

God Speaks

Message Five

He Makes Known His Design

God speaks an Un-Changing Message, Through His World, Trough His Word, How We Fail To Trust Him, and now He Makes Known His Design.

Exodus 20: 1-17 And God spoke all these words, saying,

2 “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

3 “You shall have no other gods before me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,

6 but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.

11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

13 “You shall not murder.

14 “You shall not commit adultery.

15 “You shall not steal.

16 “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.



17 “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”

God has spoken through His law to demonstrate His holiness and our sinfulness.

Though the law cannot save us, it points us to the One who fulfilled it and through Whom we can have life.

Introduction:

When did God's law come into effect?

We might be inclined to answer by saying, "At Sinai."

However, God's law has always been in effect.

God's law has always been in effect because God has always existed.

His law is based on His divine character and nature and is simply a description of what life looks like when lived as God designed it to be.

Between Eden and Heaven – the bookends of redemption history – God has graciously given His law to serve as a "schoolmaster" according to **Galatians Chapter 3**, teaching us how He commands us to live, and showing us how far we fall short of His holy standard.

God initially gave His law to Moses as the Ten Commandments.

Jesus boiled these Ten Commandments down into two overarching ones – love God exclusively with all that you are, and love your neighbor as yourself according to **Matthew 22: 36-40**.

36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?”

37 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

38 This is the great and first commandment.

39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

This is a picture of God's divine design – man living in unhindered fellowship with God, which results in man living in unhindered fellowship with others.

And, because God is the God over all creation, His law is everywhere applicable.

It is for those who live in America and Australia, Africa, Europe and South America, and everywhere in between.

Everywhere God reigns, His law applies.

I – God's design is for man to be rightly related to Him (vv. 1-11)

And God spoke all these words, saying,

2 “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

3 “You shall have no other gods before me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

5 You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me,

6 but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

8 “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days you shall labor, and do all your work,

10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.

11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.



God's law is often viewed as a list of things we should not do.

If we look beyond the negative format of **"Thou shalt not,"** we see the positive principle that demonstrates God's design for His world as He created it.

"Thou shalt have no other gods," becomes **"Worship God alone."**

"Thou shalt not take God's name in vain" becomes **"Revere God's name as holy,"** to live our lives as God designed.

In other words, God must have first place.

If we get this wrong, nothing else in our lives will be rightly ordered.

God's law reminds us that He is not only holy, but also jealous, and rightly so.

God's jealousy for His glory and preeminence is not like our selfish jealousy.

His jealousy for His glory results in our good.

There is nothing worthy of taking God's place as King in our lives.

Anything, or anyone, else that we allow into that place is a lesser thing.

And so, for His glory and our good, God commands first place - the place He, and only He, rightly deserves.

Important Question:

Am I an idolater?

That sounds like a harsh question.

The reality is, we are all prone to idolatry.

Though you may not make hand-carved idols or swear using God's name, we easily allow things in our lives to become ultimate for us.

A good test is to look at your finances and your calendar.

In many cases, the ways you spend your time and money will tell what is ultimate in your life.

If you are allowing anything but God to have first place, everything else will be out of order.

Ask God, by His grace, to help you live with Him in first place.

II – God's design is for man to be rightly related to others (vv.12-17)

12 *“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.*

13 *“You shall not murder.*

14 *“You shall not commit adultery.*

15 *“You shall not steal.*

16 *“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

17 *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s.”*

When God has first place in our lives and we walk in complete surrender and obedience to Him as our King, our relationships with others flourish as well.

This is not because of our personal effort to be a nice person to others.

This is because God works in us to make us more like Him.

Rather than having to be told, ***“Thou shalt not kill,”*** we simply walk according to God's character and nature – “Show respect for innocent human life.”

Rather than having to be told not to commit adultery, we simply walk according to God's design, “Be faithful in all your relationships.”

It is important to note again that these laws are not simply outdated cultural ideas.

These laws apply to all people in all places at all times.



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Since these laws reflect the character and nature of the eternal God who does not change, they are also timeless and unchanging.

Since God has created man in His image and reigns as sovereign King over all the earth, His law is everywhere applicable.

You don't have to tell the man in an unreached tribe in the South American bush that it is wrong to kill or steal or lie.

He knows this.

Why?

Because the almighty God who made him has written it upon his heart.

Important Question: Are you struggling in your relationships with others?

If so, it's not so much interpersonal problem but a spiritual problem.

In order for us to love our neighbor as ourselves, we must first love God with all that we are.

My inclination to be jealous, angry, bitter, or unforgiving to my brother is an indication that God does not have first place in my life.

Ask God to help you keep Him in first place, enabling you to love others as yourself.

Conclusion:

Let's look at this message in this light: God's law is a good gift from a good God.

It stands as a strong reminder that none of us measure up to God's standard of holiness and righteousness.

Romans 3: 10 and 23

10 as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one;



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23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

James reminds us, when compared to a standard of holiness, to be guilty at one point is the same as being guilty of all.

James 2: 10 For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all of it.

No amount of law-keeping can erase our points of failure.

Therefore, what we need is for someone to do for us what we could not do for ourselves.

That is precisely what Christ has done.

Far from abolishing the law, Christ fulfilled it.

Matthew 5: 17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

He then, as a lamb without spot and blemish, laid down His life for us and rose again so that in Him we might have forgiveness and life.

Christ, by His grace, empowers us to live life by God's design so that we reflect God's character and nature, bringing Him glory, the purpose for which He created us.

For the believer, the Law is not an external standard we attempt to keep in our own power.

It is a reminder of the character and nature of God, who, by His Spirit, is making us more and more like His Son, our Savior, the Lord Jesus.

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