

Introduction

Welcome to this course on the Ten Commandments. It may be helpful if I say a little about what this course will involve, and particularly about these handouts, so that you know what to expect and you're able to get the most out of our time together.

These handouts are designed to help you prepare for our class discussions by reading and thinking about the material in advance. They cover three sets of resources (note: not every handout contains material from all of these resources):

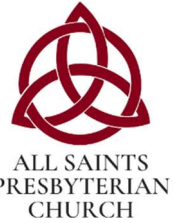
- 1. Peter Leithart's book, *The Ten Commandments: A Guide to the Perfect Law of Liberty*** (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020). You should already have a copy of this book. The chapters are very short and easy to read, and introduce some of the major ideas connected with each of the commandments, as well as some of their practical implications, Biblical connections, and so on.
- 2. Sermons on the Ten Commandments.** These were preached in 2019 at Emmanuel Church in London, England. The sermons may all be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: shorturl.at/cxzUZ (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).
- 3. Extracts from the Westminster Larger Catechism.** This Reformation-era catechism was written in the mid-17th century, and includes a number of questions and answers related to the Ten Commandments which very helpful in exploring their practical implications.

You may find at times that these three resources and the questions related to them overlap slightly. Don't worry about this – it's inevitable given the fact that they cover similar material, and indeed you may find the different perspectives illuminating.

Each handout will generally cover two or perhaps three classes. In general, we'll talk briefly at the end of each class about our plans for the next session, and I'll explain at that time what you need to do for homework.

I *strongly* encourage you not to leave your reading to the last minute, but rather to keep ahead of the game, since last minute preparation is rarely of the highest quality. Remember Proverbs 10:5: "He who gathers in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame."

Right, let's get started.



1. Overview of the Ten Commandments

Questions on Leithart, *The Ten Commandments*, Introduction (pp. 1-6)

- 1. Ten words.** Why is it significant that God spoke *ten* words (p. 2)?
- 2. The third day.** Why is it significant that God spoke to Israel on the *third* day (pp. 2-3)?
- 3. God's audience.** To whom does the LORD speak the Ten Commandments (pp. 3-4)? (Note that Dr. Leithart discusses several possibilities.)
- 4. Freedom.** Can you explain how the Ten (mostly negative) Commandments bring freedom (p. 5)?
- 5. God's true Son.** "At Sinai, the son's heart is too hard and to hear his father. But Israel isn't left hopeless. Yahweh *will* have a son who conforms to the Ten Words" (p. 5). Who is this son, and why is his identity significant (pp. 5-6)?

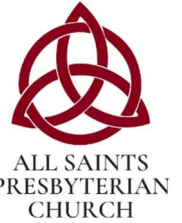
Questions on Leithart, *The Ten Commandments*, Two Tables (pp. 11-18)

General questions

- Before reading the "Two Tables" chapter in Dr Leithart's book, please write a numbered list of the Ten Commandments. You can use your Bible, and abbreviate the commandments for simplicity (e.g. "Murder"; "Adultery"; "Sabbath", etc.).
- If you were asked to divide the Ten Commandments into two sections, how would you do so? (For example, you might regard the first four commandments as one section, and then the last six as the other section, giving 4+6. Or perhaps you might opt for 3+7, or 5+5.) Please explain *why* you would divide them in this way.

Questions on the text

- 1. Numbering the Ten Commandments.** Dr. Leithart explains that the church has never been able to agree on how to number the Ten Commandments, or on how (if at all) they should be divided (pp. 11-12). How do your answers to questions a and b (above) compare with the various options Dr. Leithart discusses (pp. 11-12; see also the table on pp. 14-15)?
- 2. The structure of the Ten Commandments.** How does Dr. Leithart divide the Ten Commandments (p. 12)? Why (pp. 12-17)? (Please list as many reasons as you can.)
- 3. The Ten Commandments and the Temple furnishings.** According to Dr. Leithart, why is it significant that the Ten Commandments are echoed in the ten lampstands, the ten loaves of showbread, and the ten water chariots (pp. 13, 16)?
- 4. Relationships between the Ten Commandments.** Can you explain how the Ten Commandment "overlap and interpenetrate" (p. 17)? Dr. Leithart states that "the sequence of commandments isn't arbitrary" (p. 17). Why not?



2. The First Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the First Commandment, Exodus 20:1-3. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the First Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

Questions on Leithart, *The Ten Commandments*, Thou shalt have no other gods before me (pp. 23-29)

- 1. Freedom.** What do idols do to their worshippers (pp. 24-25)? In the light of this, why is it significant that the first commandment begins with Exodus 20:2, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (p. 24)?
- 2. Identifying idolatry.** "None of you, I presume, has a shrine to Baal or Allah in your basement. But we are hardly free of idols" (p. 25). Why not (pp. 25-26)?
- 3. Multiple idols.** Dr. Leithart states, "Idols like company" (p. 26). Can you explain what he means by this? Consider in particular the husband-and-wife example on pp. 26-27.
- 4. Secular idols?** "At least in public, we might think, our secular society has scoured the idols." Why does Dr. Leithart believe "that's wishful thinking" (p. 27)?
- 5. Liberation in the New Covenant.** How does it become apparent that "right from the beginning, Israel prefers idols" (p. 28)? In the light of this, what hope does the New Covenant offer (p. 27)?

Questions on "I Am the LORD your God," a Sermon on the First Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: [shorturl.at/cxzUZ](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y) (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. How exactly does God speak in Exodus 20? Why is this significant?
7. Why is it significant that God begins as he does in v. 2?
8. Why is it significant that Scripture never uses the phrase "Ten Commandments," but rather "Ten Words"?
9. Where else in the Bible do we find "ten words"? What is the practical and personal significance of this?
10. Why is it significant that Exodus 20:2 ("I am the LORD your God") echoes Genesis 17:7 ("I will be their God")?
11. How does Exodus 20:2 make it clear that the Law is not given as a way for lost people to be saved, but rather as a way for saved people to find life and peace and fruitfulness?
12. How does the worldview announced by the First Commandment challenge the worldview of ancient polytheism?

13. How many gods are there?
14. What happens to us if we start to pay homage to a false god?
15. What tends to happen to monotheists in polytheistic cultures?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

The *Westminster Larger Catechism* comprises a series of 196 questions (Q) and answers (A), including a significant number that are focused on the Ten Commandments. Read the following questions and answers, and consider the questions below:

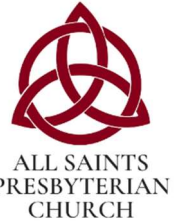
Q 104: What are the duties required in the first commandment?

A 104: The duties required in the first commandment are, the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly, by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.

Q 105: What are the sins forbidden in the first commandment?

A 105: The sins forbidden in the first commandment are, atheism, in denying or not having a God; Idolatry, in having or worshiping more gods than one, or any with or instead of the true God; the not having and avouching him for God, and our God; the omission or neglect of anything due to him, required in this commandment; ignorance, forgetfulness, misapprehensions, false opinions, unworthy and wicked thoughts of him; bold and curious searching into his secrets; all profaneness, hatred of God; self-love, self-seeking, and all other inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things, and taking them off from him in whole or in part; vain credulity, unbelief, heresy, misbelief, distrust, despair, incorrigibleness, and insensibleness under judgments, hardness of heart, pride, presumption, carnal security, tempting of God; using unlawful means, and trusting in lawful means; carnal delights and joys; corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal; lukewarmness, and deadness in the things of God; estranging ourselves, and apostatizing from God; praying, or giving any religious worship, to saints, angels, or any other creatures; all compacts and consulting with the devil, and hearkening to his suggestions; making men the lords of our faith and conscience; slighting and despising God and his commands; resisting and grieving of his Spirit, discontent and impatience at his dispensations, charging him foolishly for the evils he inflicts on us; and ascribing the praise of any good we either are, have, or can do, to fortune, idols, ourselves, or any other creature.

16. Are there any portions of the above answers that you find particularly thought-provoking? Why?
17. Can you think of any particular ways you might be tempted by “inordinate and immoderate setting of our mind, will, or affections upon other things” (A 105)?



3. The Second Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Second Commandment, Exodus 20:4-6. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Second Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

Questions on Leithart, *The Ten Commandments*, Thou shalt not make thee any graven image (pp. 33-40)

In case you're wondering, "graven" (as in "graven image," Ex 20:4 KJV) means "engraved" or "carved".

Before you read this chapter in Dr. Leithart's book, please read the second commandment (Exodus 20:4-6), and answer the following questions by circling "Yes" or "No" as appropriate:

- (1) **Yes / No** The second commandment forbids making images of God
- (2) **Yes / No** The second commandment forbids making images of God for the purpose of worship
- (3) **Yes / No** The second commandment forbids making images of God to be located in a place of worship
- (4) **Yes / No** The second commandment forbids worshiping images of God
- (5) **Yes / No** The second commandment forbids making images of any created thing
- (6) **Yes / No** The second commandment forbids making images of any created thing for the purpose of worship
- (7) **Yes / No** The second commandment forbids making images of any created thing to be located in a place of worship
- (8) **Yes / No** The second commandment forbids worshiping images of any created thing

OK, that's great. Now on to Dr. Leithart's book.

1. The meaning of the second commandment. According to Dr. Leithart, what does the second commandment actually mean (pp. 33-34)? How does this compare with your answer to question a (above)? Can you explain why Dr. Leithart thinks this (pp. 33-34)?

2. Breaking the second commandment today. How are "some churches today ... corrupted by the idolatry condemned by the Second Word" (p. 35)? Can you give any examples?

3. Images and God's jealousy. Why does breaking the second commandment "[arouse] the jealousy of Yahweh" (p. 35; cf. Ex 20:6, "for I the LORD your God am a *jealous* God..."; see also p. 36)? How does Dr. Leithart's illustration of a husband and wife help (p. 36)?

4. Seeing or hearing? How does "the second commandment [imply] a contrast between sight and hearing" (p. 36)? Why is this contrast important (pp. 36-38)?

5. The true image of God. Dr. Leithart remarks, "God prohibits veneration of graven images because he's already made his image" (p. 38). Who or what is this image (p. 38-39)? What implications follow from this about how we should keep the second commandment (p. 39)?

Questions on “The Tragic Truth about Icons,” a Sermon on the Second Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: shorturl.at/cxzUZ (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. How does the Second Commandment differ from the First Commandment? Can you think of any contemporary examples of this?
7. What are the implications of the rationale for the Second Commandment (i.e. “for I the LORD your God am a jealous God...” etc, Ex 20:5b-6)?
8. “This commandment is probably the most widely and systematically broken of all of the Ten Commandments within churches.” How so?
9. What does the Second Commandment (i.e. the whole of Ex 20:4-6) *actually* prohibit? Can you give any contemporary examples?
10. What do the verbs “bow down” and “serve” refer to?
11. What does this commandment imply about pictures of Jesus in art galleries and children’s Bibles?
12. Why do images inevitably misrepresent God?
13. How would you respond to the argument, “The Stations of the Cross in Roman Catholic churches help people to understand the life and message of Jesus?”
14. What is significant about the distinction between “seeing God” and “hearing God” in the Bible?
15. What is the single exception to the rule that we may not show honor to a physical thing as a way of honoring God?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

The *Westminster Larger Catechism* comprises a series of 196 questions (Q) and answers (A), including a significant number that are focused on the Ten Commandments. Read the following questions and answers, and consider the questions below:

Q 108: What are the duties required in the second commandment?

A 108: The duties required in the second commandment are, the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire, all such religious worship and ordinances as God hath instituted in his word; particularly prayer and thanksgiving in the name of Christ; the reading, preaching, and hearing of the word; the administration and receiving of the sacraments; church government and discipline; the ministry and maintenance thereof; religious fasting; swearing by the name of God, and vowing unto him: as also the disapproving, detesting, opposing, all false worship; and, according to each one's place and calling, removing it, and all monuments of idolatry.

Q 109: What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment?

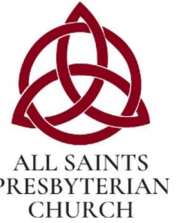
A 109: The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counseling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself; tolerating a false religion; the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever; all worshiping of it, or God in it or by it; the making of any representation of feigned deities, and all worship of them, or service belonging to them; all superstitious devices, corrupting the worship of God, adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented and taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, though under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretense whatsoever; simony; sacrilege; all neglect, contempt, hindering, and opposing the worship and ordinances which God hath appointed.

Q 110: What are the reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it?

A 110: The reasons annexed to the second commandment, the more to enforce it, contained in these words, For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments; are, besides God's sovereignty over us, and propriety in us, his fervent zeal for his own worship, and his revengeful indignation against all false worship, as being a spiritual whoredom; accounting the breakers of this commandment such as hate him, and threatening to punish them unto divers generations; and esteeming the observers of it such as love him and keep his commandments, and promising mercy to them unto many generations.

16. Are there any portions of the above answers that you find particularly thought-provoking? Why?

17. Does anything here (or in the sermon) challenge any of your own practices as a Christians?



4. The Third Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Third Commandment, Exodus 20:7. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Third Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

Questions on Leithart, *The Ten Commandments*, Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain (pp. 45-50)

- 1. God's name.** According to Dr. Leithart, why was the name of Israel's God so important in the ancient world (p. 46)?
- 2. Misunderstanding the third commandment.** How is the third commandment often understood (p. 47)? What truth is there in this (p. 47)?
- 3. Rightly understanding the third commandment.** How does "the Hebrew verb" help us understand the third commandment correctly (p. 47)? According to Dr. Leithart, how should we understand the third commandment (pp. 47-48)?
- 4. The first three commandments.** How do each of the first three commandments relate to Israel's history (pp. 48-49)? How does this help us to understand the third commandment (pp. 48-49)?
- 5. The name of Jesus.** Dr. Leithart states that "'Name' is a title of the Second Person of the Trinity, the Son" (p. 49). Why might he think this? What implications follow if he is correct (pp. 49)?

Questions on "The Strangest Commandment," a Sermon on the Third Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: [shorturl.at/cxzUZ](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y) (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. What does the Third Commandment prohibit?
7. How do the first three commandments track the development of Israel's history as portrayed in Scripture? What practical implications does this have for us?
8. Why does the Third Commandment refer specifically to God's "name"?
9. What practical implications does the Third Commandment have?
10. How might singing help us to keep the Third Commandment?
11. What does it mean to "carry around the LORD's name without integrity"?
12. How might disobedience to the Third Commandment flow from a misunderstanding of "faith"?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

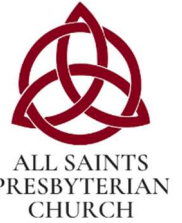
The *Westminster Larger Catechism* comprises a series of 196 questions (Q) and answers (A), including a significant number that are focused on the Ten Commandments. Read the following questions and answers, and consider the questions below:

A 112: The third commandment requires, That the name of God, his titles, attributes, ordinances, the word, sacraments, prayer, oaths, vows, lots, his works, and whatsoever else there is whereby he makes himself known, be holily and reverently used in thought, meditation, word, and writing; by an holy profession, and Answerable conversation, to the glory of God, and the good of ourselves, and others.

Q 113: What are the sins forbidden in the third commandment?

A 113: The sins forbidden in the third commandment are, the not using of God's name as is required; and the abuse of it in an ignorant, vain, irreverent, profane, superstitious, or wicked mentioning, or otherwise using his titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, by blasphemy, perjury; all sinful cursings, oaths, vows, and lots; violating of our oaths and vows, if lawful; and fulfilling them, if of things unlawful; murmuring and quarreling at, curious prying into, and misapplying of God's decrees and providences; misinterpreting, misapplying, or any way perverting the word, or any part of it, to profane jests, curious or unprofitable questions, vain janglings, or the maintaining of false doctrines; abusing it, the creatures, or anything contained under the name of God, to charms, or sinful lusts and practices; the maligning, scorning, reviling, or any wise opposing of God's truth, grace, and ways; making profession of religion in hypocrisy, or for sinister ends; being ashamed of it, or a shame to it, by unconformable, unwise, unfruitful, and offensive walking, or backsliding from it.

13. Are there any portions of the above answers that you find particularly thought-provoking? Why?
14. Does anything here (or in the sermon) challenge any of your own practices as a Christians?



5. The Fourth Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Fourth Commandment, Exodus 20:8-11. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Fourth Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

This handout also contains an additional section on Mark 2:23-28 and 1 Samuel 21:1-6. This episode in Mark's Gospel has obvious implications for the meaning and significance of the Fourth Commandment, and we'll take some time to look at it together.

Questions on Leithart, *Remember the Sabbath day* (pp. 55-60)

- 1. The Sabbath in Scripture.** What does the rest of Scripture say about the Sabbath commandment (pp. 55-56)? How did the early church recognize the continuing relevance of the fourth commandment (p. 56)? What implications might this have for us?
- 2. Sanctifying the day.** What does Israel do to sanctify the Sabbath (pp. 57-58)? How does the analogy between holy time and holy space help us to understand this (pp. 57-58)?
- 3. The sociological impact of the Sabbath.** How did the Sabbath give a distinctive shape to Israel's social world (pp. 58-59)?
- 4. Sharing God's rest.** Why is it significant that "by ceasing, son Israel *shares* his Father's Sabbatical" (p. 60)? In particular, how does this contrast with the picture found "in ancient myths" (p. 59), and how should it shape the way we enjoy our Sabbath rest (p. 60)?

Questions on "The Holy Day," a Sermon on the Fourth Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: [shorturl.at/cxzUZ](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y) (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. What misunderstanding (or at the very least a narrow view) of the fourth commandment may have been reflected in the widespread opposition to the Sunday Trading Act (1994) among Christians in the UK?
7. What does it mean to make a day holy?
8. What does God promise to do on the Lord's Day? How should we respond? Try to give as many answers as possible.
9. What is the relationship between (a) keeping the Sabbath holy; and (b) ceasing from work?
10. Do you find it hard to cease from your normal work on the Lord's Day? Why?
11. How is keeping the Sabbath an exercise of faith?
12. What is significant about the wordplay between the Hebrew words *'abad* ("work") and *'ebed* ("slave")?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

Read the following questions and answers from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, and consider the questions below:

Q 116: What is required in the fourth commandment?

A 116: The fourth commandment requires of all men the sanctifying or keeping holy to God such set times as he hath appointed in his word, expressly one whole day in seven; which was the seventh from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, and the first day of the week ever since, and so to continue to the end of the world; which is the Christian sabbath, and in the New Testament called The Lord's day.

Q 117: How is the sabbath or the Lord's day to be sanctified?

A 117: The sabbath or Lord's day is to be sanctified by an holy resting all the day, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful; and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy) in the public and private exercises of God's worship: and, to that end, we are to prepare our hearts, and with such foresight, diligence, and moderation, to dispose and seasonably dispatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day.

Q 118: Why is the charge of keeping the sabbath more specially directed to governors of families, and other superiors?

A 118: The charge of keeping the sabbath is more specially directed to governors of families, and other superiors, because they are bound not only to keep it themselves, but to see that it be observed by all those that are under their charge; and because they are prone oftentimes to hinder them by employments of their own.

Q 119: What are the sins forbidden in the fourth commandment?

A 119: The sins forbidden in the fourth commandment are, all omissions of the duties required, all careless, negligent, and unprofitable performing of them, and being weary of them; all profaning the day by idleness, and doing that which is in itself sinful; and by all needless works, words, and thoughts, about our worldly employments and recreations.

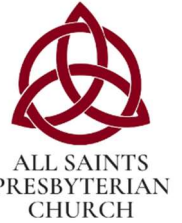
13. Are there any portions of the above answers that you find particularly thought-provoking? Why?

14. Does anything here (or in the sermon) challenge any of your own practices as a Christians?

Mark 2:23-28 and 1 Samuel 21:1-6

Please read and make notes on both of these passages (and the surrounding context to the degree that you think it would be appropriate). Among other things, you may wish to pay attention to the following:

- What did David do? How is it similar (and different) from what Jesus was doing?
- What circumstances was David in? How are they analogous to Jesus' circumstances?
- How did Abimelech behave towards David (note the contrast with the behavior of David's pursuers)?
- What lessons does Jesus draw from this episode?



6. The Fifth Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Fifth Commandment, Exodus 20:12. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Fifth Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

Questions on Leithart, *Honor thy father and thy mother* (pp. 65-70)

- 1. The modern world.** Dr. Leithart has some important observations on pp. 65-66 about the modern world, particularly concerning authority, individualism, independence, consent, and unchosen relationships. Is there anything in particular that strikes you about these observations?
- 2. Rebuilding the family.** What must we do "to keep this commandment fully" (p. 67)? What might this mean for you in practice?
- 3. Family and church.** How is "the family's role... limited by the reality of the church" (p. 67)?
- 4. Honoring parents.** Dr. Leithart remarks that "the way you treat [your parents] should resemble the way you respond to God" (p. 68). Why is this? How does Dr. Leithart "fill out the practical import of this commandment" (pp. 68-69)?
- 5. Adult children.** Why is it significant that "the commandment is *primarily* addressed to adult children" (p. 69)? What implications does Dr. Leithart identify (pp. 69-70)?

Questions on "A New Vision for Families," a Sermon on the Fifth Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: [shorturl.at/cxzUZ](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y) (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. How does the quotation of the Fifth Commandment in Ephesians 6:2 help us to understand what it means to "*honor* your father and your mother"?
7. How should the Fifth Commandment be reflected in our *attitudes*, as well as our actions?
8. What practical implications does the Fifth Commandment have for parents seeking to raise faithful children?
9. What tends to happen if children don't learn to respect and obey their authority of their parents?
10. How should our obedience to the Fifth Commandment change as we grow from childhood to adulthood? How does Mark 7:1-13 help us to understand this?
11. How else does Scripture use the vocabulary of "father" and "mother"? What implications does this have for the meaning of the Fifth Commandment?
12. What does the LORD promise to those who keep this commandment? What does this mean, and why is it significant?

13. What clues are there that the Fifth Commandment speaks about our relationships with our Heavenly Father? What implications does this have?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

Read the following questions and answers from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, and consider the questions below:

Q 124: Who are meant by father and mother in the fifth commandment?

A 124: By father and mother, in the fifth commandment, are meant, not only natural parents, but all superiors in age and gifts; and especially such as, by God's ordinance, are over us in place of authority, whether in family, church, or commonwealth.

Q 125: Why are superiors styled Father and Mother?

A 125: Superiors are styled Father and Mother, both to teach them in all duties toward their inferiors, like natural parents, to express love and tenderness to them, according to their several relations; and to work inferiors to a greater willingness and cheerfulness in performing their duties to their superiors, as to their parents.

Q 126: What is the general scope of the fifth commandment?

A 126: The general scope of the fifth commandment is, the performance of those duties which we mutually owe in our several relations, as inferiors, superiors, or equals.

Q 127: What is the honor that inferiors owe to their superiors.?

A 127: The honor which inferiors owe to their superiors is, all due reverence in heart, word, and behavior; prayer and thanksgiving for them; imitation of their virtues and graces; willing obedience to their lawful commands and counsels; due submission to their corrections; fidelity to, defense and maintenance of their persons and authority, according to their several ranks, and the nature of their places; bearing with their infirmities, and covering them in love, that so they may be an honor to them and to their government.

Q 128: What are the sins of inferiors against their superiors?

A 128: The sins of inferiors against their superiors are, all neglect of the duties required toward them; envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against, their persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands, and corrections; cursing, mocking, and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.

Q 129: What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?

A 129: It is required of superiors, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand, to love, pray for, and bless their inferiors; to instruct, counsel, and admonish them; countenancing, commending, and rewarding such as do well; and discountenancing, reproving, and chastising such as do ill; protecting, and providing for them all things necessary for soul and body: and by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God, honor to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God hath put upon them.

Q 130: What are the sins of superiors?

A 130: The sins of superiors are, besides the neglect of the duties required of them, an inordinate seeking of themselves, their own glory, ease, profit, or pleasure; commanding things unlawful, or not in the power of inferiors to perform; counseling, encouraging, or favoring them in that which is evil; dissuading, discouraging, or discountenancing them in that which is good; correcting them unduly; careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger; provoking them to wrath; or any way dishonoring themselves, or lessening their authority, by an unjust, indiscreet, rigorous, or remiss behavior.

Q 131: What are the duties of equals?

A 131: The duties of equals are, to regard the dignity and worth of each other, in giving honor to go one before another; and to rejoice in each other's gifts and advancement, as their own.

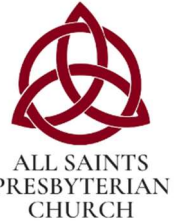
Q 132: What are the sins of equals?

A 132: The sins of equals are, besides the neglect of the duties required, the undervaluing of the worth, envying the gifts, grieving at the advancement of prosperity one of another; and usurping preeminence one over another.

Q 133: What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment, the more to enforce it?

A 133: The reason annexed to the fifth commandment, in these words, That thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, is an express promise of long life and prosperity, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good, to all such as keep this commandment.

14. Are there any portions of the above answers that you find particularly thought-provoking? Why?
15. How would you be most likely to disobey the Fifth Commandment?



7. The Sixth Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Sixth Commandment, Exodus 20:13. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Sixth Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

This handout also contains an additional section entitled "An Introduction to Just War Theory". This is referred to in the sermon, and we may discuss it if there's time and if it seems that it'd be helpful. We'll decide during our early discussions on this commandment whether we'll do this – if so, I'll ask you to read that section in preparation for our discussion on it.

Questions on Leithart, *Thou shalt not kill* (pp. 75-81)

- 1. The rationale for prohibiting murder.** Why must human life be protected (pp. 75-76)?
- 2. Parallels within the Ten Commandments.** Do you agree that "The first and second halves of the Decalogue match one another" (p. 76)? What light do these parallels shed on the individual commandments?
- 3. Different kinds of killing.** Dr. Leithart states, "Scripture treats different sorts of killing differently" (p. 77). What kinds of killing are permitted? Does Exodus 22:2-4 really permit killing in defense of property?
- 4. Murder today.** What violations of the sixth commandment does Dr. Leithart identify in today's world (pp. 78-79)? Which of these have you been guilty of?
- 5. Jesus and murder.** How does Jesus extend the meaning of the sixth commandment (pp. 79-81)?

Questions on "Loving Life," a Sermon on the Sixth Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: shorturl.at/cxzUZ (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. What crucial principle underlies the Sixth Commandment, which has in turn had a decisive effect on cultures all over the world?
7. How is the Hebrew word here translated "murder" used elsewhere in the Bible? How does that help us to understand the extent of the meaning of the Sixth Commandment?
8. How does the Biblical theme of the "image of God" relate to the Sixth Commandment? How do the other commandments (from the Seventh to the Tenth) also reflect this principle?
9. What implications does the Sixth Commandment (and the rest of the Bible) have for the death penalty today?
10. In what ways could Deuteronomy 19:4-6 and 22:8 be understood as practical applications of the Sixth Commandment?

11. What implications might the Sixth Commandment have for the following issues (you may find it helpful to refer to Q 135 of the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, below):

- physical exercise
- dealing with anger
- using a cell phone while driving
- healthy eating

12. What is “the doctrine of carefulness”? How does it relate to the Sixth Commandment? What implications might it have for the following issues:

- driving carefully near a school
- hunting for deer with a friend

13. How does “the doctrine of carefulness” relate to the issue of abortion?

14. How does the Sixth Commandment address the issue of suicide?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

The following questions and answers from the *Westminster Larger Catechism* are referred to in the sermon. You may find them helpful as you’re thinking about the sermon. After you’ve read them, please also consider the additional questions below:

Q 135: What are the duties required in the sixth commandment?

A 135: The duties required in the sixth commandment are, all careful studies, and lawful endeavors, to preserve the life of ourselves and others by resisting all thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions, and avoiding all occasions, temptations, and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any; by just defense thereof against violence, patient bearing of the hand of God, quietness of mind, cheerfulness of spirit; a sober use of meat, drink, physic, sleep, labor, and recreations; by charitable thoughts, love, compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness; peaceable, mild and courteous speeches and behavior; forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient bearing and forgiving of injuries, and requiting good for evil; comforting and succoring the distressed, and protecting and defending the innocent.

Q 136: What are the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment?

A 136: The sins forbidden in the sixth commandment are, all taking away the life of ourselves, or of others, except in case of public justice, lawful war, or necessary defense; the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life; sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge; all excessive passions, distracting cares; immoderate use of meat, drink, labor, and recreations; provoking words, oppression, quarreling, striking, wounding, and: Whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.

15. Look at the above answers: can you think of any practical implications of any parts of them?

16. In what way(s) might you be tempted to neglect these implications of the Sixth Commandment?

A Brief Introduction to Just War Theory

The issue of Just War Theory was mentioned briefly in the sermon on the Sixth Commandment. Please take a brief look at the summary of Just War Theory in this section, and make a note of any questions that you have.

Just War Theory is the attempt to articulate the circumstances in which war is morally legitimate. In order to address this issue, two questions must be answered: First, when is it right to go to war? Second, how should war be conducted once it has begun? Historically, these questions have been answered in various different ways by articulating a series of (overlapping) criteria intended to determine when war may justly be fought.

What follows is an attempt to outline the main contours of the debate. Of course, questions may still remain about some of the details, and I've given some examples of these. I should emphasise that this summary doesn't presuppose any military expertise at all on my part; obviously the practical implementation of these principles would require a detailed knowledge of the realities of warfare.

One final point: the main effect of reading this may be to underscore the extreme complexity of the issue. The recognition of this complexity is entirely salutary, since that's exactly what life is like.

1. When is it right to go to war?

1.1 Just cause

The immediate cause of declaring war must be just. Consequently, all unprovoked aggression is prohibited, as are wars waged for unjust reasons (e.g. to defend national pride) or solely for the purpose of correcting relatively minor wrongs (e.g. responding to trade tariffs). War can only be declared by a nation as a necessary response to military aggression against them.

Questions arise about (1) whether a pre-emptive war could ever be just, and if so under what circumstances; (2) whether it would ever be legitimate for one country to declare war in order to defend another from unjust aggression.

1.2 Just intention

The goal of the war must be to establish peace; other aims (e.g. regime change, economic gain) are illegitimate.

Questions arise about how to deal with the possibility that a war may have other subordinate effects that do not themselves constitute just cause, such as personal revenge or economic gain.

1.3 Competent authority

Only properly constituted governments may go to war, and they must do so by formal declaration. Private individuals, dictatorships, and other unjust authorities may not.

Questions arise because (1) modern governments are very complex, and it is not always clear which branch of government should have the final say. For example, in the UK, should the final decision be made by the Prime Minister, or the Cabinet, or by Parliamentary vote?

Questions also arise concerning (2) whether the citizens of a country can legitimately be compelled by their government to serve in military conflict; and (3) whether private individuals in one country may legitimately serve in the military forces of another. For example, would it have been right for a German citizen to assassinate Hitler?

1.4 Probability of success

War may not be declared in futile situations, since then the use of arms is likely to result simply in more deaths and casualties. A just war must have a reasonable probability of success.

Questions arise about whether this criterion (1) unreasonably restricts the right of smaller countries to defend themselves; or (2) incentivises aggressors to initiate conflicts with overwhelming acts of force.

1.5 Last resort

War may be declared only after all peaceful alternatives have been exhausted.

Questions arise about how a country should respond if an aggressor appears to be using negotiation or other peaceful means as delaying tactics while making preparations for war.

1.6 Proportionality

The anticipated benefits of waging a war must be proportionate to its anticipated harms. For example, to prevent invasion and occupation by a hostile force would be a proportionate benefit; merely to unseat a malign government would not.

This principle is distinct from the principle of proportionality in the conduct of war (see below), which relates to the proportionate use of force during the conflict itself.

[2. How should a just war be conducted?](#)

2.1 Distinction

The weapons and tactics used in war should distinguish between enemy combatants on the one hand, and civilians and other non-combatants on the other. Legitimate weapons would include firearms, missiles, bombs, electronic weapons, and so on, provided they are aimed at combatants or military targets. Illegitimate weapons would include poisons, nuclear weapons, landmines, and other weapons that cannot be reliably aimed; while illegitimate tactics would include indiscriminate carpet-bombing of cities, deliberate targeting of civilians, attacking neutral targets, and so on.

Questions arise about (1) how to respond to the use of so-called “human shields”; and (2) the possession of disproportionate weapons (such as nuclear weapons) merely for their deterrent effect, especially if “the other side” also holds them, as in the doctrine of *Mutually Assured Destruction* (MAD).

2.2 Proportionality

The weapons and tactics used in war should be proportional to the immediate threat faced or the immediate aim in view. For example, it would be illegitimate to launch an airstrike deploying thousands of bombs merely to counter a handful of advancing troops, or to kill thousands of enemy troops merely to secure a single building.

Questions arise about how to respond in situations where the enemy appears to be willing to sacrifice large numbers of soldiers for a negligible military gain, e.g. the trench warfare of WW1.

2.3 Military necessity

Any action undertaken in war must be necessary in order to help in the defeat of the enemy. Actions intended to accomplish other aims (e.g. to shape the future government of the enemy country, or to influence one's own future economic opportunities) cannot be justified.

Questions arise about how to determine whether a particular action is necessary to accomplish these military aims (e.g. the destruction of telecommunications services and transport infrastructure). For example, could defoliants legitimately be used (as they were during the Vietnam War) in order to destroy enemy food sources and hiding places, when they are also known to cause long-term ecological damage and harm to humans?

2.4 Fair treatment of prisoners of war

Enemy combatants who have surrendered, been captured, or who otherwise pose no threat may not be attacked or mistreated. This principle is intended to incentivise the surrender of opposing troops by assuring them of their personal safety if they do so, and thus to bring conflicts to a quick conclusion.

Questions arise about how to determine in practice whether enemy combatants pose an ongoing military threat (e.g. soldiers parachuting from disabled aircraft, sailors escaping from a shipwreck).

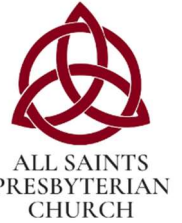
2.5 No means that are evil in themselves

No weapons or tactics may be used that are evil in themselves, such as rape, torture, forcing enemy combatants to fight against their own side, or using weapons known or designed to cause disproportionate suffering.

Questions arise about (1) how to determine whether a particular weapon is evil in itself, especially when almost all weapons seem evil in some respects; and (2) what kind of suffering counts as "disproportionate" (e.g. hollow-point bullets, anti-tank weapons, etc).

3. Summary

War may only be declared for a just cause, with a just intention, by a competent authority, with a high probability of success, as a last resort, where the expected benefit is proportional to the likely cost in human suffering. It must be conducted in a manner that distinguishes between combatants and non-combatants, with weapons and tactics that are proportional to the immediate military aims and threats. Every action undertaken must be militarily necessary, prisoners of war must be treated humanely, and no means may be used that are evil in themselves.



8. The Seventh Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Seventh Commandment, Exodus 20:14. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Seventh Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

Questions on Leithart, *Thou shalt not commit adultery* (pp. 85-91)

- 1. Adultery and society.** Why does the seventh commandment tend to provoke such strong objections (p. 85)? What social effects result from breaking it (p. 86)?
- 2. Expanding the seventh commandment.** How do the commands of Exodus and Leviticus, and the teaching of Jesus, intensify the demands of the seventh commandment (pp. 86-87)?
- 3. Sexual identity.** "Recently, we've taken sexual autonomy several steps further" (p. 87). How?
- 4. Sex and theology.** How are "sex and marriage ... theological realities from top to bottom" (p. 89)?
- 5. Perverse sexuality.** Dr. Leithart states, "Every perverse form of sexuality distorts the created design of marriage" (p. 90). How does it do this? How is this reflected in "the prophetic imagery of sexual unfaithfulness" (p. 90)?

Questions on "Our Not-so-secret Obsession," a Sermon on the Seventh Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: shorturl.at/cxzUZ (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. What do internet usage statistics tell us about the interests and obsessions of the modern world?
7. What is adultery? How is Genesis 2 significant in helping us to understand this commandment?
8. Why must covenantal commitment and relational intimacy go together?
9. What other actions and lifestyles involve breaking the design for marriage set out in Genesis 2?
10. How would you respond to someone who said, "The Bible condones polygamy"?
11. How do Jesus' words in Matthew 5:27-28 relate to the Seventh Commandment?
12. According to the *Westminster Larger Catechism*, the Seventh Commandment requires "chastity in body, mind, affections, words, and behavior; and the preservation of it in ourselves and others". How in particular should we seek to preserve chastity "in others"?
13. Why are "watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses" and "modesty in apparel [clothing]" important implications of the Seventh Commandment?
14. How does "diligent labor in our callings" help us to avoid sexual sin?

15. How is the word “adultery” used in the OT? What does this tell us about the broader meaning of the Sixth Commandment?

16. In what ways does the Bible highlight the seriousness of adultery?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

The following questions and answers from the *Westminster Larger Catechism* are referred to in the sermon. You may find them helpful as you’re thinking about the sermon. After you’ve read them, please also consider the additional questions below:

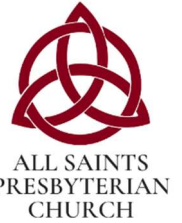
Q 138: What are the duties required in the seventh commandment?

A 138: The duties required in the seventh commandment are, chastity in body, mind, affections, words, and behavior; and the preservation of it in ourselves and others; watchfulness over the eyes and all the senses; temperance, keeping of chaste company, modesty in apparel [clothing]; marriage by those that have not the gift of continency, conjugal love, and cohabitation; diligent labor in our callings; shunning all occasions of uncleanness, and resisting temptations thereunto.

Q 139: What are the sins forbidden in the seventh commandment?

A 139: The sins forbidden in the seventh commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are, adultery, fornication, rape, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts; all unclean imaginations, thoughts, purposes, and affections; all corrupt or filthy communications, or listening thereunto; wanton looks, impudent or light behavior, immodest apparel [clothing]; prohibiting of lawful, and dispensing with unlawful marriages; allowing, tolerating, keeping of stews [public bath-houses], and resorting to them; entangling vows of single life, undue delay of marriage; having more wives or husbands than one at the same time; unjust divorce, or desertion; idleness, gluttony, drunkenness, unchaste company; lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays; and all other provocations to, or acts of uncleanness, either in ourselves or others.

17. What do you think of the following sins highlighted in A 139: “lascivious songs, books, pictures, dancings, stage plays” (“lascivious” means “sexually provocative”)? Can you think of any contemporary examples?



9. The Eighth Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Eighth Commandment, Exodus 20:15. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Eighth Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

Questions on Leithart, *Thou shalt not steal* (pp. 95-100)

On pp. 95-96, Dr. Leithart explains that "theft [taking *property*] is a variety of murder [taking the life of a *person*]" (p. 95), because despite the "distinction" (p. 95) in Scripture between people and property, there is nonetheless a "connection between persons and property" (p. 96).

- 1. People and property.** Dr. Leithart states, "The Bible hints at [a] connection between persons and property" (p. 96). How does it do this? What implications does this have for how we should love our neighbor (p. 97)?
- 2. God's property.** How does God claim "certain things as uniquely his" (p. 97)? How does this help us to understand what it means to call something "holy" (p. 97)?
- 3. Jesus and property.** How does the connection between person and property highlight "the full force of Jesus' teaching on wealth" (p. 97)?
- 4. Subtle stealing.** How is it possible to "steal in broad daylight" (p. 98)?
- 5. Mammon.** What do you think Dr. Leithart means by "mammon" (p. 98)? How might we be tempted by it (pp. 98-99)? How should we "shatter mammon" (p. 99)?

Questions on "You Shall Not Steal," a Sermon on the Eighth Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address:

[shorturl.at/cxzUZ](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y) (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. What do the statistics on road traffic accidents and insurance claims tell us about the modern world?
7. How is the Eighth Commandment rooted in the doctrine of creation?
8. In the past, how have some British supermarkets broken the Eighth Commandment? What does this tell us about human nature?
9. Describe how breaches of the Eighth Commandment found in the following situations:
 - the building industry and other trades
 - second-hand car sales
 - residential property rentals
 - residential property sales
10. How is the Eighth Commandment related to the issue of false weights and measures in Proverbs 11 and Deuteronomy 25 (NB Not Deuteronomy 15, as mentioned in the sermon)?

11. Why are vexatious lawsuits a breach of the Eighth Commandment?
12. What is meant by “engrossing commodities to enhance the price”? What’s wrong with this?
13. How does Jesus’ teaching in Luke 12:42-48 relate to the Eighth Commandment?
14. What does Ephesians 4:28 teach about the positive implications of the Eighth Commandment?
15. What does Proverbs 14:23 have to do with the Eighth Commandment?
16. What implications does 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 have for young people as they prepare for adulthood?
17. Why is gambling a tax on people who are bad at math?
18. How does Jesus give an example of keeping the Eighth Commandment?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

The following questions and answers from the *Westminster Larger Catechism* are referred to in the sermon. You may find them helpful as you’re thinking about the sermon. After you’ve read them, please also consider the additional questions below:

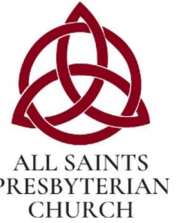
Q 141: What are the duties required in the eighth commandment?

A 141: The duties required in the eighth commandment are, truth, faithfulness, and justice in contracts and commerce between man and man; rendering to everyone his due; restitution of goods unlawfully detained from the right owners thereof; giving and lending freely, according to our abilities, and the necessities of others; moderation of our judgments, wills, and affections concerning worldly goods; a provident care and study to get, keep, use, and dispose these things which are necessary and convenient for the sustentation of our nature, and suitable to our condition; a lawful calling, and diligence in it; frugality; avoiding unnecessary lawsuits and suretyship, or other like engagements; and an endeavor, by all just and lawful means, to procure, preserve, and further the wealth and outward estate of others, as well as our own.

Q 142: What are the sins forbidden in the eighth commandment?

A 142: The sins forbidden in the eighth commandment, besides the neglect of the duties required, are, theft, robbery, man-stealing, and receiving anything that is stolen; fraudulent dealing, false weights and measures, removing land marks, injustice and unfaithfulness in contracts between man and man, or in matters of trust; oppression, extortion, usury, bribery, vexatious lawsuits, unjust enclosures and depopulations; engrossing commodities to enhance the price; unlawful callings, and all other unjust or sinful ways of taking or withholding from our neighbor what belongs to him, or of enriching ourselves; covetousness; inordinate prizing and affecting worldly goods; distrustful and distracting cares and studies in getting, keeping, and using them; envying at the prosperity of others; as likewise idleness, prodigality, wasteful gaming; and all other ways whereby we do unduly prejudice our own outward estate, and defrauding ourselves of the due use and comfort of that estate which God hath given us.

19. Are there any aspects of the above quotations that you find particularly striking?



10. The Ninth Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Ninth Commandment, Exodus 20:16. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Ninth Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

Questions on Leithart, *Thou shalt not bear false witness* (pp. 105-111)

- 1. The meaning of the ninth commandment.** Dr. Leithart explains that the ninth commandment is "more specific" (p. 105) than usually imagined. What does it actually refer to (pp. 105-106)? What are its implications for other settings (pp. 106-107)?
- 2. The ninth commandment today.** In what ways is the ninth commandment particularly relevant to us today (pp. 107-108)?
- 3. Hard truths.** "Truth-telling isn't necessarily 'nice'" (p. 108). Why not (pp. 108-109)?
- 4. Biblical lies.** Does Scripture require truth-telling in every circumstance? What do you think of the counter-examples Dr. Leithart cites?
- 5. Jesus and the truth.** What lessons do we learn from Jesus about telling the truth (pp. 110-111)?

Questions on "A Tangled Web of Lies," a Sermon on the Ninth Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: shorturl.at/cxzUZ (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. Why is it important that children tell the truth to their parents? What implications does this have for adult life?
7. What particular kind of lying does "false witness" refer to? How does the Ninth Commandment expand the scope to other situations?
8. Why is the Ninth Commandment related to "preserving and promoting... the good name of our neighbor"? How might we fail to do this in practice?
9. What does "a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report" mean?
10. How does the Ninth Commandment require a particular way of listening to people? What does the *Westminster Larger Catechism* say about this?
11. What does the Ninth Commandment imply about confessing our sins and faults? What does the *Westminster Larger Catechism* say about this?
12. Should we always tell the truth? Explain your answer.
13. How is the Ninth Commandment grounded in the doctrine of creation?
14. How is the Ninth Commandment grounded in the doctrine of the Trinity?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

The following questions and answers from the *Westminster Larger Catechism* are referred to in the sermon. You may find them helpful as you're thinking about the sermon. After you've read them, please also consider the additional questions below:

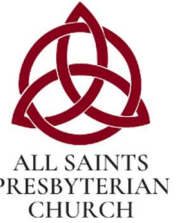
Q 144: What are the duties required in the ninth commandment?

A 144: The duties required in the ninth commandment are, the preserving and promoting of truth between man and man, and the good name of our neighbor, as well as our own; appearing and standing for the truth; and from the heart, sincerely, freely, clearly, and fully, speaking the truth, and only the truth, in matters of judgment and justice, and in all other things whatsoever; a charitable esteem of our neighbors; loving, desiring, and rejoicing in their good name; sorrowing for, and covering of their infirmities; freely acknowledging of their gifts and graces, defending their innocency; a ready receiving of a good report, and unwillingness to admit of an evil report, concerning them; discouraging talebearers, flatterers, and slanderers; love and care of our own good name, and defending it when need requireth; keeping of lawful promises; studying and practicing of whatsoever things are true, honest, lovely, and of good report.

Q 145: What are the sins forbidden in the ninth commandment?

A 145: The sins forbidden in the ninth commandment are, all prejudicing the truth, and the good name of our neighbors, as well as our own, especially in public judicature; giving false evidence, suborning false witnesses, wittingly appearing and pleading for an evil cause, outfacing and overbearing the truth; passing unjust sentence, calling evil good, and good evil; rewarding the wicked according to the work of the righteous, and the righteous according to the work of the wicked; forgery, concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others; speaking the truth unseasonably, or maliciously to a wrong end, or perverting it to a wrong meaning, or in doubtful and equivocal expressions, to the prejudice of truth or justice; speaking untruth, lying, slandering, backbiting, detracting, tale bearing, whispering, scoffing, reviling, rash, harsh, and partial censuring; misconstruing intentions, words, and actions; flattering, vainglorious boasting, thinking or speaking too highly or too meanly of ourselves or others; denying the gifts and graces of God; aggravating smaller faults; hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins, when called to a free confession; unnecessary discovering of infirmities; raising false rumors, receiving and countenancing evil reports, and stopping our ears against just defense; evil suspicion; envying or grieving at the deserved credit of any, endeavoring or desiring to impair it, rejoicing in their disgrace and infamy; scornful contempt, fond admiration; breach of lawful promises; neglecting such things as are of good report, and practicing, or not avoiding ourselves, or not hindering: What we can in others, such things as procure an ill name.

15. Are there any aspects of the above quotations that you find particularly striking?



11. The Tenth Commandment

Introduction

In this handout, we turn to the Tenth Commandment, Exodus 20:17. You'll find notes and questions on Peter Leithart's book *The Ten Commandments*, a sermon on the Tenth Commandment, and some extracts from the *Westminster Larger Catechism*.

Questions on Leithart, *Thou shalt not covet* (pp. 115-121)

- 1. A long commandments.** How does Dr. Leithart explain the unusual length of the tenth commandment (p. 115). Why is this significant?
- 2. Exodus and Deuteronomy.** How does Dr. Leithart explain the difference between the forms of the tenth commandment in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 (p. 116)?
- 3. Desire and biblical anthropology.** Why is "desire ... fundamental to biblical anthropology" (p. 117)? (NB "Anthropology" means "the study of man", from the Greek words *anthrōpos*, "man" and *logos*, "word, knowledge".)
- 4. Sinful desire.** What, precisely, is it that makes a particular desire "evil" (p. 118)? How does this help us to understand how to "avoid the trap" of covetousness?
- 5. Desire and freedom.** Dr. Leithart explains that "our culture encourages us to think our desires are free" (p. 119), arguing against this with help from Vera Pavlova (pp. 119-120). How does he argue that "'Follow your heart' is paralyzing advice to someone whose eyes are dazzled by every passing beauty" (p. 120)? Why are we "genuinely free only if our desires are trained" (p. 121)?

Questions on "What Should you Want?" a Sermon on the Tenth Commandment

This sermon can be downloaded from the Google Drive folder at the following address: [shorturl.at/cxzUZ](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y) (if this link doesn't work, please try the following full link: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1YNUyevgu01gkixHXaCIGXVfEKS02F-0Y>).

Please listen to this sermon, and then answer the following questions:

6. How does the Tenth Commandment challenge the misunderstanding that in the Old Testament God is concerned about outward things, whereas the New Testament God is concerned about internal matters?
7. What does "covet" mean?
8. Why is the Tenth Commandment longer than the Six through Ninth Commandments?
9. What does the Tenth Commandment tell us about controlling our feelings?
10. Why is it often hard to identify exactly where our desires become sinful? How does the Bible help us with this?
11. What three questions could we ask in order to identify sinful desires?

12. How do these three questions (from the previous question) help you to understand what's going on in the following Biblical episodes?

- Genesis 4, Cain and Abel
- Genesis 11, the Tower of Babel
- Genesis 16, Abram and Sarai

13. Why do mixed motives create such a problem for us?

14. How does the example of Jesus help us to understand the Tenth Commandment?

Questions on the *Westminster Larger Catechism*

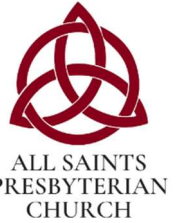
The following questions and answers from the *Westminster Larger Catechism* may help you as you're thinking about the subject of coveting.

Q 147: What are the duties required in the tenth commandment?

A 147: The duties required in the tenth commandment are, such a full contentment with our own condition, and such a charitable frame of the whole soul toward our neighbor, as that all our inward motions and affections touching him, tend unto, and further all that good which is his.

Q 148: What are the sins forbidden in the tenth commandment?

A 148: The sins forbidden in the tenth commandment are, discontentment with our own estate; envying and grieving at the good of our neighbor, together with all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his.



12. Exodus 21-23 and Leviticus 19

Introduction

In this handout, we're going to explore how the Ten Commandments are expounded within the Old Testament itself, but focusing on two passages of particular interest: Exodus 21-23, and Leviticus 19.

Your preparation is quite simple: Please read each of these sections carefully, and answer the questions below as you do so.

You may find it helpful to make notes on the versions of these texts printed below.

- 1. Dividing up the text.** It is possible to identify individual commandments or instructions within this text? Try to divide the text up into individual sections.
- 2. Relating the text to the Ten Commandments.** After you've divided the text into sections, try to work out which of the Ten Commandments each section relates most naturally to. (You may find that there's more than one answer – that's fine.)
- 3. Expounding the Ten Commandments.** What light does each section shed on the commandment it is related to? Does it suggest further applications of the Ten Commandments that you might not otherwise have spotted? Do any of these applications surprise or intrigue you in any way?

Exodus 21-23

^{21:1} "Now these are the rules that you shall set before them. ² When you buy a Hebrew slave, he shall serve six years, and in the seventh he shall go out free, for nothing. ³ If he comes in single, he shall go out single; if he comes in married, then his wife shall go out with him. ⁴ If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out alone. ⁵ But if the slave plainly says, 'I love my master, my wife, and my children; I will not go out free,' ⁶ then his master shall bring him to God, and he shall bring him to the door or the doorpost. And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall be his slave forever.

⁷ "When a man sells his daughter as a slave, she shall not go out as the male slaves do. ⁸ If she does not please her master, who has designated her¹ for himself, then he shall let her be redeemed. He shall have no right to sell her to a foreign people, since he has broken faith with her. ⁹ If he designates her for his son, he shall deal with her as with a daughter. ¹⁰ If he takes another wife to himself, he shall not diminish her food, her clothing, or her marital rights. ¹¹ And if he does not do these three things for her, she shall go out for nothing, without payment of money.

¹² "Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. ¹³ But if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then I will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. ¹⁴ But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

¹⁵ "Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁶ "Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

¹⁷ "Whoever curses¹ his father or his mother shall be put to death.

¹⁸ "When men quarrel and one strikes the other with a stone or with his fist and the man does not die but takes to his bed, ¹⁹ then if the man rises again and walks outdoors with his staff, he who struck him shall be clear; only he shall pay for the loss of his time, and shall have him thoroughly healed.

²⁰ “When a man strikes his slave, male or female, with a rod and the slave dies under his hand, he shall be avenged. ²¹ But if the slave survives a day or two, he is not to be avenged, for the slave is his money. ²² “When men strive together and hit a pregnant woman, so that her children come out, but there is no harm, the one who hit her shall surely be fined, as the woman’s husband shall impose on him, and he shall pay as the judges determine. ²³ But if there is harm,¹ then you shall pay life for life, ²⁴ eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, ²⁵ burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

²⁶ “When a man strikes the eye of his slave, male or female, and destroys it, he shall let the slave go free because of his eye. ²⁷ If he knocks out the tooth of his slave, male or female, he shall let the slave go free because of his tooth.

²⁸ “When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox shall be stoned, and its flesh shall not be eaten, but the owner of the ox shall not be liable. ²⁹ But if the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has been warned but has not kept it in, and it kills a man or a woman, the ox shall be stoned, and its owner also shall be put to death. ³⁰ If a ransom is imposed on him, then he shall give for the redemption of his life whatever is imposed on him. ³¹ If it gores a man’s son or daughter, he shall be dealt with according to this same rule. ³² If the ox gores a slave, male or female, the owner shall give to their master thirty shekels¹ of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.

³³ “When a man opens a pit, or when a man digs a pit and does not cover it, and an ox or a donkey falls into it, ³⁴ the owner of the pit shall make restoration. He shall give money to its owner, and the dead beast shall be his.

³⁵ “When one man’s ox butts another’s, so that it dies, then they shall sell the live ox and share its price, and the dead beast also they shall share. ³⁶ Or if it is known that the ox has been accustomed to gore in the past, and its owner has not kept it in, he shall repay ox for ox, and the dead beast shall be his.

^{22:1} “If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. ² ¹ “If a thief is found breaking in and is struck so that he dies, there shall be no bloodguilt for him, ³ but if the sun has risen on him, there shall be bloodguilt for him. He shall surely pay. If he has nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft. ⁴ If the stolen beast is found alive in his possession, whether it is an ox or a donkey or a sheep, he shall pay double.

⁵ “If a man causes a field or vineyard to be grazed over, or lets his beast loose and it feeds in another man’s field, he shall make restitution from the best in his own field and in his own vineyard.

⁶ “If fire breaks out and catches in thorns so that the stacked grain or the standing grain or the field is consumed, he who started the fire shall make full restitution.

⁷ “If a man gives to his neighbor money or goods to keep safe, and it is stolen from the man’s house, then, if the thief is found, he shall pay double. ⁸ If the thief is not found, the owner of the house shall come near to God to show whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor’s property. ⁹ For every breach of trust, whether it is for an ox, for a donkey, for a sheep, for a cloak, or for any kind of lost thing, of which one says, ‘This is it,’ the case of both parties shall come before God. The one whom God condemns shall pay double to his neighbor.

¹⁰ “If a man gives to his neighbor a donkey or an ox or a sheep or any beast to keep safe, and it dies or is injured or is driven away, without anyone seeing it, ¹¹ an oath by the LORD shall be between them both to see whether or not he has put his hand to his neighbor’s property. The owner shall accept the oath, and he shall not make restitution. ¹² But if it is stolen from him, he shall make restitution to its owner. ¹³ If it is torn by beasts, let him bring it as evidence. He shall not make restitution for what has been torn.

¹⁴ “If a man borrows anything of his neighbor, and it is injured or dies, the owner not being with it, he shall make full restitution. ¹⁵ If the owner was with it, he shall not make restitution; if it was hired, it came for its hiring fee.¹

¹⁶ “If a man seduces a virgin¹ who is not engaged to be married and lies with her, he shall give the bride-price² for her and make her his wife. ¹⁷ If her father utterly refuses to give her to him, he shall pay money equal to the bride-price for virgins.

¹⁸ “You shall not permit a sorceress to live.

¹⁹ “Whoever lies with an animal shall be put to death.

²⁰ “Whoever sacrifices to any god, other than the LORD alone, shall be devoted to destruction.¹

²¹ “You shall not wrong a sojourner or oppress him, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt. ²² You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. ²³ If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, ²⁴ and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless.

²⁵ “If you lend money to any of my people with you who is poor, you shall not be like a moneylender to him, and you shall not exact interest from him. ²⁶ If ever you take your neighbor’s cloak in pledge, you shall return it to him before the sun goes down, ²⁷ for that is his only covering, and it is his cloak for his body; in what else shall he sleep? And if he cries to me, I will hear, for I am compassionate.

²⁸ “You shall not revile God, nor curse a ruler of your people.

²⁹ “You shall not delay to offer from the fullness of your harvest and from the outflow of your presses. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to me. ³⁰ You shall do the same with your oxen and with your sheep: seven days it shall be with its mother; on the eighth day you shall give it to me.

³¹ “You shall be consecrated to me. Therefore you shall not eat any flesh that is torn by beasts in the field; you shall throw it to the dogs.

^{23:1} “You shall not spread a false report. You shall not join hands with a wicked man to be a malicious witness. ² You shall not fall in with the many to do evil, nor shall you bear witness in a lawsuit, siding with the many, so as to pervert justice, ³ nor shall you be partial to a poor man in his lawsuit.

⁴ “If you meet your enemy’s ox or his donkey going astray, you shall bring it back to him.

⁵ If you see the donkey of one who hates you lying down under its burden, you shall refrain from leaving him with it; you shall rescue it with him.

⁶ “You shall not pervert the justice due to your poor in his lawsuit. ⁷ Keep far from a false charge, and do not kill the innocent and righteous, for I will not acquit the wicked. ⁸ And you shall take no bribe, for a bribe blinds the clear-sighted and subverts the cause of those who are in the right.

⁹ “You shall not oppress a sojourner. You know the heart of a sojourner, for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt.

¹⁰ “For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, ¹¹ but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

¹² “Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.

¹³ “Pay attention to all that I have said to you, and make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips.

¹⁴ “Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. ¹⁵ You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. ¹⁶ You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. ¹⁷ Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.

¹⁸ “You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened, or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.

¹⁹ “The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.

“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk.

²⁰ “Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. ²¹ Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.

²² “But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.

²³ “When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, ²⁴ you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces. ²⁵ You shall serve the LORD your God, and he¹ will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from among you. ²⁶ None shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days. ²⁷ I will send my terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you. ²⁸ And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you. ²⁹ I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. ³⁰ Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the land. ³¹ And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates, for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. ³² You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. ³³ They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”

Leviticus 19

¹ And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. ³ Every one of you shall revere his mother and his father, and you shall keep my Sabbaths: I am the LORD your God. ⁴ Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves any gods of cast metal: I am the LORD your God.

⁵ “When you offer a sacrifice of peace offerings to the LORD, you shall offer it so that you may be accepted. ⁶ It shall be eaten the same day you offer it or on the day after, and anything left over until the third day shall be burned up with fire. ⁷ If it is eaten at all on the third day, it is tainted; it will not be accepted, ⁸ and everyone who eats it shall bear his iniquity, because he has profaned what is holy to the LORD, and that person shall be cut off from his people.

⁹ “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. ¹⁰ And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.

¹¹ “You shall not steal; you shall not deal falsely; you shall not lie to one another. ¹² You shall not swear by my name falsely, and so profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.

¹³ “You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired servant shall not remain with you all night until the morning. ¹⁴ You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

¹⁵ “You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor. ¹⁶ You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life¹ of your neighbor: I am the LORD.

¹⁷ “You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason frankly with your neighbor, lest you incur sin because of him. ¹⁸ You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD.

¹⁹ “You shall keep my statutes. You shall not let your cattle breed with a different kind. You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor shall you wear a garment of cloth made of two kinds of material.

²⁰ “If a man lies sexually with a woman who is a slave, assigned to another man and not yet ransomed or given her freedom, a distinction shall be made. They shall not be put to death, because she was not free; ²¹ but he shall bring his compensation to the LORD, to the entrance of the tent of meeting, a ram for a guilt offering. ²² And the priest shall make atonement for him with the ram of the guilt offering before the LORD for his sin that he has committed, and he shall be forgiven for the sin that he has committed.

²³ “When you come into the land and plant any kind of tree for food, then you shall regard its fruit as forbidden.¹ Three years it shall be forbidden to you; it must not be eaten. ²⁴ And in the fourth year all its fruit shall be holy, an offering of praise to the LORD. ²⁵ But in the fifth year you may eat of its fruit, to increase its yield for you: I am the LORD your God.

²⁶ “You shall not eat any flesh with the blood in it. You shall not interpret omens or tell fortunes. ²⁷ You shall not round off the hair on your temples or mar the edges of your beard. ²⁸ You shall not make any cuts on your body for the dead or tattoo yourselves: I am the LORD.

²⁹ “Do not profane your daughter by making her a prostitute, lest the land fall into prostitution and the land become full of depravity. ³⁰ You shall keep my Sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

³¹ “Do not turn to mediums or wizards;¹ do not seek them out, and so make yourselves unclean by them: I am the LORD your God. ³² “You shall stand up before the gray head and honor the face of an old man, and you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.

³³ “When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. ³⁴ You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.

³⁵ “You shall do no wrong in judgment, in measures of length or weight or quantity. ³⁶ You shall have just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin:¹ I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt. ³⁷ And you shall observe all my statutes and all my rules, and do them: I am the LORD.”