



SMALL GROUP LESSON

SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

GODLY GUIDELINES

EXODUS 20:1-17

The Ten Commandments have played a key role in the development of Western Civilization. They have been inscribed on the walls of our judicial buildings and memorized by school children. They have served as the basis of our understanding of law and order. In fact, until the middle of the twentieth century, many of those who were training to become lawyers were required to read and study Sir William Blackstone's *Commentaries on the Laws*

of England. These commentaries were published between 1765 and 1769. They are based upon the judicial principles found in the Bible, including the Ten Commandments and other portions of Scripture in both the Old and New Testaments. With this in mind, consider these questions.

1. Why do you think God gave the Ten Commandments, as well as the Book of the Covenant, to the people of Israel?
2. How many of the Ten Commandments are directed towards our relationship with God, and how many of them describe how we are to be related to one another?
3. Why are the Ten Commandments written in a negative—you shall not—format instead of a—you shall—format?
4. Psalm 119 is the longest psalm in the Old Testament? What is the theme of this psalm and how is it related to the Ten Commandments and the other laws of God?
5. What would happen in America if the citizens of this nation decided to really obey and abide by the Ten Commandments?

DIGGING DEEPER

Many have said that Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-7:29) is the New Testament version of the Ten Commandments. The only difference is that it raises the bar to a new spiritual height. Do you agree or disagree, and can you think of an example in which one or more of the Ten Commandments are elevated to a higher and more spiritually minded standard in the Sermon on the Mount?