

Bible Studies for Life: September 6

By Becky Brown

Place God First • Exodus 20:1-6; Psalm 16:1-11



Brown

Our first six weeks of lessons in this quarter will focus on The Ten Commandments. Providing a unique twist, each lesson will also explore the life and the writings of King David as recorded in the books of First and Second Samuel and The Psalms. Using this comparison each week, we will observe how this “man after God’s own heart” fleshed out the Ten Commandments in his daily life...in obedience and in disobedience.

Paul would write in Galatians 3:24 that the law was our tutor to lead us to Christ. The law would indeed show us our total inability to keep it, thus pointing us to our desperate need for cleansing through the blood of Jesus. When confronted by the Pharisees in Matthew 22, Jesus summed up the whole complete law in two statements: “Love God and love your neighbor.” Love is the complete fulfillment of the law. Jesus said so.

The Ten Commandments are listed here. ONE: Put God First. TWO: Worship No Idols. THREE: Reverence God’s Name. FOUR: Keep Sabbath Holy. FIVE: Honor Your Parents. SIX: Do Not Murder. SEVEN: Commit No Adultery. EIGHT: Do Not Steal.

NINE: Do Not Lie. TEN: Do Not Covet.

The first four commandments speak to our vertical relationship with God. The final six speak to our horizontal relationships with one another. God is a covenant maker and a covenant keeper. His commandments are an integral part of His covenant with His people. The provision of these laws to Moses on Mt. Sinai gave much needed guidance to God's people in how to live holy, sanctified lives that would be pleasing to Him. These commandments will never be obsolete. They are absolutely based on Holy God Who never changes.

God's great declaration of "I am the Lord" fills the pages of the Old Testament, leaving no doubt as to the sole validity of His authority. Exodus 20:1 establishes that God did the speaking of these ten "words." Moses was simply the receiver/recorder/deliverer of them to the people. God reminds them that their most recent deliverance from 400 years of slavery in Egypt had been provided by His great power and His mighty deeds on their behalf. With the first two commandments, God declared Himself to be the One and Only True God who takes a backseat to no one. God demands that there be absolutely no worship of idols of any kind.

God loves us. God knows what is best for us. God wants to guide us toward truth. God wants our hearts to be wholly His. Tony Evans wrote the lessons in our book. He is pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, Texas. Dr. Evans reminds us that the Ten Commandments are not just a list of "do this and don't do that" statements. These ten words show us the heart of God for His people.

In Psalm 16, we find the heart of David expressed in words that describe the incalculable value of his relationship to God. In God, David finds his place of refuge. David claims Him as his one and only Lord. Without God, there is no goodness. David delights in those who please God. Those who worship other gods should expect only sorrow in return. David

refuses to participate in their rituals. He refuses to speak the names of their gods (little "g").

The Lord is David's inheritance and His provision. The boundary lines of his life have fallen in pleasant places. David blesses the Lord in gratitude for His counsel and guidance. The Lord is David's firm foundation. He will not be shaken. His heart is glad. He is assured that he will dwell in security and peace. He will navigate safely along the path of life as God will reveal it to him step by step. He finds fulness of joy and pleasures forever in the presence of the Lord.

Psalm 115 describes idols as silver and gold, man's handiwork. Wordless mouths. Sightless eyes. Deaf ears. Immobile hands and feet. No life. No breath. No help. Those who make them will become like them.

Never allow yourself to think you are exempt from idol worship. Just because there is no little golden figurine on your nightstand, maintain an intentional daily review and immediate removal of anyone or anything that could potentially occupy the place of God in your life.

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