

God's Refreshing Gifts to Us:

Bible Study on the Second Table of the Law

Commandments Four to Ten

By Jan Wendorf

What refreshes you on a summer day?

- * Sipping a drink in the shade?
- * Catching an early morning jog?
- * Counting fireflies in the evening breeze?
- * Diving into the deep end of the pool?

Discuss: In what ways does God provide times of refreshment for you?

Opening prayer: Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law. Amen.
(**Psalm 119:18**)

Read **Deuteronomy 4:32-40**. When the Israelites were finally poised to enter the Promised Land after wandering around in the desert, God reaffirmed the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 5). But just before doing so, God reminded the people of some vital truths: His love for them, the victories that He had already won, the future He had planned for His chosen people.

Read **I Peter 2: 9-10**. According to this passage of Scripture, who are you?

Dear chosen one, write down specific things from your own life that show:

- The love God has for you
- The victories He has accomplished for you
- The future He has planned for you

Share these with a partner or in a small group.

God, motivated by His love for you and me, gave us His commandments. In *An Explanation of the Small Catechism* (Concordia Publishing House, 1991), subtitles are given to each of the Commandments: *First*: God; *Second*: God's Name; *Third*: God's Word; *Fourth*: God's representatives; *Fifth*: God's gift of life; *Sixth*: God's gift of marriage; *Seventh*: God's gift of possessions; *Eighth*: God's gift of a good reputation; *Ninth and Tenth*: God's gift of contentment.

Editor's Note: This study concludes the series on the Ten Commandments. See Fall 2005, Winter 2005 and Spring 2006 issues of the Lutheran Woman's Quarterly for past studies.



How refreshing to see God's commandments as gifts to us! This study focuses on what is referred to as the Second Table of the Law, Commandments Four to Ten.

Read **Exodus 20:12-17**. This passage gives us the Second Table of the Law.

In light of this passage, what are we *to do*?

What things are we *not to do*?

What insights are derived from **Romans 13: 8-10**?

What did Jesus have to say about the Commandments?

- Matthew 19:16-19
- Matthew 22:36-39
- Mark 12: 28-33
- Luke 10: 25-28

Continue reading **Luke 10:29-37**, a well-known parable that Jesus told in response to the question, "And who is my neighbor?"

What prompted Jesus' reply, "Go and do likewise."?

Who is my neighbor? Among the definitions in one dictionary: 1) a person who lives near another; 2) a person or thing that is near another; 3) one's fellow human being; 4) a person who shows kindness and helpfulness toward fellow humans.

Do you ever get the sense that the world is your neighbor? Modern technology has brought the world into our homes and computers. It seems we have instant access to world events and tragedies. What were some of your thoughts and feelings as you saw some of the recent tragic events like September 11, 2001, the tsunami of December 2004, and the devastation of the hurricanes in 2005?

Who is *your* neighbor?

List specific ways that you can love your neighbor as yourself.

Alma Kern, in her book *You Are Precious*, writes, "You are God's gift to your neighbors. Use your gifts to share God's love with them. Your neighbors are His gifts to you. Appreciate them."

Read **Genesis 39:1-10**, a section from the life of Joseph. How does this passage illustrate:

- Joseph's love for God
- Joseph's love for his neighbor
- Joseph's love for himself

The entire chapter of Genesis 39 could illustrate many of the Commandments: bearing false witness, adultery, respecting authority, coveting, etc. As time permits, read the entire chapter and discuss the connections that can be made to the Commandments.

Take some time to share other examples from Scripture of people who obeyed or disobeyed the Second Table of the Law.

Stanzas eleven and twelve of Martin Luther's hymn, *Here is the Tenfold Sure Command*, summarize this study of the Ten Commandments:

You have this law to see therein,
That you have not been free from sin;
But also that you clearly see
How pure toward God life should be.
Have mercy, Lord!
Lord Jesus, help us in our need;
Christ, you our go-between indeed,
Our works, how sinful, marred, unjust!
Christ, you our one hope and trust.
Have mercy, Lord!

Closing prayer: Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Rock and Redeemer. Direct my footsteps according to Your Word. To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father — to Him be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen. (**Psalm 19:14, Psalm 119:133, Revelation 1:6**)

Sing or read together the lyrics from *Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways* (LW 392, TLH 416).

Jan Wendorf finds great joy in working for the Lord and seeing Him direct and guide her. Her LWML service has included various committees and most recently, the Vice President of Christian Life. She lives in Grafton, Wisconsin, where her husband serves as senior pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church. They are the parents of three grown children.