

Date: _____



Shepherd's Path

A Shepherd's Personal Devotions God's Top Ten Series, Lesson 33

Lesson Title: The Ten Commandments – Why Bother?

Take Home Point: Keeping the Commandments is good for God and it's good for us.

Warm-Up:

Our world is so full of examples of the wisdom of heeding warnings that it's hard to pick out just one example! They range from the occasionally humorous, such as "Wet Paint" and the "Do Not Touch," to the very serious, such as "Don't Drink and Drive." They are not always negative; for example, "One Way. Do Not Enter." How many needless deaths and injuries are inflicted because people do not think anything will happen to them? Or how about the warning label on cigarette packages? Do we see an enormous reduction in smokers in our country? What about when your mom or dad told you to stop doing something or you would be in trouble? Did you always stop right then? Warnings are generally stated to protect someone from harm. That's why they are called warnings.

Read: Exodus 20:1-17 and Matthew 22:34-40

Observation (What happened?):

Which are the "do" commandments and which are the "don't" commandments?

Why did the Pharisees question Jesus about the greatest commandment?

Interpretation (What does it mean?):

Why did God give the commandments to the Israelites?

What commandment stands out to you? (But not that it is the greatest, of course!)

Insight:

As you read through the gospels, a question may come to mind: why didn't Jesus reiterate the laws of the OT in his teachings? The Ten Commandments and the rest of the law given by God were of the utmost importance to the Israelites (even if they didn't follow them!). Why did Jesus not emphasize keeping them? Because the law was never intended to set anyone free. God knew no one could keep it all. Quite the opposite. In Romans 3:20 Paul writes, "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin." (NIV) So before Jesus came to earth to shed his blood in our place, God needed to demonstrate to people his standard of living – perfect living encapsulated in the law. Once the Israelites recognized they couldn't keep it, then the animal sacrifices the Lord required made sense, because blood was required to cover the sins of the people. (Read Hebrews 9:22) When we claim the rescue Jesus offers through his own blood, we keep the Ten Commandments out of devotion, not a determination to live perfectly before God.

Application (What does it mean to me?):

How do you show God that you love him with all your heart and soul and mind?

How do you show God that you love your neighbor as you love yourself?