

# Sermon: The Heart of the Commandments

Matthew 12:34 & John 14:15

## Introduction: A Simple Yet Profound Truth

Before we dive in, let me ask you something: Have you ever realized that the world doesn't revolve around you? That moment when it finally clicks—that's what we call a "Copernicus moment." You see, Copernicus discovered that the earth actually revolves around the sun, not the other way around. In the same way, we are not the center of the universe—God is.

And that's exactly where the Ten Commandments start:

**"You shall have no other gods before me."** (Exodus 20:3)

So, let's take a quick trip back to kindergarten. Hold up one finger—your index finger. This represents the first commandment. Why? Because there's only **one God**. He alone is worthy of worship.

Now, here's the challenge: We may not worship little statues today, but we sure do have idols. We worship ourselves. We worship money, fame, comfort, relationships, and approval. We put our careers, hobbies, and even our own desires above God. And Jesus makes it clear in Matthew 12:34, **"For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks."**

Our hearts reveal our priorities. Who or what are you truly worshipping?

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## The Second Commandment: Cut Out the Idols

**"You shall not make for yourself a carved image..."** (Exodus 20:4-6)

Okay, hold out one hand like a pair of scissors and pretend to cut. This motion reminds us of this commandment: **Cut out the idols!**

Sure, we don't bow down to golden calves, but we bow to the idols of self-image, social media, and success. The book of 1 John warns us:

**"Do not love the world or the things in the world..."** (1 John 2:15)

God wants our worship to be pure—centered on Him alone.

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## The Third Commandment: Watch Your Mouth

**"You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain."** (Exodus 20:7)

Hold up three fingers—it kind of looks like a "W." That stands for **"Watch your mouth!"**

Taking God's name in vain isn't just about using it as a cuss word. It's about misusing His name—using it casually, making promises we don't keep, or treating Him like a genie who grants our wishes. Jesus teaches us to pray:

**"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name."** (Matthew 6:9)

God's name is holy, and our words should reflect that.

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## **The Fourth Commandment: Rest and Remember**

**"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."** (Exodus 20:8-11)

When was the last time you truly rested? Not just taking a nap, but resting in the presence of God? We live in a world that glorifies busyness, but God commands us to stop, breathe, and worship Him.

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## **The Fifth Commandment: Honor Authority**

**"Honor your father and mother."** (Exodus 20:12)

Now, let's be real. Honoring our parents isn't always easy. Some of us have great parents, while others may struggle with this. But **honor is different from respect**. Respect is earned, but honor is given. And the Bible tells us to honor authority—whether we feel like it or not.

Romans 13:1 says, **"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except from God."**

This doesn't mean we obey blindly, but it does mean we recognize that God is in control.

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## **The Sixth Commandment: More Than Just "Do Not Murder"**

**"You shall not murder."** (Exodus 20:13)

Hold up one hand like a fake gun, pull the trigger, and let your other hand drop. Boom! No murder, right?

Easy command, right? Except Jesus says:

**"Anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment."** (Matthew 5:22)

Ouch. That means when we hold onto bitterness, hatred, or grudges, we are breaking this commandment in our hearts.

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## **The Seventh Commandment: Guard Your Heart**

**"You shall not commit adultery."** (Exodus 20:14)

Hold up seven fingers—five on one hand and two on the other. Now hide the two behind your back. Why? Because adultery often happens in secret.

But Jesus takes it deeper:

**"Anyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery in his heart."** (Matthew 5:28)

Purity starts in the heart. Guard it well.

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## **The Eighth Commandment: Do Not Steal**

**"You shall not steal."** (Exodus 20:15)

Hold up eight fingers, then pretend to chop off one pinky. In some places, stealing means losing a finger. But stealing isn't just about shoplifting. It includes:

- Taking credit for someone else's work.
- Downloading music or movies illegally.
- Taking shortcuts instead of giving our best.

God calls us to **honesty and integrity** in all we do.

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## **The Ninth Commandment: Tell the Truth**

**"You shall not bear false witness."** (Exodus 20:16)

Same eight-finger motion, but this time, hide your pinky and pretend it's still there. That's what lying is—pretending.

And guess what? We're all guilty. How many times have you clicked "I agree" on terms and conditions without reading them?

**Truth matters to God.** Jesus said:

**"I am the way, the truth, and the life."** (John 14:6)

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## **The Tenth Commandment: Stop the Comparison Game**

**"You shall not covet."** (Exodus 20:17)

Hold up ten fingers and pretend to grab something. Coveting is wanting what isn't yours.

Ever seen a house on HGTV and wished it was yours? Or scrolled social media and felt jealous? We live in a world that thrives on **comparison**—but contentment is a choice.

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## **The Big Problem: We Can't Keep These on Our Own**

After hearing all of this, how are you feeling? Maybe a little overwhelmed? Like, "Wow, I've broken every single one of these!"

**That's the point.**

The law was never given to save us—it was given to **show us that we need a Savior.**

Romans 3:23 tells us:

**"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."**

And Galatians 3:24 says:

**"The law was our guardian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith."**

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## **The Good News: Jesus Fulfills the Law**

The Israelites stood at Mount Sinai, trembling because they knew they couldn't keep God's law. But guess what?

Jesus came, lived a **perfect life**, and **fulfilled every single commandment** for us.

And here's where John 14:15 comes in:

**"If you love me, keep my commandments."**

Not out of fear. Not to earn salvation. But because we love Him.

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## **Conclusion: Our Response**

So, what now?

- Recognize that we can't live up to God's standard—but Jesus did it for us.
- Repent and turn to Him.
- Let the Holy Spirit transform our hearts so that obedience comes from love, not obligation.

The Ten Commandments aren't just rules—they're a reflection of God's holy character and a call to a life of love and worship.

**The question is: Will you put Him first?**