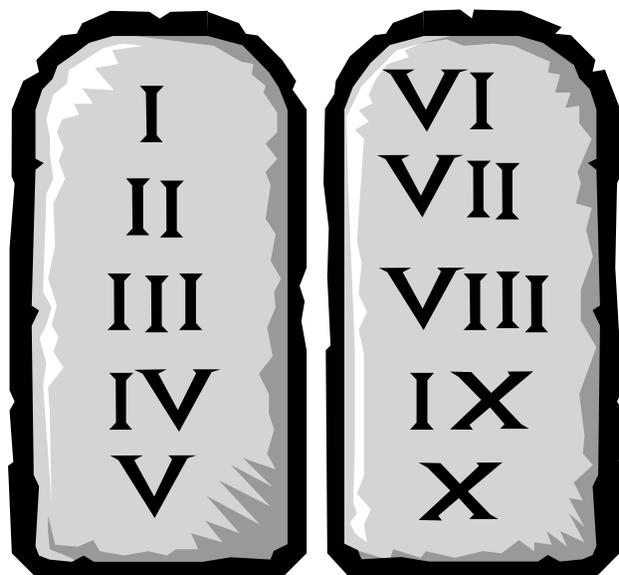


Lesson 2.4 – How Can I Serve My Neighbor?

Introduction: Outline the commandments.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT



1. What does God deal with in the fourth commandment?

Ephesians 6:1-8 ¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²”Honor your father and mother”--which is the first commandment with a promise-- ³”that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” ⁴Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. ⁵Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ⁶Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. ⁷Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, ⁸because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

Romans 13:1 ¹Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.

In the Fourth Commandment God deals with our relationship to those authorities who represent him in this world.

2. In what areas of life do we find those representatives?

Colossians 3:20 ²⁰Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.

1 Timothy 5:8 ⁸If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Ephesians 6:4 ⁴Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

In the family our parents represent God by providing for our physical needs training us in his Word.

Romans 13:1-7 ¹Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. ²Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has

instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. ³For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. ⁵Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience. ⁶This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Government represents God by protecting the weak from the strong by means of law and force.

Hebrews 13:7; 17 ⁷Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith... ¹⁷Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

2 Corinthians 5:20 ²⁰We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God.

Pastors, teachers, and other leaders in the Church have been given authority by God to care for us spiritually by means of the Gospel.

3. What do we owe those in authority over us?

Ephesians 6:2 ²"Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise-

Romans 13:6,7 ⁶This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. ⁷Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

Hebrews 13:17 ¹⁷Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.

Proverbs 30:11; 17 ¹¹"There are those who curse their fathers and do not bless their mothers;... ¹⁷"The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures.

We owe those in authority our love, obedience, and respect.

Applications: Based on this commandment: We believe children owe parents care until death, citizens may not engage in "civil disobedience" except in areas in which the government requires immoral behavior of them (Acts 5:29), parents are to discipline their children with judicious and loving use of "corporal punishment."

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

1. What does God deal with in the Fifth Commandment?

Exodus 20:13 ¹³“You shall not murder.

In the Fifth Commandment God is protecting the gift of life.

2. Why is the gift of life so important?

2 Corinthians 6:1,2 ¹As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain. ²For he says, “In the time of my favor I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation.

1 Peter 2:9 ⁹But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Philippians 1:21-25 ²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²²If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. ²⁵Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith,

God protects the gift of life because it is our “time of grace” during which we can come to faith, worship God, and serve our neighbor.

3. For whom alone has God reserved the right to end a life?

Psalms 31:14,15 ¹⁴But I trust in you, O LORD; I say, “You are my God.” ¹⁵My times are in your hands;

Genesis 9:5,6 ⁵And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. ⁶“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man.

Romans 13:3,4 ³For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you. ⁴For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

God reserves the right to end life for himself. However, since the government represents him on earth to protect our lives, it may use deadly force to protect citizens and enforce the law.

4. When do we fail to properly protect our neighbor's life?

Matthew 25:41-43 ⁴¹“Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and

you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.'

1 John 3:15 ¹⁵Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him.

God holds us accountable for failing to assist our neighbor with his bodily needs and for harboring hateful feelings toward other people.

Applications: Based on this commandment we believe: God condemns abortion and euthanasia, suicide is sin, governments may use capital punishment, governments may wage “just” wars, we are not to treat our own bodies in a way that may shorten our lives (drunkenness, drug addiction, addictive smoking), fertility treatments and research that involve the destruction of human embryos are immoral.

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

1. What does God deal with in the Sixth Commandment?

Exodus 20:14 “You shall not commit adultery.

With the sixth commandment God is protecting his gift of marriage and family.

2. What is marriage?

Genesis 2:18-24 ¹⁸The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.” ¹⁹Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ²²Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” ²⁴For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Matthew 19:4-6 ⁴“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ ⁵and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? ⁶So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.”

Romans 7:2 ⁷By law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage.

Marriage is the lifelong union of one man and one woman in which they freely consent to live as husband and wife.

3. What are the blessings of marriage?

Genesis 2:18 The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

God blesses marriage with companionship.

1 Corinthians 7:2-5 ²Since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband. ³The husband should fulfill his marital duty to his wife, and likewise the wife to her husband. ⁴The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband. In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife. ⁵Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

God blesses marriage with sexual fulfillment to draw spouses close together and help them fight sexual temptation. (Chastity)

Genesis 1:28 ²⁸God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

God blesses marriage with the gift of children.

4. What does God therefore forbid according to the Sixth Commandment?

Matthew 19:9 ⁹I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, and marries another woman commits adultery.”

1 Corinthians 7:15 ¹⁵But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.

God forbids divorce unless an unfaithful or deserting spouse has broken the marriage.

Hebrews 13:4 ⁴Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

God forbids sex with anyone who is not our marriage partner—before, during, or after marriage.

Romans 1:24-27 ²⁴Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. ²⁶Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. ²⁷In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

God forbids sex with people of the same sex.

Matthew 5:27,28 ²⁷“You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ ²⁸But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

God forbids lust and those things designed to incite lust.

Applications: Based on this commandment we believe: All forms of pornography are sin, Christians should be careful of the forms of entertainment they use, obscene jokes violate this commandment, same-sex unions are ungodly, children are to be the product of one man and one woman who have been duly married, Christian spouses will live in such a way to preserve and build their relationship with each other.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

1. What does God deal with in the Seventh Commandment?

Exodus 20:15 ¹⁵“You shall not steal.

In the Seventh Commandment God is protecting his gift of personal possessions.

2. To whom do all things belong?

Psalm 24:1 ¹The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it;

All things actually belong to God himself.

Deuteronomy 8:17,18 ¹⁷You may say to yourself, “My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me.” ¹⁸ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth

James 1:17 ¹⁷Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights

God distributes his wealth to each of us for our personal use as he sees fit.

3. What does God expect us to do with our possessions?

1 Timothy 5:8 ⁸If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

God expects us to use our possessions to support our families.

1 John 3:17 ¹⁷If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?

God expects us to use our possessions to help others who are in need.

Romans 13:7 ⁷Give everyone what you owe him: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.

God expects us to use our possessions to pay taxes and support our government.

Proverbs 3:9 ⁹Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops;

1 Corinthians 9:14 ¹⁴The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

God expects us to use our possessions to support the work of the Church.

4. How does God expect me to treat the possessions of others?

Proverbs 31:8,9 ⁸“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. ⁹Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

God expects us to help our neighbor keep his possessions.

Ephesians 4:28 ²⁸He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

God forbids us to steal or obtain someone else's possessions in a dishonest way.

Applications: Based on this commandment we believe: Employees are duty-bound to do their best for employers, employers are duty-bound to pay a fair wage, gambling motivated by greed or desire to take someone else's possessions is sin, wastefulness or careless treatment of possessions is sin. (Note: We will discuss giving for the work of God's kingdom in greater detail in a later lesson.)

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

1. What does God deal with in the Eighth Commandment?

Exodus 20:16 ¹⁶“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

God deals with the gift of a good name in the eighth commandment.

2. Why is a good name so important?

Proverbs 22:1 ¹A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold.

Proverbs 16: 28 ²⁸A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.

A good name is important because it is the basis upon which others will trust us.

3. How do we properly preserve someone's reputation?

1 Samuel 20:27-33 ²⁷Saul said to his son Jonathan, “Why hasn't the son of Jesse come to the meal, either yesterday or today?” ²⁸Jonathan answered, “David earnestly asked me for permission

to go to Bethlehem. ²⁹He said, 'Let me go, because our family is observing a sacrifice in the town and my brother has ordered me to be there. If I have found favor in your eyes, let me get away to see my brothers.' That is why he has not come to the king's table." ³⁰Saul's anger flared up at Jonathan and he said to him, "You son of a perverse and rebellious woman! Don't I know that you have sided with the son of Jesse to your own shame and to the shame of the mother who bore you?" ³¹As long as the son of Jesse lives on this earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Now send and bring him to me, for he must die!" ³²"Why should he be put to death? What has he done?" Jonathan asked his father. ³³But Saul hurled his spear at him to kill him. Then Jonathan knew that his father intended to kill David.

We preserve the good name of others by speaking well of them and defending them from false accusations.

4. How do we become guilty of damaging the reputation of others?

Proverbs 19:5 ⁵A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who pours out lies will not go free.

Proverbs 11:13 ¹³A gossip betrays a confidence, but a trustworthy man keeps a secret.

We become guilty of damaging the reputations of others when we tell lies about them, gossip about them, or betray their secrets.

Applications: Based upon this commandment we believe: It is a sin to tell truths about another person when those truths are shared to damage that person's reputation.

Luther's Small Catechism on the Fourth through Eighth Commandments

The Fourth Commandment

Honor your father and mother, that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not dishonor or anger our parents and others in authority, but honor, serve, and obey them, and give them love and respect.

The Fifth Commandment

You shall not murder.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.

The Sixth Commandment

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we lead a pure and decent life in words and actions, and that husband and wife love and honor each other.

The Seventh Commandment

You shall not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not take our neighbor's money or property, or get it by dishonest dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and means of income.

The Eighth Commandment

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, or give him a bad name, but defend him, speak well of him, and take his words and actions in the kindest possible way.