



## Scotts Hill Baptist Church

GOD'S EXIT PLAN • THE BIG TEN (PART 1) • EXODUS 20:1-11 • 4/6/2025

### MAIN POINT

The law doesn't make us righteous; rather, it reveals our need for the Righteous One.

### INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**Have you ever gotten a traffic ticket? How did it make you feel?**

**What are the benefits of traffic laws?**

**Do you think that traffic laws are just? Why would people be angry about a traffic ticket if they believe the traffic laws are good and just?**

No one likes getting a speeding ticket, and no one likes getting cited for failing to completely stop at a stop sign. Quite often, people complain when they receive a ticket or try to find some way to get out of paying it. Yet, almost everyone will agree that traffic laws are good and that people ought to obey them, and a failure to obey laws results in punishment.

Our relationship to the law of God is much the same. We agree that the law of God is good, yet we do not like to keep it when it goes against what we want to do. The law of God exposes our sinful impulses and reveals our sinful nature, and because of that, the law provides us with a very valuable service by giving us insight into who we really are.

### UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 20:1-7.

**Why did the Israelites need these specific instructions from God?**

**Why did He need to remind them of who He is and what He had done for them first?**

**Given God's description of Himself, what would be the appropriate way to view His law?**

God did not give the Ten Commandments to limit or frustrate His people but to save them from the perils of a life lived outside of His guidelines. The Ten Commandments are not a narrow set of inflexible rules. They are principles that help us live fulfilling and meaningful lives. The first principle for relating to God is that we should have no other gods before Him. Ancient peoples generally worshiped more than one god. The Israelites needed to learn the basic lesson of rejecting false gods and worshiping only the one, true God.

**We may not struggle serving multiple gods, but what are some modern-day idols people worship? How do these idols impact our relationship with God?**

**Can you "make an idol for yourself" even if you never actually create an object of worship as with your own two hands? Explain.**

**Even churches are tempted to make idols. What are some common things believers are tempted to worship corporately?**

**In what sense do you think God is "jealous"? How is that different from the way a human might be jealous?**

God created us to enjoy Him; in Him we find goodness, kindness, mercy, power, and glory. We do not add anything to God, but He still desires our affections because He loves us—and as it turns out, loving Him is what is best for us.

A basic thrust of this Second Commandment is that we should allow no substitutes for God in our lives; nothing should take the Lord's place. Idol worship is forbidden in this passage because the Lord is a jealous God. The word conveys the fact that God expects complete loyalty from His people. A close relationship exists between loving God and keeping His Commandments (v. 6). If we genuinely love Him, we will obey Him. Real love expresses itself in obedience and action.

God is not jealous like people are jealous. People are usually jealous because of wounded pride or fear of loss. God is jealous because His love for us is so strong that it causes Him to desire what is best for us. Worshiping a false god will ultimately ruin us. God's concern for us moves Him to discipline us from our idols so we might not be destroyed by them.

**What do verses 5-6 teach us about God? What does it mean to misuse the name of God?**

These verses show us that God is merciful. Those who break the laws of God will feel the repercussions for generations, but if one of those should repent, God will shower them with mercy for far longer. God is gracious, slow to anger, and quick to show mercy to any who will ask it.

Misusing the Lord's name means to swear by God's name or to not fulfill the oath one makes. Any time someone invokes the name of the Lord in an attempt to manipulate a circumstance, or uses His name in such a way that would dishonor Him, that person is taking the Lord's name in vain.

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EXODUS 20:7-11

**What are some ways we misuse God's name or take it lightly? In what ways may doing so harm our witness to those who don't know Him?**

God's name is too precious to be used so lightly. While this Commandment prohibits profanity and cursing, its meaning goes much deeper. This Commandment concerns fruitfulness. God's presence in our lives should produce visible fruits or results. If we profess to know Him but our lives fail to demonstrate a relationship with Him, we are lifting up the Lord's name to emptiness.

**The other commands begin with, "Do not." Why do you think in regard to the Sabbath God said, "Remember"? What, specifically, are we to remember about the Sabbath?**

**What are some of the ways you see Jesus practicing rest in the gospels? Why is that an important thing for us to remember?**

**Why is faith an essential part of being able to truly rest? What are we communicating about our faith in God when we voluntarily choose a posture of rest?**

Culture views rest as a celebration of self. We say, “treat yourself,” or “you deserve it!” This is a fundamental difference in the kind of Sabbath rest God commands for His people. In the Ten Commandments, God blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. Sabbath is not about us, but about Him. However, God intends to bless us through the holiness of Sabbath rest.

**How are Sundays different now than 50 years ago? What have we gained during that time? What have we lost?**

## APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**Besides reading your Bible, what are some steps you can take to avoid idolatry?**

**What are some physical objects that serve as reminders of potential idols you need to keep in check (ex. cash, credit cards, a mirror, TV, cell phone, gym membership, etc.)?**

**What are some practical things you need to do to your schedule in order to practice the discipline of rest?**

**Think about your commitment to one another. What are some things we can do to hold each other accountable in our struggles with idolatry and Sabbath?**

## PRAYER

In a time of group prayer, thank the Father for giving us the law to show us that we need His grace. Pray that God will help us live lives of gratitude because of the freedom that Christ has given us.

## COMMENTARY

| EXODUS 20:1-6

20:1-2. The covenant at Sinai was made at God’s initiative. Before God gave His principles for right living to the Israelites, He reminded them of His identity and of what He had done for them. He identified Himself as the LORD, the personal name whose significance He

had revealed more fully to Moses at the burning bush. The LORD had delivered the Israelites from Egyptian bondage. Israel's freedom from slavery rested in the Lord's love and power. What He had done for His people gave Him a claim on their lives. He had set them free. He had a right to take the initiative to tell them how to enjoy the freedom He had provided.

20:3. The first principle for relating to God is that we should have no other gods before Him. Ancient peoples generally worshiped more than one god. A variety of gods were worshiped in both Egypt and Canaan. The Israelites' sole allegiance, however, belonged to the Lord who had redeemed them. The Lord requires our sole allegiance. He, the Creator of the universe, is the only true God. The Lord not only created us; He has redeemed us by the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ.

20:4-6. Idol worship is forbidden in this passage because the Lord is a jealous God. The Hebrew word translated jealous also could be translated "zealous." The word in this context does not denote a negative quality such as pettiness that we often associate with jealousy in our culture. Rather the word jealous in this context conveys the fact that God expects complete loyalty from His people. Genuine love is exclusive in a positive sense. God is zealous that we worship Him alone because He knows that such worship will result in what is best for our lives. Because of God's great love for us, He wants us to experience the best life possible.

## | EXODUS 20:7-11

20:7. The Third Commandment focused on our relationship with God prohibits taking God's name in vain. We are to honor His name. In Hebrew thought the name represented a person's character, nature, and identity. God's name stands for and represents Him. If we abuse His name, we show our lack of respect for Him. The first part of the Third Commandment literally can be translated: "You shall not lift up the name of the Lord your God to emptiness (vanity)." We are to demonstrate our respect and reverence for God's name by saying and doing nothing that would reflect adversely on His character.

20: 8-11. The Fourth Commandment concerning our relationship with God deals with keeping the Sabbath Day holy. Anything set apart to belong to God is holy. A holy day then is a day devoted to God's purposes. God set aside the seventh day for Himself. The Jews observe the Sabbath to commemorate God's rest on the seventh day and also God's deliverance of His people from bondage in Egypt (Deut. 5:15). We run into real problems

when we attempt to define minutely how God's day is to be kept holy. God's day is kept holy when we glorify God through what we do in it.

Since Christ arose on the first day of the week, Christians observe Sunday as the Lord's Day, a day of celebration and worship. If we do not work on the Lord's Day, but do not serve God on that day either, we have failed to keep the intent of the Fourth Commandment.

The Fourth Commandment reminds believers that every day is a gift from God. All time belongs to Him. We are to be good stewards of the time He has allotted us. Observe that in addition to keeping one day holy, God also commanded His people to labor and do all their work in the remaining six days (v. 9).