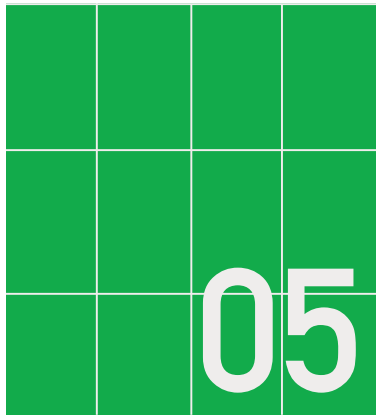




LOVE'S BLUEPRINT:

Discovering Freedom in Divine Design

I. INTRODUCTION

Welcome to Hope Channel. My name is _____ and I'll be your host for the series *There is More to Life*.

In this series of eight studies, we are exploring the foundational beliefs of Christianity from a biblical point of view. From the origins of the Bible to salvation and what happens when we die, our time together will be a time of discovery and learning, guided by Scripture and the Holy Spirit.

Today we explore the subject of the Ten Commandments. We'll explore this subject by asking several questions: Why did God give us the Ten Commandments? Do we have to keep the Ten Commandments? Do the Ten Commandments help save me?

Let us open our hearts to rediscover the richness of God's Word. We begin with a word of prayer:

"Heavenly Father, we come before You with open hearts, longing to hear Your voice through Your Word. Fill our minds with understanding and our spirits with wisdom. May Your truth guide us, Your love inspire us, and Your presence transform us. Teach us to walk in Your light and to reflect Your grace to the world. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

II. MAIN ARGUMENT

In 1913, during railway excavations along the southern coast of Israel, workers unearthed a 155-pound marble slab inscribed with the Ten Commandments in Paleo-Hebrew script.

Initially unrecognized for its significance, the tablet was repurposed as a paving

stone until 1943, when its true value was identified. Dating from 300 to 800 A.D., this artifact is the oldest known complete example of the Ten Commandments.

In December 2024, it was auctioned for over \$5 million, with the anonymous buyer intending to donate it to an Israeli institution. (Source: <https://apnews.com/article/ten-commandments-sothebys-auction-f68da9c26bb38bf62c6d98982a8561e3>)

This remarkable journey—from being a forgotten paving stone to becoming a highly valued artifact—parallels how the Ten Commandments themselves are often perceived. Many today view them as relics of the past, etched in stone but lacking relevance.

Yet, just as the tablet's true worth was eventually recognized, so too does a deeper examination of the Ten Commandments reveal their enduring value. As we delve into the significance of the Ten Commandments, let us rediscover their purpose and relevance in our lives today.

The Ten Commandments are more than words on stone—they are God's eternal standard of love, justice, and holiness, designed to draw us into a deeper relationship with Him and with one another. They are not just historical artifacts but living words meant to shape our character and actions.

And the Ten Commandments just make sense.

Imagine for a moment that you're driving in a city with no traffic lights, no stop signs, and no speed limits. What would happen? Chaos. Collisions at every corner, frustration mounting with every turn, and even fatal accidents.

Now, think of all the laws and regulations we follow every day. While traffic laws may seem restrictive at times—forcing us to slow down or stop when we're in a rush, or to respect the people we meet on the street—laws exist for a purpose: to protect us and ensure everyone can enjoy life safely. Without laws, our freedoms would result in disorder and destruction.

As we begin our exploration of God's law, we can draw analogies between the Ten Commandments and the laws we observe to make life safer in general. The Ten Commandments serve a similar purpose in our spiritual lives. They're not arbitrary rules meant to restrict us but principles designed to bring harmony, justice, and peace.

Just as traffic laws keep us safe on the roads, God's law helps us navigate life in a way that honors Him and protects our relationships with others. They're not just "rules"; they're reflections of God's own character—holy, just, and loving.

When we see God's law from this perspective, we realize that the Ten Commandments aren't burdensome obligations but invitations to experience life as God intended—filled with purpose, peace, and love.

When God gave the Ten Commandments to His people, His purpose wasn't to burden humanity with a long list of prohibitions and restrictions. He actually wanted to bless us. He designed these laws to guide us toward a life filled with righteousness, peace, and joy—a life in harmony with Him and one another.

Nearly 3,500 years ago, at Mount Sinai, God delivered the Ten Commandments as part of a covenant with His people. He declared,

“Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession” (Exodus 19:5).

His intent was to set apart His people as a holy nation, a light to the world, reflecting His character of love and justice.

The enduring nature of God's commandments is evident in their universal principles. They transcend culture, geography, and time, addressing the core of human relationships—with God and with one another. Whether it's honoring parents, protecting life, or revering God's name, these principles remain as relevant today as they were at Mount Sinai over 3,000 years ago.

When God gave the Ten Commandments, He wrote them on stone, a powerful symbol of their permanence (Exodus 31:18). Unlike ceremonial laws about animal sacrifices for purification, which pointed to Christ's sacrificial work and were fulfilled in His death and resurrection, the moral law of the Ten Commandments remains unshaken.

Jesus Himself affirmed this in Matthew 5:18, saying:

“Until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law.”

Well, let's dive right in and read the Ten Commandments as written in Exodus 20:1–17:

And God spoke all these words, saying:

“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

“You shall have no other gods before Me.

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

“You shall not murder.

“You shall not commit adultery.

“You shall not steal.

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”

Sadly, many people seem to misunderstand the purpose of the Ten Commandments.

They aren’t a burden—they are a delight for those who love God. Listen to what David says in Psalm 19:7:

“The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing the soul.”

And Psalm 119:97 exclaims:

“How I love Your Law! It is my meditation all the day.”

For believers, the law isn’t about earning salvation but about understanding God’s will and reflecting His character.

For the biblical writers, these Commandments are more than rules made up of “Do’s” and “Don’ts”—they are a reflection of God’s perfect character.

Why would David say it is “perfect”? Because the Ten Commandments reveal who God is!

As we quickly realize, the Ten Commandments reveal God’s care for humanity. They’re not arbitrary prohibitions but principles rooted in love.

We also realize that the Ten Commandments have impact two aspect of our lives: our relationship with God and one another.

The first four Commandments focus on our relationship with God. As we focus on loving God, we seek to honor Him as the only true God, avoid idolatry, reverence His name, and keep the Sabbath as a special day to connect with Him. These commandments teach us how to deepen our relationship with our Creator, placing Him at the center of our lives.

The last six commandments impact our relationships with others. As we focus on our relationships with others, we seek to fill the world with kindness, fairness, and respect.

In the family, we honor parents, value life, remain faithful, respect property, speak truthfully, and avoid jealousy by wanting what others have. These principles protect us from the harm sin causes and foster communities built on trust and compassion.

The Ten Commandments are eternal and unchanging because they are rooted in God's immutable nature. They are a moral and spiritual guide, designed to promote justice, harmony, and peace in our relationship with Him and others.

And because the Ten Commandments reveal God's character, they act as a mirror, revealing sin and showing us how far we fall short of God's perfect standard. Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the law becomes a source of joy, leading us closer to God and one another.

As the Apostle Paul explains in Romans 3:20:

“because by the works of the Law none of mankind will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes knowledge of sin.”

God's law reveals how far we have fallen short of God's perfect standard and highlights our need for His grace. By highlighting how we can honor God with our lives, the Ten Commandments reveal the destructive effects of sin and point us toward the freedom found in His ways.

When we follow His law, we reflect His love to the world and experience the blessings of a life aligned with His will.

More importantly, the law exposes our need for a Savior, pointing us to Jesus Christ as the only solution to the problem of sin. It points us to Christ, who perfectly fulfilled the law on our behalf and empowers us to live according to its principles.

To summarize it all: the Ten Commandments were given to lead us into deeper relationship with God and others. They reveal His character, demonstrate His care, and invite us to live as His treasured people, shining His light in a world that desperately needs it.

God's commandments are eternal and unchanging, reflecting His own immutable character. Aren't you glad we serve a God who doesn't change? Can you imagine living under a Creator who was always changing His mind about everything?

That's what the Ten Commandments are: they are not temporary rules for a specific

time or culture but a timeless standard of morality, designed to guide humanity in every generation.

Far from being outdated or restrictive, God's commandments provide freedom, stability, and direction. In a world that often questions the relevance of absolute truths, the enduring nature of God's commandments reminds us of their unchanging power and purpose. They speak to our modern-day need for guidance, direction, and meaning. They protect us from the consequences of sin and lead us into a deeper relationship with Him. They aren't just a set of rules—they're an invitation to live in harmony with God's will and to reflect His character in our lives.

They stand as a testimony to God's love and a guide to living a life that honors Him, now and forever.

At the same time, as important as the Ten Commandments are, remember this: obeying God's Ten Commandments isn't about earning salvation. Salvation is a gift of grace through faith. Instead, obedience to the Ten Commandments flows from love and gratitude for what God has done for us. When we understand the depth of His sacrifice, our response is a desire to honor Him by living in alignment with His will.

The law could never save us in our sinful states, because it is impossible for us to obey God's law perfectly. As fallen human beings, we are naturally inclined toward sin, and even our best efforts fall short of God's perfect standard. Romans 3:23 reminds us,

“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

Even if we could avoid outwardly breaking the Ten Commandments for a time—say, by avoiding lying—our sinful nature remains at odds with God's law. The fact is that on our own, we cannot live up to the righteousness it demands.

But here's the good news: through Christ's sacrifice and the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are empowered to live in harmony with God's law. Jesus fulfilled the law perfectly on our behalf, and His grace transforms our hearts.

As we abide in Christ, His righteousness begins to be reflected in our lives. John 15:5 makes this clear:

“Apart from me, you can do nothing.”

Together, the Ten Commandments and the Gospel reveal the fullness of God's plan:

to save us from sin, restore us to His likeness, and empower us to live in harmony with His will. The gospel and the Ten Commandments are two sides of the same coin, working together to lead us into a life of faith, love, and obedience.

In essence, the law points out our sin and corruption as well as our need for salvation. The Gospel shows us the solution to our massive predicament: we can be saved through Jesus' perfect obedience to the Ten Commandments.

This transformation of our old self or “new birth” worked out by the Holy Spirit enables us to live in obedience to God's law, not out of obligation but out of love and gratitude for His grace.

As Jesus said in John 14:15:

“If you love me, keep my commandments.”

The gospel empowers us to obey, not in our strength but through the Spirit working within us.

The Holy Spirit plays a crucial role in this process. He transforms our hearts, reshaping our desires to align with God's law of love. This transformation enables true obedience—not out of fear or obligation, but out of a deep connection with God.

When we understand that we cannot obey the law in order to be saved, and that Jesus has already kept God's law perfectly in our place, obedience to the Ten Commandments becomes a joy, not a burden.

As David said in Psalm 40:8:

“I delight to do Your will, my God; and Your law is within my heart.”

True obedience is evidence of a heart renewed by God's love and grace.

So, is it possible to obey God's law?

Not perfectly on our own—but in Christ, we can claim to be obedient to the law. His grace not only forgives our failures but empowers us to live a life that honors Him, reflecting His love to the world.

It's important to note also that living under God's grace does not free us from the

responsibility of living according to the principles of His kingdom represented in the Ten Commandments.

The Apostle Paul explains this concept in Romans 6:15:

“Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means!”

Ultimately, God’s law remains his standard of righteousness for his kingdom on Earth. It was because the Ten Commandments could not be abolished or canceled that Jesus had to die on our behalf. The Ten Commandments show us what a life in harmony with God looks like. The gospel of Jesus Christ doesn’t abolish the law; it fulfills its purpose of restoring God’s glory in humanity.

In the new creation, when sin and suffering are no more, the principles of God’s kingdom will still guide life. Revelation 22:14 reminds us:

“Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life, and may enter the city by the gates.”

Through faith in Jesus, we are justified and are declared righteous before God—and the Holy Spirit transforms our hearts and minds into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

III. CONCLUSION

As we close today’s study, let me tell you a story.

Darryl Strawberry had it all—fame, fortune, and a career that most people can only dream of. With four World Series baseball championships under his belt, eight appearances in the Major League Baseball All-Star Game, and gracing the cover of Sports Illustrated seven times, Darryl was the epitome of success.

At the height of his career, he was earning millions, but his life was far from fulfilling.

Raised in a broken home with an abusive, alcoholic father who told him he would never amount to anything, Darryl carried those scars into adulthood. This pain fueled his ambition, driving him to become one of baseball’s brightest stars. But the same drive that made him successful also led to his self-destruction.

Early in his career, Darryl was introduced to cocaine, and that first taste spiraled into

years of addiction, infidelity, and reckless living.

By the age of 22, he was signing multimillion-dollar contracts, living in luxury, and yet feeling empty inside. He later admitted, “I had everything, but I had nothing.”

In 1991, Darryl accepted Christ into his life. But without discipleship and a foundation rooted in God’s Word, he quickly fell back into his old ways, giving the enemy a foothold.

His story could have ended in tragedy—financial ruin, imprisonment, battles with cancer, and almost losing his life. But Darryl’s testimony reveals a God who doesn’t give up on His children.

“The devil wanted my soul,” Darryl says as he recounts his early days.

For years, Darryl was lost in the lies of the enemy.

Darryl’s turning point came when he surrendered completely to God. He began to study the Bible, allowing the Holy Spirit to convict him of his sinful ways. It was then he found his true identity—not in what he had accomplished but in who he was in Christ.

Through prayer, mentorship, and immersing himself in God’s Word, Darryl began to rebuild his life. The Ten Commandments became a framework for him to understand what God wanted for his life—not as a set of restrictions, but as a path to freedom.

- The commandment, “You shall have no other gods before Me,” convicted him to place God first, rather than his career, fame, or addictions.
- “Honor your father and mother” reminded him to mend broken family relationships and restore respect and love.
- “You shall not covet” taught him to find contentment and gratitude, replacing his past envy and selfish desires.

As Darryl followed these principles, his life was transformed. He overcame addiction, restored relationships, and became a minister, dedicating his life to sharing the message of redemption and God’s power to change lives.

“I was a heathen, I was a liar, I was a cheater, I was a womanizer, I was an alcoholic, I was a drug addict, I was a sinner, but I was saved by grace ... The Holy

Spirit taught me the Bible, and He empowered me to teach the Word of God,” Darryl says.

Reflecting on his transformation, Darryl often quotes Galatians 2:20:

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.”

His story is a powerful reminder that God’s commandments are pathways to freedom, stability, and peace.

Today, Darryl’s story inspires countless people struggling with addiction, brokenness, or despair. He credits the Bible—and particularly the moral foundation of the Ten Commandments—with helping him find his way back to God and a life of purpose. His testimony is a vivid reminder that God’s law is not just about rules but about transformation, freedom, and living in harmony with God’s will.

I invite you to make the Ten Commandments the foundation of your life. With the help of the Holy Spirit, you can glorify God with your life and love others as yourself.

Let us close with prayer:

“Heavenly Father, we thank You for the gift of your law. Thank You for giving us clear directions on how to honor You and live in peace and harmony with our fellow brothers and sisters. Empower us through the Holy Spirit to live lives that glorify your name and shine a light for a broken world to see. Guide us to share this truth with others and walk in the light of Your truth. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”