

How to Count to Ten – The Mystery of the Ten Commandments

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MAIN VERSES

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Launching Into Exodus

Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family, so welcome home.

Shabbat Shalom, everybody. This is the message today, and I'm super excited about it. We launched into this Israelite journey marked out in the book of Exodus in our Bible around the same time as the Torah portion cycle visits the same events, and I thought that was pretty neat. That wasn't actually planned, but yeah, I thought that was neat.

So far along the way, we've seen a huge shift in the biblical story — from this grand family narrative of Abraham and his sons growing and eventually settling into the land of Egypt, thus ending the book of Genesis. Then we turn the page and find the Israelites growing in population, to the point where the government of Egypt feels threatened, and so they begin to abuse and enslave and kill the vulnerable Israelite population. Quite a turn in the storyline.

In chapter 2 of Exodus, it says that God hears the cries of his people when they cry out. That's a significant verse for me, just as Amy was saying. It's significant because I want to take a moment and meditate on that — a time of need, a time of crisis, a time of mourning, a time when the Israelites cry out. God hears them.

And then later in the story, we keep seeing this pattern of crying out. Even in the book of Judges, Israel cries out again and God answers. The psalmist in [Psalm 120](#) says that when he

was distressed, he cried out and the Lord answered. And it wasn't just Israel in the story, in the biblical narrative, that cries out and God answers. Job declares that God hears all of the cries of the oppressed, all of those in pain.

Conceal, Don't Feel

The reason I find this so significant is that sometimes we come to places in our lives where we feel like we almost need to conceal our emotions — like we need to have faith and not let our vulnerable emotions show. Does anyone know what I'm talking about? You don't want to let anyone see it — it's just like Elsa said, conceal, don't feel, right? Just push it back. Stand bold and act as if you don't have any fear in life. Act as if you aren't hurting. Act as if you aren't going through a time of trial and tribulation and pain. Like, I'm okay.

Guys, life is filled with hard times. Nod your head if you feel like life is filled with hard times. Life is filled with mourning. Life is filled with pain. It's difficult as often as it is pleasant, joyful, and exciting at times. And it's part of the human experience to be able to express and encounter all of the array of feelings and emotions that exist in those experiences.

The Bible is a collection of ancient writings that demonstrate exactly that. People like you and me praying for their children. People like you and me seeking God's wisdom, worried about their family. Anyone ever have anxiety about their family? Yeah, the biblical characters as well. Look at that. Maybe crying because of mourning — has anyone ever went through a time of mourning? So have they.

The Bible is clear. God doesn't want you to stop talking to him just because you're going through a time of pain or trial or tribulation. No. No. God, he not only listens, and yes, he'll respond — don't fear. Not because you're an evildoer if you have fear. Not because you're an evildoer if you're stressed or anxious about something. No, he responds in this manner because it's his job to be a comforter in those times that you go through.

The Psalms of Lament

There's a collection of Psalms — and I'm sure we'll do a series about it soon — it's called the specific Psalms, or the Lament Psalms, or the Psalms of Lament. And you have this writer who is in pain, suffering with worry and anxiety. And his darkest nightmares are coming true all around him. And he writes to God. He asks God, why did you let this happen? Why did you let this happen? I thought you had promises that these things — why is this happening, God?

[Psalm 137](#) is about Israel. It's about being in Babylon, in a place where you're enslaved and you've seen your people uprooted from their land, raped, murdered, abused. And at the end, in verse 9 of [Psalm 137](#), you hear this character expressing his anger in the most uncomfortable way — what his flesh would like to see as an expression of his anger towards the Babylonians. It's so uncomfortable.

[Psalms 87, 88. Psalm 13](#) — how long, God, will you forget me? Has anyone ever maybe not prayed that but thought that? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts, he says. And day after day I have sorrow in my heart. How long will my enemy triumph over me? Look on me and answer, Lord my God. Give light to my eyes or I will sleep in death. It's so raw. It's so raw. He's upset. He's depressed in despair, angry.

Matt, but you can't talk to God that way. Tell that to the authors of the Bible. God hears our cries. And as we explored weeks ago, it is the character of our God to join us in the suffering of this world, to embrace us, to comfort us, and lead us out with a confidence of a renewed, mature faith and faithfulness to continue showing the world what his light looks like even in the darkest moments.

So if that's you today, I want to encourage you — don't stop talking to God. Don't stop praying. Don't stop crying out. Express your boldest expressions of your emotions to God. I promise you he can take it and he welcomes it. God will join you where you are. He joins us in the furnace, remember? Or as some would say, he invites us to join him.

A God Who Keeps His Promises

So here in [Exodus 2](#), God hears the cries of his people and he reminds himself of who he is. He is the God who makes promises and keeps promises. And then, as we know from the past few weeks, we have him coming to Moses, and he introduces himself to Moses formally as I am, or eh-yeh in Hebrew — a first-person word that has an imperfect tense, so it's future. I will, or I will do.

Our God has his promises wrapped up in his very name, in how he formally introduces himself. He then tells Moses to go tell the Israelites to call him by his third-person, perfect tense form of his name, Yahweh — He has done. I love that. His name is both a promise to do as much as it is a resume for what he has already done. Our God is someone that can be trusted when you cry out.

God then sends plagues onto Egypt, and the final plague kind of breaks the camel's back, if you will. And Israel is redeemed from slavery to Egypt, crossing through the waters of the Red Sea

into a new life as a people of God. A people of the God who saves.

That's something that Paul kind of refers to. He refers to it as the baptism of Moses in [1 Corinthians 10](#), where Israel went through the water, signifying a death to a life of slavery in Egypt, moving forward as the children of the king. You could say this is where believers get the idea of baptism in Yeshua, in Jesus. We go through the water, leaving behind, dying to the life of slavery, of sin, moving forward, to take up a role as a child of the king.

Arriving at Sinai

So Israel continues their journey. They arrive at the mountain of God, Mount Sinai, and they agree to be the kingdom of priests, representatives of God's kingdom on earth. And in Exodus chapter 20, something magnificent happens. This is like the first time an official, formal law is given. I mean, we're like 70 chapters into the biblical story, and here we are, law for the first time is finally being given — which is significant in and of itself in the structure of the Bible.

The Decalogue is given, but it's known generally as what? The Ten Commandments. And what's interesting — see, I have some slides here, yeah — what's interesting here is the Bible actually never calls them the Ten Commandments. We have in [Exodus 24](#), 28 and [Deuteronomy 4](#), 13, it speaks of them as, yes, Ten Commandments in both verses. But go ahead and turn to one of these Bible verses. I'm curious if you guys have a footnote beside commandments. So some of you are turning, others are turning on their Bibles. I love living in this day and age.

So [Exodus 34](#), 28. You should have a little footnote beside commandments. Does anybody see one? At the bottom, what's it say? The bottom of the page. Words. Exactly. Words.

Counting the Ten Words

Both of these verses refer to these ten somethings as the Aseret Debarim. The ten words, or the ten sayings, or the ten phrases. It's not the word for commandments, which is just interesting. I find that neat. You'll also hear these ten things called, as I said, the Decalogue. It's a title for the ten words. Deca in Greek is ten, and then you have the word logos, which is word — the ten words. And now you're a Bible nerd, so welcome to the club. But this is stuff I find is neat.

So we're all familiar with the 10 words. Don't murder. Don't worship other gods. Don't do the David and Bathsheba. And then you have our personal favorite, which is keep the Sabbath holy, right? We know them.

But what's actually really neat is the history behind how the Christian church has come to count them. What do you mean count them? It's very easy to count them. One, two, three. No, it's not. Matt, we know there's ten of them. How hard can it be to count? It's not as easy as you think.

So in Christian history, there are two main ways — there's more than that, but there's two main ways — to actually go through Exodus chapter 20 and count the ten words.

And when I say count, I mean which one is actually number one and number two and number three and so on and so forth. The most popular view actually revolves around the first three verses. And God spoke all these words. I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods beside me. You shall make for yourself... So you have, number one, I'm scared to share this slide because it's overwhelming, but it's actually pretty cool. There's three main ways to look at the Decalogue here. You have the Jewish Decalogue, and I want you to look at the first commandment in Judaism—it's generally the first. It's not even a commandment. It's a saying because it's ten sayings. It's a declaration. Number one. So notice in number two, they group in, do not make any graven images with number two. It's just shoved in there because they view it as being the same thing.

The Catholic view is interesting because they do something similar. They take the preamble, I am the Lord your God, and they combine it with thou shalt have no other gods before me, as well as grouping together verses four through six, which also means don't make any images, graven images. And then you have the Reformed view, which is more your Protestants or your Protestant view. And you can see, this is probably how many of us have grown up counting this way. Number one commandment, don't have any other gods before me. Number two commandment, don't make any graven images. And then you have number three, which is you shall not take the Lord's name in vain. How many of you knew there were like three different ways to count the Ten Commandments? Isn't that neat? These are the main ways.

Three Ways to Count

Now, what's neat about the Catholic view is they do something different that most people don't notice. Look at Commandments 9 and 10 in the Catholic Decalogue. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods. Now look what the Reformed view does in number 10. Well, yeah, I mean, it's all one thing. Don't covet, right? Well, no, if you go to Exodus chapter 20, verse 17, you shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet

your neighbor's wife. Is it one or two commandments? Is it one or two sayings? This is why the Catholic view splits that up as 9 and 10, because they've combined the first two in the Protestant view. Isn't that neat? I just found that neat. I felt like that was just worth noting. And what's neat is it doesn't seem like a big deal, but there are larger ramifications for how you count the commandments. Mainly, the focus on which one that is kind of removed from both the Jewish and Catholic versions of the Decalogue. They're emphasizing no graven images. The Reformed view? No, we've got to make that. It has to set in its own. No making any graven images. And you see that when you walk into a Reformed or Presbyterian church. You don't see images or drawings of God or biblical characters or saints. Nowhere. Why? Because in their Decalogue, it's emphasized: don't make graven images. And they set that apart in contrast to God saying, don't worship any gods other than me.

Now, if you go into a Catholic or maybe a Lutheran sanctuary, what do you see? Do you see images or drawings or artwork or statues of God or biblical characters? Yes, of course you do. Because their understanding is that, well, that's part of the same commandment. Don't worship any other gods but me. And while you're at it, don't make any graven images and bow down to them, which is what the verse says. It has to do with the gods. Love that. So in the Reformed view, that nativity scene that we have at Sukkot is a graven image and you sin, right? And I guess I appreciate that because if the Catholic Decalogue counted it a little bit differently, things like the Sistine Chapel, the sculpture of David or Moses, wouldn't be that cool, right? Just interesting.

Dr. Carmen Imes and the Chiasm

Now, Modern Scholarship has taken a look at the three main views. And I appreciate up-and-coming scholar and author Dr. Carmen Imes. She's a writer of a book which I highly recommend called *Bearing God's Name, Why Sinai Matters*. And she takes on a different approach that I really appreciate. She takes the approach of including the preamble, which is commandment one in the Jewish view: I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt. That's first focus. And she takes on a different approach, very similar to the Catholic Decalogue. That's neat. So she goes on to explain that in the ancient world, you didn't have images just hanging around your house. You didn't have artwork. In the culture this was written to, the means of worship was through images. That's why you had images. This is why in [Genesis 1](#), when God creating mankind to be his images, it's the word *tzalim* in Hebrew. It literally means the idol for which he is expressed. When mankind is made to be his images in the world, that's

why it's so controversial. Worship to God happens when we, as his image, reflects his character and kingdom into the world.

And she makes this point, for those of you who do care, and I find this extremely interesting. She points out that there's actually a chiasm in [Exodus 20](#), which is why she feels this way. The grammatical reason to read these commandments together is found in verse 5. You shall not bow down to them or worship them. The recipients of worship are plural, but image in the previous line is singular. This prohibition must be continuing the thought of the preceding sentence, a prohibition of other gods being plural, a chiasm—literally, a literary sandwich—in [Exodus 20](#), 2-6 and in [Deuteronomy 5](#), reinforces my claim that they should be read together. In other words, here's the chiasm of [Exodus 20](#). I am the Lord your God. I am Yahweh your God. Then you must have no other gods, plural. Then you must not make a graven image. Then you must not bow down to the other gods. Then it ends with the same statement it began with: I am the Lord your God. What's the emphasis here? All of these verses point to one thing: worship Yahweh alone. The God that saved you is who you worship alone. In other words, if you try to break these sections of scriptures up to mean something about paintings or artwork, you take away from the point of what the message is trying to say. Don't worship any other gods but Yahweh. That's the point of this whole section of how the beginning of the Decalogue comes forth.

Only One God

Something else that's fascinating about the text is notice that it never says that there's only one God. Another Bible nerd moment. It simply says you are to worship only one God, and Yahweh is that God. Not that there really are multiple gods or something floating around. There are people for some reason that teach that. But no, in the ancient world, Israel is coming out of Egypt. They may as well believe that the gods of their neighbors were real. So here, God meets them at their level. He says, worship only me. Don't make images of other gods and bow down and worship them. This is a stance. It's called henotheism. It's the worship of only one God in a world of many gods. And this is actually the backdrop of the biblical story all the way up to about the time of the monarchy with David. And then the biblical narrative switches to monotheism: there is only one God. But that's that. Just a fun fact.

Invited to Think and Struggle

To summarize, the Bible says that there's only ten phrases or ten words on the tablets, which we spoke last week. We believe the two tablets were copies of each other. And we believe that there

were 10, but we're just not exactly sure how to count them. We don't know how to count them. Is 9 9 and 10? Is 1 1 or 2 or 3, or are they all combined? How does that work? And the reason why that's exciting for me is because it's not a huge deal, but it's one of the many, many, many things in the Bible that causes us to think and even struggle. Which one is right? Which version is right? It's not simply 10. It's not simply a black and white answer. And when we pick up the Bible, we're invited on a journey, not to simply look at an encyclopedia and look at all these cool checklist facts. No, we're invited to think. We're invited to try to understand. And we're getting into the glimpse of the world that God allowed the biblical authors to paint for us. It's not always black and white in the world of the Bible.

One of my favorite examples of this is found in Proverbs. And the thing is, we love to look at the Bible sometimes as a simple checklist of commandments. Like we can just mark off every single day and feel holy, right? Because that would be easy. But how many commandments does God actually lay out details for us to follow? Oh, this just gets uncomfortable, doesn't it? Like let's go to the go-to, the sacred cow, Sabbath. Does God tell us in detail this is exactly how you're supposed to... Okay, don't light fires. What does that mean? Okay, don't bake and cook. What does that mean? Don't work. What does that mean? It's absent. It's absent. See, we as humans, we want it to be easy. Just give us a list, God. Tell us exactly how to be robots in this world. No, you're invited on the journey. That's why Sabbath might not look exactly the same for everyone at different points on a different journey. That's why community is so important, especially we see in Judaism going up through the first century. You had different sects within the community trying to understand and grind these scriptures down to something that they could make sense of.

Fringes and Wisdom

Does the relationship look and feel the same as it did when you first started on this journey? Depending on how far along you are, maybe not. How about fringes at the corners of your garments? There we go. Hey, we got some. Hey, look at that. What does that look like? Numbers never tell us.

Is there a certain way to tie the thread? Is there a certain length? I mean, certainly Israel didn't have some that were like blue and white and some that were tight-eyed or with beads in it. I mean, we have all kinds of liberties we take today, right? What was it? A thread of tekellet. What is that? We think it's this blue dye that comes from the snow. Okay. How am I supposed to wear them today? Because we don't really wear towels around our waist with no shirts on, kind of like they did in the Near East coming out of Egypt. How do I wear them today?

On these tablets, there are 10 phrases. Which one is number one? Which one is the first? And I love examples like this because I feel like it's an invitation to experience not only the grace of God, but the character that God wants us to be active in a relationship towards him, as well as active in a community around us. My favorite example, here we go, [Proverbs 24. Proverbs 24.](#) Do not answer a fool according to his folly, or you yourself will be just like him. Is that some wisdom? Yes. We're going to follow this commandment, right? Because it's in the Bible, right? Yes, we need to follow it.

Next verse. Answer a fool according to his folly, or he will be wise in his own eyes. I'm trying to follow a checklist here, God. Which one of these am I supposed to do? And it's not about a which one. It's about a when. When? Yeah, you're supposed to follow both. Supplies, right?

The answer is when. Okay, God, when am I supposed to? Where in between these verses is when? When am I supposed to keep this commandment versus this commandment? When? And that comes from something that can only be learned. It's called wisdom.

Wisdom Over Checklists

Guys, sometimes we misrepresent what the Bible is as this checklist that fell out of heaven. And we don't realize that it's something that we're supposed to meditate on in order to guide us in the world, to give us the divine wisdom of God's kingdom to demonstrate in the world around us. It's supposed to be taken out and lived out. And it's not always easy and it's not always clear, but it's something that when we lean on God, when we take of the tree of life (which [Proverbs 3](#) calls God's wisdom) instead of the tree of trying to figure out everything and living our life to our own ways, determining good and evil for ourselves, then we walk it out. And this is an example of that. I hope you guys thought that was neat. That's one of my favorite verses.

The Bible is an amazing divinely inspired book that wants you to work, to think, and become strengthened by its wisdom.

A Dynamic, Living World

The biblical worldview. It's a world that's filled with joy, but sometimes the biblical world is filled with sorrow. And it's a world that is sometimes filled with easy decisions and other times it's filled with hard ones. Anyone ever struggled to make a decision in their life? Yeah. Anyone ever opened their Bible trying to look for an answer for a really, really, really hard decision? Yeah. Welcome to the authors. This is what it was. And it's a world that is dynamic, constantly changing and filled with color. The Bible is our invitation to listen to the words of God, learn his

wisdom and implement it into his creation. Are there ten words? Are there ten commandments? Yes, there are.

Taking the Lord's Name in Vain

The next Debar, the next commandment—I'll say that because it's familiar language. It's either the second or the third. And it's this one right here. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

Now... I grew up thinking that this commandment simply had to do with the way I pronounced or used his name in speech. And if we're being honest, it can and it does extend to that realm of our speech. Please don't misunderstand me there. But I believe it's far from limited to that domain. I grew up thinking that this commandment specifically had to do with using the title God with a swear word. Anybody? That's what comes to mind, right? Okay, me. And that, imagining that language, carried far more weight than any singular four-letter word that existed. That was it. And if someone had God mixed with a cuss word, or even saying the name Jesus in an irreverent fashion as a response to stubbing your toe, likely this was a desecration of this commandment, which I don't disagree with.

But it's amazing because in Judaism over time and generations, fence laws have been set up. You guys know what I'm talking about, fence laws? So they set up fence laws around the commandments to keep you from transgressing the original commandment. And the problem arises when you set up so many fence laws that you don't even understand why the original commandment was instituted. And so in the messianic world, we love to pick on Judaism because of this, but we do the same things. Oh man, we do the same things.

The Cycle of Words

So we're not allowed to use God in a cuss word, which is good. Don't do that. You can't say Jesus in an irreverent fashion, agreed. But now in our culture, it's become common to say, oh my God, whenever something dramatic happens. It's not a cuss word. It might be irreverent, but in context, you could argue it's used correctly. Nope. Banned. You're not allowed to say that. If you say O-M-G, you might as well say G-D. Fine. We can fix this. Gosh. Rhymes with Josh, not God. Right? So we're clear. No, no. You're just changing the sound of the words that are not a cuss word, but might as well be a cuss word that aligns the phrase with a cuss word, including God's title, which is a desecration of the commandment to not take the Lord's name in vain.

Right? Okay. I'm not saying it's okay to say, oh my gosh, I'm just taking you along the journey that I've been on in my life. I just want to point out this cycle. And it continues.

So instead of saying Jesus Christ in an inappropriate fashion, we become convicted. So we say, geez. Right? Nope. It's too close to the other. Okay. So you catch yourself. You stub your toe. Gee, cricket. And that's kosher because we're not talking about God. We're talking about a magical talking cricket with a top hat. Of course, then you get people that are really critical of Disney, so you've transgressed there in something that's probably filled with more zeal than the original command. You can't use that. So we finally, we finally come, we finally come to a place where we feel we're safe. Cheese and rice. Mexican food. Can't touch it. And is that too real? The cycle that we've all been through. What do you do? That's been my journey. And I completely agree. We should not be grabbing at the name or title of God we serve to fill in a desire or need to articulate certain degrees of emotions in our language in present day.

Bearing God's Name

But I say all that to say that when we look at the Hebrew in the verse, a very compelling new translation arises from this familiar phrase. And instead of reading it, do not take the Lord's name in vain, Hebrew scholars such as Robert Alter and Carmen Imes take a different approach. They suggest a translation more like this. You shall not bear or literally carry the name of Yahweh your God in vain. So many pastors, rabbis, teachers, and even scholars have been dissatisfied with this translation. Why? Because the Hebrew seems to be indicating that you can somehow physically pick up the name of God and carry it around. And you can't. It's not physical. It's not a piece of luggage that you carry around with you. And so many translations in the past because of this have leaned towards interpreting the word vain as simply common. Don't make it common. In other words, bearing God's name means not to pronounce it. Thus, you have a tradition emphasized, especially in Judaism and even some Christian arenas, where you don't say the divine name because that makes it common and that transgresses the commandment. Which makes sense, but there's a scriptural example where this phrase, bearing, is used not long after the giving of the Decalogue that may help us get a fuller sense of what this commandment actually means for us.

We find the same usage of this word, to bear, in [Exodus 28](#), when God gives instructions to build his tabernacle. And we come to a section where he's speaking about the garments of the high priest, and we see something extremely significant involving this phrase.

The High Priest's Garments

So Aaron shall bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastplate of judgment on his heart when he goes into the holy place for a continual remembrance before the Lord. So I want you to imagine the high priest is charged to wear a specific wardrobe when he enters into the tabernacle and does all of the holy objectives around the tabernacle. The high priest also wears a headband with the words, Kedosh le-Yahweh written on them. Holy unto Yahweh. And in this case, what's interesting is you see that little L there before the divine name, Le Yahweh. So whenever you see the Lamed appear, in many cases with this fashion, it becomes kind of a possessive.

It belongs to God. So in other words, when the high priest wore the signature around his forehead, he's saying that he belongs to God, which is neat. This is God's representative. Right? What does this have to do with the command to not bear the name of the Lord in vain? So the high priest bears the names of Israel, being the representative of Israel by bearing their name. He also bears the name of God on his forehead, being the representative of God to Israel. And remember last week when we spoke about God's treasured possession? What was the vocation given to Israel and then later given to us in 1 Peter? It's in Exodus chapter 19, 5. You shall be my treasured possession out of all peoples. Indeed, the whole earth is mine, but you shall be for me a priestly kingdom or a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Israel had been called to be a kingdom of priests. Priests are those who mediate, representatives of God and his heavenly kingdom on earth. Just like the high priests, they're called to be representatives. They are called to carry his name, not into the tabernacle, but into the nations. They're called to carry his name, to be a light to all nations.

Carry His Name Into the Nations

This is why the command is so significant here. It isn't just about screaming God whenever you stub your toe. It's more than that. Just like the command about graven images is more than just painting a picture on the wall, there's a bigger picture that is about you honoring Yahweh alone. Here, the bigger picture is the jersey that you wear in the world that says, I am a child of the Most High God. I am a servant of Yahweh. I am a son or a daughter that has pledged allegiance to King Yeshua. Bear the name of Yahweh among the nations and represent him well. Don't take his name in vain.

The command doesn't just affect the things you say. It also affects the way that you live in all areas of your life. Remember whose name you bear. Remember that. Because the world is

watching you. And you can either leave an impression of God's signature on the world, or you can damage the reputation of his character.

The Jersey You Wear

Imagine wearing a jersey of your favorite football player around. Imagine you're part of a football team and you wear your jersey all around to work every day in traffic because everybody's cool as a cucumber in traffic in Charlotte. I know you. You're wearing this jersey everywhere, okay? And it has the name of your team on it. Now picture a day in the life of you. What is the impression of the team that is left in the world because of you? Is it good? No. Or is it maybe not? Or sometimes in the middle somewhere, depending on the day?

If you are a mediator of heaven on earth, which you are if you're a follower of Yeshua, you are his hands and feet, you are an ambassador of Christ according to Paul, you are a soldier of Christ according to Paul, you are his representative on earth, then you bear his name. When you open your mouth, but also when you do the things that you do, when you act or react the way that you do, you have an opportunity to bear his name and represent him well, or to do it in vain.

His Hands and Feet

See, if we're right about how we read the Ten Commandments, the Decalogue, initiating the count with, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Don't worship any other gods but me. And don't make any graven images of those gods and bow down and serve them. If this is the first, number one of the list of ten commandments, then it sets the stage for the first two commandments to revolve around two things. One is worship God alone, and the other is to represent him well. This is the foundation. This is how you do that.

How you doing? Good? It's easier just to say cheese and rice, isn't it? Let me go back to that. This commandment extends far beyond that. It extends into your workplace. How do you represent him in your workplace? It extends into your home. How do you represent him in your home? It extends into your church. How do you represent him in your fellowship? How do you represent him? Your representation is the primary exposure of his name in the world that is far from him. Is it seen in vain?

Representation Extends Everywhere

What about the rest of the commandments? Let's move on from this one. The next on the list is keep the Sabbath day holy. Everybody's excited. Yeah, this is our favorite. It's good we got this one. What does that have to do with representing God well? Matt, shh, just let us have our day of rest. Stop it. How do you spend your Sabbath?

See, many times we learn about the Sabbath day and we find an excuse to be lazy. Yeah, because it's a Sabbath and I need to rest, which means I need to be lazy, which means I get to chill out on the couch all day long, eat potato chips, and I'm keeping the Sabbath and I'm honoring God and I'm an upstanding citizen of the kingdom of heaven because I didn't mow my lawn today. Yeah, see my lawn, zee, zee, woo-wee, right? No one else, okay. I've been there. No, I can't help you out today. I'm resting.

So [Exodus 28](#), let's read the commandment in the Decalogue. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all of your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male servant or your female servant, or your livestock or the sojourner that is within your gates.

Man, the Sabbath. Sadly, one of the most neglected or dismissed decrees in Christianity. Because it's seen as outdated, not relevant, and it's something that's just Jewish, or something that's done away with. And I hate that because it fits. We love the Sabbath because we understand it's not a burden. Two amens. It's good. Y'all need prayer. It's not a burden. It's a what? It's a blessing.

Keep the Sabbath Day Holy

What would happen if we as a whole stopped viewing Sabbath as this horrible burden God is commanding us to strap onto our backs and carry all day long and view it as what it is? It's an invitation. It's an invitation. It's an invitation to an example of God's provision, safety, and God's eternal peace. That is what it is.

Remember, the author of Hebrews speaks of entering into a relationship and pledging allegiance to Yeshua, entering into allegiance to the Christ, the Messiah, the King, as entering into the eternal Sabbath. Like he matches the two up. Every week as Christians, we're reminded of that. Do you get that? That's so cool. When we enter into the Sabbath day, we step into the example that was put into place of the eternal rest that we only find in Christ. That's so neat. That's so significant to me.

It's an invitation. And look at the command. Sabbath is not only about you. Everybody say, Sabbath is not just about me. Sabbath is not just about me. It's about you representing God to

others. Oh, the same thing that the foundation and the first two commandments are trying to emphasize towards us. You are no longer slaves. No more 24-7 hustle, right? Neither are your servants. Neither are your neighbors. Neither are your animals. That's right. Betsy, the cow, gets a taste of God's eternal rest too.

And that's not a joke because a new creation affects all of creation, right? Because our God is bigger than... Yeah. Yeah. Because his plans and his promises are bigger? Sometimes we get confused about why God himself needed to rest after six days of molding the universe in the Genesis creation poem. And guys, God didn't need to rest because he was tired. I hear that. I'm like, why would you say that? No. It was a point in creation where God demonstrated his sovereignty, his reign over creation by sitting down and resting, managing and in control, king over creation.

An Invitation to Rest

Imagine a king walking into his throne room. He puts his sword against the wall and he walks over to his throne and he sits down after a long war. And he's not resting because he's tired. He's resting because this kingdom is his and this is where he belongs on his throne. This is the context of resting. I love the [Daniel 7](#) imagery.

If you're a believer and you've never read [Daniel 7](#), please go back and read [Daniel 7](#) because that was the example that Yeshua constantly referred to himself and his ministry towards. Being the son of man that was overtaken by the beast, but through his death, the beast lost all of its power and he was elevated up to the heavenly throne room, given all power and all authority over both heaven and earth. [Daniel 7](#), son of man. But I love the [Daniel 7](#) imagery in the New Testament because we have the son of man sitting down at the right hand of God.

And in [Genesis 1](#) and 2, we have creation being finished and God resting over his creation. And the same is true on the cross. We have Yeshua yelling this familiar phrase, it is finished, ushering in a new creation, sitting down and resting over a creation where his kingdom of heaven has collided and engulfed earth once and for all.

The Son of Man Resting

As believers, the Sabbath should be even more significant to us than non-believers because of this fact. It's a weekly reminder. We get to walk out the true reality that we now live in as servants and ambassadors of the kingdom of God.

At some point, we need to stop and realize that the Torah, the laws, the commandments, the decrees, they were all given as a gift, as a structure to set anarchy and chaos apart, as a vocational calling to step out of a lifestyle of slavery and into the role as a daughter and into the role as a son of the king. And as an ambassador, a royal ambassador of Yeshua's kingdom, a soldier of Christ, as Paul loves to yell out, how do we do this?

Well, we lay our lives at the feet of the king. We submit and we humble ourselves, taking the name of the God who saves, and we bear his name to the world. We walk out that responsibility and that calling every day and every moment. And sometimes that looks like standing in the midst of chaos as a beacon of peace, of stillness, of quiet in the world that is exploding around you. And sometimes it looks like resisting anger and hatred, replacing it with mercy and grace, daring to forgive. Sometimes that looks like not taking offense, but showing love in a way that is unheard of. That is how the scriptures tell us to bear the name of God. And it means not using the Bible as fuel to stoke your pride either.

The Mystery of the Ten Commandments

See, we just went over the mystery of the Ten Commandments. I love that title—the mystery of the Ten Commandments. What was the mystery? Well, we know there are 10 of them, but the Bible never really tells us how Israel counted them. We don't know. Is Judaism right? Is the Catholic tradition right? Is the Reformed tradition right? Is modern Hebrew scholarship correct? Which one is right? What's the answer to the mystery? What's the answer? I need to know I'm right. I don't know, and guess what? Neither do they. Maybe that's the point, you see?

There's no right way to count them listed in the biblical text. There's no way to know. That's part of the struggle that, if you submit yourselves to it, brings humility as you walk out the very commandments that you want to be right about counting. Maybe being right isn't as important as being humble. Maybe the principles of God are meant to bleed through our actions, not our prideful acts of being at the top of the Bible knowledge food chain. Maybe this is how we bear his name in the world around us.

Following Yeshua's Example

The same way that Yeshua did. Through acts of self-giving love, afflicting mercy, scarring acts of graciousness, painful acts of forgiveness. By living out the character of our God as a living sacrifice. Burning on fire with the spirit of the living God within us. Maybe, maybe that's the lesson we find in the mystery of the Ten Commandments. Maybe living them out, worshiping

God alone and representing him well. Maybe that's more important than how to count them correctly.

Worship team, you guys can come up. So I don't know where you're at today, but I hope that you find encouragement in these pages of God's word here in Exodus of all places. I hope that you find a peace like no other in the testimony of these pages. I hope that you find eternal rest in the arms of Yeshua. Yeshua, the King, the Christ, the Mashiach, the Messiah. That is who we follow as an example of what it looks like to bear the name of God in a world that finds itself far from it. Maybe you find yourself farther from the rest of the world. I don't know.

Concluding Through Worship

Please stand as we conclude services the same way we went in, and that's through worship. Guys, I don't know if we have a prayer team today. I believe we do. We have a prayer team at either side of the sanctuary. Guys, I want to invite you today. Take advantage of servants that will pray with you. Take advantage of the fact that there are servants that will serve and stand beside you and hold your hands and stand with you. And don't let an opportunity pass by. It's more than a blessing to have these individuals here to be able to pray with you.

Open to His Embrace

And I don't know where you're at today. Maybe you're at a place where you realize you haven't been living out God's name. Or maybe you're at a place where you feel so far from God and the trauma and the tragedy and the sorrows of life that you're not even sure he can hear you any longer. I promise you, I promise you his word says that he's ready to embrace you in your suffering.

Alvina Malkinu, our father, our king, father, we thank you for this time together. Father, we ask in the name of Yeshua that you would continue to feed us your word through your spirit. Father, that you would remind us that we are to focus only on you in this life, serve you alone, but also represent you well to the world around us. That is our calling as a kingdom of priests. That is our calling as ambassadors of the Messiah, of the King. Give us the strength, Father. Give us the courage to focus on you and live out the calling you have in our lives to bear your name to the world. In Yeshua's name we pray, amen.

I'm Matthew Vanderels, pastor of Founded in Truth Fellowship, and we hope you enjoyed this message and that it was a blessing to you and your family. Founded in Truth exists to cultivate a fellowship of image bearers that live the redeemed life only Yeshua can give. If this ministry has

been a blessing to you, we would love to hear from you. Send us an email through the contact form on our site and tell us how God has used this ministry to edify your faith and your relationship with Him. If you would like to donate to Founded in Truth Ministries and be a part of this ministry's continued impact, you can do so through our website. Thank you for joining us, and we pray that you experience the peace and the joy of God's holy Sabbath. Shabbat Shalom.

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