



John Calvin's *Institutes in the Christian Religion* (1541)

A PPA Seminar: Fall 2017

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Study 6: Chapter Three: The Law of God, Part 2

Read pgs. 146-181

"In the same way...that God wrote His law on two stones with His finger, that is, with His miraculous power, He must today write on our hardened hearts of stone by means of His Holy Spirit" (Calvin, *Sermons on the Ten Commandments*, pg. 250). *"...God used brevity when He gave us his Law; there are no more than ten statements. We can count on our fingers all the instruction that is required for our life."*

Scripture Reading: Exodus 20:1ff; Deuteronomy 4:10, 15, 5:1ff; Psalm 119; Isaiah 40:18-20, 45:10; Jeremiah 31:31-34; Matthew 5:17-20, 22:37-39

1. **What is the Fifth Commandment?** Explain God's purpose and design in this commandment in your own words. Do you seek to keep this commandment? [pgs. 145-148]
2. What are the three parts of the honor that is due our parents? Who are our parents? [pgs. 146-148]
3. **What is the Sixth Commandment?** What is God's aim and purpose in this commandment in your own words? Do you seek to keep this commandment? [pgs. 148-149]
4. Can someone murder without picking up a weapon to harm another? How specifically? How is the prayer: *"Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight..."* (Psalm 19:14) be relevant to the meditation on the sixth commandment? [pgs. 148-149]
5. **What is the Seventh Commandment?** What is its purpose in your own words? Do you seek to keep this commandment? [pgs. 150-154]
6. How is marriage a gracious gift and "God-given remedy" for upholding and honoring God in the seventh commandment? How does Calvin biblically and with the church fathers critique the Roman Catholic monastic vows of celibacy? [pgs. 151-153]
7. Because God owns believers through the Lord Jesus Christ, how are we to specifically avoid "debauchery" ("excessive indulgence in sensual passions")? [pgs. 153-154].

8. **What is the Eighth Commandment?** Summarize this commandment in your own words. What are some specific examples of breaking this commandment? [pgs. 154-157]
9. List a few mutual responsibilities in life that uphold the eighth commandment and honors God. Do you seek to keep this commandment? [pgs. 156-157]
10. **What is the Ninth Commandment?** What is the objective of this commandment summarized in your own words? Give a specific example of keeping this commandment from the heart. Do you seek to keep this commandment? [pgs. 157-159]
11. **What is the Tenth Commandment?** Summarize this commandment in your own words. Why does Calvin think that some might think this is a “superfluous commandment”? Explain. Do you seek to keep this commandment? [pgs. 159-161]
12. What is the aim of the Law of God? How is this revealed both to God and to others? What are the “two tables” of the Law of God? What does this specifically teach you? [pgs. 161-166]
13. Is it possible for unbelievers to keep God’s law? Can believers keep God’s law? Explain the meaning of Augustine’s phrase from his *Confessions*, “*Let Him give what He commands, and let Him command whatever He wills*” [pgs. 166-167]
14. Is it helpful to make distinctions between mortal and venial sins? Why, or why not? Explain using Calvin’s biblical reasoning. [pgs. 166-168]
15. What are the three main functions of the Law? Briefly explain each one [pgs. 171-181]:
 - i. First Function of Law [pgs. 171-174]:
 - ii. Second Function of Law [pgs. 174-175]:
 - iii. Third Function of Law [pgs. 175-176]:
16. Are Christians bound by observance of the Law? Explain in your own words. Do you seek to observe the Law of God? How specifically? [pgs. 177-179]
17. Explain the differences between the Ceremonial and the Moral Laws [pgs. 179-181]