

“The BIG TEN ~ 3rd & 4th commandments”

In the 1924 Summer Olympics,

- Eric Liddell an Olympian from Scotland was the odds on favorite to win the 100-meter race. He had trained & dreamed of this moment for many yrs.
 - You might remember his story from the movie, Chariots of Fire?
 - When the race schedule was finally published ~ the 100-meter race was scheduled for the following Sunday.
- Eric Liddell possessed a deep & abiding love for God & he dropped out of the 100-meter race because he refused to dishonor God by running on the Sabbath.

My question for you is this: Do you think Eric Liddell was right or do you think he was being too rigid?

Whatever your answer may be, most of us respect someone who lives out their personal beliefs & convictions.

The 2nd wisest man to ever live, King Solomon, summed it up this way: “Here’s my final advice: Honor God & obey His commands. This is the most important thing people can do.” Ecclesiastes 12: 13

Solomon’s words remind me of an interview that was conducted with a homeowner in southern Florida just after Hurricane Andrew devastated the area.

- This particular man’s home was the only one standing after the powerful storm. This interview still challenges me on how I do life. “When questioned by the reporter, the homeowner replied, “I built this house myself & I made sure that I followed all the state building codes. These other builders tried to cut corners to save a few dollars, & you can see for yourself what happened. If they had just followed the code, these homes would still be standing.”

One of the greatest concerns facing America today is the character DEFICIT! And 1 of our greatest needs is to find an ethical code that will guide & build us up in any & every circumstance.

It’s WHY we are taking time to consider God’s ‘BIG TEN’: God’s code of ethics in the ‘10 Commandments’ that we can build our lives upon!

It’s time to reassess how we are doing TODAY = ‘honoring God,’ according to His basic code of morality. Let’s tackle the 3rd & 4th commandments.

I. 3rd commandment:

A. Exodus 20: 7 or p. 59 in pew Bible

1. “You must not misuse the name of the Lord your God.”
2. How would you rank or compare the 3rd Commandment with the other 9 commandments?
3. We would probably rank murder & adultery as some of the most despicable on the ‘BIG TEN’ list, & toward the bottom of the list we probably would rank saying the Lord’s name in vain near the bottom.

Don’t set this one aside too quickly ~ God’s name is very sacred. Every time you utter HIS HOLY NAME you have a divine audience with Him.

Bible says, "The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse His name." Exodus 20: 7b

B. It's interesting how the ancient Israelites regarded God's name:

1. The Jewish people took the name of God so seriously that they refrained from even writing His name. His formal name Yahweh was written YHWH. Not until later years were vowels added so that it could be pronounced.
2. In Deuteronomy 28: 58 Moses calls God's name, "...this glorious & awesome name = I AM your God."
3. The ancient Israelites understood plainly that God's name was not given for their manipulation or to be used without purpose, serving as fodder for jokes & other flippant remarks. Bible plainly says,

"The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse His name."

C. Ever notice how we casually misuse God's name?

1. The 1st is thru careless conversations:

- a. The poet said, "I'm careful of the words I say to keep them soft & sweet. I never know from day to day which ones I'll have to eat.
- b. Bill Simmons writes a blog for ESPN.com Page2; he's posted an article "An Apostle of Basketball Jesus."
- c. When we use the name of Jesus in a flippant manner, we are breaking the 3rd commandment. You might ask, Exodus 20: 7 says that "we should not misuse the name of God."
- d. Philippians 2: 9 says, "...God elevated Him to the place of highest honor & gave Him the name above all other names, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven & earth;"
- e. Jesus is God in the flesh = and His name is to be honored!

2. 2nd way we misuse God's name is thru profanity:

- a. This is absurd to even say but God's last name isn't damn.
- b. Any profane use of God's name is a serious violation of the 3rd commandment such as: Jesus Christ carelessly + By God... + this God forsaken place + Dear God... +Oh God... + Lord have mercy.
- c. Some simple advice, when you say God's name you better have something to say, HE'S LISTENING divine audience

3. 3rd way we misuse God's name is thru ungodly comparisons:

- a. Common mistake is comparing YHWH to Allah.
- b. Here's some subtle differences you need to be aware of today:
 - i. In ISLAM they believe Jesus is a prophet & Muhammad is an equal prophet. Muhammad supposedly wrote the Quran; but historically this is impossible because Muhammad was illiterate.
 - ii. ISLAM does not believe that Jesus was crucified or killed by the Jewish people, He was just taken up by God.
 - iii. Salvation for Muslims come thru correct belief, good deeds & FIVE PILLARS. Jesus death on the cross is not mentioned.
- c. Those who practice the "Five Pillars" of Islam worship a god named Allah who was selected by Muhammad from among the 300 plus idols

honored at the Ka'aba, & Muhammad tried to modify this moon god to become the God of Abraham.

Please know any subtle comparisons between YHWH & Allah are inaccurate & a horrible offense to God's holy name!

Honoring God's name is no small matter ~ protect His holy name

NOW Turn quickly to the controversial...

- II. 4th commandment:
 - A. Exodus 20: 8 – 11
 - 1. "Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy."
 - 2. Genesis 2: 2 – 3, "On the seventh day God had finished His work of creation, so He rested from all His work. & God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when He rested from all His work of creation."
 - B. The ancient Hebrew understood when they practiced Sabbat ~ connotes to cease work in order to set the day aside for YHWH = 'I AM'
 - 1. By ceasing the work of their agendas they were entering into the holy sphere of God.
 - a. God's command is that on the 7th day we cease from work & producing, cease from being participants in the functioning of the economy.
 - b. It was a time for the Hebrews to celebrate & enjoy what God had done in the previous six days.
 - c. Strong reminder that God does not value humans by their ability to produce. We have great worth apart from what we produce.
 - 2. Deuteronomy 5: 12 + 15 or 3 books to your right
 - a. Moses called on Israel to observe the Sabbath in order to remember & reflect on the fact they once were slaves in Egypt but the mighty Lord had redeemed them from slavery.
 - b. Every time they rested on the 7th day, they asserted their status as a free person no longer in bondage; it was YHWH who redeemed them!
 - C. Somewhere along the lines the ancient Hebrews figured out a way to mess up their only day off ☺
 - 1. You know how it is. There is a good guideline & then somebody wants to make a policy or a rule out of it.
 - 2. People do that with diets. There is a good diet and all of sudden they're counting fat grams so meticulously they make every meal miserable for all.
 - 3. INSERT That's the way the ancient Israelites started doing.
 - D. It's a shame that they DID NOT KNOW the scripture; they made the Sabbath all about what you can't do.
 - 1. The Sabbath command is in fact a command to experience joy!
 - 2. R Isaiah 58: 13 – 14 or p. 563 in pew Bible
 - E. Clarity 4th commandment is only one of the 'Big 10' not repeated in N.T.

1. Colossians 2: 13 – 14 or p. 903 in pew Bible
2. The O.T. is like an old will & now the N.T. God has made a new will. The old will was nailed to the cross.
 - a. If you have a rich uncle & in 1995 he writes a will & you are not included in the will, but then you become good friends with your uncle & in 1995 he writes a new will & he includes you in his will for \$1 million dollars & he dies in 2010.
 - b. Which of the two will be in effect? Praise God = the 2nd will!
3. In the O.T. covenant you & I were excluded because it was based upon an individual living perfectly in order to be saved. All of us were out.
4. But now God has made a new covenant in which Jesus paid for all of our sins on the cross & He has said, "...everyone who confesses that Jesus Christ is Lord shall be saved. NOW we are included!
5. R Colossians 2: 16 NOW we are free from the O.T. law

F. TODAY the Sabbath has changed significantly:

"Our great-grandparents called it the holy Sabbath; our grandparents called it the Sabbath; our parents called it Sunday; but today we call it the week-end."

III. Multiple Benefits of observing timeless principles of Sabbat:

A. 1st it's for our own good!

- i. 1 day a week we worship rather than work. We relax & spend time with our families. Time to reflect & on God's goodness!
- ii. 1 day a week we refocus ~ recalibrate our hearts.
- iii. Devote 1 day a week to focusing on God in a special way!

B. INSERT how God honored Eric Liddell's decision