

The Ten Commandments

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[0:00] Good morning, everyone. Wow, look at this place. Do we appreciate this? Just this extra space corner here. Not you, Sonny, just the corner that you're sitting in.

Yeah, that was really good. Thanking mostly Agnes and Hank and Bonnie and the team for just getting it done. I think they did it in three days. They started on Tuesday and were pretty much done by Thursday. So really grateful. Doesn't look like we have loads more space. There's still people standing, but grateful that we're all here. Excited.

We finished Jonah and that was a really fun series. And actually that was a really impactful series for me just to challenge all the things that the Lord challenged us through that book.

But we're moving on now and it's the summer and the sun's out and the humidity is suffocating and it's here. So we're going to do something different. We know that there's people who are traveling different places and different times. So we're going to do what I'm calling the summer ensemble, the summer ensemble, which is basically some of the Bible's greatest hits that we all know we all heard of.

But we're going to go through each of them and actually have a look and go, well, actually, do I understand the context of where that passage is coming from? What is what is it actually talking about when it's going through those verses? Maybe Psalm 23 is going to be one of them. The Lord's Prayer will be another.

[1:20] The Beatitudes, the Sermon on the Mount will be one of them as well. And Gabe's actually going to take us through the armor of God on the fruit of the spirit, all these things that you've heard. And if you grew up in Sunday school, you will know them, kind of know them.

Do you still remember the fruit of the spirit? Go on, try. Love, joy, patience, kindness, goodness, peace, gentleness, and kindness through the spirit of God.

Amazing. Amazing. Amazing. There's a song. So good. So we're going to go through all of those and they're just going to be, I guess you could say that they're one off things.

But as a whole, the question really is, why do we why have we gravitated to these passages? Why do we like them? Why do we remember them? And what does the gospel have to do with them? That's the key.

Because actually this this book here, we believe is the book of good news. And it has we're going to go through the greatest hits, but we want to really understand why they're the greatest hits, why they impact us and how they impact us so many thousands of years later here in Hong Kong.

[2:19] So that's what we're going to do. And we're going to go through today the Ten Commandments, the Ten Commandments. Who's watched the movie? Who's old enough to have watched the movie The Ten Commandments? Yes. Yes. Agnes is just proud. Yep. Me. That's me.

From what I remember, it's a really long movie. Right. Yeah. Really long. We're going to go through that. And, you know, it's something that we hear a lot. Don't you think when people think about Christianity, they're like, oh, I can't be if you maybe if you're someone who's older, I can't be a Christian because I've done tons of bad stuff.

I'm not good enough to be a Christian. Or maybe the younger crowd will say, well, I don't want to be a Christian because there's so many rules, so many things, so many things that I want to do that if I became a person of faith or religion, then I really can't do.

And so you get this kind of image of Christianity is one of just rules. And you're not wrong. We do like rules. We do appreciate rules. Anyone who has visited Vietnam as a pedestrian will miss the rules that drivers should abide by because you can't walk across the road without fearing for your life.

And if only they respected the rules and respected the traffic lights, then I will know when to walk across the road. So rules are good. You see Kowloon World City. Anyone who lived in there will tell you rules are good.

[3:36] They're not necessarily bad. And you can see mankind when there is no rule, then all the destruction or the evil or the pain that it causes. Ironically, even in a place like the Kowloon World City, there are still rules.

Just the rules aren't for everyone to flourish. Rules are to oppress a certain group, to give power to another group. But there are still rules. So we're going to talk about that.

And we're going to talk about the Ten Commandments. And I think it's a fascinating passage of scripture. But maybe the first question I have is, who here knows all the Ten Commandments? Oh, Francis. Oh, I saw you put your hand up and then you hide.

Come back around. Francis Chirk. Do you know them all? Really? Dude. Okay. Can you shout them out? Is this the Francis translation?

Number one is God first. Okay. We're going to need a mic. Can you come up a little bit here? Okay. So number one is God first.

[4:49] So know the gods before me. Know idols. Blasphemy. Don't take the Lord's name in vain. S.

What was it? Sabbath. Keep the Sabbath day holy. Honor your mother and father. Do not murder. Do not commit adultery.

Don't steal. Don't lie. And then don't covet. Wow. Where's it?

Just like that, bro. Yeah, bro. That's so good. I've never been able to do that. It just hurts my hand.

Yeah. So how, how, you seem to have an acronym that you were going, what was the acronym?

Oh, it's just letters. So you just remember letters. Man, that's impressive. That's impressive. So we know the Ten Commandments. Do we know where they're found in scripture? What book is it from?

[5:52] Gracie, welcome back. Exodus. Any, any takers on what chapter it's from? Crickets. Crickets.

Oh, close. Not 21. 23. 23 is a good number, but it's not 23. 20. 20. So just a little bit of context of why they got the Ten Commandments, or as Lin-Manuel Miranda calls them, the Ten Dual Commandments.

Why did they get it? Of course, you've got the Israelites who were oppressed as slaves in Egypt for hundreds of years. Finally, God frees them. Okay? And you've got the plagues.

You've got the Passover. And then they're in the desert. And they're wandering around the desert. And then they see God create water from rocks. They make, he makes bitter water sweet. They see bread falling down from heaven for them to eat.

And then they see, my personal favorite, just water. Just the Red Sea, just part. Just however you imagine it will be crazy. However you do that, it will be crazy.

[6:56] And they see all these things. And they've got the freedom. But here's an interesting thing. To the person who says, oh, man, I don't want to be a Christian because there's so many things that I'm not allowed to do. Those commandments, for example, came to a group of people for hundreds of years were in slavery.

They did not have any freedom. It wasn't, oh, there's some things that I can do and some things I can't. They weren't allowed to do anything. Eat, sleep, work, repeat.

It was all they ever knew. And yet God grants them freedom. And they go out into the wilderness. And it's only then, it's only after they've gone out there, God then decides to teach them how to live. God teaches them the way to live for them to be able to survive and for them to be able to flourish. They didn't know what living in harmony meant.

We're coming up to a year of this. I feel as though we'll stop calling an experiment soon. But we're coming up to a year of this. We're still trying to learn how to live. We're still trying to learn what to do.

[7:57] They had a pillar of cloud and fire that was guiding them. They knew where they were going, but they didn't really know how they were going to get there because they were starting to bite each other's heads off. And so then God tells Moses to go up to the mountain, to Mount Sinai.

And then he gives them two iPads, two tablets. Okay. And these two tablets contain the blueprint for how mankind was going to flourish. The only thing that you see that God has handwritten himself, he writes down and he gets Moses to take them down.

The 10 commandments. When I tell you about the rules of Christianity, what really goes through your mind here? You think about, okay, well, actually it's important to have some rules. And it's interesting.

Those 10 commandments, they weren't new things. It wasn't like, guys, turns out we're not allowed to murder. They knew in their hearts that this is where you should be anyway.

You look at all the tribes around all the places in the world where actually they don't even need to talk to each other. Mankind are agreed that there are some things that you should do and some things that you shouldn't do. C.S. Lewis calls that the moral law in mere Christianity.

[9:02] Just there's something, even without reading the Bible, as you just exist and you just look, there are some things in your heart that you know you should do and those things you shouldn't do. The 10 commandments almost just articulates it in a clear ways for people to actually understand.

And actually, culture knows this too. It's not even just the church. The founder of Hollywood, Cecil DeMille said this, the 10 commandments are the charter and guide of human liberty. For there can be no liberty without law.

Even the founder of Hollywood says, actually, in order to be liberty, freedom, there must also be law in order to guide.

You can't drive on any side of the road you want to. That isn't freedom. That isn't liberty. That isn't a society flourishing. That is chaos. But we, when we hear people talk to us about Christianity and religion and rules, do we know what we really should say?

Do we know how to explain to them actually what this is? Now, we're going to go through this. And it's interesting. Even from the very beginning, Exodus chapter 20, if I invite you just to turn there.

[10:04] Actually, I want to do something even more uncomfortable.

Let us stand for the word of God. God, we stand for your word because we recognize his power.

Forgive us when we lose reverence for this, for these words. We see even in these words, there is so many examples of your people, your children taking for granted your words.

And so we imagine ourselves in the place of the Israelites standing in the desert, desperate for direction, desperate for your word, desperate to find out who had given them freedom from Egypt. Desperate to find out where to go. And we, Lord, are the same. With the freedom that we've been granted by you, we now seek to hear your word and your voice and ask you to show us the better way.

[11:23] Exodus chapter 20, the Ten Commandments. And God spoke all these words saying, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of Israel.

You shall have no other gods before me. 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.

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

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. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work.

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.

[12:28] 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. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. 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.

Now, when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled and they stood far off and said to Moses, you speak to us and we will listen, but do not let God speak to us lest we die.

Moses said to the people, do not fear for God has come to test you that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin. The people stood far off while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

This is the word of the Lord. Please take a seat. First, I'm going to try and move this, but I'm really hoping that I don't speak and I suddenly fall off the stage.

[13:47] The first thing then, as he gives out these laws, I am the Lord, your God. I am the Lord, your God. Let me tell you what this means. This means before the rules, there is relationship.

Before the rules, there is relationship. There is relationship over the rules. There is relationship before the rules, after the rules. It's much more about relationship than it is about rules.

As a parent, I'll tell you this too. When I'm trying to put guidelines in my family's life, in how I parent my kids, what I'm striving for isn't just compliance. It's connection.

I'm putting these things in place so that I can have connection with my kids so that they won't destroy themselves or they won't destroy each other because I'm craving, I'm hoping that they would have connection with me and with each other. Relationship before rules.

Before he even dishes out the rules, he says, I am the Lord, your God. Your God. God, I am yours and you are my people. In Genesis 17, when he speaks to Abraham, he says, I will have a special covenant with your people and with the generations that will come.

[14:51] I will have a bond with you. I am your God. This meant a lot to the Israelites because they came from Egypt where there were tons of gods. And he's saying, hey, ignore the rest. I am your God.

There is relationship before the rules. There is grace that comes even before the law. You see, it's interesting. Sometimes we think I will only become a Christian when I become a good person, when I start abiding by the rules.

Because I don't want to abide by all the rules, then I won't become a Christian and God won't love me. God will only love me once I become a good person. Have we thought that before? Have we heard someone say that before? But here's the thing.

The Israelites were granted freedom even before the law. God didn't have them prove themselves. Can you abide by my commandments? If you can abide by commandments, then maybe I will consider letting you out of Egypt.

He didn't do that. Grace comes first. Freedom comes first. Relationship comes first. So often we get it the wrong way around already.

[15:48] We think we have to abide by rules and then we will have a relationship. That is not the gospel. And if you've heard a different one, then here is the time to kind of just surrender that and go, no. God gave me freedom.

God wants to have a relationship with me first. And then the rules come second. And the rules come second because he knows that when you're going to go out and live in a new way, you're not slaves anymore.

Unless you put some rules in place, things aren't going to go well. Even as my family flew off to the UK last week, I thought, even as someone who now has a lot of freedom to do whatever I want, I still have rules that I put in place.

What time I stay up till, what time I wake up, what I do when I wake up first. I've got the chance to put it, carve out in my schedule the time that I want to spend with the Lord all the time in the morning.

But with parenting and life, it changes. I got to put some rules in my place. You see, when we get the freedom, when we get the relationship, then we want to start putting things in place. God here in the Ten Commandments isn't just being a stern, grumpy old man.

[16:52] He's trying to help them, guide them into a flourishing relationship with them and with each other. And so there's ten. So there's ten commandments here. One to four about his relationship with the people.

The first four commandments are him basically giving them some guidelines and going, this is how you're going to have a good connection with me. And then five to ten, the second six are all about how you're going to have a connection with each other.

Jesus is just deft in the way he does this. When he comes, he just summarizes them all in two, right? Love God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength and love your neighbor as yourself. And it covers really one to four and then five to ten.

But that's the first thing that we have to remember. It is relationship first. When you're thinking, oh man, I hate being a Christian because I don't get to do this. My friends are all going to go do this now and I don't get to do it.

Now it's never been about that. The question is, hey, why does God not want me to do that?

Actually, is that going to be healthy for me? Is that going to help me? Am I going to get joy and satisfaction from it? Likely the things that your friends are going to do, no, maybe for a little bit they will.

[17:57] But eventually, I promise you, they will get dull and they will get boring and they will get tiring. And they will get destructive. God puts these things in place because he wants you to live well.

He wants you to flourish. Grace comes before the law. And I'm just going to fly through some of these ten commandments because that's not really the main thing that I have here. Because all of it, if there's going to be one thing that you get away, it's that those rules are in place for relationship. It's relationship over rules. It's connection over compliance. And if you have a relationship with God or Christianity, which is one of just, oh, I need to hit these things. I need to not do these things and I need to do these things.

It's so much more than that. What you've done is reduced Christianity to just sin management. What's the lowest bar? What can I get away with without getting into trouble? That's not what it is. Sin management is simply just behavior modification. It's just changing your behavior. And we all know we can do things without really wanting to or feeling like it. But God who sees into the heart isn't just into behavior modification.

[18:56] He's into heart transformation. He's into connection and relationship. During this free time, I've been able to catch up on a couple of the books that I've been wanting to read and the secular books just to kind of see where we are as a society.

And one of them is Dare Greatly. Dare Greatly by Brene Brown. Who's read it? A couple of people. And of course, she did a very popular, famous TED talk about this. She really studied into vulnerability and shame.

She went to study PhDs on this thing. And you know what she came out with? I'm just paraphrasing now. Her thought was, after all my study and all my PhD, I realized one thing. We were built for connection.

We were built to be with people. That's it. So any of you who are thinking, oh, actually, I don't need people or people have been so hurtful to me.

I'm choosing just to block them all out. Well, that's unfortunately that won't work because we were built. We were made from community when the Godhead decided to create humanity. And we were made for community.

[19:55] We can't get past it. We were built for connection. There's another book that I've been reading, which is called The Courage to be Disliked. It's by, has anyone read that one? No, it's actually a Japanese book that was translated into English, which actually makes a little bit of a hard read.

And it's a conversation between a Japanese old philosopher with a young, fiery man, young man. And the old philosophers, basically philosophy, is saying the world is simple.

Life is simple. People can change. And people can be happy. The world is simple. Life is simple.

People can change. And we can be happy. Now, the young, fiery guy is like, no, that's not true.

I've had so much hurt. I've had so much pain. But how dare you say that the world is simple? Life is simple. Mine hasn't been simple. And his point is actually all the problems that we face are what? They're all intrapersonal problems.

Think about society breaking down at a family level, at a government level, whatever it is. They're all relationship problems. So we really have to figure this out. We all know, Christian or not, that we need people.

[20:58] We need connection. Whether we dislike them, whether we find them annoying or not, it doesn't matter. We need people. We need connection. And so God here, when he gives the Ten Commandments, is really giving them a blueprint for how to coexist, how to live, how to have connection with one another.

It's all about relationship. It's always been about relationship. Let's fly through these. The Ten Commandments sometimes are called the Decalogue, the Ten Words. And we'll go through them

maybe nearly just as fast as Francis did.

First one is, you shall have no other gods before me. You shall have no other gods before me. Remember, Egypt, so many gods. He's come out and they're saying, you shall have no other gods before me.

Now, the word before me isn't, hey, as long as I'm number one, you can have two, three, four, five, six, seven. That's not what it is. He's saying, you shall have no other gods in my vicinity. Get them out of my face, is what he's saying.

They do not belong anywhere near me. That's what he's saying. And this goes back to the things that we've talked about all the time. That God isn't just supposed to be your number one where, okay, you prioritize him first.

[22:00] It's like when a single person gets asked, what kind of person are you looking for today? Well, they have to be a Christian. And then they have to be good looking. And then they have to earn a lot of money. And they're really smart. And all these other things. Because they're lying.

Because really, Christian is really much down the list. It's just the first thing to say, because that's the thing that we say at church. He's saying, hey, I can't just be number one. I have to be the only one. I can't just be number one.

I have to be the only one. What does this do? What does that actually mean? Because you're like, okay, well, God, you're my only one. What does that even mean? Because I still got to work tomorrow. I still got a family that I have to figure out.

What does that mean? It means include me in all of those things. I am part of all of those things. I precede and supersede all of those things. Let me into every part of your life.

Whether it's your career. Whether it's your dreams, life dreams. Whether it's your relationships. Let me be part of all of it. And let me be the king of all of those things. Is God your number one?

[23:01] Is your God your only one? You shall have no other gods before me. And then he says, and you shall not worship idols. Carved images.

This is the invisible God here. We all have a propensity to worship the things that we see. Right? Even things that seem godly.

You can end up worshiping church and have nothing to do with God. Right? You can end up worshiping music. Oh, that's so nice. That sounds so good. That's such a great song.

Oh, tune. Jesus. But you're not actually worshiping Jesus. What God is saying that, hey, don't make anything else about me other than me.

Don't even make images about me. I'm far beyond anything that you can see or imagine or understand. Don't have any idols. And we talked a lot about idols in the book of Jonah, so we're not going to go through it here.

[23:57] Do not take the name of the Lord in vain. We often translate that to, hey, let's not curse. Let's not say bad words. But it's so much more than just that.

It's not just, oh, instead of saying, oh, my, you say, oh, my gosh, or goodness, or whatever word I'm... It's not just... That's the low level.

That's the... Like, what can I get away with? How can I swear without not swearing? Right? And we all have those words. But what he's saying is something different.

He's saying, that first song that we sang, the name of Jesus is powerful, beautiful, wonderful. We all recognize, and especially the Jewish culture would have recognized that there's something just so beautiful, so real and significant about someone's name.

And that name really means something. And how you treat that name is how you treat that person. How you treat that name, how you use that name will tell you whether you are filled with reverence and awe for that presence or not.

[24:58] So don't take the name of the Lord in vain. Basically means don't cheapen who he is. He is God in heaven. Here we are on earth. Let our words be few. His thoughts and ways are so much higher than ours.

That's what it is. Have a higher view of who God is, is what he's saying. God isn't just a genie in your back pocket, or when you stub your toe on the table, that's when you say his name.

Or when you're shocked and then you call Jesus his name. That's not what it is. Fascinates me that that entered into culture, though. Those who don't even profess to even believe Jesus exists still somehow use his word when they are shocked and scared and in pain.

It's fascinating, isn't it? So, no other gods before me, no images, no idols, don't take the name of the Lord in vain, and Sabbath. Take a rest.

Isn't this the best commandment? Like, for people who really work hard and are consumed by work and maybe have a... Isn't this just the best commandment? But isn't this just the one that we ignore the most?

[26:02] Someone once told me that the Sabbath isn't a reward for finished work. It is relief from unfinished work. It is not a reward for finished work.

You don't rest only after you've completed everything. It's relief from unfinished work. Why?

Because the work will never be finished. One of my favorite basketball players, Kobe Bryant, he cites one of his motivating factors was in high school.

I think his English teacher told him, don't rest in the middle, rest at the end. And it sounds inspiring and it sounds great, but actually that's not true.

We have to rest in the middle. If not, why? If we could get a proper practice of rest in, there may be a lot of the problems that we're facing.

Mental health. The rest that we need when it comes to just taking a break, taking a breather.

Something that I've realized in Hong Kong. This city is just crazy. It's so quick and easy to get to everywhere. You can meet so many people all in one day, all in the same area.

[27:08] And then recognizing, man, I need to stop. I need to decompress. And the first time I sat down, when I first came to Hong Kong five years ago and took myself away to Chongzhao and had a little bit of a rest, I literally felt as though I was slamming the emergency brakes on my car and I was skidding.

That's how I felt. If you've driven abroad in the cold, you'll know what that is and suddenly you use control a little bit. I literally felt that physically. I was like, man, I've been going so fast for so long. Do you rest?

It's in the Ten Commandments. Not just because he's a grumpy old man, but because he knows that we need it. And he cites and says, even God, even God worked for six days and then had a rest.

Now, of course, there's probably a rising generation of people who agree and don't want to work at all. And six days is way too many. Half that is probably much better. So, no, for you guys, you have to work. In order to have a Sabbath, you have to work.

You have to have Sabbath. You can't just be Sabbath-ing all the time. But there's something that is so necessary. A couple of quotes that even my brother and I were talking about.

[28:15] There's a guy called Watchman Ni, who is one of the key historical figures in the church in China. He said this about rest. Our rest lies in looking to the Lord and not to ourselves.

Our rest lies in looking to the Lord and not to ourselves. When you get so consumed with all the things that you have to do, whether it's school, work, family, just life in general, the easiest thing is actually just to focus everything on yourself.

And we can get so tired and exhausted and fatigued from just looking at ourselves. The rest comes in when we take our eyes off ourselves and we look to God. A French philosopher, and it was one of my favorite quotes probably of all time, is all of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to spend time alone in a room.

All of humanity's problems stem from man's inability to spend time alone. Why? We talked about this last time. Because when you spend time alone, that's when you shrink back to the appropriate size that you actually are.

When you are busy doing all the things that you're doing, we just can't help but just inflate ourselves. We become the center of our worlds. But when you sit alone quietly and you just sit and you realize the world is spinning regardless of whether you're around or not, then you'll return back to the appropriate size because we are vapor in the wind.

[29:28] Because we will just pass away. And it's great because when you return back to that moment, that burden that you put on yourself, that pressure to please, that pressure to perform, just go.

You're like, man, I'm just a mortal human being. I'm not supposed to impress everyone. I'm not supposed to save the world. I can't save the world. Sabbath is so important.

Walter Brinkman says this, people who practice a Sabbath live all seven days differently. When you actually spend cut out time for God, your other days will look different because you're not chasing

anymore.

You're not straining anymore. You're not stressing anymore. That one day that you spend with him will impact the six days. I was talking to a friend here in the church when they were for dinner and she's just so busy with so many things to do, so many, so much to prepare for, for example.

So the question isn't, oh man, you know, we need to squeeze an hour in with God. No, it's just squeeze in just a little bit. Just if you're going to spend six hours studying, spend six minutes with God and watch the rest of those hours change.

[30 : 33] Those who spend and practice Sabbath will live the seven days differently. It comes back to that thing about that you shall have no other gods before me. If you include him in your one day, you will realize you'll start wanting to include him in your every day.

You restrict him and limit him to just an hour and a half on a Sunday morning. The rest of your days won't look any different and you'll be just as stressed and just as hopeless as everyone else who doesn't have him in their boat. Practice that Sabbath.

Pull yourself away from society. He is the only one. It's interesting. That's the final one, the Sabbath. And then he jumps into the relationship ones. It's as if in order for you to have healthy relationships, you need to first have a healthy relationship with yourself and with God.

Otherwise, if you don't have your Sabbath, if you don't restore and spend time with yourself and spend time with God, you're going to carry all that brokenness. You're going to carry all that anxiety. You're going to carry all that pride into all your relationships.

So he goes, hey, sort yourself out first. Me and you. And then you spend time alone with me. After that, and only after that, let's move into the relationship commands.

[31 : 41] Interesting, right? And so then he goes from here and he goes, the first one, our favorite. All of us, we love it. We love honoring our father and mother. We love listening to everything that they say. We love completely submitting to them in every way because they clearly know best.

Of course, submitting and obeying is different to honoring and respecting. We've got to figure out what that line is because the generations are getting further and further apart.

There's the good old days, which are the good old days. And then there are the future and the new. The generation gap has never been bigger.

Whether it's globalization, whether it's technology, whether it's a bit of everything, the generation gap has never been bigger. Within one generation, we as a society have completely flipped in how we care for our young.

Now, I've shared this example before. My parents, my dad was the youngest of 10. My mom was the second youngest of 11. And the ratio for parenting back then was what? One to 10. One to 11.

[32 : 44] Actually, my dad's family, he was one of 16. But he came from a time, I mean, yeah, my grandma would be constantly, just perpetually pregnant. But that was the thing, right?

And then that one adult would look after all these kids. Within the space of a few decades. It's completely flipped. Now one child is looked by four, five, six different adults.

One generation. Think about how long mankind has lived on the surface. At least in this city. Within one generation, it's completely flipped. And just when you're about to think, oh, yeah, you kids have it so much better.

You have so many more people to care for you and love for you. You know what that does? Just a word to us more experienced older folk. You know what that does? That just puts this crushing pressure onto our young people.

Because all of the hopes of our grandparents and our great grandparents, our parents, all are on us going, you are amazing. You can do everything. You can do anything.

[33 : 45] You will. You must deliver. You will. You must go to university. Can you imagine that crushing pressure that has? The amount of young people I meet who are like, what do you want to do?

I don't know. I have no idea what I want to do. I just want to be told what I'm good at. I have so many options now. So many options that my grandparents never, ever had.

And they never failed to remind me. And yet I'm just crushed by the pressure. The anxiety overtakes me because I simply just don't know what I want to do. One generation.

A 180 almost. So we've got to try and figure out what it means to honor our father and mother. And I think there's a way to do it where both sides can come away and grow in dignity.

Well, let's say you have a parent who actually is trying to get you to submit and obey. But you're like, okay, well, actually, some of those things that you're asking me to do are not godly. Some of those things, the clearest idol here is, actually, I shall have no other gods before me.

[34:44] You're actually trying to make me idolize something else. A career. Studies. Whatever it is. Don't have that as an excuse to not study hard enough, though. Don't say, oh, Pastor James told me that my studying is an idol.

So, hey, blame him. I can't study anymore. I'm done. But it's all about, okay, well, God is, there is no one else before God.

My parents have these thoughts. Some of them from culture. Some of them from their generation. How can I honor them in a way? How can I let them see that I hear them and I respect them? And I understand where they're coming from.

And yet still, respectfully, say, actually, no, but I'm going to do my best, but actually, this isn't my biggest thing. How do we find that line? And I don't know what it looks like for you because every family is different.

But what God says here is honor your father and mother because it's so important. Because the family needs to be healthy in order for society to be healthy. Society is broken because families are broken.

[35:51] So straight away, he goes in for the relationship when he goes in for the one with your parents. The two generations. And yes, it says here, honor your father and mother. But in Luke chapter 1, you see Zechariah's prophecy is actually saying that God will also turn the hearts of the parents to the children.

So it's not just one side where the younger ones have to listen regardless to anything that the older generations say. It's that the older generation will have their hearts turned to the young people and to have humility and to have love and compassion.

And most of all, patience. Because we all look back on our lives with rose-tinted glasses. They are when I was young. When I was young, I already had a family. When I was your age, I was already doing this and I was already doing that.

And I was perfect and I never made any mistakes. Which we know is completely untrue. You know the most beautiful, beautiful old people that I've met are just the ones who have such humility.

Say, hey, I made my mistakes. I'm not here to tell you how to live your life. I'm here for you whenever you make your mistakes and you will. But actually, there's so many things that I still don't know.

[36:57] When I meet some of those people, my heart just literally explodes. Because I see you have every right to just be prideful and egocentric and all those things. And yet, you are just so selfless.

Have you met those people? Not your head if you've met someone like that. And like an older person who just has that vibe about them. It's just beautiful. It's what I strive to have. Because as I grow up, I start thinking I know a lot that I've had these accomplishments that I've done well.

And I've given this example before. Tim Keller is the one who said it. When you look back on your previous self from five years ago, you look back at that person and go, well, that person was a little bit silly.

They made some silly mistakes. They worried about things they shouldn't have worried about. Don't you have that? Five years. Maybe not even five years. Maybe five months. Maybe five days. You look back on your previous self and you go, ah, you didn't know enough.

Which means, well, don't get all happy and comfortable now that that means you are current, your present self is the perfect self. That's not true. Because you, five years from now, will look back on yourself today and think the same things.

[38:05] Right? Five years from now, you will look back at you today and go, oh, he was so worried about those things. And he really shouldn't have. She was so caught up in that job and that career and she got the promotion and she still wasn't happy.

And then she ended up leaving anyway. Don't you see that? Actually, we right now all have the capacity and ability and the need to learn to be humble. In order for the generations to exist, the younger ones need to go to the older ones and go, there is something that I need to learn from you. There's something about just grinding it through a job that you don't really have the feels for anymore, but you're still doing it because it's just what you need to do. There's a resilience. There's

a strength that comes from that.

I want to learn from that. I want to learn the selfless sacrifice that you had, the grandparents. And then the older people can look back on, look down, look to the young people and go, well, can you teach me how to do this on my phone?

Hey, how do I put this setting on? How do I? Actually, can you tell me what you young people are thinking about when it comes to this? I'm so shocked and disgusted from what I'm seeing and how society is going.

[39:17] Can you help me understand what the thought process is? Don't just come down and say, I don't agree. Help me understand. I'm trying to listen. I'm trying to understand and recognize that I'm still slow to understand, but I really want to.

Why? Not because I want to win the argument, but because I want relationship with you. It's always been about that. It's a delicate maneuver how you honor your parents.

But I think if we can do it right, if we can follow the spirit's guiding, if we can be filled with humility, we can do it in a way that both sides will grow in dignity. Grow in looking more like Jesus.

Honor your father and mother. The next few I'm not really going to go through. Not murder. Don't kill anyone. Do not commit adultery. One wife is more than enough. Don't try and get another one.

Anyway, any more than that? Don't steal. If it's not yours, it's not yours. Okay, so that's self-explanatory. Do not bear false witness versus any neighbor.

[40:28] Actually, this isn't just about lying. This is more than that. God knew that the Israelites going into the wilderness, starting a city of their own, starting a culture of their own, what you need is actually for there to be justice.

You cannot tolerate lying in the courtroom. That can't happen. Israel will die unless there is a system that actually promotes justice, that isn't corrupt.

Because you can't have it. We all know that there is a truth. A healthy judiciary system is absolutely, absolutely essential for a society to flourish. And that's what he's saying here.

Do not bear false witness. Don't go into a courtroom and lie. Because if you do that, then all bets are off. Then you might as well violate all the other commandments. This society won't last. And finally, do not covet.

This is a dangerous one, right? Covet is looking at someone else and seeing what they have. And Josh! Welcome back, Josh. He hates attention, so can we give him a round of applause?

[41:35] He's been away for a whole month. Welcome back. And Josh helped us design the formatting of this new space as well.

Really good to see you. Envy is looking at someone else, coveting and looking at someone else and going, man, I wish I had that. Have we had that?

Can you put your hand up if you have never envied anyone? Okay, there are no liars in the room. That's good. But actually, envy is worse than just looking at someone and saying, I wish I had that. It's actually even more. It's looking at someone and not just saying, I wish I had what you had. It's that, actually, if I can't have it, neither can you. That's toxic.

That's dangerous. When we look at someone, and I do this regularly with anyone who has hair. I look at them and go, man, what a waste of hair.

[42:41] Like, do you not have this, Aaron? Do you feel this? Right? People just don't use their hair well enough. If I had hair, it would look so much better than that.

But I step into covet envy territory when I look at you and go, well, if you're not going to use your hair well, I wish you would be bald too. But we look at people who have a car that we want.

We look at the people who have a lifestyle that we want. We look at people who have a spouse that we want. We look at people who have the job that we want. And we go, oh, if only I had that.

Honestly, the joy of missing out, what a beautiful thing, Juju.

And I've said this before. Social media is just so dangerous and so toxic for that. I think that's the only objective of social media is to keep you scrolling.

And so you can look at other people, feel worse about yourself, and so you just keep scrolling. And then, of course, when you're scrolling and you're feeling bad about yourself, then you will say, okay, well, I need to post something myself. Oh, this matcha latte looks pretty good.

[43:45] I want to post a picture of this. And so it looks like I'm having a cool life. And then we just continually just have this cycle. It is so dangerous. It is so toxic. And I've told you this before.

I'm still on social media, but I've taken it off my phone because I don't like it on my phone, I realized, because I don't like doom scrolling. Because I know what it does to me. Every time I scroll, and I have great friends who have great lives, and I feel as though I have a beautiful life, and I look, and I see them, and I see them doing things, and I'm like, why wasn't I invited to that?

Why are you guys hanging out? Why wasn't I invited to your grandmother's birthday party? Why didn't you pay for me to go to the Maldives with you? Like, don't you have that?

And then I'm just looking like, oh, man. And honestly, for you young people, you're like, oh, but it's okay, James, because you seem to have everything. Other than the hair, you pretty much have, you've got a beautiful wife, you've got kids, you love God, you do all these things.

What have you got to be jealous of? I've got everything. And honestly, and I'll tell you here as a grown man, with what the world says, you've ticked all the boxes. Like, I'm ready to die now.

[44 : 52] There's nothing else I need to tick. Even I, when I look at social media, I'm like, oh, man. That is so much nicer. Hank's Omega swatch color is so much nicer than my one.

I'm going to get his one. I need all of them. I need all the planets. I've got to catch them all. Paul's Pokemon. I've got to catch them all. Honestly, there's so many things.

And if you feel that, then you should just consider doing the same. It's freed me. And I realized something. Once I took it off my phone, and once I, I thought the world was going to kind of really go into some trouble and chaos without me being on Instagram.

I thought everyone was going to really lose their minds. And yet, it just carried on. It just, I picked it up.

I just, when I used the laptop and went, oh, oh, it's still the same. That grandma's having another birthday party. She's not dead yet. It's just a constant, it's just a constant thing.

[45 : 54] It doesn't stop. And God here, in his love for us, says, don't do it. Why? Because actually, it's not even about what that person has. What you're most discontent with is actually you don't think I'm giving it to you.

You're most discontent with me. It makes you look down on other people, and it makes you mistrust me. That's the danger. Don't do it. Do not covet.

Do not envy. Whether it's your neighbor's servant or wife or car or donkey, whatever it might be, don't want. Be happy with what I've given you. And we've all known this, where we've got something beautiful and great, and then someone else shows up with something shinier and bigger, and we're like, oh, it ruins the thing that you have.

Don't do it. That's it. The Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, stand as a way to help humans flourish with each other. It's relationship before the rules.

It's freedom. It's grace before the law. It's connection over compliance. Do you understand that? Do you feel that? Because if you don't, then you will look at these laws, and you will just be grumpy about them.

[47 : 00] You will just look at Christianity and go, oh, I'm not meeting the mark. I'm not fulfilling everything I need to fulfill. But one final thing, and this is where I'll conclude, because grace comes before the law, but it also comes after the law.

Because there's something else. When he gives these laws, and actually there's tons of other things that he gives guidance for, we know we fall short.

He knows we fall short. We all fall short of the glory of God. And so we all stand guilty. We all stand guilty because we have violated one of these laws. Well, you say, well, I have not murdered, and I have not stolen.

Though I'm of the thought that everyone has stolen something, especially from a tuck shop when you were a child and having some snacks and some sweets. You say, oh, I haven't, well, you have. Because you have had other gods before you.

You have had other idols that you've worshipped. You've had other people's approval that you've sought more than gods. We all fall short. We all stand guilty. Here's the problem.

[47 : 56] Because we stand guilty, if God was completely fair, then we would be condemned. We would be condemned. Because we fall short. But yet we are all justified freely by his grace as a gift.

As a gift. And you say, how does that happen? We've got the law, but we're not fulfilling it. Well, how? But if you let us off, then you're not fair. Then you're not just. Well, that's where Jesus comes in.

Romans 8 says this. There is therefore now no new condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, couldn't do. And he fulfilled the requirements of the law through Jesus.

And he tells us not to set our minds on the things of the flesh, because that will lead to death. But to set our minds on the spirit, and that will lead to life. And the same power that brought Christ up from the grave is the same power that will help you and I.

And because of that, because that spirit is inside us, we no longer have the spirit of slavery and fear inside us. Because we are now adopted as children, and we can cry, Abba, Father, to him. Jesus was the one that fulfilled the law for us.

[49:01] John 1 says this. The law came through Moses. This law, the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments, they came through Moses from Mount Sinai. But grace and truth come through Jesus Christ. Because of what Jesus did, we now stand free.

Free to have a relationship with him. Free to have a connection with him. Yes, there are things that we should comply to. There are the rules that we should abide by. But not because he just wants us to, because he wants our lives to be miserable.

Because he wants us to flourish. Do we get that in our heart of hearts? Jesus says, be perfect for your heavenly Father who is perfect. And you're like, well, yeah, those laws and all the other things that you Christians do, I can't fulfill.

Does that mean I have no hope? No. That is why you have hope. Because Jesus saw that, knows that, and came and saved you and died for you so that you would no longer be dead to sin.

No longer be dead to sin and you would be freed. When he says that, he's not talking about an absolute moral perfection that the Greeks would have understood it to be. He's not talking about having the judicial restraints in society, a concession that the human heart is hard.

[50:17] In fact, Jesus himself knew in John 2, he said he didn't, scripture says he didn't entrust himself to man. Because he knew what was in the heart of man. So he knows. And yet he still died for us.

And his love covers a multitude of sins. And he finishes and summarizes the Ten Commandments with just those two simple things. Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

And love your neighbor as yourself. And then he says, just love each other as I have loved you. And you'll be just fine. Relationship over rules.

Connection over compliance. Grace before the law. Grace after the law. Isn't that beautiful? Isn't that incredible? Let us be a people who understand that.

Understand how much we are loved by God. It's funny, at the end, and this is where I'll finish, the Israelites hear the Ten Commandments and they're like freaking out. They're like, thunder, lightning. Moses, you go to him.

[51:17] We're just going to stay back here. We're good. And then Moses says, don't be afraid. Yes, there are rules. Yes, there are laws. But this God just wants you to not turn away from him. Would you turn to him?

Would you trust him? Would you abide by his commandments, knowing that they are for your good? And not just his. Thank you.