

The Gospel According to the Ten Commandments

Discussion Guide

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How to Use This Study

Almost all good Bible studies have some combination of study questions and commentary. Often the authors will comment on the passage to be read and then ask questions based on the passage and their comments. But ours is different.

This Bible study is designed so that the students' first steps into a passage of Scripture are taken by themselves with the help of the Holy Spirit. That is why the first thing you will find is not commentary but questions that are designed to help the students to read, search, discover, think about, and apply the great truths of the Scriptures for themselves before they are influenced by notes, lecture, or commentary from others.

After immersing themselves in the passage, pondering it, and answering what questions they can, we then suggest that the students participate in a group discussion and/or lecture. Then, after that, in preparation for the next meeting the notes for the following lesson should be read to reinforce, enhance, and clarify learning. After the notes are read, the students will have studied the passage at least three or four times (by themselves, in a group, hearing a lecture, and reading the notes with the passage). Then, following the notes, the questions in that lesson begin with one or two review questions to identify the "take-aways" from the study on that passage. Those are followed by the questions on the new passage of Scripture to be studied for the next class period or small group discussion.

George Robertson and I developed our studies while teaching the men's and women's Bible studies, respectively, at The Covenant Presbyterian Church in St. Louis, Missouri. We had both morning (women's) and evening (men's and women's) classes. Our format was fairly simple. The morning schedule looked like this:

9:30-10:05 Small group discussion of lesson questions led by trained group leader
10:05-10:20 Small group sharing of prayer requests and praying together
10:20-10:30 Travel time to assembly of all groups together
10:30-11:00 Lecture over the passage just discussed

The evening schedule was basically the same but began at 6:30 p.m.

When participants registered for the study, they were given the Introductory Questions to answer in preparation for the first class. (If you are receiving the study in a one-book, bound form, then simply give instructions to complete the Introductory Questions before the first class session.) Those questions were brought to class and discussed in the first small group discussion session before the first lecture. Then, after class, the students read Lesson One and answered the questions in Lesson One in preparation for the discussion in the second class session. That is the pattern on which the materials were designed.

We have heard of other groups that have utilized our studies using a similar schedule but with many variations. I have been using one of our studies with a small group of women with a very relaxed format, leading them through their answers of the questions and then giving them a

teaching wrap-up to explain, summarize and apply the passage at the end of our time together. We follow that with a time of prayer for each other.

The material may also be used for individual study. We do recommend, however, that you grapple with the Bible passage and the study questions and try to answer as many as you can before you go to commentaries, other study helps, or the next lesson's notes. We tend to learn best what we dig out for ourselves. If you miss the mark on a question, count that as an opportunity for learning; we tend to learn best from our mistakes!

We pray that this study will help you know God in Jesus Christ through the study of his Word.

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St. Louis, Missouri
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Lesson 1—Ten Commandments

1. What did you find interesting or challenging in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. When in your life have you experienced the fact that God “is not safe. . . but he is good”?

Personal; answers may vary.

Read Deuteronomy 5:8-10.

3. What is the second commandment? What is its essential meaning?

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything—NIV. Thou shalt not make thee any graven image—KJV. Answers will vary as to meaning.

4. What reason does God give for this commandment? How does this explain the prohibition against idols?

5:9—Because the Lord is a jealous God. To create an image that had no bearing on the reality of who God was would be an insult to the essential love relationship that God wants with his people.

5. What is the warning to those who disobey this commandment?

He will punish the children for the sins of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate him.

- a. What is the promise to those who obey it?

He will show love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments.

- b. What does this imply about the importance of parents’ worship?

Answers may vary, such as: Our worship of God must be sincerely from the heart for the sake of our children.

6. Read also **Exodus 32**. What was so terrible about the people's actions that made the Lord want to destroy them?

The people exchanged this marvelously gracious God for a hunk of gold.

7. How is this similar to **Romans 1:18-23**?

1:18—Godlessness and wickedness, suppressing the truth about God; 1:21—They neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him; 1:23—They exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like . . . animals.

8. Read **Exodus 33:1-34:14**.

- a. After the people's worship of the golden calf and Moses' intercession, what did Moses ask next in these chapters, for himself, from the Lord?

33:13—Teach me your ways so that I may know you. 33:15—If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. 33:18—Now, show me your glory.

- b. What was God's reply? How does it express his grace and splendor?

God would have been justified to wipe them out. Instead: 33:14—My Presence will go with you. 33:17—I will do everything you have asked. 33:19—I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you. . . I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and compassion on whom I will have compassion.

9. How do people today (you!) create physical and mental images to worship God (idols)?

Answers may vary.

10. Take some time to read **Deuteronomy 4:15-24; 27:15; 1 Samuel 15:23; Isaiah 44:10-22; 66:3-4; and Habakkuk 2:18-20**. What further insights about idolatry do you learn from these verses?

Answers may vary, such as: Dt. 4:19—People are naturally enticed by the worship of created things; 27:15—Idolatry is detestable to the Lord. 1 Sam. 15:23—It is likened to arrogance, presumption, stubbornness and insubordination. Is. 44:9—Idols are worthless;

one who worships them “feeds on ashes, a deluded heart misleads him; he cannot save himself, or say, ‘Is not this thing in my right hand a lie?’” etc.

11. How does obedience to the Second Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Answers may vary.

Lesson 2—Ten Commandments

1. What did you find helpful or meaningful in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. How has this lesson changed your worship and life?

Personal; answers may vary.

Read Deuteronomy 5:11.

3. What is the Third Commandment? What is its essential meaning?

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God; you shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Meaning: this prohibits the careless and blasphemous use of God's name in speech.

4. Read **Malachi 1:11-14**. How can God's name be misused in our worship?

Malachi rebuked those who made a vow to bring the best of his flock for an offering and then substituted a blemished animal. God's response is, "Cursed is the cheat. . . .For I am a great king. . .and my name is to be feared among the nations." When we come with ulterior motives or with a careless attitude, we profane the name of God.

5. See also **Malachi 1:7,12; Psalm 40:10-11; 43:4; 51:6; 86:11; 145:18; Proverbs 23:23; Isaiah 65:16; 1 Corinthians 5; 13:6; and Ephesians 4:15**. What are some ways that we can misuse the Lord's name with our words?

Answers may vary, such as: Mal. 1:7,12—When we say the Lord's Table is contemptible. Ps. 40:10—Speaking inaccurately about God; 43:4—To convey God as less than our joy and delight; 51:6—Failure to speak truthfully; 86:11—Without proper fear and reverence. Is. 65:16—By invoking blessing or taking an oath falsely. 1 Cor. 5:6—Boasting; slander; 13:6—By delighting in evil, not rejoicing in the truth. Eph. 4:15—By not speaking the truth in love.

6. What is to be our motivation for obeying the Third Commandment? See also **Malachi 1:6**; **Romans 8:12-16**; and **Ephesians 1:5-6**. Why is this important?

God's Lordship motivates us by fear to be reverent. It is appropriate to have a healthy fear of God (Dt. 5:11). In Malachi, God appeals to a different motivation. He says, "A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me?" (1:6). You must be faithful to honor God's name with your lips and your actions because he is your Father (Rom. 8:12-16; Eph. 1:5-6).

7. Have you witnessed the violation of the Third Commandment during the past week? What were the instances? (Think of specific conversations, media, entertainment, etc.)

Answers may vary.

8. Read **Leviticus 5:1**.

What is to be our response to violations of the Third Commandment?

We are to speak up or be held responsible, bearing the iniquity ourselves.

- b. How do you usually respond?

Personal; answers may vary.

9. Read also **Matthew 5:33-37**. What do oaths and promises have to do with the Third Commandment?

When Jesus forbade the use of oaths in Matthew 5:33-37 and said, "Let your yes be yes and your no be no" he was responding to a particular practice of the Jewish leadership. They would swear by heaven or earth or Jerusalem or anything other than God. Then because they had not made God part of the transaction, they felt free to break whatever oaths they had made. But God is our witness whenever we make promises of any kind like, "I'll be there," or "I'll pray for you," or "I'll send you that." God is in every transaction because he is the God of all reality.

- 10.** How did Jesus live the Third Commandment and make it reality? See **Psalm 138:2; Matthew 23:39; John 5:43; 10:25-12:28;** and **2 Corinthians 1:20.**

Answers may vary, such as: Christ was motivated to act faithfully because of zeal for God's name (John 12:28). If Christ had not honored God's name, our redemption would have been hopeless. Paul said his ministry among the Corinthians was faithful because of Christ's faithfulness: "For no matter how many promises God has made, they are 'Yes' in Christ. And so through him the 'Amen' is spoken by us to the glory of God" (2 Corinthians 1:20); etc.

- 11.** How does obedience to the Third Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Personal; answers may vary.

Lesson 3—Ten Commandments

Read lesson notes.

1. What did you find interesting or challenging in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. What has been different in your life this week as a result of this lesson on the Third Commandment?

Answers may vary.

Read Deuteronomy 5:12-15.

3. What is the Fourth Commandment? What is its essential meaning?

5:12—Observe the Sabbath day, to keep it holy or “set apart” for God in a way distinct from the six other days of the week.

4. What is unusual about this commandment compared with the other nine?

It takes up four long verses for its statement and explanation; it is the only one of the ten not directly restated in the New Testament; it is phrased in positive terms, not negative—a command (as is the Fifth Commandment), not a prohibition.

5. What does it mean to keep the Sabbath day—or anything else—“holy”? (A dictionary might be useful here.)

Answers may vary, such as “to set apart as sacred; to consecrate; to dedicate; to observe as holy, keep sacred; honor as sacred, hallow” as directed by God.

6. Read also **Genesis 2:1-3** and **Exodus 20:11**. What connection do you see between creation and the Sabbath?

The One who needed to rest, established the pattern of working six days and resting a seventh (Genesis 2:2). God ordained the Sabbath rest by his own example immediately upon completion of the creation. It is a law like all the rest that was woven into the fabric of the universe (Exodus 20:11)

7. Read **Jeremiah 17:21-27; 22:3-5;** and **Isaiah 58:13-14.** What good reasons do these passages give for the Israelites to observe the Sabbath? What do they teach you?

It carries blessings and curses like the rest of the commandments (Jer. 17:21-27; 22:3-5). In its observance you will find your joy in the Lord; he will cause you to “ride on the heights of the land” and to feast on the inheritance of our ancestors—in other words, obedience to this commandment brings special blessing to all of life (Is. 58:14).

8. Read also **1 Corinthians 16:2; Galatians 4:10; Colossians 2:16; Hebrews 10:25;** and **Revelation 1:10.** What other name was given to this one day of the week? How are these “two” days the same?

The Old Testament uses “Sabbath” and “Lord’s Day” interchangeably. In Isaiah 58:13, the Sabbath is called the Lord’s Day. Those who hold to a distinction between the two claim that Paul made this distinction in Galatians 4:10 and Colossians 2:16. But it is clear that he was only condemning the observance of days in terms of soteric legalism. If he had condemned all observance of days, he would have contradicted his own prescription for observance in 1 Corinthians 16:2: “On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money. . .” He would have also stood in conflict with John in Revelation 1:10 and the writer of Hebrews in 10:25 who obviously observed a set day for worship. In both Old and New Testaments, God has ordained that one day in seven be set aside for his glory.

9. Read **Psalms 92.** Find all the reasons you can in this Psalm for observing the Sabbath as God prescribes.

Answers may vary.

10. What are some practical ways that you observe the Sabbath that make it distinct from every other day of the week? How do you determine what you will or will not do?

Answers may vary.

11. How does obedience to the Third Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Answers may vary.

Lesson 4—Ten Commandments

1. What did you find helpful or challenging in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. What do you find most difficult about keeping the Fourth Commandment?

Personal. Answers may vary.

Read Deuteronomy 5:16 and Ephesians 5:21-6:9.

3. What is the Fifth Commandment? What is its essential meaning?

Honor your father and your mother. The prohibition against dishonor is by implication a command to preserve the honor of our parents. But the Bible makes it clear that we are not only to preserve their honor but the honor of all. Therefore, the commandment first addresses our attitude in obeying, ruling and mutually submitting.

4. How do the roles described in the Ephesians passage relate to the Fifth Commandment?

Paul first applies this principle to wives, whose attitude must be that of preserving the honor of the leadership position that God has given her husband in the home. She does it unto the Lord; it is not because her husband is inherently superior. Paul then addresses children, who are exhorted to obey their parents with the Fifth commandment in mind.

5. What does it mean for children to obey their parents “in the Lord”?

A child's attitude must be that he is obeying his parents because this is the honoring thing to his Lord. A child must also view his obedience as a ministry to his parents. He must recognize that here is one way he can be a blessing to his parents. He must obey unless and until his parents command him to do something “outside the Lord,” in violation of God’s revealed will in the Bible. Even then, he must appeal to his parents in humility.

6. What is the distinction between “submission” and “obedience”?

The distinction is a matter of attitude; one can obey outwardly yet still have a rebellious or resentful attitude. Submission is the condition of being humble and compliant; obedience refers more to the act or instance of doing what was commanded.

7. How can we harmonize **Genesis 1:27** and **Galatians 3:28** with the Fifth Commandment and the Ephesians passage?

There is no concept in Scripture of one human being's inherent superiority to another. Though they have different roles in the home, God made it clear that man and woman are equally created in his image (Genesis 1:27). There are simply different roles and those roles differ according to context.

8. What special instructions are given to fathers in the Ephesians passage? Why do you think this is emphasized?

A father's attitude must be that of the heavenly Father's. He is to rear his children in the training and instruction of the Lord. In other words, not only is the content prescribed but also the gracious manner is inferred, being the opposite of exasperation. Fathers must be careful to guard the tender souls of their children and not break their spirits. They must teach their children in the same manner that God teaches them.

9. What is the promise given with the Fifth Commandment? What exactly do you think this means?

Those who honor and do their duty within their several relations will live long and prosperous lives. This is not works righteousness; it is simply the way that God has created the world to operate. The keeping of this commandment will generally mean a happier life.

10. Read also **Proverbs 10:1; 15:20; 19:26; 20:20; 22:22-25; 28:24; and 30:17**. What warnings do these verses give regarding the Fifth Commandment?

Specific answers will vary. Generally, honoring parents will result in joy and blessing; dishonoring them brings disgrace to father and mother and brings spiritual blindness, destruction, and death to the disobedient son or daughter.

- 11.** Read also **Romans 13:1-7**. How does the Fifth Commandment relate to all relationships in society?

God has ordained various authorities within human civilization, including those of the family and the civil government. At its root, refusal to obey these authorities “in the Lord,” is rebellion against God. Romans 13:1-7 protects against anarchy in society just as the Fifth Commandment protects against anarchy in the family.

- 12.** How does obedience to the Fifth Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Answers may vary.

Lesson 5—Ten Commandments

Read lesson notes with references.

1. What was new or interesting to you in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. What will you do to honor your fathers and mothers (natural, spiritual, institutional) this week?

Answers may vary.

Read Matthew 5:21-25 with Deuteronomy 5:17.

3. What is the Sixth Commandment? What is its essential meaning?

You shall not murder. This commandment specifically prohibits the unlawful taking or diminution of human life which is created in the image of God. Or to state it positively, it commands the protection of the image of God in others and in ourselves.

4. Read also **Genesis 1:26-27; 9:5-6; Romans 13:4; 1 Corinthians 11:7** and **James 3:9**.

- a. What is the biblical worldview of men and women that makes them unique among God's creatures?

People were created in God's image to have dominion over all other creatures.

- b. How does this apply to capital punishment, or does it?

The Bible makes it clear in Genesis 9:6 and Romans 13:4 that precisely because the State is responsible to preserve lives created in the image of God, it must execute murderers.

5. In the Matthew passage, what does Jesus say is the root of disobedience to the Sixth Commandment? How does he give further insights into this command?

Anger; all anger with another human being is incipient murder. Every person who is angry with another without righteous reason should be brought before the civil court because he is a murderer. In other words, Jesus says that murder begins as an attitude of vindictiveness

(wishing harm or ill on that other person), and the attitude, though it may not result in the physical act, is just as guilty.

6. Also from the verses in Matthew, how does a failure to address this root in our hearts affect our worship?

In vv.23-24, Jesus says that if we come to worship with unreconciled attitudes then our worship will be in vain. God will not regard our worship if it is not from repentant hearts. If we come to worship knowing that we are in sin, by not seeking reconciliation with someone else, then the heavens will be bronzed against our worship.

7. Read also **Matthew 5:43-48** and **1 John 4:20**. How do these verses apply to obeying the Sixth Commandment?

In Matthew 5:44,45, we must love our enemies and pray for our persecutors. God means business when he commands us to be reconciled as much as is possible to those about us. John says it clearly again, "If anyone says, 'I love God,' yet hates his brother, he is a liar" (1 John 4:20).

8. How might you use the Sixth Commandment and the other passages in this lesson to reason through the life issues of *(Answers will vary; here are some examples)*

- a. Abortion?

We have a responsibility not just to oppose abortion personally, but also actively to preserve the lives of the unborn. The Bible is clear that it regards the embryo in the womb as a human being.

- b. End-of-life concerns? (Artificial respiration, intravenous feeding, etc.)

The Shorter Catechism says that the sixth commandment "requires all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life, and the life of others" (Q.68). This would include making those at the end of life comfortable, administering necessary procedures when requested, keeping the patient hydrated, honoring living wills, etc.

c. Euthanasia?

We must certainly condemn Dr. Kavorkian's action of assisting death. But we must be careful to realize too that medical technology has taken us to the point that a human body can be kept functioning long after the person is dead. The removal of these artificial means after the brain has died is not to kill someone but rather allowing it to finish the days God has given it.

d. Suicide?

It is also clear that suicide is a sin, though not the unforgivable sin. Everything leading to the destruction of one's life is also forbidden—engaging in risky adventures, failure to exercise, or irresponsibility in personal habits or eating.

e. Self-defense?

The self-defense of our families, which the civil law still protects, is implied in the Sixth Commandment. It is a vestige of its original foundation on the law of God.

9. Read also **Isaiah 53:4-6; Romans 6:23** and **8:1-4**. How are we all worthy of capital punishment? What is the answer to our plight?

All of us are sinners and worthy of capital punishment, for "the wages of sin is death." But the principle of capital punishment also spells our redemption. For Christ became a murderer in our place. Christ took on all the sins of those who by faith put them on him, and God executed him.

10. How does obedience to the Sixth Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Answers may vary.

Lesson 6—Ten Commandments

Read notes with Scripture references.

1. What did you find especially challenging in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. How has your thinking changed as a result of this lesson?

Answers may vary.

Read Deuteronomy 5:18 and Matthew 5:27-30.

3. What is the Seventh Commandment? What is its essential meaning?

You shall not commit adultery. The Shorter Catechism states our duty succinctly: "The seventh commandment requireth the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity, in heart, speech, and behavior" (#71).

4. How would you explain, "looking lustfully"? What would consist of "crossing that line" for you?

Answers may vary. Personal.

5. How can we help guard others and ourselves from doing this?

Answers may vary, such as: We must be guardians of our own and our neighbor's thoughts. We must also keep our tongues from that which would lead our neighbor or us into unchaste thoughts or actions. We must do whatever it takes to avoid adulterous activity.

6. What are all the negative consequences to individuals, families, and society when the sin of adultery is committed?

Answers may vary, such as: Heartbreak; disgrace; destruction of families; emotional and financial problems; difficulties with trust and commitment; makes church seem no different than the world; etc.

7. What would you say to the couple who reasons, “We need to live together before we get married to see if we are physically compatible,” or “It’s all right if we live together because we’re going to get married anyway”?

Answers may vary, such as: Not only does the Bible forbid it but it is statistically proven that premarital sex and cohabitation are detrimental to marriage. In fact, 50-60% of the couples that do either or both before marriage divorce. If man knows better than God about what should and should not happen before marriage, then why is man's wisdom not producing more stable marriages?

8. Read also **Genesis 1:27-28; 2:18-25; 4:1; Song of Solomon 1-2; and 1 Corinthians 7:1-5,9**. What is God’s view of human sexuality from these verses?

Sexuality is a wonderful gift from God. In Genesis, a man is to leave his parents and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. Song of Solomon is a celebration of conjugal married love. 1 Corinthians says that the husband’s body belongs to the wife, and the wife’s to the husband; they are not to deny each other physically; and a couple should marry rather than have sex outside of marriage.

9. Read also **1 Corinthians 7:32-38**. What benefits does Paul give for singleness? How can the Seventh Commandment encourage the single person?

The one who has "settled the matter in his own mind, who is under no compulsion but has control over his own will" does the right thing if he decides not to marry. Paul says that a single person will have less to distract him or her in the work of the Lord. God knows best; to remain chaste while single will bring the greatest blessing; the single person in the Lord has advantages that married people do not.

10. How does the Seventh Commandment apply to homosexuality?

Homosexuality is clearly a sin and not permissible under any circumstances. But it is not labeled by the Bible as anything worse than any other sexual sin. No one may offer excuses like, "I may be into pornography but at least it is heterosexual." That is in the same camp; the Seventh Commandment addresses the heart of the matter.

11. How does obedience to the Seventh Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Answers may vary.

Lesson 7—Ten Commandments

Read the lesson notes with Scripture references.

1. What did you find especially helpful or challenging in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. What additional insights did you receive when you read **1 Corinthians 6:12-20**?

Answers may vary.

Read **Deuteronomy 5:19** and **Ephesians 4:28**.

3. What is the Eighth Commandment? What is its essential meaning?

You shall not steal. The Shorter Catechism is simple and succinct. What is required? "The eighth commandment requireth the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others." And what is forbidden? "The eighth commandment forbiddeth whatsoever doth, or may, unjustly hinder our own, or our neighbor's, wealth or outward estate."

4. Have you ever had anything stolen from you? What were your feelings at the time? How do you explain these feelings?

Personal. Answers may vary.

5. Does this commandment support the right to private property? Why or why not?

Yes. The very definition of "to steal" implies ownership. To steal is to take the property of another wrongfully without right and with intent to keep or make use of wrongfully.

6. Read also **Exodus 22:1-15** and **Luke 19:8**. What part do you think restitution should play when one is convicted of stealing?

If one has stolen from the estate of another, he is responsible to restore it if possible. When Zaccheus the tax collector was converted by Christ and responded, "If I have stolen anything, I will repay it four times" (Luke 19:8) he was only keeping the commandments for restoration given in Exodus 22, "a thief must certainly make restitution" (v.3).

7. Read also **2 Thessalonians 3:6-12** and **1 Timothy 6:6-10**. What are some safeguards that can help us keep from falling into this sin?

Instead of stealing, we must work. We must strive against our inherent tendency to seek the course of least resistance, looking for that opportunity to make money without working or win enough that we will never have to work again. We must not work just for ourselves but with the purpose of having something to share. We must seek "godliness with contentment."

8. What other kinds of things can be stolen besides money or material goods? Write down as many as you can think of.

Answers may vary.

9. The opposite of stealing is giving. Read **2 Corinthians 8:9** and **9:6-15**.

- a. What principles of giving are in these verses?

Answers may vary, such as: 9:6—The one who sows generously will reap generously; 9:7—We are to cheerfully give as we decide in our hearts, not reluctantly from outside pressure; 9:8-11—We may give as God directs knowing he will supply our needs. 9:12—One purpose of the money with which God supplies us is to give to the needs of others.

- b. What is to be our motivation for giving?

Gratitude in response to Christ's grace. We are to give freely and without compulsion in order to express our thanksgiving to Christ and put ourselves in the position of witnessing his provision for us.

- c. How does Jesus Christ provide the answer for the one who breaks the Eighth Commandment (and every commandment)?

We are spiritually guilty and bankrupt in every way before God. On the cross Christ took upon himself our poverty and sin so that we might receive his riches and righteousness. He makes the exchange of grace and sin, so that we might be keepers of the eighth commandment (as well as all the others).

10. What other kinds of things can be given besides money or material goods? Write down as many as you can think of.

Answers may vary.

11. How does obedience to the Eighth Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Answers may vary.

Lesson 8—Ten Commandments

1. What did you find thought provoking or challenging in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. In what ways will you seek to positively obey the Eighth Commandment after studying this lesson?

Personal; answers may vary.

Read Deuteronomy 5:20 and Ephesians 4:22-25.

3. What is the Ninth Commandment? What is its essential meaning? State it in both negative and positive terms.

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. Meaning: You shall not lie; you shall give true testimony in behalf of your neighbor.

4. From the Ephesians verses, what is the reason why we must speak truthfully?

Lying is part of our former way of life, from which God saved us in Christ. We are to put off that old self and be made new in the attitudes of our minds; and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

5. Read also **Genesis 3:1-5** and **26:1-9**.

- a. What are some reasons why people—and the devil—lie?

Gen. 3:1-5—To deceive, mislead, and manipulate others; to promote themselves; 26:1-9—To protect themselves. Other possibilities: Lack of faith that God can and will do what is best for them if they tell the truth; lack of humility; pride; etc.

- b. How seriously do you think our society takes this sin? What evidence do you see for your answer?

Answers may vary.

6. What are some other terms that you can think of for this sin? See also **Leviticus 19:11,12,16**; and **Proverbs 22:1**.

Lev. 19:11—Lie, deceive; 19:12—swear falsely by the Lord’s name; 19:16—slander. Pr. 22:1—Libel; false and exaggerated flattery. Other possibilities: Perjury, fibbing, “white lies,” etc.

7. Read also **Matthew 5:33-37** with **Romans 1:9**; **2 Corinthians 1:23**; **Philippians 1:8**; **1 Thessalonians 2:5,10** and **Hebrews 6:17-19**.

- a. Is Jesus forbidding the taking of oaths under formal occasions or any other circumstance? Why or why not?

Answers may vary, but basically the answer is: No. Oaths and vows are appropriate in courts of law, when taking public office, making marriage vows, etc., because these are vows before God and human witnesses that solemnize and authorize the occasion, recognizing the presence and rule of God and accountability to him.

- b. What is the main principle that Jesus is teaching in the Matthew verses?

Simply, be truthful; make your word your bond. Keep your promises to God and to people. Be a person of integrity that others can trust.

8. Read **Proverbs 6:16-19** and **12:17-22**. What are some good reasons in these verses for obeying the Ninth Commandment?

God hates lying. When he lists seven things in Proverbs 6:17 that he especially detests, a lying tongue is at the top. He is the God of truth and demands truthfulness from all. Furthermore, the Bible says he delights in men who are truthful (Proverbs 12:22).

9. What are some more good reasons in **Proverbs 19:5**; **Colossians 3:9-10**; and **Revelation 21:8** and **22:15**?

Pr. 19:5—A false witness will not go unpunished. Col. 3:9-10—Lying is part of the old self, but we have put on the new self which is being renewed in the knowledge of the image of its Creator. Rev. 21:8—(Unredeemed) liars end up in the fiery lake of burning sulfur; 22:15—Everyone who loves and practices falsehood ends up outside of the celestial city.

- 10.** What is God's answer to our violation of the Ninth Commandment? See **John 1:14,17; 4:23-24; 8:31-32; 14:6,16-17; 17:17; 18:37; Ephesians 4:15; 6:14; and 1 Timothy 2:3-7.**

Jn. 1:14—The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; 1:17—Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ; 4:23-24—We are to worship God in spirit and truth; 8:32—The truth will set us free; 14:6—Jesus is the way, the truth and the life; 14:16-17—The Holy Spirit of truth lives in us and is our Counselor; 17:17—We are sanctified by God's Word which is truth; etc.

- 11.** How does obedience to the Ninth Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Personal; answers may vary.

Lesson 9—Ten Commandments

Read the notes with Scripture references.

1. What was new or personally convicting to you in the notes and/or lecture?

Answers may vary.

2. Do you think there is ever a situation in which it is all right to lie? Why or why not?

Answers may vary.

Read Deuteronomy 5:21; 7:25; Micah 2:1-2; and James 4:1-3.

3. What is the Tenth Commandment? What is its essential meaning?

“You shall not covet.” Negatively stated, the commandment forbids our envying or regretting the good estate of our neighbor as well as seeking anything inordinately from him. Positively stated, the commandment requires complete contentment with our whole estate. Furthermore, it requires that we must be happy for whatever good comes to our neighbor.

4. Why do you think God included this commandment among his “top ten”?

Answers may vary.

5. Read also **Job 20:20; Luke 4:14; Philippians 4:11; 1 Timothy 6:6-8; and Hebrews 13:5.** What is the opposite of coveting? Why is this quality so rare?

Being content is the opposite of coveting. Answers may vary as to the reasons for its rarity.

6. What is at the root of coveting? See **Proverbs 4:23; 14:30; 20:9; 27:19; Jeremiah 17:9; and Romans 7:7-8.**

There is something wrong with us at the most fundamental level . . .the heart. Our hearts are truly described by the Bible as being "deceitful above all things and beyond cure" (Jeremiah 17:9).

7. What effects of disobedience to the Tenth Commandment do you see in

a. Our society

Answers may vary.

b. Your family

Personal. Answers may vary.

c. Your own life

Personal. Answers may vary.

8. What is God's solution to this sin and every violation of the Ten Commandments? See **Ezekiel 36:25-27; Romans 3:21-23** and **5:1-8**.

God wants to give you a new heart. He will take out your old sinful heart which is described in Ezekiel 36:26 as "stone," calcified, unable to respond to God in any way. And he will give you a new one, one of "flesh," healthy and beating after God's rhythm.

9. Read also **Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 3:15-17; and Hebrews 12:28-29**. What is to be our response to God's solution? What evidence of this do you see in your own life?

To turn to Christ not only to give us a new heart, but a new life, one that begins to obey him out of gratitude. Personal applications may vary.

10. How does obedience to the Tenth Commandment make an important difference in your life today?

Answers may vary.

11. What has God accomplished in your life during the past ten weeks as a result of this study on the Ten Commandments?

Answers may vary.