22 – The ten Commandments

I. The commandments of God

A. Some were based on culture, others for all time

B. “He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments’”

C. The ten Commandments are a summary of the law of God, the blueprint to holiness

D. They are not numbered in the Bible, but come from the oral tradition of the Jews passed on to us

E. The numbering is different for Catholics and Protestants due to an emphasis on specific points

F. The purpose is to provide an easy way to remember the commandments of God and to keep them

II. What do they mean?

A. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.

1. God is the only God and is the only one to be worshipped

2. God by His nature deserves all adoration and attention

3. Have I treated people, events, or things as more important than God?

4. In terms of time, attention, devotion, etc. who or what do I treat as God instead of God?

B. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

1. God is Holy, therefor His name is Holy

2. Knowing the name of God is a privilege, and honor, and a responsibility

3. There is a difference between using vulgar speech and violating this commandment

4. Have my words, actively or passively, put down God, the Church, or people?

C. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.

1. Worship of God is necessary to the human being

2. Proper balance between work and rest is necessary to the human being

3. The worship of God comes before all else (even football)

4. This also includes regular prayer and reflection

5. Do I go to Mass every Sunday (or Saturday Vigil) and on Holy Days of Obligation (Jan. 1; the Ascension; Aug. 15; Nov. 1; Dec. 8; Dec. 25)?

6. Do I avoid, when possible, work that impedes worship to God, joy for the Lord’s Day, and proper relaxation of mind and body? Do I look for ways to spend time with family or in service on Sunday?

D. Honor your father and your mother.

1. Originally about abandoning them in old age

2. Honor does not mean letting them run your life!

3. Do I show my parents due respect?

4. Do I seek to maintain good communication with my parents where possible?

5. Do I criticize them for lacking skills I think they should have?

E. You shall not kill.

1. this is also understood to extend to a person’s reputation, livelihood, and worth

2. The actual word used is murder, not kill, this does not keep legal just governments from using deadly force when necessary

3. Have I harmed another through physical, verbal, or emotional means, including gossip or manipulation of any kind?

F. You shall not commit adultery.

1. This commandment calls for chastity – the proper use of our sexual desires and acts

2. Lust is when we begin to use others or ourselves as objects rather than honor them as persons

3. All pornography, including soft porn, is prohibited by the commandment, as is masturbation

4. Have I respected the physical and sexual dignity of others and of myself?

G. You shall not steal.

1. This commandment includes all things, including intellectual property, as well as harming public places (vandalism)

2. This includes wasting time at work, downloading copyrighted works, taking things from others, or charging undue prices

3. Have I taken or wasted time or resources that belonged to another?

H. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

1. This includes speaking ill of others, even if true – no gossip!

2. Respect for the truth in charity

3. Have I gossiped, told lies, or embellished stories at the expense of another?

I. You shall not covet your neighbor’s spouse.

1. Married folks are off limits! Period!

2. This includes fantasy, thinking about, or wanting

3. Acknowledging beauty is one thing, but dwelling is another….

4. This violates justice due to spouses

5. Have I honored my spouse with my full affection and exclusive love?

J. You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.

1. Seeing that great care and wanting one for yourself is okay, seeing it and wanting to take it from them is not

2. Jealousy is to be avoided

3. Am I content with my own means and needs, or do I compare myself to others unnecessarily?

Here are the Catholic Ten Commandments:

I am the LORD your God. You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.

Honor your father and your mother.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

The Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17 NKJV)

“I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods before Me.

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image

“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

“You shall not murder.

“You shall not commit adultery.

“You shall not steal.

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

“You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's.”