

10 Words of Grace. A Study of the Ten Commandments.

Week #2: Exodus 20. No other gods.

September 23, 2018

If you asked your neighbor what they thought of the 10 Commandments, you would probably get two responses. The first is that they are generally a good set of rules to follow. The second, however, would be that they have little if any idea of what the Commandments specifically say - people generally know they allude to 'the golden rule', but really don't know much more than that.

Most of us don't think about the Commandments much anymore ... if we're honest, we might say that they make us feel a bit guilty about our behavior. This fall, however, I want to challenge us to look at them *not* as a set of guilt-inducing Commands, but rather as words of grace from our loving Father in Heaven. Let's learn to see them as a beautiful mountain range that stands vigil over us generation after generation. And let us more importantly see that they point us carefully to God's grace poured out in Jesus Christ. *The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith in Jesus Christ.* (Galatians 3:24).

Questions:

1. The Hebrew people received these Commands in the midst of an intense relationship with God that He initiated, as He identified with them and cared for them.
 - What must this experience have been like . . . really?
 - What has been your experience of God and His love for you? How has it affected your understanding of His commands and desires for your life?
2. Ken spoke about positional authority and moral authority. Read John 15:9-17 as a help in understanding the difference between these two.
 - What type of authority does God generally exercise in your life? What is necessary for His moral authority to become what you identify with in your relationship with Him?
3. *Influence* is something that the first command is really all about. God must be the primary *Influencer* of everyone who proclaims Him to be their God ... but it's not easy.
 - What are the competing influencers, the other "gods" in your life? Why?
4. *Identity* is the other key issue in this first commandment. Kenneth Boa writes, "I have come to view this issue of identity as a powerful potential source of motivation for believers, particularly during times of temptation and spiritual warfare".
 - Read Ephesians 1:3-14. In identifying with Jesus, how does this identity help you live the 1st Commandment with joy?
5. What can you do to bring the joy the 1st Commandment into the lives of those around you:
 - through your faithful generosity and trust that God will provide for you?
 - in your interests?
 - in your relationships and how you handle them?
 - in your scheduling?
 - in your troubles?
6. Memorize the 1st Commandment this week and put the magnet you received on your fridge at home or filing cabinet at work to remind of these Words of Grace.