



## And God spoke all these words:

C1: “I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. “You shall have no other gods before me.

C2: “You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God,

C3: “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God”

C4: “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.”

C5: “Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.”

C6: “You shall not murder”

C7: “You shall not commit adultery”

C8: “You shall not steal.”

C9: “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.”

C10: “You shall not covet your neighbour’s house. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.”

Exodus 20 & Deuteronomy 5

# A Reader & Study Guide

Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Write down these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel.’ Moses was there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without eating bread or drinking water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant—the Ten Commandments. Ex 34:27–28.

## Living the Ten Commandments

### Which is the greatest commandment?

On one occasion an expert in the law, tested Jesus with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ By the First Century AD, the Pharisees had hedged the Ten Commandments with 613 rules to keep. Some were positive injunctions some where negative prohibitions.

Jesus answers the questioner, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.’ This summarises well the Ten Commandments, four directed to loving God, six directed to loving our neighbour. In fact if we got the First Commandment right all the others would fall into place.

Jesus shows us his respect for the Ten Commandants and the law when he teaches, ‘Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven”

This series aims to help us think through how a Christian applies the Ten Commandment to their lives. We want to read them and apply them through Christian eyes. We want to read them in their historical context. Moses delivers the Ten Commandments twice; first to the generation directly rescued out of slavery in Egypt, in Exodus 20; and second to the next generation 40 years later on the brink of entering the promised land in Deuteronomy 5. They are received by God’s people after they were rescued. God rescues his people and then shows them how he wants them to live. This is a critical context for our reading. Further this series will help us apply the Ten Commandments as Christian Scripture through the lens of Jesus. In the New Testament Jesus resets the Ten Commandments in their proper place and shows us how they apply to the Christian life. Each week will explore a commandment through the Bible with a set of readings. We will particularly focus in through the lens of Jesus and his applications. We will explore the implications of each commandment for us and

current issues. There will be food for thought and discussion along the way.

### Traps for unwary Readers

As we read the Ten Commandments there are traps to avoid for the unwary reader. Here are four, you might be able to identify others:

**Legalism:** Legalism is the mistake of reading the Ten Commandments out of context as a set of laws to keep and impress God with. First Century Pharisees were the masters of legalism. The commandments were hedged by 613 rules. Legalism looks at being saved through works ie. keeping the commandments. The Gospel teaches us we are not saved by law keeping, we are saved by faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour who perfectly kept the law for us. By faith we are credited with his righteousness, the great exchange.

**Moralism:** Moralism is the mistake of reading the Ten Commandments as rules to live by independent of living for God. “Christian values” is the phrase commonly used in our community to acknowledge the Ten Commandments but keep God at a distance. It is a selective reading of the Ten Commandments that ignores the fact the first four commandments are all about loving God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, in the context of rescue. God challenges the moralist who keeps the law outwardly but their heart is far from God. E.g. Isaiah 29, Ezekiel 36, Mark 7, 2 Peter 2 etc... The rich young ruler walks away sad having his moralism exposed.

**Lawlessness:** Lawlessness is the mistake of reading the Ten Commandments as irrelevant to the Christian life post Jesus. This is the error of our age flowing out of our context. Lawlessness ignores the Ten commandments. Paul reminds us the law is good it shows us what God is like, and how we should live, and why we need a Saviour. Jesus shows us the Ten Commandments have a place in the Christian life.

**Hypocrisy:** Hypocrisy is the mistake of reading the Ten Commandments applying them to others but not to yourself. Hypocrisy is rebuked all through the Bible. Paul confronts hypocrites in Romans 2, “You who preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that people should not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? The Bible rebukes hypocrisy.

**How are you at risk at being tempted by each of these dangers in reading and applying the Ten Commandments?**

## Benefits of the 10Cs for the Christian Life

J. I. Packer helps us to see the benefits of reading the Ten Commandments for the Christian. He identifies at least three:

One, They show us what sort of people God wants us to be? God's character is reflected in the Ten Commandments. They show us what God is like, what actions God loves, and what actions God hates. Through the Ten Commandments God teaches us how to be his people.

Two, they show us what sort of life is natural for us. God's purposes in creation are reflected in the Ten Commandments, our lives are best lived in joyful obedience to the law, reflecting the good will of our Creator God. There is joy not drudgery in obedience to his commands. This is the blessed life.

Three, they expose our failure and point us to our Saviour. The Ten Commandments can't save us but rather they point us to our need for a Saviour, the risen Lord Jesus. Where we struggle to keep the commandments we are pointed to the gospel of Jesus for our forgiveness and restoration. The law is good but it exposes our need for a Saviour.

This series will challenge us to apply the Ten Commandments as Christian Scripture, avoid some of the traps, encourage us to love God, and serve our neighbour. The goal of the Christian studying The Ten Commandments is to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself."

"God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in them. This is how love is made complete among us so that we will have confidence on the day of judgment: in this world we are like Jesus. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love. We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister."

1 John 4:16–21

Pray with us that God might write these laws on our hearts by his Holy Spirit.

GP 2015

## Reader 1 No Other Gods but me

And God spoke all these words: 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. 'You shall have no other gods before me. Ex 20:1–3.

Moses summoned all Israel and said: Hear, Israel, the decrees and the laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. It was not with our ancestors that the LORD made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today. The LORD spoke to you face to face out of the fire on the mountain. (At that time I stood between the LORD and you to declare to you the word of the LORD, because you were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain.) And he said: 'I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. 'You shall have no other gods before me. Deut 5:1-7

Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the door-frames of your houses and on your gates. Dt 6:4–9.

This is what the LORD says— Israel's King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty: I am the first and I am the last; apart from me there is no God. Is 44:6.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. Jn 1:1–5.

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.... No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in the closest relationship with the Father, has made him known. Jn 1:14,18.

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. I have brought you glory on earth by finish-

ing the work you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. Jn 17:3–5.

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, ‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’ ‘The most important one,’ answered Jesus, ‘is this: “Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” The second is this: “Love your neighbour as yourself.” There is no commandment greater than these.’ ‘Well said, teacher,’ the man replied. ‘You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbour as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.’ When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, ‘You are not far from the kingdom of God.’ And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions. Mk 12:28–34.

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, ‘Peace be with you!’ Then he said to Thomas, ‘Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe.’ Thomas said to him, ‘My Lord and my God!’ Then Jesus told him, ‘Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.’

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: “Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is ”the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.- Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.” Acts 4

The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the

church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. Col 1:15–20.

I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. 1 Ti 2:1–6.

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also...” “No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. Matthew 6:19-24

**How do you respond to the person who says ‘all roads lead to God’, or ‘God is a figment of human religious imagination’? What conversations have you had? How would a Christian answer these views of God?**

**Read the passages**

**The Commandment**

What is the thrust of the First Commandment?

How does C1 introduce God to us?

How does context shape our reading of the first commandment?

Read Exodus 19, Deut 5:1-7, What do we learn about C1?

Why does God give this prohibition?

The positive flipside of C1 is expressed in Deut 6:4-9 What does it teach us about God? What does it teach us about how to respond to God?

From the readings which God is C1 talking about here ?

Which Gods aren’t we talking about here ?

How can you distinguish between God and gods?

### **Applied by Jesus**

How does Jesus understand the first commandment in Mark 12:28-34 ?  
How does Jesus apply C1? How does Jesus respond to the law?

What does the New Testament add to our understanding of the One God ?  
What do we learn about God through Jesus ? In our Readings what is Jesus relationship to the One God?

### **Implications for us**

What other 'gods' are we tempted to follow and worship in our days ?

What were the contemporary 'other gods' of Moses, Isaiah, Jesus, Paul, Us ?

How can money become a 'god'? Why does Jesus warn us of this ?

What are the clues you worship something as a 'god'?

What implications does C1 have in our multi-faith, multicultural community?

How does C1 help Christians respond to the gods of other faiths?

### **Food For Thought: How would you respond to this?**

Monotheism makes me grouchy. I don't trust any religion that makes God look like one of the ruling class. I guess I'm a pagan or an animist. -  
**Gloria Steinem**

There is no God. But lots of people believe in God. Why? Because they want consolation so they project or objectify their longings and call this God. So this non-existent God is simply the projection of human longings.  
-**Ludwig Feuerbach**

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be. **Anne Frank**

Whatever your heart clings to and confides in, that is really your God, your functional Saviour. — **Martin Luther**

“When you fast, do not look somber as the hypocrites do, for they disfigure their faces to show men they are fasting. I tell you the truth, they have received their reward in full. But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face, so that it will not be obvious to men that you are fasting, but only to your Father, who is unseen; and your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. Matthew 6:16-20

The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness, since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse. For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen. Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. **Romans 1:18-27**

The Lord's message rang out from you not only in Macedonia and Achaia—your faith in God has become known everywhere. Therefore we do not need to say anything about it, for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us. They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead—Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath. **1 Th 1:8-10.**

Thomas said to him, “Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?” Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.” **John 14:5-6**

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to feel sympathy for our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. **Heb 4:15–16.**

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. **Ro 12:1–2.**

**What are different ways humans try to approach God ?**

**How do the different faiths approach God?**

**Are there right and wrong ways of approaching God? List a few**

**How do you connect with God?**

**Read the passages**

### **The Commandment**

If C1 warns against worshipping false gods C2 warns against approaching God the wrong way, on human terms and not God’s terms. What is the thrust of the second commandment? Why is God offended by the use of idols?

What does the golden calf incident in Exodus 32 teach us about God’s response to the use of idols and images?

How do the prophets warn about idols and images ?

How do you feel about C2’s response to the use of images? Why the consequences? Why does this approach to God offend him?

### **Applied by Jesus**

Why is Jesus harsh about the way the religious leaders approach God?

What mistake have the Pharisees and teachers of the Lord made in approaching God? How does Jesus address this?

How does Romans 1 unpack the issues addressed by C2? What mistake has humanity made in approaching God? How do we see this expressed in our day? What is the right way to approach God according to the New Testament? How does Hebrews 4 help us see this?

### **Reader 2 C2 Flee Idols**

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20 4-6

Moses said to Aaron, ‘What did these people do to you, that you led them into such great sin?’ Do not be angry, my lord,’ Aaron answered. ‘You know how prone these people are to evil. They said to me, “Make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don’t know what has happened to him.” So I told them, “Whoever has any gold jewellery, take it off.” Then they gave me the gold, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf!’ Moses saw that the people were running wild and that Aaron had let them get out of control and so become a laughing-stock to their enemies. So he stood at the entrance to the camp and said, ‘Whoever is for the Lord, come to me.’ And all the Levites rallied to him. Exodus 32:21-26

Hezekiah did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, just as his father David had done. He removed the high places, smashed the sacred stones and cut down the Asherah poles. He broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been burning incense to it. (It was called Nehushtan.) Hezekiah trusted in the LORD, the God of Israel. There was no one like him among all the kings of Judah, either before him or after him. He held fast to the LORD and did not stop following him; he kept the commands the LORD had given Moses. And the LORD was with him; he was successful in whatever he undertook. 2 Ki 18:3–7.

For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;  
he is to be feared above all gods.  
For all the gods of the nations are idols,  
but the LORD made the heavens.  
Splendour and majesty are before him;  
strength and glory are in his sanctuary. Ps 96:4–6.

All who make idols are nothing, and the things they treasure are worthless. Those who would speak up for them are blind; they are ignorant, to

their own shame. Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit nothing? People who do that will be put to shame; such craftsmen are only human beings. Let them all come together and take their stand; they will be brought down to terror and shame. Isaiah 44:9-11

Then the Lord said to him, 'Now then, you Pharisees clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside you are full of greed and wickedness. You foolish people! Did not the one who made the outside make the inside also? But now as for what is inside you—be generous to the poor, and everything will be clean for you. 'Woe to you Pharisees, because you give God a tenth of your mint, rue and all other kinds of garden herbs, but you neglect justice and the love of God. You should have practiced the latter without leaving the former undone. 'Woe to you Pharisees, because you love the most important seats in the synagogues and respectful greetings in the market-places. Woe to you, because you are like unmarked graves, which people walk over without knowing it.' One of the experts in the law answered him, 'Teacher, when you say these things, you insult us also.' Jesus replied, 'And you experts in the law, woe to you, because you load people down with burdens they can hardly carry, and you yourselves will not lift one finger to help them. Lk 11:39–46.

'Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!" Mt 7:21–23.

The Pharisees and some of the teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem gathered round Jesus and saw some of his disciples eating food with hands that were defiled, that is, unwashed. (The Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat unless they give their hands a ceremonial washing, holding to the tradition of the elders. When they come from the market-place they do not eat unless they wash. And they observe many other traditions, such as the washing of cups, pitchers and kettles. So the Pharisees and teachers of the law asked Jesus, 'Why don't your disciples live according to the tradition of the elders instead of eating their food with defiled hands?' He replied, 'Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: "These people honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules." You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions.' Mark 7:1-8

## Implications for us

What are wrong ways we approach God?

What is the consequence of approaching God the wrong way?

What is the appropriate way to approach God ?

How can we avoid legalism, moralism, hypocrisy, and lawlessness in our approach to God ?

How are we tempted to make idols of God in our minds? How does C2 challenge this ?

How does C2 Challenge you today?

## Food For Thought

Ambition is an idol, on whose wings great minds are carried only to extreme; to be sublimely great or to be nothing. **Shakti Gawain**

You can safely assume you've created God in your own image when it turns out that God hates all the same people you do.— **Anne Lamott**

The diversity of religions...speaks to a truth-that all people in every time and place have felt the need to respond to the infinite... the various faith traditions are the 'how' of that response...All religions are truthful in far more important ways than some of their propositions are false“ -**Chris McGillion**, religious affairs columnist Sydney Morning Herald, March 18, 2003.

Man's mind is like a store of idolatry and superstition; so much so that if a man believes his own mind it is certain that he will forsake God and forge some idol in his own brain. - **John Calvin**

## Reader 3 C3 Hallowed be your name

And God spoke all these words:

“You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. Exodus 20:7

So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt.” .....Moses said to God, “Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ Then what shall I tell them?” ....God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: ‘I AM

has sent me to you.” God also said to Moses, “Say to the Israelites, ‘The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation. Exodus 3:10-15

Then the LORD said to Moses, “Get up early in the morning, confront Pharaoh and say to him, ‘This is what the LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so that they may worship me, or this time I will send the full force of my plagues against you and against your officials and your people, so you may know that there is no one like me in all the earth. For by now I could have stretched out my hand and struck you and your people with a plague that would have wiped you off the earth. But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you my power and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth. You still set yourself against my people and will not let them go. Exodus 9

So Moses chiselled out two stone tablets like the first ones and went up Mount Sinai early in the morning, as the LORD had commanded him; and he carried the two stone tablets in his hands. Then the LORD came down in the cloud and stood there with him and proclaimed his name, the LORD. And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.” Exodus 34

Say to the Israelites: “Anyone who curses their God will be held responsible; anyone who uses the name of the LORD blasphemously is to be put to death. The entire assembly must stone them. Whether foreigner or native-born, when they use the Name blasphemously they are to be put to death. Le 24:15–16.

The LORD reigns forever; he has established his throne for judgment. He will judge the world in righteousness; he will govern the peoples with justice. The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you. Psalm 9:7-10

I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered through the

countries; I judged them according to their conduct and their actions. And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, ‘These are the LORD’s people, and yet they had to leave his land.’ I had concern for my holy name, which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone. Ezekiel 36:19-21

“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone. I will show the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned among the nations, the name you have profaned among them. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD, declares the Sovereign LORD, when I show myself holy through you before their eyes. Ezekiel 36:22-23

I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols. See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.” Isaiah 42  
“Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.” Matthew 1:20-21

“Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.’ But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one. Matthew 5:33-37

And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. ‘This, then, is how you should pray:

‘ “Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven. Mt 6:7–13.



Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:10-11

I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and makes war. His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron sceptre." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. Revelation 19:11-16

**When Jesus teaches us to pray "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be your name" What was he encouraging us to pray?**

**How do Aussie Christians dishonour the name of the Lord?**

**Read the passages**

**The Commandment**

What is the thrust of the third commandment?

How is C3 about more than "cussing"?

See Exodus 3:10-15 How did God introduce himself by name to Moses? What does his name mean? How does this help us understand C3 ? What is the significance of the Lord's name, what does it represent ?

How had Israel failed this commandment? See Ezekiel 36

What does it mean to honour the name of the Lord ?

What does dishonouring the name of the Lord look like ?

**Applied by Jesus**

What is the significance of the names given to Jesus at his birth ?

How does Jesus apply C3 to the making of oaths in Matthew 5:33-37? What can we learn about our words and promises ?

What is Jesus asking when he teaches us to pray "Hallowed be thy name"?

How do the readings link C3 with the name of Jesus?

How does C3 apply to us?

How does the coming of Jesus shape how we honour God's name ? Philipians 2:10-11, Rev 19:16

**Implications for us**

How do we dishonour the name of Jesus?

How do we honour the name of Jesus ?

What behaviours is this challenging in you?

What does honouring the name of Jesus look like in your life?

**Food For Thought**

"Do you advocate the Ten Commandments as a guide to the good life? Then I can only presume that you don't know the Ten Commandments." - **Richard Dawkins**

I grew up thinking I was the Messiah. Every time my Momma saw me, she would say "Jesus Christ, what are you doing?" **Bill Cosby**

I believe in God, but not as one thing, not as an old man in the sky. I believe that what people call God is something in all of us. I believe that what Jesus and Mohammed and Buddha and all the rest said was right. It's just that the translations have gone wrong **John Lennon**

**Reader 4 Remember the Sabbath**

And God spoke all these words:

"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien

within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. Ex 20:8-11

“Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor the alien within your gates, so that your manservant and maidservant may rest, as you do. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day. Deut 5:

Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done. Genesis 2:1-3

Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Say to the Israelites, “You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so that you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy. ‘ “Observe the Sabbath, because it is holy to you. Anyone who desecrates it is to be put to death; those who do any work on that day must be cut off from their people. For six days work is to be done, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day is to be put to death. The Israelites are to observe the Sabbath, celebrating it for the generations to come as a lasting covenant. It will be a sign between me and the Israelites for ever, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, and on the seventh day he rested and was refreshed.” ’ Ex 31:12–17.

‘ “There are six days when you may work, but the seventh day is a day of sabbath rest, a day of sacred assembly. You are not to do any work; wherever you live, it is a sabbath to the LORD. Le 23:3.

‘You came down on Mount Sinai; you spoke to them from heaven. You gave them regulations and laws that are just and right, and decrees and commands that are good. You made known to them your holy Sabbath and gave them commands, decrees and laws through your servant Moses.

In their hunger you gave them bread from heaven and in their thirst you brought them water from the rock; you told them to go in and take possession of the land you had sworn with uplifted hand to give them. Ne 9:13–15.

In those days I saw people in Judah treading winepresses on the Sabbath and bringing in grain and loading it on donkeys, together with wine, grapes, figs and all other kinds of loads. And they were bringing all this into Jerusalem on the Sabbath. Therefore I warned them against selling food on that day. People from Tyre who lived in Jerusalem were bringing in fish and all kinds of merchandise and selling them in Jerusalem on the Sabbath to the people of Judah. I rebuked the nobles of Judah and said to them, ‘What is this wicked thing you are doing—desecrating the Sabbath day? Didn’t your ancestors do the same things, so that our God brought all this calamity on us and on this city? Now you are stirring up more wrath against Israel by desecrating the Sabbath.’ When evening shadows fell on the gates of Jerusalem before the Sabbath, I ordered the doors to be shut and not opened until the Sabbath was over. I stationed some of my own men at the gates so that no load could be brought in on the Sabbath day. Once or twice the merchants and sellers of all kinds of goods spent the night outside Jerusalem. But I warned them and said, ‘Why do you spend the night by the wall? If you do this again, I will arrest you.’ From that time on they no longer came on the Sabbath. Then I commanded the Levites to purify themselves and go and guard the gates in order to keep the Sabbath day holy. Ne 13:15–22.

A psalm. A song. For the Sabbath day.

It is good to praise the LORD  
and make music to your name, O Most High,  
proclaiming your love in the morning  
and your faithfulness at night,  
to the music of the ten-stringed lyre  
and the melody of the harp.  
For you make me glad by your deeds, LORD;  
I sing for joy at what your hands have done.  
How great are your works, LORD,  
how profound your thoughts! Ps 92

Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations— I cannot bear your worthless assemblies. Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals I hate with all my being. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands in prayer, I hide my eyes from you; even when you offer many prayers, I am not listening. Is 1:13–15.

This is what the LORD says: be careful not to carry a load on the Sabbath day or bring it through the gates of Jerusalem. Do not bring a load out of your houses or do any work on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy, as I commanded your ancestors. Yet they did not listen or pay attention; they were stiff-necked and would not listen or respond to discipline. But if you are careful to obey me, declares the LORD, and bring no load through the gates of this city on the Sabbath, but keep the Sabbath day holy by not doing any work on it, then kings who sit on David's throne will come through the gates of this city with their officials. They and their officials will come riding in chariots and on horses, accompanied by the men of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, and this city will be inhabited for ever. People will come from the towns of Judah and the villages around Jerusalem, from the territory of Benjamin and the western foothills, from the hill country and the Negev, bringing burnt offerings and sacrifices, grain offerings and incense, and bringing thank-offerings to the house of the LORD. But if you do not obey me to keep the Sabbath day holy by not carrying any load as you come through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day, then I will kindle an unquenchable fire in the gates of Jerusalem that will consume her fortresses." ' Je 17:21–27.

Keep my Sabbaths holy, that they may be a sign between us. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.' ' "But the children rebelled against me: they did not follow my decrees, they were not careful to keep my laws, of which I said, 'The person who obeys them will live by them,' and they desecrated my Sabbaths. So I said I would pour out my wrath on them and spend my anger against them in the wilderness. But I withheld my hand, and for the sake of my name I did what would keep it from being profaned in the eyes of the nations in whose sight I had brought them out. Eze 20:20–22.

On the Sabbath Jesus was going through the grain fields, and his disciples began to pick some heads of grain, rub them in their hands and eat the kernels. Some of the Pharisees asked, "Why are you doing what is unlawful on the Sabbath?" Jesus answered them, "Have you never read what Da-

vid did when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God, and taking the consecrated bread, he ate what is lawful only for priests to eat. And he also gave some to his companions." Then Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." Mark 2:22-28

Another time Jesus went into the synagogue, and a man with a shrivelled hand was there. Some of them were looking for a reason to accuse Jesus, so they watched him closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath. Jesus said to the man with the shrivelled hand, 'Stand up in front of everyone.' Then Jesus asked them, 'Which is lawful on the Sabbath: to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?' But they remained silent. He looked around at them in anger and, deeply distressed at their stubborn hearts, said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out, and his hand was completely restored. Then the Pharisees went out and began to plot with the Herodians how they might kill Jesus. Mk 3:1–6.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matt 11:25-30

And yet his work has been finished since the creation of the world. For somewhere he has spoken about the seventh day in these words: "And on the seventh day God rested from all his work."- And again in the passage above he says, "They shall never enter my rest." It still remains that some will enter that rest, and those who formerly had the gospel preached to them did not go in, because of their disobedience. Hebrews 4

For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his. Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will perish by following their example of disobedience. Heb 4:8–11.

One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. If we live, we

live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. Ro 14:5–9.

Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ. Do not let anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. He has lost connection with the Head, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow. Colossians 2:16-19

And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, ‘they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. “Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them,” nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; “he will lead them to springs of living water.” “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” Rev 7:14-17

Then I saw ‘a new heaven and a new earth,’ for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Look! God’s dwelling-place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. “He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death” or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’ He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’ Then he said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ He said to me: ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life. Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. Re 21:1–8.

**What is the right balance of work, rest, and pray for a person’s week?**

**Do you think it is right for Christians to support Sunday Trading, Sunday parties, and Sunday Sport ? Explain?**

**How should Christians practice the Sabbath of C4?**

**Read the Passages**

**The Commandment**

What do we learn about The Sabbath from the Fourth Commandment?

What can we learn from the 7th day of Creation? Why does C4 point us to it ?

How did Israel practice the Sabbath ?

What is the theological point of the Sabbath ?

**Applied by Jesus**

How does Jesus confront Sabbath legalism?

See Mark 2&3, What does it mean for Jesus to be ‘Lord of the Sabbath’ ?

How does he teach us to practice the Sabbath?

What does Paul Teach us about Sabbath days in his letters?

How does Hebrews 4 teach us about the Sabbath?

How does Sabbath point us to the 7th day of Creation?

How does the Sabbath point us to the new heavens and the new earth?

**Implications for us**

What’s the point of the Sabbath idea?

How could we avoid Sabbath Legalism?

How should we avoid Sabbath Lawlessness?

How should we celebrate the Sabbath ?

How can you prioritize meeting with God and his people each week?

If you are a parent how can you help your family practice the Sabbath?

### **Food For Thought**

You know, it's ironic to me that Christians want to keep the Ten Commandments in our schools, because Christianity has abrogated four of the Ten Commandments. For example, the Sabbath day according to the Ten Commandments is Saturday, not Sunday. And the reason is because God rested, not because Jesus was resurrected. **-Alan Dershowitz**

“But what is meant when the Lord exhorts us to rest by his own example? Having finished the creation of the world in six days, he dedicated the seventh to the contemplation of his works. The more strongly to stimulate us to this, he set before us his own example. For nothing is more desirable than to be formed after his image.” **John Calvin**

Anybody can observe the Sabbath, but making it holy surely takes the rest of the week. **Alice Walker**

Keeping the Sabbath day holy is much more than just physical rest. It involves spiritual renewal and worship. **James E. Faust**

### **Reader 5 Honour your Parents**

And God spoke all these words:

“Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. Exodus 20:12

”Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the LORD your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the LORD, who makes you holy. ”If anyone curses his father or mother, he must be put to death. He has cursed his father or his mother, and his blood will be on his own head. Exodus 21:7-9

A wise son brings joy to his father, but a foolish man despises his mother. Proverbs 15:20

To have a fool for a son brings grief; there is no joy for the father of a fool. Proverbs 17:21

A foolish son brings grief to his father and bitterness to the one who bore

him. Proverbs 17:25

He who robs his father and drives out his mother is a son who brings shame and disgrace. Proverbs 19:26

If a man curses his father or mother, his lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness. Proverbs 20:20

Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. Buy the truth and do not sell it; get wisdom, discipline and understanding. The father of a righteous man has great joy; he who has a wise son delights in him. May your father and mother be glad; may she who gave you birth rejoice! Proverbs 23 :22

A man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father, but a companion of prostitutes squanders his wealth. Proverbs 29:3

“The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, will be eaten by the vultures. Proverbs 30:17

And he said to them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions! For Moses said, ‘Honour your father and your mother,’ and, ‘Anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death.’ But you say that if a man says to his father or mother: ‘Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is Corban’ (that is, a gift devoted to God), then you no longer let him do anything for his father or mother. Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.” Again Jesus called the crowd to him and said, “Listen to me, everyone, and understand this. Nothing outside a man can make him ‘unclean’ by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him ‘unclean.’” Mark 7:9-15

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honour your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise—“that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord. Wives, submit to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. Children, obey your parents in everything, for this

pleases the Lord. Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. Colossians 4

Give the people these instructions, so that no one may be open to blame. Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. No widow may be put on the list of widows unless she is over sixty, has been faithful to her husband, and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the Lord's people, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds....If any woman who is a believer has widows in her care, she should continue to help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need. 1 Ti 5:16.

As soon as they left the synagogue, they went with James and John to the home of Simon and Andrew. Simon's mother-in-law was in bed with a fever, and they immediately told Jesus about her. So he went to her, took her hand and helped her up. The fever left her and she began to wait on them. Mk 1:29–31.

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn ”a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.” “Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Luke 12

Now Jesus' mother and brothers came to see him, but they were not able to get near him because of the crowd. Someone told him, 'Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to see you.' He replied, 'My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.' Lk 8:19–21.

Large crowds were travelling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot

be my disciple. And whoever does not carry their cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Lk 14:25–27.

Peter said to him, “We have left everything to follow you!” “I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields—and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” Mark 10 28-31

Then Jesus' mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting round him, and they told him, 'Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.' 'Who are my mother and my brothers?' he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle round him and said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God's will is my brother and sister and mother.' Mk 3:31–35.

Near the cross of Jesus stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother there, and the disciple whom he loved standing near by, he said to her, 'Woman here is your son,' and to the disciple, 'Here is your mother.' From that time on, this disciple took her into his home. Jn 19:25–28.

For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. Eph 3:14–17.

**What do you enjoy about your parents or being a parent?**  
**What do you find hard about your parents or being a parent ?**  
**How does God feel about earthly families ?**  
**How do earthly families struggle?**

**Read the passages**

**The Commandment**

What does the fifth commandment teach us about how God sees earthly families? What blessing is anticipated?

How is the C5 applied through Scripture?  
What do we learn from the Proverbs about family relationships ?  
Why are earthly family relationships important to God?

### **Applied by Jesus**

How does Jesus apply C5 in Mark 7  
How do we reconcile the Luke readings with C5?  
What's the relationship between loving God and loving your family?  
When do families become idols? What are the signs?

### **Implications for us**

How do different stages of life impact on how we fulfil C5 ?  
How do you struggle with C5?  
What practical action can you take to honour your parents?

### **Food For Thought**

No matter how calm you try to referee, parenting will eventually produce bizarre behaviour, and I'm not talking about the kids. Their behaviour is always normal. Parents are people who yell and they yell and they yell and they yell. And you already have the point... and they're still yelling.

#### **Bill Cosby**

Our parents deserve our honour and respect for giving us life itself. Beyond this they almost always made countless sacrifices as they cared for and nurtured us through our infancy and childhood, provided us with the necessities of life, and nursed us through physical illnesses and the emotional stresses of growing up. -**Ezra Taft Benson**

**Homer:** Well, here we are. The whole family. All together, sharing, getting to know each other, exchanging ideas, stories and laughs, snuggling up, bonding together as only a tightly-knit family can. Why, we're more than a... **Bart:** Dad, you can stop now. The commercial's over. The show's back on.

God could not be everywhere, and therefore he made mothers. **Rudyard Kipling**

### **Reader 6 Flee Murder**

And God spoke all these words: "You shall not murder. Exodus 20:13

Now Cain said to his brother Abel, 'Let's go out to the field.' While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, 'Where is your brother Abel?' 'I don't know,' he replied. 'Am I my brother's keeper?' The Lord said, 'What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground, which opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth.'

"But you must not eat meat that has its lifeblood still in it. And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each man, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of his fellow man. "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. Genesis 9

One day, after Moses had grown up, he went out to where his own people were and watched them at their hard labour. He saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his own people. Looking this way and that and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. The next day he went out and saw two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one in the wrong, 'Why are you hitting your fellow Hebrew?' The man said, 'Who made you ruler and judge over us? Are you thinking of killing me as you killed the Egyptian?' Then Moses was afraid and thought, 'What I did must have become known.' When Pharaoh heard of this, he tried to kill Moses, but Moses fled from Pharaoh and went to live in Midian, where he sat down by a well. Exodus 2:11-15

Jesus went on: 'What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person.' Mk 7:20–23.

You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the

truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Jn 8:41–47.

“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell. “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. I tell you the truth, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.” Matthew 5

For this is the message you heard from the beginning: we should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother’s were righteous. Do not be surprised, my brothers and sisters, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love each other. Anyone who does not love remains in death. Anyone who hates a brother or sister is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him. 1 Jn 3:11–15

Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ ‘You shall not murder,’ ‘You shall not steal,’ ‘You shall not covet,’ and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself. Love does no harm to a neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law. Ro 13:8–10.

Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children. But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practise magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulphur. This is the second death.’ Re 21:7–8.

If you really keep the royal law found in Scripture, ‘Love your neighbour as yourself,’ you are doing right. But if you show favouritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as law-breakers. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it. For he who said, ‘You shall not commit adultery,’ also said, ‘You shall not murder.’ If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a law-breaker. Jas 2:8–11.

**Why do people commit murder?**

**What is the difference between unlawful killing and just killing?**

**Can any type of killing be justified?**

**Read the passages**

**The Commandment**

**Translation point:** The imperative is against unlawful killing resulting in bloodguilt. The Hebrew Bible contains numerous prohibitions against **unlawful killing**, but also allows for **justified killing** in the context of warfare (1 Kings 2:5–6), capital punishment (Leviticus 20:9–16) and self-defence (Exodus 22:2–3). The New Testament is in agreement that murder is a grave moral evil, and maintains the Old Testament view of bloodguilt.

What does the sixth commandment teach us how God values human life? Why is this?

Why is God against unlawful murder? How does Genesis 9 help us to see that? What is the principle on view here?

How does the fact humans are made in God’s image impact of the application of this commandment?

**Applied by Jesus**

Jesus raises the bar on murder by looking at anger and the heart? Where does murder come from according to Jesus in Mark 7

**Implications for us**

How do you apply C6 to the controversial topics of Abortion? Euthanasia?



Capital punishment? Just War? (Remembering the C6 is about unlawful killings not just killing) Why do we turn a blind eye to abortion?

### **Food For Thought**

“I feel the greatest destroyer of peace today is 'Abortion', because it is a war against the child... A direct killing of the innocent child, 'Murder' by the mother herself... And if we can accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people not to kill one another? How do we persuade a woman not to have an abortion? As always, we must persuade her with love... And we remind ourselves that love means to be willing to give until it hurts...” — **Mother Teresa**

No matter what you think about the Iraq war, there is one thing we can all agree on for the next days - we have to salute the courage and bravery of those who are risking their lives to vote and those brave Iraqi and American soldiers fighting to protect their right to vote. **Hillary Clinton**

Every murderer is probably somebody's old friend. I specialize in murders of quiet, domestic interest -**Agatha Christie**

The utterly fallacious idea at the heart of the pro-war argument is that it is the duty of the anti-war argument to provide an alternative to war. The onus is on them to explain just cause. -**Zadie Smith**

### **Reader 7 Flee Adultery**

And God spoke all these words:

“You shall not commit adultery. Exodus 20:14

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called “woman”, for she was taken out of man.’ That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. Ge 2:20–25.

It will save you also from the adulteress, from the wayward life with her seductive words, who has left the partner of her youth and ignored the covenant she made before God. For her house leads down to death and

her paths to the spirits of the dead. None who go to her return or attain the paths of life. Prov 2

Another thing you do: you flood the Lord's altar with tears. You weep and wail because he no longer looks with favour on your offerings or accepts them with pleasure from your hands. You ask, ‘Why?’ It is because the Lord is the witness between you and the wife of your youth. You have been unfaithful to her, though she is your partner, the wife of your marriage covenant. Has not the one God made you? You belong to him in body and spirit. And what does the one God seek? Godly offspring. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful to the wife of your youth. ‘The man who hates and divorces his wife,’ says the Lord, the God of Israel, ‘does violence to the one he should protect,’ says the Lord Almighty. So be on your guard, and do not be unfaithful. Malachi 2:13-16 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Do not commit adultery.’ But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell. Matthew 5

Jesus went on: ‘What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person.’ Mk 7:20–23.

“It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become an adulteress, and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery. Matthew

“What did Moses command you?” he replied. They said, “Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away.” “It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law,” Jesus replied. “But at the beginning of creation God ‘made them male and female.’ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. He answered, “Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman com-

mits adultery against her And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery.” Mark 10

The body, however, is not meant for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. By his power God raised the Lord from the dead, and he will raise us also. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! Do you not know that he who unites himself with a prostitute is one with her in body? For it is said, ‘The two will become one flesh.’ But whoever is united with the Lord is one with him in spirit. Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honour God with your bodies. 1 Co 6:13–20.

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Saviour. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church- for we are members of his body.‘ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.’ This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. Eph 5:21–33.

Marriage should be honoured by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral. Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, ‘Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you. Heb 13:4–5.

**What are some attitudes to adultery in Australia?  
How does the media portray adultery ?**

**What leads a person to commit adultery?  
How can we guard against it?**

**Read the passages**

**The Commandment**

Why do you think God prohibits adultery ?  
What does this teach us about how God sees marriage?  
How does C7 reflect Genesis 1&2 ? What model of marriage  
How do Malachi, Jesus, and Paul build on God’s blueprint for relationship in Genesis 1&2?

**Applied by Jesus**

How does Jesus raise the bar on adultery in Matthew 5 ?  
What does Jesus teach about Marriage?  
How do the New Testament teach about marriage and sexual purity ?  
Why is adultery offensive to Jesus?

**Implications for us**

How can you flee adultery in your mind ?  
How can you flee adultery in your body ?  
What do you need to confess to God and make peace with him?  
How can we help married people strengthen their marriages  
How can we help those scarred by adultery?  
How does 1 Cor 6 help us flee adultery?  
How is C7 inflamed by pornography?

**Food For Thought**

Men and women who decide to flirt with adultery just once can become enmeshed in misery and unhappiness for themselves and their precious families. -**Joseph B. Wirthlin**

Let us be honest with each other. The threat to marriage is not the gays. It is a lack of loving commitment - whether it is found in the form of neglect, indifference, cruelty or adultery, to name just a few manifestations of the loveless desert in which too many marriages come to grief. -

**Malcolm Turnbull**

In the Bible it says they asked Jesus how many times you should forgive, and he said 70 times 7. Well, I want you all to know that I'm keeping a chart **Hillary Clinton**

The thing that alarms me is that there are so many clergymen who say that the so-called 'new morality' is all right. They say we're living in a new generation; let's be relevant, let's change God's law. Let's say that adultery is all right under certain circumstances; fornication's all right under certain circumstances. If it's 'meaningful.' -**Billy Graham**

If you age with somebody, you go through so many roles - you're lovers, friends, enemies, colleagues, strangers; you're brother and sister. That's what intimacy is, if you're with your soulmate. Marriage is a risk; I think it's a great and glorious risk, as long as you embark on the adventure in the same spirit. **Cate Blanchett**  
If God would have wanted us to live in a permissive society He would have given us Ten Suggestions and not Ten Commandments. -**Zig Ziglar**

## **Reader 8 Shun Stealing**

And God spoke all these words:

“You shall not steal. Exodus 20:15

‘ “Do not steal.’ “Do not lie.’ “Do not deceive one another. ‘ “Do not swear falsely by my name and so profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.’ “Do not defraud or rob your neighbour. ‘ “Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight. Le 19:11–13.

“Two things I ask of you, LORD;  
do not refuse me before I die:  
keep falsehood and lies far from me;  
give me neither poverty nor riches,  
but give me only my daily bread.  
Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you  
and say, “Who is the LORD?”  
Or I may become poor and steal,  
and so dishonour the name of my God. Pr 30:7–9.

“Will you steal and murder, commit adultery and perjury, burn incense to Baal and follow other gods you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, ‘We are safe’—

safe to do all these detestable things? Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD. Je 7:9–11.

‘Suppose there is a righteous man who does what is just and right. He does not eat at the mountain shrines or look to the idols of Israel. He does not defile his neighbour’s wife or have sexual relations with a woman during her period. He does not oppress anyone, but returns what he took in pledge for a loan. He does not commit robbery, but gives his food to the hungry and provides clothing for the naked. He does not lend to them at interest or take a profit from them. He withholds his hand from doing wrong and judges fairly between two parties. He follows my decrees and faithfully keeps my laws. That man is righteous; he will surely live, declares the Sovereign LORD. Eze 18:5–9.

Return to me, and I will return to you,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘But you ask, “How are we to return?” ‘Will a mere mortal rob God? Yet you rob me. ‘But you ask, “How are we robbing you?” ‘In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse—your whole nation—because you are robbing me. Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not drop their fruit before it is ripe,’ says the Lord Almighty. ‘Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,’ says the Lord Almighty. Malachi 3:6-12

He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Eph 4:28

Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Saviour attractive. Tt 2:9–10.

Jesus went on: ‘What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person’s heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and defile a person.’ Mk 7:20–23.

Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. For the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing. Give to everyone what you owe them: if you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honour, then honour. Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law. The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' 'You shall not murder,' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not covet,' and whatever other command there may be, are summed up in this one command: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' Love does no harm to a neighbour. Therefore love is the fulfilment of the law. Romans 13 :1-10

**"I cannot begin to explain how frustrating it is to find my work has been made available online without my consent," Josh Pyke. Why are Australians happy to steal through software, movie, and music piracy? What do you need to delete from your phone or hard drive? What is the right thing to do? Why don't Australians take copyright seriously?**

### **Read the passages**

#### **The Commandment**

Why is stealing offensive to God ?

How does stealing disrespect our neighbour?

How does Malachi show us how we rob God?

#### **Applied by Jesus**

According to Mark 7 :20-23 Where does the desire to steal come from?

What is Jesus's response to stealing ?

How does Paul in Romans 13, help us think through issues like tax evasion, piracy and copyright theft, white collar crime?

Is there ever a case for stealing?

#### **Implications for us**

Australians are in the top illegal down loaders on the planet? What does C8 teach us about this?

What should you delete from your hard drive or throw out ?

"The argument that artists can make their income from touring is a band-aid, I am a mother of a young child and touring the world constantly is just not an option. Conversely, touring is expensive and therefore so are ticket prices, meaning there is a finite number of people who will buy tickets. It is not a viable argument in my opinion." Discuss

Why don't we take C8 seriously with piracy and tax evasion?

What are polite ways you steal? How does C8 challenge this?

How do you rob your work? God? The rich? The poor? The Government?

How can you avoid white collar crime?

What do you need to fess up to and make restitution for?

#### **Food For Thought**

"Stealing, of course, is a crime, and a very impolite thing to do. But like most impolite things, it is excusable under certain circumstances. Stealing is not excusable if, for instance, you are in a museum and you decide that a certain painting would look better in your house, and you simply grab the painting and take it there. But if you were very, very hungry, and you had no way of obtaining money, it would be excusable to grab the painting, take it to your house, and eat it." — **Lemony Snicket**, *The Wide Window*

Stealing! How could you? Haven't you learned anything from that guy who gives sermons at church? Captain what's-his-name? -**Homer Simpson**

## Reader 9 Flee False Testimony

And God spoke all these words:

“You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour. Exodus 20:16

One witness is not enough to convict anyone accused of any crime or offence they may have committed. A matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If a malicious witness takes the stand to accuse someone of a crime, the two people involved in the dispute must stand in the presence of the LORD before the priests and the judges who are in office at the time. The judges must make a thorough investigation, and if the witness proves to be a liar, giving false testimony against a fellow Israelite, then do to the false witness as that witness intended to do to the other party. You must purge the evil from among you. The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you. Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. Dt 19:15–21.

You Shall not raise a false report: put not your hand with the wicked to be an unrighteous witness. And the judges shall make diligent inquisition: and, behold, if the witness be a false witness, and hath testified falsely against his brother; Deuteronomy 19:18

A false witness that speaks lies, and he that sows discord among brethren. Proverbs 6:19

He that speaks truth shows forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit. Proverbs 12:17

A false witness shall perish: but the man that hears speaks constantly. Proverbs 21:28

A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies. Proverbs 14:5

A true witness delivers souls: but a deceitful witness speaks lies. Proverbs 14:25

A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaks lies shall not escape. Proverbs 19:5

The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward. Finally two came forward and declared, “This fellow said, “I am able to destroy the temple of

God and rebuild it in three days.” ’ Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, ‘Are you not going to answer? What is this testimony that these men are bringing against you?’ But Jesus remained silent. The high priest said to him, ‘I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.’ ‘You have said so,’ Jesus replied. ‘But I say to all of you: from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven.’ Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘He has spoken blasphemy! Why do we need any more witnesses? Look, now you have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?’ ‘He is worthy of death,’ they answered. Then they spat in his face and struck him with their fists. Others slapped him and said, ‘Prophecy to us, Messiah. Who hit you?’ Luke 22

‘You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don’t you believe me? Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.’ John 8:41-47

You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin” : Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Ephesians 4 22-27

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. Eph 4:29–5:2.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 'Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matthew 5 10-12

I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. 17 Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. 18 As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. Jn 17:14–18.

Thomas said to him, 'Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?' Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really know me, you will know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him.' Jn 14:5–8.

**Why do people lie ? In what ways do you lie ?  
Is there ever a time when lying is ok?  
Why does truth matter?**

### **Read the passages**

#### **The Commandment**

Why does God prohibit false testimony ?  
How does false testimony disrespect your neighbour?  
Why is truth important to God ?  
What is the immediate context for C9?

#### **Applied by Jesus**

How does Jesus judge the false witness of the Pharisees?  
How does Jesus teach about false testimony?  
How did Jesus experience false witnesses against him?  
What do we learn from him about facing false witnesses?

#### **Implications for us**

How should you expect to suffer for following Jesus?  
When are we tempted to twist the truth for our gain?  
What lies should you fess up to?  
How can you practise truthfulness?

### **Food For Thought**

Men are liars. We'll lie about lying if we have to. I'm an algebra liar. I figure two good lies make a positive. -**Tim Allen**

Well, I think women across Australia, particularly, are a bit fed up with this constant attack and belittling of women in politics, and particularly the role of a female as a prime minister. **Christine Milne**

Richard Nixon is a no good, lying bastard. He can lie out of both sides of his mouth at the same time, and if he ever caught himself telling the truth, he'd lie just to keep his hand in. -**Harry S Truman**

If you tell the truth, you don't have to remember anything. -**Mark Twain**

The truth is incontrovertible. Malice may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but in the end, there it is. -**Winston Churchill**

### **Reader 10 Crucify Coveting**

#### **And God spoke all these words:**

"You shall not covet your neighbours' house. You shall not covet your neighbours' wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour." Ex 20:17

"You shall not covet your neighbour's wife. You shall not set your desire on your neighbour's house or land, his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour." Deut 5

"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food, and the body more important than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life<sup>a</sup>? Matt 6:25-27

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. <sup>30</sup>If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. Matt 6: 28-34

Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, ‘Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?’ ‘Why do you ask me about what is good?’ Jesus replied. ‘There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.’ ‘Which ones?’ he enquired. Jesus replied, ‘ “You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, honour your father and mother” and “love your neighbour as yourself.”’ ‘All these I have kept,’ the young man said. ‘What do I still lack?’ Jesus answered, ‘If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.’ When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth. Mt 19:16–22.

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but don’t get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. James 4:1-3

After he had left the crowd and entered the house, his disciples asked him about this parable. “Are you so dull?” he asked. “Don’t you see that nothing that enters a man from the outside can make him ‘unclean’? For it doesn’t go into his heart but into his stomach, and then out of his body.” (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods “clean.”) He went on: “What comes out of a man is what makes him ‘unclean.’ For from within, out of men’s hearts, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, lewdness, envy, slander, arrogance and folly. All these evils come from inside and make a man ‘unclean.’” Mark 7:17-23

But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. **1 Tim 6:6-10**

What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, ‘You shall not covet.’ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognised as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. **Romans 7 7-13**

I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength. **Philippians 4:11-13**

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. You adulterous people don’t you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. **James 4:1-4**

Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in

God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life. **1 Ti 6:17–19.**

‘As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: love each other. Jn 15:9–17.

**“Shopping catalogues, Real Estate Agents, Amazon, and reality TV shows are evil” Discuss**

**How would you define coveting?**

**How do you experience coveting?**

**What helps you resist coveting?**

**Read the passage**

**The Commandment**

Why is God against coveting ? How is it an expression of C1 & C2 ?

What are the anticipated objects of coveting in C10?

Why do humans covet?

**Applied by Jesus**

How does Jesus deal with the Rich young ruler in Mark 10?

Contentment is the antidote for coveting, how does the Bible teach about contentment?

Where does Jesus

How does Paul see coveting work in Romans 7?

**Implications for us**

How is coveting a form of idolatry, rebuked in C2?

What causes us to covet? What helps you resist coveting ?

What is the secret of biblical contentment ?

What would help you to covet less?

How can generosity be an antidote to coveting?

How can you help your family to practise contentment?

Ask God to help you “Be content with less and generous with more”

**Food For Thought**

All people - African, European, American - worry about being different. But I've learned that the traits we'd rush to get rid of are the very ones that others desire. People always covet what they don't have. That's why we should look at ourselves every now and then and say, 'I'm proud of myself. I like the way I'm made.' **Freida Pinto**

Whenever teenage girls and corporate CEOs covet the same new technology, something extraordinary is happening. **Michael J.**

Be thankful for what you have; you'll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don't have, you will never, ever have enough. **Oprah Winfrey**