



Yesterday’s commandments are pretty specific — don’t murder, commit adultery, lie or steal. Here we have a commandment that seems to be less important, yet in many ways may be the most important. For lying, stealing and cheating often begin in a moment, a season — obsessively coveting what others have or simply wanting more than we already have. In America’s “buy and sell” advertising culture, people are bombarded all the time with reminders of what “we don’t have” and what we “should have” and with the theme “these things will make you happy!”

In what ways is being grateful and giving thanks to God a guardrail for coveting?

Why might coveting what others have or what we don’t have offend God and be an offense to others?

How is loving God, others, keeping a Sabbath and having no other gods before God reflected in this last commandment?

GPS for Families

GrowPrayStudy.org/family

Just as God gives us the commandments and other instructions for life, we need to do the same for our kids. Many young adults live a very entitled existence, thinking the world owes them whatever they want or need. These are often unhappy people who are difficult to be around. So, now is the time to set boundaries with your child. It is difficult to say “no” sometimes, but if we want to raise adults who understand that they are not God, boundaries are necessary. If you need encouragement in setting clear limits with your children, let these words on the role of boundaries encourage you:

When children hear “no,” they learn the world will not give them whatever they want.

Limits teach children they can set their own limits, which will be important as they enter the teen and adult years.

Boundaries instill confidence when they see they can “survive” not getting what they want.

Limits teach children that they are not entitled to whatever they want.

Boundaries teach children to be creative when they cannot get what they want, and they have to be resourceful to meet a need.

Limits in relationships teach children that they cannot treat others as they wish.

When children learn their own limits, they come to realize the importance of family, friends and a relationship with Christ.

MESSAGE “Proceed with Caution”

SCRIPTURE Ephesians 5:15-18

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Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon:

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PRAYER FOR THE WEEK

God, you have given me commandments as a blessing to me, a guardrail for my life. I thank you for your grace, for loving me, for blessing me in my life, for providing for me. Today I thank you for your commandments. Sometimes I am tempted to cross the lines you have given me, and sometimes I have crossed those lines. Please forgive me, and may your Holy Spirit guide me as I learn to live a life within the freedom of the loving guardrails you have put in place. AMEN.

God's commandments were a key part of the life of the Jewish people during the time of Jesus, and there was a constant conversation as to which commandments should be kept, which were the most important and how to keep them. The religious leaders of that time decided to test Jesus by asking him which was the greatest commandment. No matter what he said, it would somehow have been the wrong answer. Instead, Jesus quotes a commandment they would all know, one from Deuteronomy chapter 6 that was given just after the Ten Commandments, yet it had become a secondary and even unimportant one for many — to love God.

In what ways do all of God's commandments depend upon just loving God and loving neighbor?

Why is "being obedient to God because we love" a guardrail — relationships that we value with God and others, guarded by love?

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Deuteronomy 5:1-7

Israel had been delivered from 400 years of slavery in Egypt. And they were on their way to the Promised Land, a land of milk and honey, a place where they would be "The People of God." But they were not yet the people of God; they still had the mindset of slaves and the values of Egypt. It was going to take a great deal to change. So, God gives them a gift, a gift of commandments that, if kept, would form and shape who they would become — a people set apart by God for God. This first commandment is the most important; in a world of many gods, there was only one God.

How is the first commandment at odds with the culture of this world?

What are the ways we place the gods of this world over the one God?

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Deuteronomy 5:12-15

The idea of a Sabbath season is the oldest commandment in the Bible. It is one of the 10 as we read here in Deuteronomy and also in Exodus, but it is written into creation itself, where God created the world in six days and rested on the seventh, marking it as holy. Jesus affirms the commandment in a special way by saying, "Humanity was not created for the Sabbath, the Sabbath was created for humanity!" (Mark 2:27) We could paraphrase this as, "A Sabbath day is a guardrail that God has given us for our own good." This is another commandment that our 24-hour-a-day world is at odds with.

How is a day of rest a guardrail that keeps us on track in life?

What are ways you can build into your week moments of worship, rest, Bible study, prayer and relationship building?

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Deuteronomy 5:17-20

Today we look at four of the Ten Commandments, each that deal with relationships. The first commandments are primarily about a relationship with God. Today's readings are about relationships with one another. The definition of evil is rooted in self-centeredness where the individual's needs and wants take precedence over anything or anyone else. If self-centeredness is the root of evil, then Christ-centeredness is the root of good and holiness where the will and purpose of God takes priority, a guardrail that keeps our lives on track directed by God's intent, an abundant life defined by a holy relationship with God and one another.

How is our culture at odds with the commandment to not commit adultery, to not steal, to not bear false witness?

What lines should we draw for ourselves that we will not cross to ensure these commandments take priority?

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