent God
5. The Ten Words, then, are not primarily a cosmic law laid down by God, although they function as a law, but rather it might be better to think of them as a guidebook for how Israel will enjoy her rights and privileges as a wife - how will Israel represent God, how will they grow into their role as a kingdom of priests?
6. The Ten Words, though limiting, are not meant to be limitations, but rather to direct Israel to the freedom of serving God, by doing these things they will enjoy the right of representing God to the earth
7. That is, the way that Israel will enjoy the promises of the covenant are by living in these directives from God, these are not restrictions to earn the blessings of the covenant, these are descriptions of how to live out the blessings of the covenant

D. But the Ten Words not only mirror the purpose of the covenant, they harken back to the creation account as well

1. As we saw last week, the purpose of the covenant was to restore the Adamic roles of image and likeness that had been given in creation but lost in the fall - in a way, God is announcing His purpose to recreate in the world
2. Now as we are entering chapter 20, we are seeing God enact His purpose, to effect His design and just as the purpose is the same as creation, the effecting is also the same as creation
3. In fact, this is one reason that calling these the Ten Commandments is deceptive - they are not called the Ten Commandments in Exodus or Deuteronomy, rather they are called Words, they are the Ten Words of God
4. And, the word used in Exodus 20:1 - *And God spoke all of these words, saying* - is the same word used in Genesis 1:3 - *And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light*, or in Genesis 1:26 - *Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.*
5. Through these Ten Words, God is speaking Israel into existence just as God had spoken the world into existence
6. The Ten Words are from God, declaring who He is and placing His image on Israel and thus the character of God that Israel is to display is given in the form of directives or commandments - this is how you will represent Me

E. So let's turn and look at Exodus 20

And God spoke all these words, saying,

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

"You shall have no other gods before me. "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. "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. "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 on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. "You shall not murder. "You shall not commit adultery. "You shall not steal. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. "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."

Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die." Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin." The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

And the LORD said to Moses, "Thus you shall say to the people of Israel: 'You have seen for yourselves that I have talked with you from heaven. You shall not make gods of silver to be with me, nor shall you make for yourselves gods of gold. An altar of earth you shall make for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and your peace offerings, your sheep and your oxen. In every place where I cause my name to be remembered I will come to you and bless you. If you make me an altar of stone, you shall not build it of hewn stones, for if you wield your tool on it you profane it. And you shall not go up by steps to my altar, that your nakedness be not exposed on it.'

F. Proposition and Outline:

1. Proposition: Since the covenant appoints Israel as an image bearer, the image they must bear is described by the Words of God, pointing us to a new image that we must bear
2. Outline:
 - a. The Law Teaches Us About God
 - b. The Law Points Us Forward to Christ
 - c. We Obey the Law of Christ

II. The Law Teaches Us about God: God places His image on Israel

1. If we are look at Exodus 20 as central to the Covenant then the Ten Words should primarily teach us about God
2. Israel is to be the bride of YHWH representing Him as a wife restoring the role Adam should have had in creation
3. If Israel needs to represent God, though, then need to know who God is and how to represent Him
4. This is the purpose of the Ten Words in Exodus 20, they primarily describe who God is and secondarily describe how Israel is to represent Him, they are descriptive and then prescriptive
5. And, as we look at Exodus 20, we see that God describes Himself in three different ways: He says that He is merciful, that He is sovereign and that He is holy, and Israel must represent Him that way

A. YHWH is Merciful: He is your Savior

1. Exodus 20 starts with another reminder of God's mercy to Israel, Exodus 20:2 - *I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*
2. I won't dwell on this verse long, because we considered the same truth last week, but throughout this covenant God upholds this covenant as a covenant full of grace not works because God has already worked for them
3. So, the first attribute of God we see in the Ten Words is that God is merciful, He is a gracious God saving them from the bondage of Egypt and making covenant with His people when they had no right to demand it

B. YHWH is Sovereign: He is your God

- a. As we continue in Exodus 20, we start on the Ten Words, and has often been noted, there are roughly two halves to the commandments - the first half relating to God and the second half relating to man
 - b. The first four commandments all have to do with how Israel is to worship God; they all remind Israel that YHWH is their God, He alone is to be worshipped and He must be worshipped as He has revealed Himself
- 1. So, we start with the 1st commandment: you shall have no other gods before me**
 - a. This commandment is often misunderstood - it doesn't primarily mean that we choose something to be more important than God, it means that we worship something in addition to God, we recognize another god in His presence, another god before Him (not above Him)
 - b. To the Israelites, this would have meant that God is not the ruler of pantheon of gods like Ra or Zeus or Jupiter in Egypt, Greece or Rome - or to put it more directly, God alone is sovereign, He doesn't share His sovereignty with others
 - c. And a reason is given for this command - it comes after the second commandment, but it applies to both - God is a jealous God, He will not share His glory with any other being, His glory belongs to Him alone
 - d. So to represent God rightly, Israel must not accept gods beside YHWH, that would suggest that YHWH is not completely and absolutely sovereign, that YHWH could share glory with another
 - 2. The 2nd commandment is similar: you shall not make for yourself a carved image of God**
 - a. This commandment again tells Israel how to worship God, but instead of focusing on other gods, now God forbids them from making an image of Him, trying to describe Him like something in creation
 - b. And again, the reason is given - God is a jealous God, He will not allow His glory to be lessened by man trying to make Him in their image, He alone represents Himself, no image in creation is worthy of Him
 - c. In fact, He says that He is so jealous for His own glory that He will destroy any who try to take His glory away, but to those who give Him the glory that He deserves He will show Himself faithful to the covenant
 - d. So to represent God rightly, Israel must be careful not to make God in their own image or the image of anything else, they must represent God only as He has revealed because anything else lessens His glory
 - 3. The 3rd commandment continues describing worship: you shall not take the name of God in vain**
 - a. As we continue through the first half of the commandments, we move from theoretical, who is God, to practical, how do we worship Him day to day
 - b. And this third commandment has to do with the everyday worship of God, Israel is taking the name of God just like a wife takes her husband's name, and now Israel represents God, Israel displays God to the world
 - c. So Israel must be careful to live in that great privilege and great responsibility - worshipping God will not be only about setting up a temple and having priests to service it according to the commandment, but every Israelite must take care to bear the name of God rightly
 - d. To represent God rightly, Israel and each Israelite must be careful to live as though God exists and that God is their God and they must remember that all of their actions are representing Him and must reflect Him
 - e. To do otherwise would again lessen His glory, it would suggest that He is not sovereign, He is not omnipotent and He is not all that important to their lives, they must make much of bearing His name

- 4. The 4th commandment makes worship very practical: remember and rest on the Sabbath day to keep it holy**
- a. This commandment has everything to do with the reason given afterward - Israel should remember the Sabbath because God has done the work for them
 - b. Here in Exodus 20, God's work is described in creation, God alone created the world and completely finished the work, allowing Him to rest in His creation, so to reflect who God is, Israel must rest
 - c. In Deuteronomy 5:15, the second statement of the Ten Commandments, another similar reason is given - *You shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.*
 - d. Again, it is about the work that God has done - God worked for them to bring them out of Egypt, so they don't have to work, they can rest in what God has done, and that rest will be practical and representative, they will take a day off from labor to testify that they are resting in the God who works for them
 - e. This teaches us something about rest - rest isn't primarily sitting around doing nothing, it is enjoying the benefit of completed work - God doesn't sit around doing nothing, but He does enjoy His completed work and He calls His people to represent Him by enjoying the benefit of His completed work
 - f. Again, this connects creation and redemption - in both God alone worked and His people could rest, and God wants Israel to represent Him by resting one day a week - resting testifies that God is sovereign, He has completed every work on their behalf

C. YHWH is Holy: He is your King

- a. The second half of the commandments turn from worshipping God to actions toward men, but ultimately they are still about representing God
 - b. These commandments are how Israel must treat each other because of how God treated them, God has given them a pattern for how to treat each other based on His actions toward them
 - c. Moreover, if YHWH is God, then YHWH is also King - He not only describes worship but He also describes relationship, He has the right to command them to live certain ways
 - d. So, by following these commandments Israel testifies that YHWH is their King and that He is a good King and they will live in response to how He has treated them
- 1. The 5th commandment is honoring your father and mother**
- a. All of the second half of the Ten Commandments are rooted in an attribute of God's holiness, and the 6th commandment is rooted in the fact that God is the ultimate Father
 - b. And if God is the ultimate Father, then fatherhood, and by derivation motherhood, ought to be honored positions in a society that honors God,
 - c. Fathers and mothers should be honored, because to do so represents God well - Israel honors her parents because they believe fatherhood is to be honored because God is a Good Father
 - d. This is why there is no qualifications on how good a parent must be to be honored, the command is not about parents but about God, parents should be honored because Israel honors God's fatherhood
 - e. And, as is noted in the New Testament, there is a promise associated with this commandment, but in many ways this promise applies to the entire Ten Commandments, especially the second half - in fact, Deuteronomy 5 makes this plain as it repeats this promise as applying to the whole set
 - f. If Israel lives according to these commandments then Israel will enjoy the goodness of God in the land, they will be representing God well and will be near Him and enjoying His goodness
 - g. To represent God well, they must demonstrate that He is a good father by honoring fatherhood and motherhood, honoring the representative roles that God has put into society
- 2. The 6th commandment is you shall not murder**
- a. Again, this is rooted in an aspect of God's holiness, Israel must love live because God is the author of life
 - b. From creation on, and especially reiterated at the flood, human life was to be honored because God had made humanity in His image, to desecrate life is to desecrate the God who created life
 - c. So, as with many of the commandments in the Ten Commandments, the negative command could be expressed in the positive sense, Israel shall not murder, instead they must honor life created by God
 - d. To represent God well they must demonstrate that He is the author of life by honoring the life He made

3. The 7th commandment is you shall not commit adultery

- a. Once again, this is rooted in who God is, and aspect of God's holiness - God is faithful to every promise He has made, and He has demonstrated this faithfulness to Israel particularly, He is faithful to them even as a husband is faithful to a wife
- b. Israel shall not commit adultery, instead they must be faithful to their promises, faithful to their covenants
- c. To represent God well they must demonstrate that He is faithful by being faithful in marriage

4. The 8th commandment is you shall not steal

- a. Israel must not be taking from each other, instead they should be marked by a spirit of giving because God had given freely to them
- b. In stealing, Israel would testify that God had not given them enough, that they were not satisfied in God's good gifts and instead they would take them from each other, denying that God had blessed them
- c. So, to represent God well they must demonstrate that He is the source of their abundance and respect what God had given to their fellow Israelites

5. The 9th commandment is you shall not bear false witness

- a. God is not only faithful, but He is also true, He is the source of all truth and He has given Israel of His truth
- b. So Israel must not be marked by lies, especially lies against their fellow Israelite, instead they must honor the truth of God by speaking the truth
- c. To represent God well they must demonstrate that He is the truth and be careful to speak the truth

6. The 10th and final commandment is you shall not covet anything that is your neighbors

- a. In a sense, this last commandment brings us back to the beginning of chapter 19, it closes the loop
- b. In chapter 19, God chose Israel to be His treasured possession, and now God demands that Israel respond in kind - God is to be Israel's great treasure, her desire and delight
- c. To covet or desire what their neighbors had would be to testify that they were not satisfied in God Himself, God was not their treasure, possessions had become their treasure
- d. To represent God rightly they must demonstrate that He is the ultimate treasure by being completely satisfied in Him and not coveting their neighbor's things

D. So each part of Exodus 20 is about who God is and therefore how Israel must be His representative

1. If Israel is the bride of God, they must know Him and represent Him well
2. To do so, they must represent God as merciful, their savior, as sovereign, their God, and as Holy, their king
3. To do any less would be to deny who God is, to fail in the covenant, and to fail to live in the blessings of the covenant; to do less would be to walk away from the great privilege of being YHWH's bride
4. If you're following along in your Bible, you'll notice that Exodus 20 continues with some laws about altars - I'm not going to specifically cover those this morning, though they belong to this chapter, because they practically repeat many of the same points
5. The rules about altars emphasize that God is sovereign - he must be worshipped as He is - and God is holy - He must be worshipped according to His rules, they emphasize again what we have already covered

III. The Law Points Us Forward to Christ: God fulfills His image in Christ

1. As we move into our next point, I want to think about the ultimate purpose of the Ten Words
2. My thoughts here have been well guided by Paul in Galatians 3
 - a. For example, Galatians 3:19 - *Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made,*
 - b. And again, Galatians 3:24 - *So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.*
 - c. The law's ultimate purpose was to point forward to Christ, and the heart of the law, the Ten Words, must share the purpose of the whole to point us forward to Christ
3. So Christ's words in Matthew 5:17 prove true - *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.*
 - a. Christ fulfills the law because the law is a placeholder, even a guardian shepherding us forward to Him
 - b. So ultimately, the Ten Words of God must teach us something about Christ, the image that God gave to the Israelites must be ultimately fulfilled in Christ, the end of the Ten Commandments is Christ
 - c. Or as Paul says in Romans 10:4 - *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*
4. So the Ten Words of God teach Israel what to do and what not to do so that they will be ready to receive the promised Christ - they act as a placeholder until the promised Christ would come
 - a. So, let's go back through Exodus 20 and see that Christ is the fulfillment and end of the law

A. Christ fulfills the law because Christ is Merciful: He is your Savior

1. We saw at the start of Exodus 20 that God is a merciful God, He had brought them out of slavery in Egypt
2. And now Christ ultimately fulfills this revelation from God, as Christ Himself says in John 8:26 - *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*
3. God freed the Israelites from bondage in Egypt because Christ would free His people from a much greater bondage, He would free them from the bondage of sin, proving that He is the merciful One
4. The law points us forward to Christ because Christ fulfills the grace that underpins the Words of God

B. Christ fulfills the law because Christ is Sovereign: He is your God

- a. As we move on, I think this is where the great joy of the Ten Commandments reveals itself
 - b. As we consider how Christ fulfills the Ten Commandments, we will see that the first four commandments, the commandments about God, are carefully crafted to leave a place for Christ
 - c. The first four commandments actually make a hole in a sense, they mark off boundaries that Israel cannot fulfill, but they anticipate that someone will fulfill them - Israel can't stand in God's presence, but someone can, Israel can't image God, but someone can, Israel can't represent God, but someone can, Israel can't do God's work, but someone can - and that someone is Jesus Christ
1. **1st commandment: You shall have no other gods before me because Christ alone shares God's glory**
 - a. Consider Hebrews 1:1-6 (really I'd like to read the whole chapter, or even the whole book, but we'll stop with a representative sample) - *Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs. For to which of the angels did God ever say, "You are my Son, today I have begotten you"? Or again, "I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son"? And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says, "Let all God's angels worship him."*
 - b. Or again, John 1:1-2 - *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.*
 - c. God demanded that no other gods be imagined in His presence because He was marking off a place for One who stood in His presence and shared His authority and bore His glory
 - d. No god could be in the presence of God, because God's presence is filled by Christ - He sits that the right hand of the throne of God and there is no other, no other being that we would put in God's presence would be equal to Christ, any other being would be a lessening of God's glory
 - e. But Christ upholds and shares God's glory perfectly so that God is not jealous but well pleased because Christ is not another god, but One with God Himself, He alone could stand in God's presence

2. **2nd commandment: You shall not make for yourself a carved image because Christ alone is the image of God**
 - a. We could consider Hebrews 1 again, or consider Colossians 1:15-19 - He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities---all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell
 - b. God demanded that the Israelites not make an image that represented Him because only one image would ever represent Him as He is and that image is Christ - no idea made by man or image in creation could take the place of Christ
 - c. But Christ is the perfect image of God because in Him all the fullness of God is pleased to dwell, God forbade images to mark off a place for His perfect image: Jesus Christ
3. **3rd commandment: You shall not take the name God in vain because Christ alone bears God's name perfectly**
 - a. Israel was commanded to take care to bear the name of God well because One was coming who would bear the name of God perfectly, and this is Christ, as Christ Himself claimed in John 5:43 - *I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive him.*
 - b. Or again in John 10:25 - *The works that I do in my Father's name bear witness about me,*
 - c. So that the crowds were very right in Mark 11:9 - *And those who went before and those who followed were shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!"*
 - d. God demanded the Israelites not desecrate His name, not bear it in vain because to do so would be to deny the coming Messiah, to deny that One could come and bear His name perfectly
 - e. But Christ has come in the name of His Father, perfectly bearing that name and perfectly representing God
4. **4th commandment: Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy because Christ alone finishes the works of God**
 - a. Jesus declares that He completes the work of God, even referencing the Sabbath, in John 5:16-17 - *And this was why the Jews were persecuting Jesus, because he was doing these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I am working."*
 - b. And if Jesus completes God's work, then He is able to give rest, Matthew 11:28-30 - *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*
 - c. So the author of Hebrews calls us to think about a better Joshua that was to come, a Joshua who could give real rest, in Hebrews 4:8-10 - *For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, for whoever has entered God's rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.*
 - d. God demanded that the Israelites rest in His work because they couldn't try to complete His work, a place was made for One to come and complete God's redemptive and creative work, and that One is Christ

C. Christ fulfills the law because Christ is Holy: He is your King

- a. As we move into the second table of the law, we see that just as the attributes of God that the law focused on changed slightly, so the picture of Christ displayed changes slightly
 - b. Commandments 4-10 all point to Christ because Christ is the One who perfectly fulfills them, He embodies their meaning and so they reflect Him
 - c. In one way, we can think of this as Christ perfectly keeping the law - and this is true, Christ perfectly kept the law in the place of Israel, but even more, we should see that Christ predates the law, and so rather the law was crafted to reflect Christ not the other way around, the law points us to One who keeps it
1. **5th commandment: You shall honor your father and your mother because Christ perfectly honors His Father**
 - a. Consider John 8:49 - *Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me.*
 - b. Jesus claims that, in contrast to the Jews, He perfectly honors His Father - the law was ultimately about God being the ultimate Father and Christ is the ultimate Son honoring His Father
 - c. And honoring His Father, Christ perfectly obeyed His Father, John 15:10 - *If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.*
 - d. Christ embodies what the law set out, He kept it perfectly and He kept it according to its ultimate meaning in pointing to God and is therefore the end of the law for righteousness
 2. **6th commandment: You shall not murder because Christ gave His life to bring life into this world**
 - a. Acts 3:15 sums it up nicely - *But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be*

- granted to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses.*
- b. Christ is the Author of life, for by Him all things were created (Col. 1:16), but even more, Christ gave His life to bring life back into this world, He created the image of God in this world, He was the image of God in this world and He sacrificed Himself to restore the image of God in this world
 - c. Again, Christ embodies what the law set out, He kept it perfectly and kept it according to its ultimate meaning in pointing to God and is therefore the end of the law for righteousness
- 3. 7th commandment: You shall not commit adultery because Christ will always remain faithful to His church**
- a. The description of Christ in Ephesians 5:28-30 is the definition of positive faithfulness - *In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church—for we are members of his body.*
 - b. And so Hebrews 10:23 is assuredly true in Christ - *Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful.*
 - c. Once again, Christ embodies what the law set out, He kept it perfectly and He kept it according to its ultimate meaning in pointing to God and is therefore the end of the law for righteousness
- 4. You shall not steal because Christ freely gave us from His riches**
- a. The Israelites were not to steal, but rather to be generous because God had given generously to them
 - b. And Christ has done this in an ultimate way, John 1:16-17 - *And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*
 - c. Christ embodied the law by doing the opposite of stealing, by giving us of His fullness, and he does this continually, Ephesians 2:6-7 - *And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.*
 - d. And we can even rest in the promise of Christ's riches, Philippians 4:19 - *And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.*
 - e. Once again, Christ embodies what the law set out, He kept it perfectly and He kept it according to its ultimate meaning in pointing to God and is therefore the end of the law for righteousness
- 5. You shall not bear false witness because Christ embodies truth**
- a. Jesus identifies Himself as truth in John 14:6 - *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life.*
 - b. And not only is He the truth, but He tells the truth, John 8:40, 45 - *but now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God... But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.*
 - c. Or John 18:37 - *Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world---to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."*
 - d. So that He is rightly called the faithful and true witness, Revelation 3:14 - *"And to the angel of the church in Laodicea write: 'The words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's creation.*
 - e. Once again, Christ embodies what the law set out, He kept it perfectly and He kept it according to its ultimate meaning in pointing to God and is therefore the end of the law for righteousness
- 6. You shall not covet because Christ is your treasure**
- a. As we studied in our Biblical Theology class, Christ is the fulfillment of the kingdom of God and He says in Matthew 13:44-46 - *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls, who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.*
 - b. Christ came into this world to be the ultimate treasure, the ultimate focus of desire, the pearl of great price
 - c. And so, Christ embodies what the law set out because He satisfies what the law could not, He provides a source of infinite satisfaction, a joy that is inexpressible and full of glory, a pleasure that denies covetousness - Christ is the end of the law for righteousness

D. The law points to Christ because every part of the law is ultimately about Christ

1. The law was about revealing the character of God, and Christ is God Himself
2. The law was about the Israelites reflecting the character of God in this world, and Christ has perfectly reflected God's character
3. The law is not about moral duty, the law is about what Christ would do and be and now has done and is

IV. We Obey the Law of Christ: We reflect Christ's image in this world

1. As we move to our last section, application, I'm going to fly through this for the sake of time
2. But as we think applying the Ten Commandments, we need to acknowledge several things, first we must listen to Hebrews 8:13 - *In speaking of a new covenant, he makes the first one obsolete. And what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.* - the Old Covenant is gone, it is done, obsolete, passed away
3. So Paul tells us specifically that we should not even desire to be under the law in Galatians 4:21-26 - *Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not listen to the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. But the son of the slave was born according to the flesh, while the son of the free woman was born through promise. Now this may be interpreted allegorically: these women are two covenants. One is from Mount Sinai, bearing children for slavery; she is Hagar. Now Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia; she corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.*
4. So Paul says of Himself in I Corinthians 9:20-21 - *To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.*
5. We aren't under the Old Testament law, and that for at least two reasons, first we were never part of that covenant and second that covenant has been fulfilled, trying to be under that law is like refusing to turn around and look at the glory of the sun because you'd rather look in a mirror the other direction
6. But, does this mean the law is meaningless to us? By no means! Because it has shown us the glory of Christ, and if we are in Christ, then the character of God revealed in Christ is who we are and our lives should reflect this
7. We are not under law and yet we are under law, the law of Christ - Just as Israel reflected the glory of God, her bridegroom, so we must reflect the glory of Christ, our bridegroom according to His revelation of Himself
8. And because the character of God never changes, in many ways the reflection of God is still the same

A. We worship God in Christ

1. **We worship God in Christ alone, renouncing any other route of approaching God**
 - a. If Christ is the perfect representative of God's being, the only One whom men and angels are to worship, the only One seated at the right hand of the throne of God, then we must worship God only in Christ
 - b. Practically this means a host of things are out of limit for a Christian, whether it be gnosticism and multiple deities, or Catholicism and the mediation of a secondary priest, or self-righteousness, an attempt to appear before God on our own - all of these are outside the law of Christ, we must worship in Christ alone!
 - c. These things would not represent Christ well, because Christ is the only access to God
 - d. So, we should take to heart Philippians 3:8-9 - *For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him,*
 - e. Or in the positive sense, Philippians 3:3 - *For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh*
 - f. Nothing else must stand before God except Christ, we worship in Christ alone
2. **We worship God according to the image of Christ alone, renouncing all desire to make Him in our image**
 - a. If Christ is the perfect image of God, the One in whom God's presence fully dwells, then we must worship God according to the image of Christ, rejecting all other images we might desire or hold on to
 - b. Instead of being like Psalm 50:21 - *These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you.* - our worship should always have the character of Colossians 1:15 - *He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.*
 - c. The law calls us to praise and worship God this way - to see that Christ is the perfect representation of God, to do otherwise would not represent Christ well, it would not reflect His glory
 - d. We cannot make God in our image, we must worship Him in the image of Christ
3. **We regard representing Christ as a solemn undertaking and guard our life accordingly**
 - a. If Christ bore God's name perfectly and now we bear Christ's name then we must be careful to bear it well
 - b. II Peter 2:20-21 - *For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them.*
 - c. Those who took the name of Christ but desecrated it by turning away or continuing in sin are worse off

than when they started, it is a solemn task to bear Christ's name; to do otherwise would not represent Christ well, would say that He is not our sovereign Lord, to say that He has not bought us with a price

d. We cannot lightly take Christ's name, it must become our life's purpose to represent that name well

4. We remember and rest in all that Christ has done for us as Creator and Redeemer

- a. If Christ has done what God prefigured in Creation and in the Law by completing God's work and giving His people rest, then we must rest in what Christ has done for us
- b. Romans 4:3-5 - *For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,*
- c. We rest our souls in Christ, by rejoicing in His work while adding none of our own, to do otherwise would not represent Christ well, resting in our works (even keeping a special day) would deny what Christ did
- d. So I don't believe this means we need to continue in the letter of the law by obeying the 7th day Sabbath (because of how Christ and the New Testament treats the Sabbath), but if you do because it reminds you that your rest is in Christ and encourages you to rest in Christ in the rest of your life, then excellent
- e. Regardless, let us uphold the exhortation of Colossians 2:16-17 - *Therefore let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.*
- f. The Sabbath pointed to Christ, we rest by resting in Christ

B. We obey the King in Christ

1. We aim to honor our fathers and mothers because in doing so we honor Christ who honored His Father

- a. Ephesians 6:1-3 - *Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise— "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."*
- b. Christ honored His Father, in representing Him can we do less?

2. We seek to honor and protect life because Christ gave us life and life is in His image

- a. I John 3:15 - *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*
- b. I chose this verse because it emphasizes both the reflection of Christ in the Old Testament law and the intensification of the law of Christ - that murder and hatred are of the same vein, much like Matthew 5
- c. Christ gave His life for us, in representing Him can we dishonor those made in His image?

3. We strive to be faithful in our relationships, especially marriage, because Christ is faithful to us

- a. Hebrews 13:4 - *Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.*
- b. Christ is faithful to His bride, in representing Him can we do less?

4. We seek to give to others freely instead of taking from others because Christ gave freely to us

- a. Ephesians 4:28 - *He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.*
- b. Christ gave freely to us, in representing Him can we do less?

5. We aim for complete truthfulness instead of any deceitfulness because we are one with the truth in Christ

- a. Ephesians 4:25 - *Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.*
- b. Christ is truth for us, in representing Him can we be less?

6. We strive to make Christ our treasure instead of desiring worldly things because Christ is the treasure

- a. Matthew 13:44 - *"The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*
- b. Christ came to be our treasure, if we represent Him can we desire anything else?

C. I've flown through these applications for the sake of time, but also because I don't sense that we don't know these things are true or that we shouldn't do them - we don't need a long lecture on the fact that stealing is bad

1. So, what I hope that I've demonstrated is that we do these things because we are called to represent Christ the same way Israel was called to represent God, we don't do these things under the stricture of law, but under the freedom of representation - we do these things because we love our bridegroom
2. If we want to represent Christ as His bride, what will we look like, how will we show the world who He is?