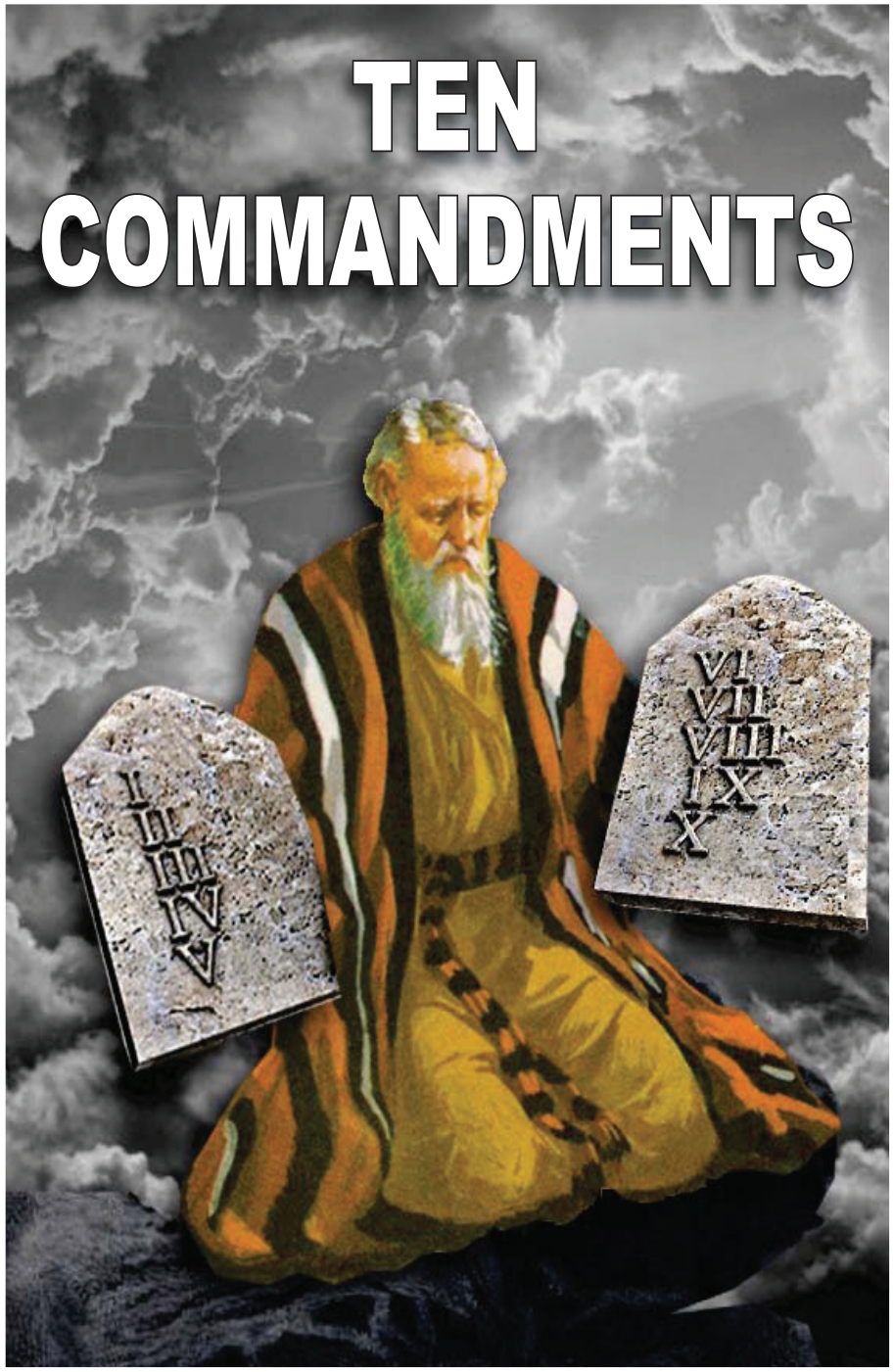

AGES 10-13

The Missionary Baptist
Vacation Bible School Literature Committee presents

TEN COMMANDMENTS

Vacation Bible School Lessons for Ages 10-13
All Lessons Originally Written by Sister Ronnica Shuffitt and
Elder Roger Carter with Limited Editing by Brother Cory Glass

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LESSON ONE

GOD PRESENTS HIS COMMANDMENTS

LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 19:3-9
KEY VERSE: EXODUS 19:5

LESSON TEXT

Exodus 19:3 And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel; **4** Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. **5** Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: **6** And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shall speak unto the children of Israel. **7** And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the Lord had commanded him. **8** And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord. **9** And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the Lord.

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this week our study will focus on the Ten Commandments. These commandments were God's moral law for his people. They were rules for right living. It is very appropriate that we focus on these commandments anytime; however, at this time when there is so much controversy about them, it is even more essential that we concentrate on them in order to learn what God was and is saying to us. As our study proceeds we will cover the presentation of the commandments and their instruction about man's relationship to God and to his fellow man.

PRESENTATION OF THE COMMANDMENTS

The opening lesson of our study finds the children of Israel at Sinai. This mountain is one of the most sacred in Israel's history. Many events that were important to Israel happened at this mountain; Moses met God in a burning bush, God made his covenant with Israel, and Elijah heard God in a still small voice.

This mountain was located in the south central Sinai Peninsula and there was a valley that was 2 1/2 miles long and 1 1/2 miles wide before it. This space would hold 3 million people. The children of Israel were here to receive God's rules for their lives.

PREPARING FOR THE COVENANT

THE PEOPLE

God had rescued the children of Israel from Egypt for a purpose - to become a holy nation. Then he called Moses to him (Ex. 19:3) and told Moses what to say to the Israelites. Moses was to tell the people that if they would keep God's covenant they would be a peculiar treasure to him (Ex. 19:5). The people replied that "all that the Lord hath spoken we will do." (Ex. 19:8)

After the people's reply, God spoke to Moses from a Cloud and instructed him to sanctify the people. They were to get ready physically and spiritually to meet God. The people were to set themselves apart from sin and daily routine in order to dedicate themselves to God (Ex. 9:10-14). They were to wash their clothes. This act of washing and preparing served to get their minds and hearts ready to meet God. When we meet God for worship, we should set aside all of the cares of life and devote our hearts and minds to the worship of God.

THE MOUNTAIN

Just as the people were to be sanctified, the mountain was also sanctified. The people were not to come too close to the mountain nor were they to touch the mountain. If this instruction was broken by anyone, man or beast, they were to be put to death (Ex. 19:12-13). Now all was ready for the people to receive the commandments.

On the third day, Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God. A trumpet sounded, just as a trumpet will sound when Christ comes back again, and God came (Ex. 19:19). Moses went up to the top of the mountain to receive the moral law of God. One of the tablets would deal with man's responsibility to God and the other with man's responsibility to his fellow man.

IN CONCLUSION

The people were prepared, and the mountain with sanctified. All was ready and God came to the scene, just as he said he would. He delivered to Moses his moral law (fundamental principles to live by).

God has told us that we need to prepare to meet him for he is coming back. He will keep that promise just as he kept his word to the children of Israel.

In our introduction it was mentioned that there is great controversy over the Ten Commandments today. These commandments are God's rules for society to live by. They are as applicable today as they were at the time they were delivered.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. Why is it important to study the Ten Commandments?
2. _____ went up on the mountain to get the Ten Commandments.
3. Explain what the people had to do to get ready to receive the Commandments.
4. What was the importance of washing their clothes?
5. Why were the people not to touch the mountain?
6. The _____ are good moral laws for right living.

LESSON TWO

HONORING GOD

LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 20:1-7

LESSON TEXT

Exodus 20:1 And God spake all these words saying,
2. I am the Lord thy God, which has brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
4. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:
5. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;
6. And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.
7. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

INTRODUCTION

In our first lesson we studied how the people of Israel readied themselves to receive God's law. This lesson will deal with the first three commandments. The children of Israel had just come out of a land where the Egyptians had worshiped many gods. However, God told them that he was the only God that they were to worship. In our time, many things can become gods to us. Money, fame, work, pleasure, and acceptance by a certain group can become gods when we concentrate on them too much and put them before God. Let's see what God says about this.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). First of all, this Commandment says that we are to acknowledge God as the one and only true God. In Matthew 4:10, Jesus said, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and him only shall thou serve." The first commandment says that God exists and denies the existence of any other god. Forbidden by the first commandment are atheism (denying that there is a God), polytheism (worship of many gods) or worshiping (putting before God) anything more than God. If you place more importance on being popular, gaining wealth or position, having the right kind of clothes, or material things, than you do on serving and honoring God, then these things may become, or have already, become a god to you.

No one sets out to worship any of these things. However, depending on the amount of time that they occupy in our lives, they can grow into gods that ultimately control our lives. God is a jealous God (Ex. 20:5). We are to believe in, trust in, hope in and love him (John 14:1). God should have the central place in your life.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness *of any thing* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth:" (Exodus 20:4)

As we observe the beautiful colors of fall or the power that is in a storm, we realize that there must be a higher power that is in control. Mankind knows from the things of nature that something, or someone, greater than us is responsible for the world and all that is in it. This higher power deserves our worship and praise. In the second commandment, we are forbidden to make any kind of image of anything and worship it as a god.

Many examples of idolatry are given in history and throughout the Bible. Since we cannot see God (because He is a spirit), we are prone to make images or objects to worship (Isaiah 45:20; Isaiah 46:7). God is a spirit and our worship of Him is to be spiritual, without any physical images, statues or representation of Him (John 4:23-24; Philippians 3:3). In our world today there are many examples of idol worship. God strictly forbids this.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" (Exodus 20:7).

It is common today to hear the Lords name used as a slang word, or as a swear word. You hear this at school, on TV, at the movies, in restaurants, or almost any place you go. Exodus 20:7 states that God will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain. This commandment instructs us to use God's name reverently (Leviticus 22:2). Matthew 5:34 says "But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:" Our conversations with one another are to be pure without the uses of swear words or taking gods name in vain.

What does "in vain" mean? If you tell God you will do something, then you are to fulfill that promise. When you use God's name foolishly or irreverently, that is taking His name in vain. God's name is precious, holy, glorious and wonderful. We are to remember that when we speak His name.

IN CONCLUSION

We have now studied the first three commandments. They emphasize that we are to honor and glorify God with our lives, our speech and to worship only Him. We can understand the importance of this when we realize that God used five verses, Exodus 20:1-5, to stress that he is God.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER
1. What is an idol?
2. Give some examples of idols.
3. All scripture points us to _____.
4. What are God's instruction about worshiping him?
5. Why should we never use the Lords name in an irreverent manner?

LESSON THREE

THOU SHALT

LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 20:8-12

LESSON TEXT

Exodus 20:8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.
9 Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:
10 but the seventh is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:
11 for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day and hallowed it.
12 Honor thy father and mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

INTRODUCTION

This lesson continues our study of God's Commandments to the children of Israel and to us today. The fourth and fifth commandments tell us things we should do in order to please God. Commandments one through three command us to worship God and Him only. We are not to use images or anything else, just worship God in spirit and in truth. Commandment three admonishes us not to worship God falsely but to revere His name. In this lesson we will discuss the fourth commandment, which sets a time for worship. We will also discuss the fifth commandment, which is to honor our fathers and mothers. The fifth commandment is the only commandment that has a promise.

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Exodus 20:8). When God created the world, he did so in six days. On the seventh day he rested. This was an example to us that we need rest after a week of working.

The meaning of the word Sabbath is "rest" or "a period of rest". God knew that our physical bodies would need rest. Therefore, he tells us to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. This day of rest is a time that we spend worshiping God, free from the demands of this world. This is to be a time that we devote to God.

Just as our physical bodies need rest, our spiritual bodies need refreshing. Our souls need a time, unhurried, to commune with God and give him honor and glory for all he has done.

The Sabbath day was to be a day in which no work was done. The focus was to be on God. How different our Sabbath day is today, as we hurry to the mall or some other form of entertainment. I can remember a time when only the necessary businesses were open on Sunday, such as hospitals or service stations. Even grocery stores were closed.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

The fifth commandment instructs us to honor our fathers and mothers. If we do this there is a promise attached: that our days may be long upon the land which the Lord our God gives us. This is the first commandment with a promise attached to it (Exodus 6:1-3). In order to live in peace in the Promised Land, the Israelites would need to respect authority and build strong families. What does it mean to "honor" your parents? Partly, it means speaking well of them and politely to them. However, it also means acting in a manner that shows them respect and courtesy. Even if we find it difficult to get along with our parents, we are still commanded to honor them. The only exception to this would be if parents were asking us to do something against God's will.

Duty to God, and to parents, is called piety (reverence for God and respect for parents). The first five Commandments deal with our duty to God (commandments one through four) and to our parents (commandment five). If one of the first five Commandments were broken, it meant showing impiety to God. The next five Commandments deal with man's relationship with man. Breaking any one of Commandments six through ten was very wicked, but not impious.

As young people today, does the fifth commandment apply to you? This is a day, and age, when "do your own thing" seems to rule. God, however, still says we are to honor our fathers and mothers (Matthew 19:19). Ephesians 6:1 states, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Colossians 3:20 says, "Children, obey *your* parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." The Lord told us what to do in order to please Him. Even so, parents also have a duty to their children. We are not to provoke them to anger, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20-21). Since God made honoring your parents a commandment, and it is also discussed in the New Testament, there is no question about whether we should obey this commandment.

As you study history in school, pay attention to what happens to nations when their family structure is broken down. When a nation leaves the rules that God sent forth, it falls.

IN CONCLUSION

The fourth and fifth commandment instruct us to set aside a time to rest and worship God. We are also to honor our parents, in the Lord. God promises us that if we keep the fifth commandment, we will live long in the land that the Lord our God has given us. Commandments one through five deal with our relationship to God and to our parents. We are to fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

QUESTIONS TO ANSWER

1. Why are we to keep the Sabbath?
2. For what or whom was the Sabbath created?
3. Explain why it is important to spend time alone with God.
4. What is the promise if we honor our parents?
5. What is piety?
6. How are the first five Commandments related?

LESSON FOUR

THOU SHALT NOT

LESSON TEXT: EXODUS 20:13-17

LESSON TEXT

Exodus 20:13 Thou shalt not kill.

14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

15 Thou shalt not steal.

16 Thou shalt not bearfalse witness against thy neighbor.

17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

INTRODUCTION

The last five Commandments are to instruct us in how to treat and respect our fellow man. These have been used to help set up the laws of our nation. By using these principles of God, our society can continue in its civilized state. Though they are short, to the point, and easy to understand, mankind is not totally willing to obey them. The apostle Paul states, "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;*" (Romans 3:23). This scripture is not to be used as an excuse to commit sin, but for us to strive to live a closer life to God by being obedient to Him and His laws. In this lesson, we will take each commandment individually and search out its meaning.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

This commandment was given to safeguard the sanctity of human life. Genesis 1:26-27 tells us that man was made in the image of God. We must realize that it would be against God's will to murder someone. God declared this to Noah and his children after they left the ark (Genesis 9:5-6). Today, the world calls murder by many names. One example is abortion. This is the taking of an innocent life that has not yet been delivered from the mother's womb. He or she is already a part of the world. People are making decisions for that child even before he, or she, is born. Are the ones who kill these babies any different than the Egyptians were in the days preceding Moses, when they put so many children to death (Exodus 1:15-22)? Suicide is also murder, and so is assisted suicide. Just because somebody's standard of living is not what we conceive to be good or beneficial, who are we to end it? Job set a good example. When it seemed like everything was going against him, his wife told him to "…*curse God and die*" (Job 2:9). Job refused to do this, and eventually he was blessed with more than he had previously (Job 2:9-10; 42:10). Although people die by other people's hands in war, or in accidents, this is not murder. Please read Deuteronomy 19:4-6 and Romans 13:4.

THOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

Adultery is a violation of the marriage vows. Marriage is a divine institution that typifies the relationship between Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:22-25). The Lord blessed the love between a husband and wife from the beginning (Genesis 2:18-24). This is why it is stated in most weddings, "*What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder*" (Matthew 19:6). If this commandment is not followed by either person, it can lead to many other problems in life (James 1:14-15). The account of David and Bathsheba is a perfect example of the problems caused by adultery (II Samuel 11 & 12).

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

The Lord teaches us that each individual needs to work for the things they need and want. This must be done in the correct way. We must obtain all things legally and honestly. Apostle Paul tells us, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" (Ephesians 4:28). Some try to excuse their stealing by saying it was just a little thing and the owner has so much. Stealing is stealing, no matter how big or small. The taking of things that do not belong to you can result in punishment and problems to more than the one who takes it. Achan is a good example of this. He took some treasures and spoils from Jericho that were to go to the treasury of the Lord. Because of this, the people of Israel were defeated in battle with the loss of many lives. When they found out what Achan did, they took him, his family, and his possessions, then stoned them and burned everything (Joshua 6&7)

THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR

Bearing a false witness means to say something that is not true about someone. There are many different names that can be used for this commandment. Some are lying, slander, perjury, blasphemy, and flattery. We learn that the devil is the father of lies (John 8:44). If we tell a lie, even if we think it is for someone's good, we are supporting the Devils cause. Read James 3:1-12. It tells how our tongues can get us into great trouble. By bearing false witness against someone, it can do no one any good. It will continue on a downward course. Can you think of a time when a small "fib" started growing into a bigger lie until a situation got out of hand? The truth, though sometimes painful, is the best course to follow.

THOU SHALT NOT COVET

This commandment is probably the hardest for man to keep, because it is not a physical act, but the desire that comes before the act. There are so many things that can be coveted in this world by man. Some people desire the riches of this world, while others may desire the love of another person's spouse. By being disobedient to this commandment, it will lead us to be disobedient to the other commandments. How do we fight against covetousness? We must learn contentment. Read I Timothy 6:6-10. If we can learn to be thankful for what we have, which is from God, we will realize that he will supply all our needs and more. Read the parable of the rich fool (Luke 12:15-21).

CONCLUSION

Throughout this lesson we have studied the things we should not do. Many will say "I won't steal, or kill, and I haven't disobeyed all the commandments, so I'm not all bad." The scriptures teach us, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point,* he is guilty of all" (James 2:10). Please read Matthew 19:16 about the one who came to Jesus to find the way to eternal life. As you read, he tells Jesus he has kept many of the Commandments from his youth. When Jesus told him to get rid of the desires of his heart, the young man went away sad. The Lord doesn't forgive one who partially repents, but one who repents completely to His satisfaction. Our greatest desire should be to please God. To please Him is to be obedient to Him.

LESSON FIVE

THE GREAT COMMANDMENT: LOVE

LESSON TEXT: MATTHEW 22:34-40

LESSON TEXT

Matthew 22:34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

INTRODUCTION

For the last few days we have been studying the Ten Commandments. We have discussed to whom they were given, and what each Commandment truly means. In this lesson, we move to the time Jesus was on the earth and what he says about the Commandments. This was a time when different types of religious people were trying to find error in Jesus' teaching. They questioned Him about many things. Many had given up trying to find fault with him. The Pharisees, a religious sect that believed in self-righteousness and works for salvation, tried one more time by asking; "*Master, which is the great commandment in the law*" (verse 36)? When Jesus was asked that question by the Pharisee, He did not hesitate to give them an answer. He told them we are to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and to love our neighbor as ourselves (verse 37, 39). What was he trying to tell them back then, and us today?

LOVE GOD

First we need to understand what kind of love Jesus is speaking about. It is not the love we see between a man and a woman, nor the love displayed between parents and children. It is a Godly love. It is a love that only comes about by being a child of God. It is a love made perfect by the sacrifice Jesus made by dying on the cross for our sins. God loves us to the extent that He gave His only begotten Son to suffer and die for us (John 3:16). It is a spiritual love that not only dwells in the physical body, but in the soul, or spiritual body, also. Once a person has been saved and has this love of God planted in his soul, he looks at things differently. He wants to honor God and live in a way that pleases Him. The apostle John writes: "*For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments:*

and His commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3). It is not hard to do this, as long as we stay close to God. A child of God never truly wants to bring dishonor to Him, because they do love Him. It is a complete love for the Lord. Please read I John 2:15-17. The scripture is telling us we can't love the world, or the things of the world like we love God, or His love is not in us. We must realize that our life, like the world, will someday pass away. When this happens it will be our love for God, and more importantly His love for us, that will let us live forever with Him. Yes, we all die, but then those who are saved by God's grace will go on to live with the Lord for eternity. This doesn't mean we can't get out and enjoy life and have fun, but this should never be first in our life. As long as we put God first and be obedient to Him, He will be pleased with us.

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

The second part of the Great Commandment states we are to love our neighbor as ourselves (verse 39). Who is this neighbor Jesus is talking about? It is our fellow man, or everyone that lives on this earth. You are probably thinking right now, "How can we love everybody, especially all the wicked people of this world?" Jesus is telling us we need to love them enough that we want to see them saved. This takes that Godly love we wrote of earlier in this lesson. We may not like their ways, but we are to love them in a way that might lead them to Jesus, and salvation. Also, we should treat them like we want to be treated. This is where the last five Commandments come into the picture. We don't want to be treated wrongly, so we should not treat other people wrongly. Many people say they love God, but treat their neighbor terribly. Read I John 4:20-21. It states that if you truly love God, you will love your brother or neighbor. When someone does something wrong to you, you need to pray and forgive them, not try to get even. The apostle Paul wrote, "*Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. 21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."* (Romans 12:20-21).

CONCLUSION

As you read the lesson text, you may think that the Great Commandment was really two commandments. We hope you now realize that "LOVE" is the Great Commandment. Just as the Ten Commandments were written on stone tablets for man to go by, we need the Great Commandment written in our heart to live by. Read Romans 13:8-10. We find there that "*therefore love is the fulfilling of the law*" (verse 10). The law needs to be fulfilled in each individual's life. Is it in yours?