

General Church Education



Family Lesson: Exodus 19-20

The Ten

Commandments

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Family Lesson 2 - F

The Ten Commandments
Exodus 19 & 20
The Second Commandment

Family Talk:
The Lord Will Not Hold Him Innocent

by the Rev. Peter M. Buss

Why do the Ten Commandments contain only one severe warning like this: We are not to kill, or steal, or commit adultery, or lie; but “the Lord will not hold him innocent that takes His name in vain”?

Taking the Lord’s name in vain means using His names in angry, or violent, or even dirty speech. The Lord’s names are (among others) Jehovah, God, the Lord, Jesus, and Christ. They should be used in speaking about the Lord, in worshiping Him, and in praising Him. To use them in common speaking such as a swear word, or to express surprise, or anger, is to take His name in vain.

It is so common, isn’t it? People do it all the time. We find that there are people in the world who can’t talk without using the Lord’s names as swear words. Even religious people do it, and (sadly) some members of our own church may have done it. It happens so often that people tend to think it is a bad habit. It’s like smoking, or biting your nails—perhaps a bit worse. But everyone does it, so it’s not all that evil.

The Lord doesn’t say that. He said,

“You shall not take the name of the Lord Your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him innocent that takes His name in vain.”

In saying this, He ranks profanity—the abuse of the Lord’s names—as one of the most serious evils.

It is not just a bad habit. Perhaps with a very few people outside of the church, who have been brought up to think nothing of it and don’t know better, it could be a bad habit. But with most people, it is worse than that. Let us think of the fact that people take the Lord’s name in vain in front of religious people. This is not the way they behave normally. A person would not insult a friend’s wife, or mother, or father. He would know that is improper behavior. But he will insult that person’s God freely, without worrying how he feels. Why? Is that just a bad habit? Does he just do by habit what he knows offends the people who are listening?

It is a silly way to talk. To insult the Lord is childish. The Lord Himself isn't hurt by it, and people who put the Lord's names into their sentences all the time sound stupid, if you stop to listen to them. They think it makes them big, somehow – it is as if they are saying, “See how big I am, I can insult God.” That is a stupid way to behave, yet people who are normally sensible and not stupid, do this all the time. Why?

If New Church people do this, it means they ignore the most holy teachings they have. They have been taught from childhood to think of the Lord in a holy way, and now they are “insulting” Him every time they speak His name in vain. How did they start? Did they just slip into a bad habit? Hardly. You don't start something so different out of a bad habit.

What we *must* realize is that every time – every time a person takes the Lord's name in vain, hell loves it, and gives that person a delight in doing it. This is the reason it is so common – not because of a bad habit, not because of people not knowing better – but because hell loves us to insult the Lord, and gives us a delight in it. This is why normally thoughtful people offend their friends in this way when they would never do it in any other way. This is why normally intelligent people try to “act big” and succeed in looking stupid by taking the Lord's name in vain. They do it because the hells love it – and the hells make them insensitive, and the hells make them feel big.

Let us start, therefore, by seeing this evil in its proper light. It is not a bad habit, or a “thing big people do.” It is an evil, forbidden by the Lord, which the hells love us to do.

The Ten Commandments
Exodus 19 & 20
The Fourth Commandment

Family Talk:
Honor Your Father and Your Mother

You know what “father” and “mother” mean. You have a father and a mother. But perhaps you do not know what “honor” means. It means respect and love. Every year as you grow older, you learn more things and can do more things. And you can grow to love your parents more and more.

This is so important that the Lord has given people a Commandment—“Honor your father and your mother.” You have heard about the Ten Commandments. In a few years you will know all of these commandments by heart. You will say them many times. The Lord Himself spoke those Ten Commandments to the Children of Israel. He also wrote them with His finger on two tables of stone. Those two tables of stone were kept for a long time in the Ark in the Tabernacle. They were the most precious things the Children of Israel had.

The fourth Commandment is:

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

This Commandment teaches us that the father and mother we are to honor are more than the man and woman who are our “father” and “mother.” The country that the Lord has given us is “our motherland.” Those who really love their country are said to have “patriotism”, and to be “patriots.”

Now, why is our country like a father and mother to us? It is because our country feeds and protects us. It educates us and gives us work. It does many things for us that we cannot do for ourselves, just as fathers and mothers do in homes.

Who is the Father of all people – of men and women of all ages and of all children? The Lord is. This is why we call Him the “Heavenly Father.” Whether we say, “Our Father, Who art in the heavens”, or “Heavenly Father,” we mean the same Lord God. All of us are His children. Even all the angels are His children. They, too, call Him “Heavenly Father.”

But do we have a “Heavenly Mother?” Yes, the Church is our “Heavenly Mother.” The Lord Himself calls the Church His Bride and Wife. He says that it

is the “Mother” of all who learn from her the wonderful things taught in the Word.

So the Lord’s Commandment, “Honor your father and your mother,” means that we are to love our parents, the father and mother in the home. We are to love our country. And above all, we are to respect and love the Lord’s Church and the Lord Himself.

If we keep this Commandment, our days will “be long upon the land” which the Lord gives us. For we shall become angels and live happily in His kingdom of heaven.

The Ten Commandments
Exodus 19 & 20
Reading for Children

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Evelyn Stroh

(This brief teaching about the Ten Commandments is intended for children to read or for parents to read and tell to the little ones).

And now we will go with the Children of Israel on to Mount Sinai which they reached in the third month of their journeying, and pitched their tents in the wilderness beside the mountain.

And God called Moses up into the mountain.

Let us read first Chapters 19 and 20 of Exodus.

This is a tremendous and beautiful story. The Lord again used the forces of nature to create a great miracle when He spoke to Moses from the midst of the burning mountain.

The Ten Commandments were given in this way in order that the people should feel certain that these laws were not just the laws of men, but spiritual laws that came down from heaven from the Lord God. For these crude men would not have believed in any other way, and would not have preserved them and kept them holy from generation to generation.

Now you or I can't hear the sound of the Lord's voice in the burning mountain, but we can hear it deep within ourselves if we try. And He will show us all the signs and reasons why these commandments are true and holy, if only we will turn to Him in the Word and the Writings and really listen to Him with both heart and mind.

For the Lord has given the Writings which Swedenborg wrote, to unfold to us the full meaning of these commandments and show how every wise and good thing in the world is ordered by them.

Let us take them one by one and see what they may mean in our spiritual country, and what they would mean in every country in this world if people lived by them.

The First Commandment: *“You shall have no other gods before Me.”*

If you and I and all the world obeyed that in its full meaning, many things would happen. There would be only one religion. People would understand one another better and never quarrel over religion. Because having no God but the true One means seeing Him as He truly is and having no false ideas about Him. We are able to see God more nearly as He really is, now that the Writings have told us how the angels in heaven see Him, and our hope is that all the world may one day see Him that way also. But we have our small part to do in this, and that is to put away all the selfish wrong thoughts that draw our own minds into obscure thinking and doing, for this selfishness is really a form of worship and we are making other gods in our minds when we love ourselves most.

Let us each try to see God truly, and learn to love His law, and not forget that our church of the New Jerusalem is our tender mother who has taught us to see Him in the Writings and the Word.

The Second Commandment: *“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.”*

We know one thing that this means: that we should never swear or use the Lord’s names carelessly.

But it means more than that. It means we should keep holy all our thoughts and words about God and all His names, and that we should keep holy the Word which He has spoken in the Bible and the Writings.

It also means that we should not ask for selfish or wrong things when we pray to the Lord, and never to any wrong act in relation to His church.

We can all keep this commandment in many ways, even when we are very young, by not taking part when people make jokes about the Word, or about the Lord, or speak His name carelessly. We must not be angry when others do it, because they may not always understand how wrong they are, and they may not intend wickedness. But it may help others to see there is a better way, if we are brave enough to stand against it and keep His name holy ourselves.

The Third Commandment: *“Remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it holy.”*

The Children of Israel were commanded to keep the seventh day holy because Jehovah had made it the day of rest when He had accomplished the work of Creation, as you remember. It was impressed upon them especially so that they would not forget to keep some worship toward the Lord, for the tribes were very crude external men, and Moses had to keep continually reminding them that it was the Lord God who was leading them. Even so, they kept making images for themselves and bowing down to them.

We all need the reminder of the Sabbath to worship the Lord. We don't forget Him in so crude a way as the Israelites, but we all have many things we enjoy more than listening to the Word of the Lord. This is because our spiritual hunger for truth and good, is not so strong as our natural appetite for pleasure.

The Lord knows we forget too often that there is another life and that we are likely to put off too long making ourselves ready to live there, so He asks us to give a little part of one day in seven to remembering how He came to tell us about it, and how He has given us full measure of His Divine Truth from which to learn the way to heaven.

He loves all mankind, and wants all to know Him in His Glorified Humanity so that all may love Him in return.

So let us remember that, when we think of this commandment, and because of it, try to keep the Sabbath holy in our hearts even while we are doing other things. We can do this in our hearts every single day and not keep it just for Sundays. But we should try to make Sunday a happy day and join in worship of the Lord with all those who know Him. For it is a wonderful thing to think that on that day all mankind in some measure is kneeling before the Lord and listening to His Word in some form. It makes us have part in the heavenly choirs too, when we sing to Him in church.

The Fourth Commandment: *“Honor your father and your mother.”*

Fathers and mothers are our first teachers. They teach us to pray, and tell us about the Lord when we are very young, beside all the other things they do to take care of us and keep us well and happy. There have been some evil fathers and mothers, but most people who have little children are the “trying to be good” sort of people, and want to have their children know the Lord and learn His Commandments.

So even our fathers and mothers are for us as a kind of prophet of the Lord, just as Moses was for the Israelites. For parents too represent the Lord to very little children, who usually think of God in almost the same way as they do of their parents. At least they always learn to think of the Lord from what their parents tell them.

But as children grow up to be men and women other things little by little stand for them as prophets or teachers and become a spiritual parent Can you think what these might be?

Schools, and colleges and churches (especially churches, because there it is the Lord's Word which guards and guides us, and schools and colleges, except

those in the New Church too often ignore the Word and teach only the science of natural life.

Beside these, our country is to us a kind of parent whose laws and guardians protect us. But above all is the kingdom of the Lord which our church represents here on earth, and the Lord Himself.

Thus in our spiritual country it is the Lord who is our father and the church or the kingdom of heaven our mother, and it is to them that our deepest love belongs; and we should honor our natural parents because they correspond to these. But if we think of both natural and spiritual parents, we keep the commandment more truly.

This brings us to the end of the first four commandments which teach our duty toward the Lord. Next we will take up the other six which teach us our duty toward the neighbor.

The Fifth Commandment: “*You shall not murder.*”

We all know what this means in the outmost sense (that we must not intentionally do anything to cause anyone to die). But even this need a good deal of understanding, for we know that people sometimes have to go to war and kill other soldiers, and that sometimes very good men have to do this. And sometimes also good men have to shoot evil ones who try to kill or injure others or steal little children away from their homes. Perhaps we can see why this is.

Those who do this to protect innocent people, we know are not breaking this commandment. It is only right at such times to prevent someone from doing wickedness, when there is no other way to stop them. The laws of our country make these things clear and so does the Word, and every grown up person knows and understands these differences.

But there is never any excuse for *wanting* to kill anyone, and planning to do it with hatred, or for any reason at all except for defense of someone’s life or someone’s country.

This helps us see what is meant in a spiritual way by this commandment. Its real teaching is that we must not hate or desire to hurt anyone. It means too that we must not kill spiritually. Can you guess what that means?

Well, our spirits have life according to the good and truth we have in our minds from the Lord. So you see this commandment also means that we must never do anything to destroy that good and truth in anybody else.

For this reason we must never make fun of other people’s ideas about religion, even when we think we see they are wrong. Because, even though the ideas

may be false, there may be some good from the Lord conjoined with it, which makes a link between them and heaven through which they may be led toward heaven. And if we took that from them, it might break that precious link. It is always safe to tell people what we believe to be true, but never to hurt their own faith even when it is without clear understanding. For that is killing what spiritual life they have, and it is breaking this commandment spiritually. If we think of this, we will never feel proud and vain of even the spiritual truths we know; for that shows we very likely have less spiritual good from what we know, than these others might have who know less.

So let us always remember not to do or say anything that might kill any good love or impulse in anybody, even though they be foolish and ignorant in mind.

The Sixth Commandment: *“You shall not commit adultery.”*

To adulterate anything means to make it unclean. You will learn more of terrible ways in which people break this sixth commandment as you grow older, but just now we will talk of ways in which younger people may avoid breaking it.

It does not mean only soiling our hands and body, but soiling our minds. It means we should not let nasty or wrong thoughts stay in our minds, or speak them with our lips.

We cannot always keep them from popping into our minds, because Hell isn't far from any of us while we are living in this world; and there are also plenty of evil people in the world who say or write or make pictures of unclean things. But we can push them from our minds and protect ourselves from them if we try.

And the Commandment means also that we must keep our bodies pure and clean and not use them in any way that will make them the wrong kind of houses for our spirits. For your body is the house or habitation of your spirit, and your mind is where the spirit looks out upon this world and makes its choice between what is good and true and what is evil and false.

So we should try to keep the windows of our mind pure and bright and our house and the garden about it clean and lovely, and not filled with unclean rubbish where spiritual disease can lurk and destroy our spiritual health.

Then we will know that we are making ready to keep this sixth commandment truly when we are men and women grown and learn to cherish the most beautiful gift the Lord has given – Conjugal Love, which makes one man and one woman find and love each other for always, and make a home together, both in this world and in the next.

The Seventh Commandment: “You shall not steal.”

You don't need to be told what that means in the regular way. We all know it is wrong to take things that belong to other people. People are called thieves, who steal and are put in jail as punishment. Even countries can be thieves, when their armies go out and steal land and people from other countries. Too many things like that have been done by all the countries in the world at one time or another; and these things will always happen until all the people and all the countries really try to live by the Ten Commandments.

But we must remember that there are spiritual ways of stealing too, and that this commandment is a little like the one not to kill. For, if we take away anything that helps people grow rich in heaven from much love and Wisdom from the Lord, we make them poor there, and that is worse than making them poor here. For it spoils their spiritual life which goes on to eternity, while our natural life is only for a short time.

So we want to remember never to take away any good thought or desire in others, or to make them doubt the Lord; and never to feel it is too much trouble to give other people friendship and kindness, for these things are symbols of the Lord's love for men, and if we withhold them we take from others something of their trust and belief in God.

And inmosty in this commandment is the thought that we should never pretend even to ourselves, that the good and truth we have is from ourselves instead of from the Lord. For that is stealing from the Lord and it shuts us away from heaven, and closes us up in hell, just as people here are closed up in jail when they steal naturally.

The Eighth Commandment: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Bearing false witness against anybody, is telling lies about them. Now you and I know that telling lies is saying something that isn't true. People who do that often are not trusted by anyone. Neither are people who make promises they never keep, nor are countries either.

Lies may be big ones or little ones, horrid ones or just mild ones that are sometimes called fibs. There are none of them right, but the worst kind of all are the “false witness” kind which the Lord especially commands us not to do.

These are the kind that say something not true about people or countries in order to hurt them or defraud them, or get them in trouble. So again you see that it is what is in our hearts or minds that makes the evil.

Just as in the case of “you shall not murder,” or “steal,” there are times when it is right to do what the commandment appears to condemn. For it could be right to lie to save somebody’s life or their suffering, or to prevent a great wrong being done them. For instance if we met a robber and knew he was trying to overtake some innocent person to do him harm, and he asked us where he was, would we be right or wrong if we told the robber the truth? We can all see the answer to that. So you see the need to understand that it is always the intention in our hearts that counts in breaking or keeping the commandments.

You will see the difference between those kinds of lying (the kind, useful lies and the evil ones) more clearly as you grow older and have more experience. But what we need to remember now is that we should never lie if there is any other possible thing to do that will not hurt anyone else. And sometimes even then we can do better than lying, by just keeping still and saying nothing at all.

And the kinds of lying we must try hardest not to do are the kind that will trouble our conscience – that inner part of our minds where the influx from the Lord is troubled when we do wrong, and which gives us a feeling of uneasiness in the breast.

It isn’t always easy to keep from lying, but if we make a habit of trying to tell the truth; and if when we forget sometimes we make a mistake, we can say, “I will tell the truth. It was this way.” Then we will be keeping the commandment and will have the trust of the angels in our spiritual country, and the trust of our friends in this world.

And most of all we will have the trust of the Lord.

The Ninth Commandment: *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s house,” and*

The Tenth Commandment: *“You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his manservant nor his maidservant nor his ox nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.”*

These two commandments go together, and were given to the Children of Israel in these words because the things mentioned were the kind of things they had for riches and possessions. But also because these things represent all the kinds of riches or possessions natural and spiritual which any man may possess.

We know that to covet means to be envious, and to want what other people have, and to be unhappy because they have them instead of we ourselves.

But there is a deeper meaning inside this that has to do with the way our spirits feel and think. It means we should not let that “I want what I want when

I want it” feeling rule over our minds; and that we must try to make usefulness and good work more important than riches or power; and the love of our neighbors more important than loving ourselves.

If we do this we will be so busy and happy that we won’t have many thoughts about coveting anything, and the Lord will give us spiritual gifts that are much more precious than what we may possess in this world.

But this does not mean that we must not have any possession or want to earn more and acquire things honestly. It just means we must not make those things of first importance, but must only desire them for the use we can make of them to help us perform our use in this world. We all need good food and clothing and homes that are comfortable, and we need minds well stored with knowledge, and we also need some pleasure and recreation to keep both our minds and bodies healthy and happy.

We must not however put our own pleasures in the first place, and our neighbor’s and the Lord’s in the last. We must strive to do some use in the world which is a good use, that will serve the Lord and the neighbor, our country and our Church.

Now, just one little thought more about the Ten Commandments. Isn’t it clear to see that all the wrong things in the world come from breaking them?

The laws of every nation are based upon them in some measure, but those who govern the countries too often forget to follow them. What a wonderful world it would be, if every nation and every person kept the Commandments!

We should be deeply thankful in our hearts that the Lord has given us, in the Writings, new understanding of the power and meaning of these laws, and should do all in our power to spread their knowledge. We each can help by striving to live our lives by the commandments in their true meaning.

We cannot do it from ourselves alone. But if we turn our hearts toward the Lord Jesus Christ in His Glorified Humanity and ask Him to help us draw near to His Holy Mountain which represents heaven, we can hear His voice calling to us in these Laws He has given to men.

The Ten Commandments
Exodus 19 & 20
LEVEL 1 – LETTERS THAT ARE PICTURES

MATERIALS NEEDED

Crayons

LETTERS THAT ARE PICTURES

Let us talk about the Hebrew letters in the Lords name:

"I am the **Lord your God**" is the way the Ten Commandments begin.

When we say **LORD** in Hebrew, it sounds like **YEHOWAH**.

It is a word made up of four letters. Two of the letters are the same. (Notice that Hebrew reads from right to left.)

Do you know that those letters are really pictures?



The first one (called a yodh) is really a picture of a **hand**. When we see it, we are to think of hands.

The letter that appears twice is really a picture of a **window** in a house. The sound (like an English H) is of wind blowing. That letter appears twice in the Lord's name because it has the idea of the breath of life.

The one other letter is a picture of a **nail** or hook for joining things together. The Hebrew word for "and" is just this letter by itself, because the word "and" joins things together.

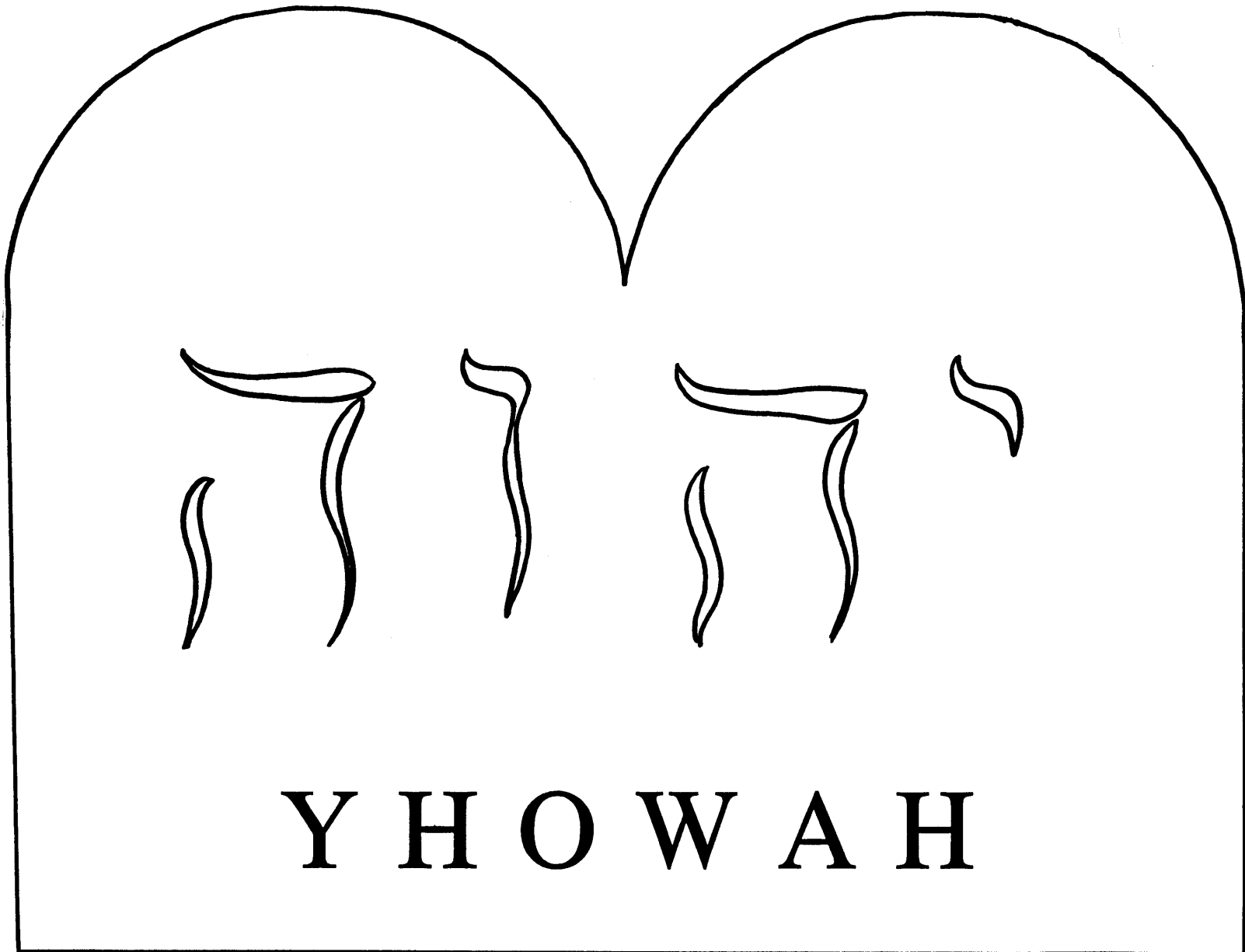
And so the letters have:

a hand - showing the Lord's care and power

a window - showing the life breathing in from the Lord

a nail - meaning a joining together

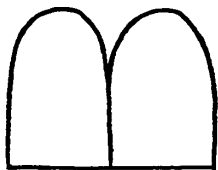
On the next page you will see the Lord's name in Hebrew.
Can you find the hand, the two windows, and the nail in the Lord's name?
Would you like to keep it just like it is, or color it?



The Ten Commandments
Exodus 19 & 20
Project #1
LEVEL 2 – MOUNT SINAI DIORAMA

Find a box. A shoebox, or grocery carton, or even an opened cereal box will do.

Take the box outside to a spot where a little digging won't matter. Let your child fill it with a mound of dirt. Shape this mound into Mount Sinai. It is in the desert, so it will not need grass and trees, but your child may adorn his diorama if he wishes.



Cut out the blocks of figures below and Moses, or make figures out of clay if you have enough clay. Arrange the Israelites at the bottom of the mountain. Walk Moses up to the top. Using some clay or playdough*, make two tables of stone. (* recipes on the next page)

The Lord gave them to Moses. Your child can illustrate this by putting the two tables on the Word and then carrying them to Moses.

By building and acting this scene, your child will learn a basic but very important truth:

The Lord gave the Ten Commandments to Moses on top of Mount Sinai.



Recipes for playdough:

Recipe #1:

Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ cup salt
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour
2 tablespoons water

Recipe #2:

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup salt
3 tablespoons powdered alum
2 cups water
3 cups flour (or more)

Mix salt and water and bring to a simmer. Remove from heat and add alum immediately. Mix part of the flour into hot mixture, then knead in the rest of the flour. This mix may be kept for long periods of time if stored tightly wrapped in plastic bags.

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 19 & 20

Project # 2

LEVEL 2 – THE LORD GIVES THE COMMANDMENTS

MATERIALS NEEDED

Paper

Paints or crayons or craypas

Briefly re-tell the story of the Lord's giving the Ten Commandments.

Go through them all, so that your child understands simply the basic laws.

1. Use paints, crayons or craypas to illustrate one of these:

- a) Moses on the mountain, receiving the Ten Commandments
- b) Mount Sinai with the Lord speaking in thundering and lightning
- c) Moses bringing the tablets down from Mount Sinai
- d) One of the Commandments

2. Learn one or more of the enclosed Ten Commandment songs.

All That the Lord Has Spoken, The Two Great Commandments and The Fourth Commandment are from *First Songs for Little Children*. The Ten Commandments is from Lori and John Odhner's *Songs from the Word*.*

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 19 & 20

LEVEL 3 THE LORD GAVE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

MATERIALS NEEDED

Colored pencils or markers, Glue, and Scissors

The Lord gave the Ten Commandments



The words of the Ten Commandments are written in *Exodus* 20:1-17 for all people to read and obey. *Exodus* 31:18 tells us where the Ten Commandments, also called The Testimony, were first written.

“And when He had made an end of speaking with him on Mount Sinai, He gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God” (*Exodus* 31:18).

The Lord came down upon Mount Sinai with thunder and lightning and thick clouds so that the people would know that these laws were from Him alone. They are not man-made laws; they are the Lord’s laws.

The Lord wants all people to remember and do what He wrote in the Ten Commandments.

The Two Tables of Stone

The Ten Commandments were written on tables or tablets of stone. Stone is hard and lasts for a long time. By writing the Ten Commandments on stone the Lord taught that they are truths of the Word which last forever. They are to be written on every person’s memory and life.

The first Table teaches us how we are to worship the Lord.

The second Table teaches us how the Lord wants us to treat other people.

Projects

1. Learn to say the Ten Commandments as a recitation.

You will find them on page 3. This will take a while, but if you learn a little bit every day you will soon be able to say all the Commandments.

2. Make a model of the tablets of stone with Hebrew words written on them.

Hebrew was the language the Children of Israel spoke and understood. The language we speak and understand is English.

English is written or read starting at the left edge of a page, moving to the right. Hebrew is written or read starting at the right edge of a page, moving to the left.

Hebrew books open the opposite way from English books, as if you were opening the book from the back first.

The model you are making is sort of like a Hebrew book. Hebrew words are written on the “front” cover (we would think it was the back cover on English books). You will glue Hebrew words on the inside of the book.

- a) Start with the paper with the tablets drawn on it (page 4). Cut out the tablets along the dark lines. Color in the Hebrew letters on the “front” cover.
- b) Next, color the Hebrew letters on the other large piece of paper (page 5).
- c) Cut out the Commandments that you have colored in order, one at a time, starting with the 1st Commandments (all the Commandments are numbered), and glue each Commandment on the inside on the correct tablet. *(Next to each Commandment it tells you on which tablet, and where on the tablet, to glue it.)*
- d) Your finished “tables of stone” can be displayed standing up because of the centerfold. It would make a nice background for your copy of the Word or worship area.

3. Learn the Ten Commandments in Hebrew.

On pages 6 and 7 you will find the commandments in Hebrew writing, with the Hebrew pronunciation and the English translation.

Use these pages, and the enclosed tape recording, to help you learn to say the **Ten Commandments in Hebrew**. *It will take effort and hard work! See if you can do it!*

The Ten Commandments

And God spoke all these words, saying,

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

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.

The Ten Commandments
Exodus 19 & 20
LEVEL 4 –BEARING FALSE WITNESS

Note the difference between these two statements:

- A) He is fast.
- B) He is like a bullet.

And between these two:

- A) It is cold.
- B) It is like a block of ice.

Did you notice that in each case sentence B uses a comparison?

There is a book of the Writings that uses a lot of comparisons. It is called the *True Christian Religion*.

You could say that someone who bears false witness (someone who lies) is “bad.” But you could also say that someone who lies is like _____.

Well, when the *True Christian Religion* talks about this commandment, it says that someone who lies is like:

- ...someone who pretends to be friendly but carries a dagger behind his back
- OR
- ...someone who gives you a glass of water but puts poison in it. (TCR 324)

Someone who does not use the Ten Commandments is like:

- ... a ship with nothing in it but mud (TCR 534).

Someone who keeps the Ten Commandments is like:

- ...a ship that carries silver and gold and precious stones.

Someone who does not know the truth, but who at least tries to keep the Commandments, is like:

- ... a good tree, but with not very much fruit.

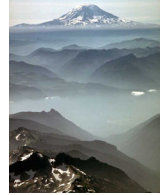
What happens to that person after death? Because he or she does not know very much, their “good fruit” is not very much. But still that sincere effort to live up to the commandments makes them ready for good things in the other world. The Lord can take just a tiny bit of good in a person and grow it into wonderful things. The Lord teaches us that in the spiritual world such a person may at first look like they are clothed in garments of a red color. But when they have had a chance to learn true and good things their garments look purple with a beautiful golden glow. (TCR 537)

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO KEEP THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Application

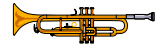
Your project to go with the Ten Commandments reading is to get a glimpse of how objects mentioned in the Word each have a special meaning. They tell us that something about our mind or spirit is like something in this world that we can see with our eyes. Here are some examples:

A mountain: Our love for the Lord is like a mountain. That is why the Ten Commandments were given on a mountain. We should keep the commandments because we love the Lord.



A fire: This can have a good meaning and a bad meaning. Love is like a fire that warms us. But it can also be like hatred that burns us up.

The sound of a trumpet: Truth from heaven is like the sound of a trumpet.



Egypt: Knowledge – the things that we learn – is like Egypt. The Lord does not want us to stay in Egypt (just knowing things). The Lord wants us to come up out of Egypt – that’s when we use our knowledge and do what we know is right. In the commandments the Lord tells us that He brought us out of the land of Egypt.

A cloud: Something that is hard to understand is like a very dark cloud. But when we understand something, especially something true from the Word, it is like a cloud with light shining in it. Clouds are mentioned many times in the Word because they have to do with the way truth appears to us.



Lightning and thunder: The Lord’s truth is like thunder and lightning. It is very powerful; sometimes it shakes us. To the evil it can seem frightening, but to the good it is striking and awesome.

The number 6: This number has to do with trying hard. “Six days you shall labor and do all your work.” It has to do with fighting hard against evil, and not giving up.

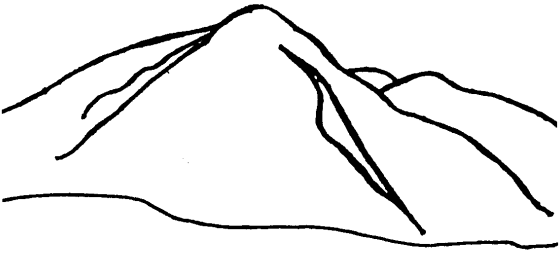
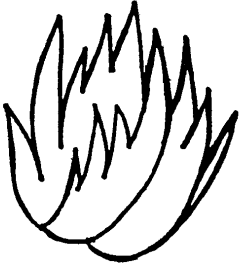
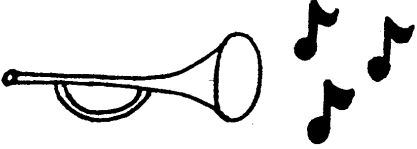
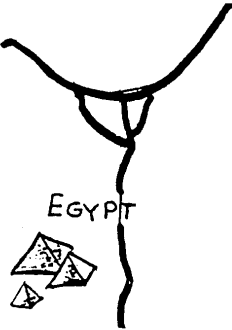

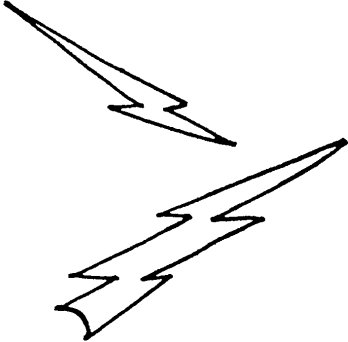
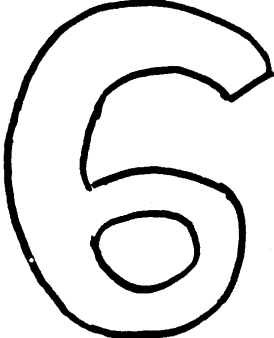
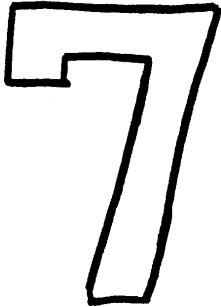
The number 7: This number has to do with rest. “And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.” There is rest and peace when we have succeeded with the Lord’s help.

Flashcards

The flashcards on the next page have pictures of the objects mentioned above. The flashcards on the page after that have the meanings for the objects. Cut up the cards and practice matching each object with its meaning.

Feel free to make more than one set, and use them for a Memory Game, or to play a card game like Go Fish.

Our love for the Lord	Love—or its opposite, hatred
Truth from heaven	Knowledge (the things that we learn)
The way truth appears to us (something we understand)	The power of the Lord's truth
Trying hard	Rest or Peace

The Ten Commandments
Exodus 19 & 20
LEVEL 5 – DEEPER MEANINGS

Materials Needed
Scissors
Stapler or paper clips

The Ten Commandments and the Jewish Church



The Lord gave the Ten Commandments to the Israelitish Church on Mt. Sinai. He gave them the instructions for the building of the tabernacle. The commandments were to be kept in the Ark in the Holy of Holies so they would know that God commands these things to be done.

The Ten Commandments and the Christian Church

When the Lord came into the world, He taught the Christian Church that it is not enough to obey the commandments just literally—they must be obeyed in spirit as well.

Look up these passages and identify which of the Ten Commandments the Lord was referring to in each case.

Matthew 5:27 & 28 _____

Matthew 5:21 & 22 _____

Matthew 5:33-35 _____

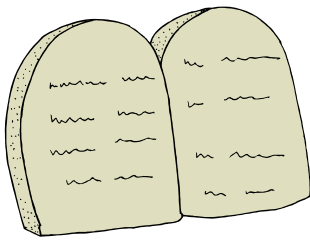
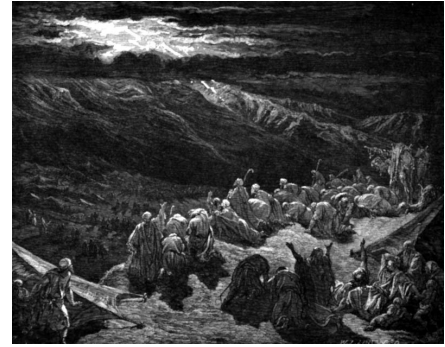
The Ten Commandments and the New Church

The Laws in the Ten Commandments existed among many nations of the world. No nation can survive if its people are allowed to murder, steal, commit adultery, and bear false witness without punishment.

If these laws already existed in many places, then why were they given in such a memorable manner from Mt. Sinai?

To find the answer, read the following quotation from the *True Christian Religion* 282:

One might therefore be amazed that these laws, which are universally known on earth, were proclaimed in such a miraculous fashion by Jehovah Himself from Mount Sinai. But pay attention: they were proclaimed in such a miraculous fashion, so that it should be known that those laws were not just civil and moral legislation, but also Divine laws, so that acting against them was not only wrongdoing the neighbor, that is, one's fellow citizens and society, but also sinning against God. So by being proclaimed by Jehovah from Mount Sinai they became religious laws.



It is not all that hard to obey the Ten Commandments in their literal meaning. Many people do not murder, steal, commit adultery or bear false witness. Most governments will take action against those who do. Then why were they given in such a memorable manner? You just read the answer from *True Christian Religion*. Write it here briefly in your own words.

The deeper meanings of the Ten Commandments:

The Lord has given the New Church new instruction in the Ten Commandments. He teaches us what each commandment means on deeper levels. The *natural level* is what the words say, the *spiritual level* tells us how to love our neighbor, and the *celestial level* tells us how to love the Lord.

Enclosed are four work sheets:

Purple sheet, with the Ten Commandments printed **in order**.
(*9th and 10th are together on one section - see TCR 325 for the reason.*)

Green sheet, with the natural senses of the Commandments, **not in order**.

Yellow sheet, with the spiritual senses of the Commandments, **not in order**.

Blue sheet, with the celestial senses of the Commandments, **not in order**.

Take each of the four pages and cut them into the nine sections indicated. Figure out which internal senses go with each literal sense and staple or clip them together.

(*If you get stumped, you may find the answers in TCR 291-32.*)

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

<p>1.</p> <p><i>You shall have no other gods before Me.</i></p>	<p>2.</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>3.</p> <p><i>Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.</i></p>
<p>4.</p> <p><i>Honor your father and your mother that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.</i></p>	<p>5.</p> <p><i>You shall not murder.</i></p>	<p>6.</p> <p><i>You shall not commit adultery.</i></p>
<p>7.</p> <p><i>You shall not steal.</i></p>	<p>8.</p> <p><i>You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.</i></p>	<p>9 & 10.</p> <p><i>You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.</i></p>

THE NATURAL SENSE

<p>To take the name of the Lord in vain means abusing the Lord's name in conversations, and swearing and cursing..</p>	<p>You must not kill anyone, nor inflict upon any wound from which a person may die or be maimed. You must not harm a person's name or reputation. All enmity, hatred and revenge is murder.</p>	<p>You must not act the part of a false witness before a judge; nor lie; nor be a hypocrite; nor defame the neighbor to the injury of his honor, fame and name; nor plot or premeditate evil against anyone.</p>
<p>You must not steal, or rob, or take away anyone's goods secretly. It also includes any kind of illegitimate gain and fraud in paying taxes and debts.</p>	<p>Idols must not be worshiped. No man dead or living should be worshiped as a god. No one except God and nothing but what comes from God is to be loved above all things.</p>	<p>Six days are for man and his labors, and the seventh for the Lord and for rest for man.</p>
<p>Honor parents, be obedient to them, be devoted to them, return thanks to them for the natural and spiritual benefits they confer. In a broader sense, honor kings and magistrates. In the broadest sense, love your country.</p>	<p>These two commandments look back to all the preceding ones, and teach and command that evil actions must not be done, nor even longed for; for if anyone refrains from evil actions, but still longs to do them, he actually does them.</p>	<p>You must not commit adultery, nor think or do or speak about obscene or lascivious things.</p>

THE SPIRITUAL SENSE

<p>You must not adulterate the goods of the Word or falsify its truths.</p>	<p>In the spiritual sense this commandments forbids all longings which are against the spirit, that is, those which oppose the spirituality of the church, which has to do with faith and charity.</p>	<p>No other God than the Lord Jesus Christ is to be worshiped. The Lord our Savior is Jehovah Himself, who is at once Creator, Redeemer and Regenerator.</p>
<p>A person's spiritual labor continues as long as the fight against what is evil and false in the person lasts. But when a person is regenerated there is rest.</p>	<p>You must not in any way kill or destroy the soul of anyone. There are many ways to do this: for example, turning a person away from God, religion, and Divine worship. Or persuading anyone to hate and reject these.</p>	<p>Revere and love God and the church. God, who is the Father of all, is meant by "father" and the church by "mother."</p>
<p>You must not persuade others that false ideas of faith are true and that evil ways of life are good, and that true ideas are false and good ways are evil.</p>	<p>You must not introduce anything that the Word teaches, and by which the Lord is worshiped, into frivolous conversation, or speak lies about it, for this reviling and blaspheming God, and His name.</p>	<p>You must not deprive others of the truths they get from their faith. Spiritual thieves steal truth by insinuating false ideas.</p>

CELESTIAL SENSE

<p>In the celestial sense, "father" means our Lord Jesus Christ, and "mother" the Lord's church spread throughout the whole world.</p>	<p>You must not take away from the Lord His Divine power, nor claim for yourself His merit and righteousness.</p>	<p>You must not speak against the Lord and the Word, thus banish truth itself from the church; for the Lord is Truth itself, as is the Word.</p>
<p>Jehovah the Lord is infinite and eternal. He is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. He is the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End, who was, and who is, and who is to be. He is love itself, consequently life itself, thus the one only Being from whom all things are.</p>	<p>You must not be rashly angry with the Lord nor hate Him, nor wish to blot out His name.</p>	<p>You must not blaspheme against the Lord Jesus Christ, or against the holiness of the Word. Blasphemy of the Spirit is not forgiven.</p>
<p>All the things we are told not to do in the previous commandments must not be longed for.</p>	<p>At the end of our work against evil we are linked with the Lord and protected from hell. There is peace.</p>	<p>You must not deny the holiness of the Word or profane it. This is done by those who in heart ridicule all things of the church and of religion.</p>