

TRAINING FOR LEADERSHIP – THE RESOURCES IN THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

The human need – the acute suffering and bondage of the Israelites in Egypt.	God’s response: <i>I have heard my people’s cry, and I will remember my covenant.</i>	God’s calling of a leader: Moses’ burning bush experience. God’s training of a leader: learning to hear from God and to shepherd sheep.	God’s purpose: Moses was called by God to be a leader to deliver His people from the pain of bondage to the joys of genuine worship.
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The first four of the Ten Commandments is God’s personal statement to His people about the gospel. These commandments are not arbitrary **rules**, but they are really the TENDER Commandments, designed for **relationship** with a loving and faithful Creator-God that His people may experience joyful relationships with Him as they in worship serve Him with their praises and receive the sufficiency of His resources for their every need.

The Covenant in the first four Commandments	Identity	Values	The three angels’ messages: protection against the covenant violations of Babylon and the beast . The sin-disease of Babylon: Looking for love in all the wrong places. The sin-disease of the beast: any method (force, fear, threat, coercion, intimidation, control etc.) to satisfy our addiction to the idols of Babylon.	Write a timeline of your life similar to the covenant timeline and song of Deut. 32, which was placed beside the Ark of the Covenant as a testimony . The song of Moses and the Lamb, Revelation 15:1-4.
<i>I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt...</i>	Discover your identity in God.	Discover the high value God has placed on you in redemption: “You are bought with a price.” “According to the price paid we are to value ourselves” - EGW	The everlasting gospel – God’s covenant intention, exhibited in creation, and worked out at the cross. Contract vs. covenant Salvation.	Detect where false christes (beasts, idols) have stolen your identity , twisted your values , and damaged your life.
<i>1. You shall have no other gods before me</i>	Find your identity in one God only , the one who delivered you from bondage (the gospel). Truth: Who you are determines what you do.	How highly do you value your God? Is ONE God enough? Having multiple gods is spiritual adultery.	Fear God – for there is no want to those who fear Him (Psalm 34:9). Replace fear with trust.	Victory over the beast (counterfeit saviors)
<i>2. You shall not make a graven image, you shall not bow down and serve them...</i>	Protect your identity. Do not custom-design substitute god-replacements (idols) in your own image to compensate for your personal alleged deficiencies, + unbelief in God’s sufficiency for your every need. The Lie: What you do determines who you are.	Discover how highly God values you , because He does not want you and your family to reap the consequences of spiritual adultery. False self-worth: Your performance + the opinions of others about that performance.	The fear of God takes away all other fears. Detect your fears so you may discover where the roots of unbelief and idolatry lurks. “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties; and see if there is any wicked way in me” (Psalm 139:23).	Victory over his image
<i>3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.</i>	Know the resources of your identity. Find in the sufficiency of God’s many glorious names your identity, protection, and security. (God controls you). Guard against making a name for yourself by god-playing. (You attempt to control others). No god-playing allowed, for God is BIG enough to handle anything.	In His many glorious names God shows the high value He places on you , and He asks that you similarly place high value on others by refraining from god-playing. Genuine self-worth: Genuine self-worth: What God thinks of you.	Give glory to Him – and overcome pride which is misplaced and man-made and performance-based self-worth. Live to make a name for yourself by seeking to impress others or to control others. Feelings of anger when one does not get his own way.	his name
<i>4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy...The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God.</i>	Celebrate your identity – and experience rest as you trust in His rating of your life as complete in Him.	The Sabbath is a sign of the high value God places on us , for He created us primarily, not for work, but for relationship with Himself.	Worship Him who made heaven and earth. To worship is to place our highest value on God. He is always worthy to receive worship. <i>Worthy is the Lamb who was slain!</i>	his number

By an honest processing of your personal **timeline**, God will restore your **identity** in Him, remake you in His **image**, give you security in the sufficiency of His many glorious **names**, and rate you with His **number** [7], His designation of your completeness in Him. As your process your past **history**, God offers to give you a new history with all the benefits of Christ’s salvation history. This will then become your personal **testimony** about God, out of which will grow God’s **vision** and **destiny** for your life. A Christian leader is one whom God has equipped for leadership by teaching him to hear the voice of God (“my sheep hear my voice”), and to whom God will give **His vision and purpose** for His people. The leader will share that vision with others as he teaches them to also hear from God (“he who has an ear let him hear”). Our new **testimony**: “I waited patiently for the Lord...He drew me out of the pit...set my feet upon a rock...put a new song in my mouth...many will see and hear and put their trust in God” (Psalm 40:40:1-3).
Ervin Thomsen, 2011

Identity Theft Protection in the first four of the Ten Commandments:

In the prologue to the law you will find these words, “*I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of bondage*” (Exodus 20:2). Notice that before God uttered a single command, He first reminded His people of their identity. It was as if He was tenderly saying to them, “You are my very own, you belong to me, remember what I did for you at the Red Sea where the armies of Egypt perished. And I did it all because of my faithfulness to the covenant I established with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Because the commandments are an integral part of God’s covenant, we must always remember the covenant context of the commandments, where God is saying, I am all for you! Just look how the concept of *identity* is everywhere in the prologue to the commandments.

- Accept God’s identity. “*I am the Lord...*”
- Accept your own identity in God. “*...your God.*”
- Accept the origins of your identity. “*...who brought you out of Egypt.*” The deliverance from Egypt was based on God’s covenant promises. And behind the deliverance from Egyptian bondage stands the everlasting covenant initiated by God and His Son, who before the foundation of the world clasped hands in holy covenant and thus took the initiative to save us.ⁱ

Find your identity in one God only (the 1st Commandment): “You shall have no other gods before me.” Why? Is God afraid of the competition? No, for there are *no* other gods anywhere. The competition arises in the twisted thinking of people who deny the abundantly plain truth about God and construct in the minds their own gods. (Romans 1:18-22). This *one* God is all you really need. He is BIG enough to handle anything. Just look at track-record of His performance the Red Sea. There He acted redemptively in your behalf. He wants you to trust Him for everything. And in the New Testament, Paul tells us to look at His redemptive act of the cross. “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? (Romans 8:32).

Satan’s lie is this – find your identity in many gods. If God does not come through for you in ways that please you, have some spare gods available. How do you make a spare god? Make him in your own image. This is why the first two commandments are really two sides of the same coin, for all sin has its origin in the idolatry of god-replacement.

Protect the identity God has given you (the 2nd Commandment): “You shall not make unto yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything in heaven above or the earth beneath, you shall not bow down and worship them, for I am a jealous God.” Or in other words, “*You shall NOT make and worship god-substitutes made in your own image.*” Often we have seen this commandment as merely a prohibition against images, icons, and other religious art in certain churches, but even God Himself utilizes religious art. Remember the uplifted bronze serpent, and the two cherubim over the mercy seat at the ark of the covenant. God wants us to define our identity by letting Him express His image in us.

Satan’s lie is that you should define your identity by your idols, god-replacements – building your self-image on your performance + the approval of others of that performance. Idolatry is to look to others for affirmation of our image-building pursuits. Genuine worship focuses entirely on God’s covenant declaration about our identity. We derive our personal sense of worth by worshiping the One about whom every being in the cosmos declares, “*Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!*” (Revelation 5:12).

Know the power of your identity, (3rd Commandment): *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.* On the surface, many see this as a mere prohibition against profanity. The wider and deeper meaning of these words refers to the pursuit of expressing your identity by trying to make a name for yourself by god-playing. Remember Nebuchadnezzar! For the person who possesses a solid and secure identity in his covenant-keeping God, this is really an invitation to know the power and resources of your identity by depending on the sufficiency, supremacy and sovereignty of God as expressed in His many glorious names.

Because you are so secure in the magnificence and greatness of your Creator-God, you gratefully respond in praise and worship, as you give Him glory for His sufficiency, as expressed in His many names. Here are a few of these:

- The LORD is my Banner (Hebrew YHWH-Nissi)
- The LORD of Hosts (Hebrew YHWH-Sabaoth)
- The LORD is Peace (Hebrew YHWH-Shalom)
- The LORD of Hosts (Hebrew YHWH-Sabaoth)
- The LORD is Peace (Hebrew YHWH-Shalom)
- The LORD will Provide (Hebrew YHWH-Yireh)
- The LORD our Righteousness (Hebrew YHWH-Tsidekenu)
- The LORD is my Shepherd (Hebrew YHWH-Rohi)
- MOST HIGH (Aramaic Illaya)
- The LORD who heals (Hebrew YHWY Rophi)

Cherish and celebrate your identity (the 4th Commandment) and celebrate your identity. “*Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy...the seventh day [the number] is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall not do any work...for in six days God created heaven and earth.*”

Here are some things to celebrate:

- Celebrate that you don’t have to depend on your work as the source of your identity. Really, the Sabbath commandment should be the easiest of all the commandments to keep. Why? After all, what is easier – to work or to rest?
- Celebrate that you are not saved by *your* work, but by Christ’s redemptive work at Calvary’s cross. So if some people charge you that by your Sabbathkeeping you are trying to work your way to heaven, you can just reply that you are *not working* but *resting*, and that this is a celebration that you are not saved by your works, but by Christ’s work.
- Celebrate on this day God’s rating of the completeness of your identity *in* Him as a perfect ‘7.’ Because of the sufficiency and fullness of Christ, cherish your identity – for you are a new creation of infinite worth, deeply loved, completely forgiven, fully pleasing and totally accepted by God. Do-it-yourself religion only gets you a grade of ‘6,’ but if you are really performance-driven you might achieve a ‘666.’

