



“I shall always be ready to remind you of these things...”
2 Peter 1:21



CABOT WESTSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

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When We Meet

Sunday

Bible Classes – 9:00 am
 Worship – 10:00 am, 5:00 pm

Wednesday

Bible Classes – 7:00 pm

Our Elders

R.D. Hopper
 Norman Kemper

Our Deacons

Troy Hunter
 Kelly Kendall
 Tony Ramick

Our Preacher

Alex Hale

Information About the Ten Commandments

By Alex Hale

The Ten Commandments fall into two sections. The first four laws tell us how to relate to God – how we revere, respect, and love Him. The second six laws deal with how we are to treat each other. Jesus summarizes these thoughts when asked what the greatest commandment was (Matt 22:37-40). He taught that man’s relationship with God and relationship with others are intertwined. We cannot love and respect God properly if we do not love and respect each other. We cannot love and respect each other properly if we do not love and respect God. Our faith is both horizontal and vertical. You cannot have one without the other (1 Jn 4:7-8, 20-21).

The Ten Commandments are mostly written in the negative. With the exception of the fourth and fifth commandments, they are all stated as “*Thou shalt not.*” Why would God do this – don’t negatives tend to turn people off? Think about the commandments in their original context. God had just called the people of Israel out of slavery. At this point, they are a long way from being a nation. A better description of their plight would be a disorganized mob – they needed order! God provided them a list of “nots” as a way of molding and maturing them into the nation that He desired.

We understand this with our own children. One of the first words parents teach their children is “no.” If your infant heads for the electrical outlet or your toddler heads for the hot stove, you shout, “No! Don’t touch that!” In a very real sense, the children of Israel were in the infant stage and so they needed limitations. They had spent hundreds of years living in a nation where the people worshipped many gods – they had to NOT do that anymore! They had spent generations among a nation that did not respect human life (in Egypt, people were property to be bought and sold; in addition a decree from the king could lead to mass infanticide or murder) – the children of Israel had to learn NOT to think of people in that way!

Though these commands of God do have a stern quality about them, when you are warning a child not to go down a path which will hurt themselves or others, you cannot get too stern. This is what God is doing with these laws – He is saying “no” as a means of protection for His children. We must understand that all of God’s laws are for our good. God put commands in scripture because He wants to protect us. He tells us to “*flee sexual immorality*” because He knows that sexual immorality is a path to emptiness and frustration. He tells us, “*You shall not steal or bear false witness*” because He knows that stealing and lying hurt us in many ways. God’s commands are like an umbrella. When you put up an umbrella it shields you from the rain, but if you choose to move out from under the umbrella during a storm you are bound to get wet. Though the laws are negative in tense, they are not negative in nature. Their purpose is not to burden us, but to protect us and provide God’s best for us (Jer 32:38-40).

The Ten Commandments are a guide leading us to a Savior. Jesus came to show the law’s true purpose. The Ten Commandments (and the rest of the law) were meant to help prepare the people for Jesus (Gal 3:24). In the Greek world of Paul’s day, there was a type of household servant called the *paidagogos*. This person was in charge of the child’s moral welfare. He was not the child’s teacher, but he was responsible to see that the child was, in fact, under the teacher’s care. Paul explains that this was the function of the law. The law leads to the teacher Himself.