

Exodus 20:12-17

How To Relate To People

This past week there were several items in the news that fit in the “that’s not exactly a good idea” category.

1) Some people in Waterloo, Iowa, wanted to get rid of a beehive under their home. Firefighters say they used gasoline to try to smoke out the bees. You can guess what happened. They set their house on fire.

2) Demolition crews set off charges intending to bring down one section of an old bridge across the Mississippi River at Cape Girardeau, Missouri. They wanted to then rebuild that section. The explosion took out the bad section. In fact it took out all the rest of the bridge, too. Engineers aren't exactly sure what went wrong.

3) Hugh Willoughby, of the International Hurricane Center at Florida International University, receives suggestions from amateur hurricane busters. One suggested towing an iceberg to Florida to cool the ocean.

One person suggested coating the ocean with olive oil, and another recommended building giant fans along Florida's coast to blow hurricanes in the other direction.

But Willoughby says the most often suggested idea, is to use a nuclear warhead to blow a hurricane apart. He notes hurricanes are bad enough without being radioactive.

Why is it that ideas can seem so good to us and then end up being total disasters?

The reason is because they’re not good ideas at all. We think they are. Hey, they make sense to us. But the truth is they cause more harm than good.

If you stop and think about it, at times, we’ve all approached life in the wrong way. Every one of us has done some things that have had disastrous consequences.

Maybe you haven’t burned the house down to get rid of the bees, but you’ve offended people, damaged relationships, and hurt others.

We think our ideas are the way to go, but that’s the problem. They’re our ideas.

They're our ideas and like the people who want to nuke hurricanes there's a whole lot that we don't know.

Last week we looked at Exodus 20 and the first 4 of the 10 commandments. Those are commandments showing us how to relate to God.

Today we want to continue in our study of the commandments to see part 2, how to relate to other people.

Turn Exodus 20 pg 68

In our day and age nothing seems sure anymore. In the past 30 years our culture has been through a social upheaval that's right off the charts when it comes to intensity.

Think about it. We're even debating the definition of marriage. That's been settled for thousands of years. Or at least it was until our generation.

We have been so indoctrinated with relativistic thinking that most people feel uneasy about saying that one thing's right and something else is wrong.

Is it any wonder that we make such monumental mistakes in interacting with our family, our coworkers, the people who live next door to us?

Where can we go to find substantive direction for life? How can we know how to act and react to the people around us?

One again, as we've seen so many times here at FCC we go to the owner's manual. We go to the manufacturer's guidebook for life, the Bible.

The God who created us as unique individuals, made in His image, knows exactly how to do life. The source of life is the source of wisdom on how to live life.

So rather than burning the house down to get the bees, let's look at God's wisdom for doing life.

Life is very complex. Our problems can seem very complex. But I believe if we just honestly lived out these commandments we were going to look at today, we'd find that life takes on a whole new character.

I. Honor Your Parents **Read vs 12**

My mom was an alcoholic. If you've lived with an alcoholic you know what I mean when I say that I heard the same stuff over and over every night from my mom. She knew a couple of Bible verses and one of her favorites was this one. *Honor your father and your mother...*

Every time I did something she didn't like she'd quote this verse. I didn't know any Bible verses at that point, but I figured there must be some to parents about how to treat their kids.

Well, there are, but God purposely doesn't start there. He starts with how we are to treat our parents.

The Hebrew word translated honor is based on the word that means heavy. When we say "That's a weighty matter," or "Man, that's really heavy." We mean that's really important. It's significant.

God says how we treat our parents is really significant. It's really heavy. In fact it's so significant that He attaches a promise to it. *...that your days may be long upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you.*

The NT says "*Honor your father and mother,*" is the first commandment with promise...

What this honor looks like changes as time goes on in our lives. When you're a kid, honoring your parents is expressed mainly through being obedient to their rules.

When you're a teenager the obedience part continues but there's also a learning to show respect to your parents in your attitude in spite of you growing independence.

As adults we're to continue to show respect by hearing from our parents and by caring for them even though we've established a separate home of our own.

God is a God of order and design. We'll see that clearly tonight in *the Case for Christ* as we look at the physical world around us.

But God has also designed order in the social realm as well.

Everyone in the family has a role to play and when we get outside of our roles, trouble begins to surface. Husbands have been assigned the role as servant leader in the home. Wives have been assigned the role of helper. Children have been assigned the role or duty of honoring mom and dad.

Dads and moms are assigned the roles of teaching children and training them up in the Lord. Husbands are to love their wives with an unquestionable, sacrificial, resounding kind of love. Wives are to fight the desire to want to rule over their husbands.

But we struggle with that divine order and our roles in that order. Husbands don't want to be leaders, fathers don't want to train up their children, wives don't want to submit, children don't want to honor, and so we end up with confusion and trouble.

God says start here. Honor your father and mother.

Bill and Kathy Peel, *"Where is Moses When We Need Him?" "Since the family is the primary source of revelation being passed from one generation to the next, and since parents are the key transmitters, dishonoring parents has a double impact. When children of whatever age dishonor their parents, not only was that act sinful itself, but they cut themselves off from prime source of truth and God's will."*

When a generation loses the commitment to honor their parents it spills over into all of society. In other words, kids who have learned to honor their parents in turn respect those in authority over them. This enables them to be upright, law-abiding citizens.

Parents are teachers of faith and morality. What God is to the world, parents are to their children. Unfortunately, some parents become so focused on their own personal happiness and what they want that they forget their job is to help mold character so their children will have the strength to do what is right in a world that encourages them to do wrong.

After we learn how to relate to God, the first step in relating to others starts in the family.

- I. *Honor Your Parents*
- II. *Respect Life*

Read verse 13

The KJV translates this *“Thou shalt not kill.”* All other translations, that I’m aware of, translate it *“You shall not murder.”*

There’s a reason. The Bible says that the sanctity of human life is rooted in creation. In Gen 1:27 *God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

Gen 9:6 *“Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man.*

No animal life is made in the image of God. Only human life. Therefore if anyone who murders violates that image and is to be put to death.

The Bible distinguishes between premeditated murder, negligent homicide, and self-defense.

Now you say, “Well I didn’t always do so well on the honoring parents command. I messed up a few times. But I’m safe on this one. I’ve never murdered anyone.

It’s fascinating to me to see what the NT does with this command. We’re to respect life. In fact, human life is sacred. But that means we’re to watch out for the stuff that is often preliminary to murder.

For example, Jesus said, *“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ (which means worthless) shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire.”*

I think Jesus is saying that murder begins with the arrogant and egotistic attitude that causes someone to call his brother "empty-head" or "good for nothing," or "fool."

In the Book of James the Bible says, *Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain.*

The commandment not to murder obviously means that were not to go out and shoot somebody on the street. But it means a lot more.

Murder is forbidden in its formative stages. Murderous thoughts and attitudes are, in effect, murder in principle, or murder in embryonic form.

So we have to deal with any attitude or act which could lead to murder quickly.

Our commandment "Thou shalt not kill" has just grown, hasn't it? Lust, greed, hatred and demeaning prejudice ("you fool") has to be dealt with as murderous attitudes. Unresolved conflict and animosity have to be dealt with quickly, so that reconciliation takes place.

Suddenly we're not so quick to say we don't need to apply this commandment.

We need to respect life. That takes in a whole lot more than just the physical act of murder.

So if we want to honor God we'll Honor our Parents, Respect Life, and...

III. Stay Pure

Read verse 14

Newsweek July 12: *The Secret Lives of Wives* August 9: *The New Infidelity*

We are totally confused and bewildered as a society when it comes to sexual purity.

We act like breaking marriage vows and committing adultery are something new and cutting edge. Here's a newsflash for Newsweek. It's really the same old infidelity.

Out of all the commandments, this is probably the one that people scoff at most.

The truth is that God designed the sexual union between a husband and wife. The God who created us in His own image made us both genders, male and female with that built in sexual attraction.

God says, *It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him. and then A man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*

Part of the becoming one flesh invokes the intimacy of the sexual union.

See now why adultery is so destructive?

During the whole debacle with our last president I must have heard 20 different news commentators say, "He only cheated on his wife. Everybody does it. Let's evaluate our president on the really important issues. Not on his sexual escapades."

Well they might not have thought his adultery was important, but I'll guarantee you his wife did.

If a man or woman doesn't think vows sworn before God are important, how could we take anything they say as certain? What do they think is important?

God expects exclusivity in marriage because He expects exclusivity in our relationship with Him. The marriage relationship is supposed to be a picture of our relationship with God. That's why He is so offended by broken marriages. They mar the picture that He intended of one woman and one man together with each other for their whole lives, willing to sacrifice anything and everything for the benefit of the other.

Adultery is not just a matter of one spouse sinning against the other. It's a matter of sinning against Almighty God who is our Creator and our Judge!

Adultery is an offense against God because it destroys trust. It is the breaking of a vow that two people have made with each other.

When a trust that heart-felt is betrayed, it makes it that much harder for persons to trust in God and believe that He will fulfill all that He has promised.

Adultery comes from our devaluing of commitment.

George Barna, "Commitment is viewed negatively because it limits our ability to feel independent and free, to experience new things, to change our minds on the spur of the moment and to focus on self-gratification rather than helping others."

- I. *Honor Your Parents*
- II. *Respect Life*
- III. *Stay Pure*
- IV. *Live Honestly*

Read versde 15

Anytime we take something that we owe to others - time, money, affection, courtesy, appreciation, we steal from them. Anytime we withhold something that God requires us to give we steal from Him.

Why is stealing so important that God lists it with the big 10?

Because stealing is an act that's completely contrary to the character of God. What's God's nature? *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."*

Galatians 1:4 Jesus Christ gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father...

Galatians 2:20 "...the Son of God loved me and gave Himself for me."

In the final analysis, stealing says, "I don't trust God, and in His promises to provide. People trust in stealing because they refuse to trust in God. So the thief trusts himself more than God.

Why can we trust God? Because God never fails to keep His promises. For centuries He gave predictions through his prophets about His Son.

He said that because of our sin we were separated from Him but His Son would come and take our judgment.

God used His prophets to tell specific details about Jesus Christ. Where He'd be born, when He'd be born, His family lineage, even the exact date of His death.

Jesus Christ fulfilled those prophecies down to the letter.

And as He did He was God's provision for our sins. The Bible says: *that through this Man (Jesus) is preached to you the forgiveness of sins; and by Him everyone who believes is justified from all things from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

When we see how far short we fall of keeping the 10 commandments perfectly, we can also see why we need a Savior. If God was faithful to send His own Son to die on a cross to provide salvation for us, then we can certainly trust Him to take care of us.

Want to honor God? Honor your Parents, Respect Life, Stay Pure, Live Honestly, and

V. Practice Truthfulness

Read verse 16

Simply stated, the ninth commandment, forbids lies and condemns liars. Talk about doing things the wrong way and causing disastrous consequences. The NT, in Ephesians 4 explains it this way:

...put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and ... put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.

That's interesting. The Bible says, "Put your trust in Christ and then live up to your position as a child of God." When that happens there's certain things that we need to do.

One is stop telling lies and start telling the truth.

It's amazing how we can break these commandments and not even realize it. Let me show you how you do it.

You're walking around with a long face because homebodies hurt you or angered

you in some way. Your spouse, your boy friend, your mother, somebody asks you what's wrong.

And what do we say? "Nothing." We don't want to get into it so we lie. We lie and we don't even think twice about it.

The fact is, there's a whole bunch of areas where we tell lies.

And if we're willing to be dishonest in the small things, it'll eventually spill over into the big things.

Here's the top 10 list of lies you hear most every day:

10. Don't worry Dear we'll only stay five minutes.
9. This will just be a short meeting.
8. I'll respect you in the morning. I
7. The check is in the mail.
6. I'm from the government and I am here to help you.
5. This hurts me more than it hurts you.
4. Your money will be cheerfully refunded.
3. When the doctor says, "This will just sting a little bit."
2. Your car will be ready by 5.
1. I'm starting my diet tomorrow!

God says put it off. Like taking off an old, dirty shirt. Put off lying and put on truth telling.

There's 340 references to the words "truth," "truly," and "true" in the Bible.

De 32:4 *He is... A God of truth*

Ps 33:4 *...all His work is done in truth.*

Ps 108:4 *For Your mercy is great above the heavens, And Your truth reaches to the clouds.*

Ps 119:142 *Your law is truth.*

Ps 119:151 *All Your commandments are truth.*

Ps 119:160 *The entirety of Your word is truth*

Joh 14:6 *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

God always tells the truth. That's His nature. Jesus Christ is the truth. He's the embodiment of truth.

We speak the truth, because we worship the God of truth.

Our final commandment we want to look at this morning, Commandment number 10 may be the most difficult of all to keep.

VI. Be Satisfied

Read vs. 17

We're not to covet. If we want to relate to others around us we're not to covet. So just what does the word "covet" mean?

The Hebrew word translated "covet" is *chamad*. It means simply "to delight in" or "to desire." It's not a negative word in itself.

In Genesis 2:9 in describing the garden of Eden it says: *And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.*

The word "pleasant" is a translation of the word *chamad*. That's a positive use of the word.

Obviously in the 10th commandment God's warning against a wrong desire.

One Dennis the Menace comic shows him looking at a catalog and saying, "This catalog's got a lot of toys I didn't even know I wanted."

That's a form of coveting.

The Wizard of Id had a comic strip where one monk is putting up a sign on the bulletin board in front of his church while a visiting monk watches. The sign read, "Thou shalt not covet." The visiting monk said, "Boy, I wish we had a signboard like that at our church."

That could also be a form of coveting.

There's nothing wrong with toys. There's nothing wrong with church signs, or houses, wives, servants, or donkeys.

What's wrong is when greed, materialism, craving, and passions run our lives. Madison Avenue knows all about coveting, don't they. They know what makes us tick. They know how to appeal to our covetous nature. They know how to constantly put things in front of us to make us dissatisfied with what we have.

That's the heart of coveting. Not being content. Being dissatisfied.

God condemns a coveting heart. God blesses a contented heart.

You say, "What's the big deal about coveting? Obviously if I lie, murder, or steal other people are effected. But coveting. That just effects me."

Maybe that's what makes coveting such a deadly sin. We can hide it so well. No one knows it's there while it slowly takes over our whole life.

Contentment is learned.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians church: *I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.*

Contentment means I'm satisfied with God. I'm content with Jesus Christ. If I have lots of stuff great. If I don't have lots of stuff, that's great too. Because my life isn't about stuff. It's about my Creator and my Savior.

Contentment is learned. Here's some help in learning contentment:

- A. Resist comparing yourself to others
- B. Rejoice in what you do have
- C. Give some of what you have to help others
- D. Refocus your attention on what's going to last. On eternal things.

At times, we've all approached life in the wrong way. Every one of us has done some things that have had disastrous consequences.

Maybe you haven't burned the house down to get rid of the bees, but you've offended people, damaged relationships, and hurt others.

The Book of Proverbs gives us this challenge: *Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away... Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you. Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding...*

The Commandments of God are the wisdom of condensed down for us to grab hold of.

How are you doing life this morning? Your way, or God's way.