

# Lesson 1 Why God can Command us

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] So on the front side, you've got the list of the fingers and kind of what that's for and then the commandments on the other side. The other side of the paper is the outline of what we're going to talk about today.
- And I need a volunteer to help me get started. I just need somebody like Jack to help me. Now, Jack, you've got to sit down.
- You don't have to do it. Good, because you're going to get a lot of sleep last time. But I just need you to hold these two weights in your hand. And I need you, if you would, while you're doing that, I need you to take your glasses off and put them back on.
- Okay, put them back on. Then I need you to take your pen and I need you to write your name on your paper. You can just write Jack. You don't have to write your whole name. Okay?
- Okay. Hold me down. Okay, and you can put the lid back on your bin.
- [ 1 : 0 4 ] It's hard. Okay. Put it down. Yeah, okay. And now, if you could, do you think you could, you know, take a drink out of your wife's cup? Or is that off limits? You could.
- She would harm you if you did that. No, it's that coffee and he doesn't drink coffee. Oh, I knew there was something wrong with you. You don't drink coffee? I can't even imagine.
- Okay. Well, just sit there for a second and hold those. Michelle, can I get you to help me? All right. You get the big 12 powder, okay? Put that in one hand.
- And then I want you to do five presses, straight presses like this. One. It's a little unbalanced. Uh-huh. Two. Three. Four.
- It's your weight. Five. There you go. There you go. There you go. Okay, so we all know kind of the issue here, right? I mean, when you look at Michelle, she's got one hand that's free, one hand that's burdened with the weight.
- [ 2 : 0 1 ] It's harder to do it when you're burdened down like that, right? Because this hand is harder. Are you sure? It's heavy. Okay. Okay. Well, here. Here. Just put it in here for me.
- Okay. That'll work. All right. So, and for Jack, like, if you had to go around carrying these weights all day long, we all know if we did that, we'd be burdened with these things.
- We couldn't do the things we want to. I mean, you wrote your name. That was not nearly as easy if you could have just picked up the pen and done it, right? Okay. All right. So I'm going to set you free. Oh, bless you.
- Yeah. You knew that. It's this idea of this burden that we want to talk about with the Ten Commandments. And I want you to think historically first. We know that the Ten Commandments come in the book of Exodus.
- That's right. And in the book of Exodus, it's a story about a people who are in slavery. Who are the people who are in slavery? Hebrews. The Hebrews, the Jews, the Israelites, right?

- [ 3 : 04 ] They're in slavery. That's their burden, right? Right? That's the burden that they have to weigh. That's the weight that they have to carry. When they were set free, what country did they get set free from?
- Egypt. Egypt. That's right. And when God set them free from Egypt, how did he do it? Moses. Moses. He used Moses.
- And then what else did God bring to set them free? Bring. How many plagues did he bring? Ten. Ten. Ten. And what was sort of the final miraculous act that helped them to be free of the Egyptians?
- Okay, that was the 10th plague, but it's something after the 10th plague that happened. Parting of the Red Sea, that's right. That was their sort of final, you know, being done with Egypt.
- When God told Pharaoh that he wanted his people to be set free, for what purpose did he say that he wanted his people to be free?
- [ 4 : 11 ] So they could come and worship me. That's right, they're going to come and serve me. So we've got this background, knowing kind of what God has done for Israel. What we want to do is we want to kind of answer the question, why can God command us?
- Or another way to ask the question is, why should we obey? What is it about God that makes it so that we ought to obey him? And the verse that we're going to use is this verse that's here.
- This is Exodus chapter 20, verse 2. And this is where the Lord says, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.
- And from this verse, we get three reasons why God can command us or why we ought to obey him. And the first reason is this.
- We see his greatness. We see his greatness listed in this verse, right? It comes in his name, right?
- [ 5 : 13 ] We just kind of recounted all this about Israel and being set free. Did God ask anybody for permission to do what he was doing? Did he ask Pharaoh for permission?
- Did he ask the Israelites for their permission for them to be set free? No. Because God is great. God is the authority.
- God does not need to ask anyone permission. Did he ask Israel for permission to make them his treasured possession? No. Because again, God is great.
- He's the ultimate authority. And in this verse, we see two of his names that we've discussed in Sunday school. Can you find them?
- Lord and God. Now, what do you think Lord here means? It's capital L-O-R-D. All caps. It's a Hebrew name.
- [ 6 : 20 ] Yahweh. That's exactly right. Yahweh, Jehovah. It's the same thing. When you see all caps in your English Bible, it's Yahweh or Jehovah. Jehovah and Yahweh are the same thing.
- They're just pronounced differently because of some Germans. But that's all you need to know. Okay. Then he said God. Okay. Does anybody know the Hebrew behind God? Can you remember that? Holy.
- Holy is our word. Hebrew. Hebrew. Elohim. That's right. Okay. I know that those Hebrew names are hard to remember.
- So that, good job. Good job. Yahweh and Elohim. Okay. When we studied these names, we found out a lot about God. There was a lot about who he is.
- As a matter of fact, the name Yahweh has this place in Exodus 3 where God tells Moses his name.

[ 7 : 15 ] Right? Because Moses says, what do I tell people your name is? And God answers with, you tell them, I am that I am. I am has sent you.

And so the word Yahweh, the name Yahweh, the phrase I am are very closely related so that God is the ever present God.

He's the ever present God. And so it means, this name means some things. Okay. So let's take a look at some of the things. One, it means that he has authority. Okay.

As the authority, he can tell us what to do. He can do what he wants to do. He doesn't have to ask anyone for permission at all. He can, he's in charge, in other words.

Okay. Secondly, it means his sovereignty. Okay. As the sovereign Lord, it means that he has, and here's a great definition of sovereignty.

[ 8 : 15 ] Okay. He has the right, the wisdom, and the power to do what he wants to do. He has the right.

Okay. That's that, that's that sort of approval and that authority. He has the right to do what he wants to do. He has the wisdom to do what he wants to do. And he has the power to do what he wants to do.

That's one of the things that his name, Yahweh Elohim, means. It also means that he's self-sufficient. He's self-sufficient. He doesn't need anything.

You know, I like to say it this way. God is not like Tinkerbell. He does not need our belief to exist. You all understand what I'm saying, right?

Like there's so many people that think that the only reason that we serve a God is because we need to believe something. And our belief creates for us a psychological sort of experience.

[ 9 : 12 ] But the truth of the matter is, is that God exists whether there's any earth or not. Whether every human being cease to exist, God exists. Because he exists within himself.

He exists because of himself. And he gives himself his own existence. And his existence is eternal. That's the next idea. He has no beginning. He has no end.

He is infinite. And because of that, he needs nothing from us. Okay? Then he's almighty.

He's almighty. He can do all that he wants to do. It's this idea. You've probably heard the word, the idea of his omnipotence. Or his all-powerfulness.

That's what almighty means, is that he can do what he wants to. And he's also unchangeable. He's unchangeable. He never, ever, ever changes.

[ 10 : 09 ] He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Now, let me ask you this. He's about to give them his rules, his law, his ten commandments.

But he starts by saying, I am the Lord your God. Isn't that kind of strange to start that way? Why do you think he starts that way?

Well, let's do it this way. Let's think of what would happen in a classroom.

Okay? You've got a classroom at school, and you've got a bunch of seventh graders. You walk into the classroom, and you say, all right, everybody, get out your books. Get out your pen.

Get out your paper. It's time to read our chapter and write our definitions. And if you just walked in as a rookie teacher, first class, first day of your first year, and you just launched in with those commands, how likely would you think it would be that these students would comply?

[ 11 : 17 ] You'd just establish your authority. You walk in, and you say, I am the teacher. Right?

My name is this. This is what you will call me. I am your teacher. That's what every teacher does in every school and every class I've ever been in. You gain more compliance by saying, I'm the authority.

That's what God's doing. He is establishing his authority because he is the one who is great. So I put the crown up here to represent his greatness, right?

He is the one who is great. He is the one who gets to do this. He, because of his authority, owns all things because he's created all things. You know, if I were to walk into, if I were to walk into Neal's house, and I would say, Neal, it's time.

We're painting the walls blue. We're going to take this wall that's here between these two rooms out. We're also going to change out all the flooring to something new. Do I have the right to do that? Why?

[ 12 : 21 ] You don't own the house. I don't own the house. God owns his people. He has the right to tell them and to do whatever he wants them to do.

Psalm 89, 11. The heavens are yours. The earth also is yours. The world and all it contains. You have founded them.

So God can tell us what to do. We should obey him because of his greatness. Now let's talk some application for a second and just kind of think about what that means for us.

How many of you like to be told what to do? How many of you, it just thrills your soul when someone looks...

Huh? Depends on who's telling. Does it depend on who's telling or does it also depend on what they're telling? Both. Yeah, both. None of us like to be told what to do.

[ 13 : 21 ] Here's the most fascinating thing to me. Okay? Get a job and you have put yourself in an arrangement in which you have a boss who tells you what to do.

How many times do you know of people who, working in the workforce, think to themselves, I really hate it when he tells me to do that? Like a bunch of people.

Like we often think to ourselves that we're smarter than our bosses. We know better than our bosses. We've discovered a better way to do something. And even if we are, you know, of the generation that's wise, that doesn't say it out loud, we might still feel it.

I don't like to be told what to do. But here's the truth. God has created you. And he has the right to tell you what to do. He has the right to tell you what to do.

And that means that we're always going to live under submission. Now, I'm assuming something here. I'm assuming that your generation gets this better than the generations under me.

[ 14 : 28 ] And that is that you understand that you've always been living in submission to somebody. You know, you went from your parents to teachers in the school. And from the teachers in school, you went to the governing authority over you because they told you what you could do with your car, what you couldn't do with your car.

All kinds of authority is over us. God has even established authority within the church. Right? There's a set of authority within God's church.

The point is, is that we're never in a place where we're out from underneath authority. We're to always be living lives of submission. Now, that doesn't mean all authority is good authority.

It doesn't mean that they're doing what they should. But the point is, is that God can tell us what to do. We always live in submission to him. And that also means that all the people in our lives, all of your family, all of your friends, whether they acknowledge it or not, are underneath God's authority.

Even if they are rabid atheists and hate God, they're still under his authority. Because he made them.

[ 15 : 45 ] And so, that means that if there are people in our lives that are Christians, and we see them do things they ought not do, and they're under God's authority, and here's the Ten Commandments, using the Ten Commandments to kind of hold them accountable to what it is that God has told them they ought to do, should be something that we do.

I mean, if you see a friend of yours, you know, once we get into talking about, say, bearing false witness and what that means, and we come across a Christian friend of ours that lies about something, and we see it, then it is a part of our responsibility to hold them accountable to God's commandments.

So, we should obey God because of his greatness. Okay, let's look at a second thing. Let's look at his goodness. His goodness. Obey God because of his goodness.

Now, back in our verse, Exodus 20, verse 2, there is one single word in this verse where I'm looking at God's goodness.

Okay? And I'm going to show you what it is, and then you're going to be like, wow, that's such a tiny little word. But does anybody want to guess before I tell you which word I'm thinking? It's the word your.

[ 17 : 14 ] I am the Lord your God. There's a lot of times in Scripture where God speaks about, I am the Lord God, kind of describing this title, but here he's making it very personal.

I am your God. Not only are they going to belong to him, not only are they his treasured possession, but he's their inheritance as well.

Right? He has the right to command us because of his greatness, but he also commands us because of his goodness, because he wants us to be a part of his family.

He wants us to be a part of that relationship with him. You know, it's that idea. We see his greatness, but it's his goodness. We're a part of his home. We've come into his house.

We're a part of his family, and now we need to act according to how the family acts. Think about God's goodness in this way. I'm going to read to you from Exodus 19, 4 through 6, four verses, and I want you to look at God's goodness or God being a personal God with his people and just how tender he seems to be towards them, okay?

[ 18 : 27 ] He says, you yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. Now then, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you shall be my own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

These are the words that you shall speak to the sons of Israel. What are some things that kind of demonstrate God's goodness? It demonstrates his desire to be personal with us and that relationship.

What are some of the things you see out of those verses? I love the part where he bore them out on wings and eagle. Yeah. I mean, that's just so grand and majestic.

Yeah. Great description. Good, a good, a good sort of caring kind of image. Yeah, what else? He shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

Oh, okay. And how, for you, how does that show kind of that personal goodness that he's got? A kingdom of priests?

[ 19 : 41 ] Yeah. You're the one that... Exactly. Because, because you weren't anything. You were slaves. And now, you're not going to be just a kingdom, which, to go from being slaves to being a kingdom is good, but a kingdom of priests.

People? Because what does a priest do? Tell the word. Well, he tells the word, but like in this culture, a priest was one who related directly to God on behalf of others.

So, so you guys are going to get close to me, is what he's saying. You know? Yeah. Almost puts us on that same level. You what? Almost puts us on that same level as God. Right.

It brings us so close to him as the representatives to the rest of the world. It's, it's such a good thing. Like, you're a part of my, my family now. Yeah. Um, it's interesting to me to, to think about that because my dad, my dad used to tell me, my dad was a pastor, right?

So, um, he used to tell me that pretty much I needed to be sure that I watched everything that I did, uh, because I represented him. Right. And, you know, as a, as a preacher's kid, that was a, that was kind of a tough thing because I remember in high school, I remember in my freshman history class, um, cussing in front of the whole class and teacher because I was mad about something and the teacher stopped everything and looked me dead in the eyes.

[ 21 : 10 ] He says, I am so ashamed of you and your dad is a preacher and I cannot believe that. And I thought to myself, how did you even know my dad was a preacher? Like, because I went to a consolidated high school and I was from this school and he was from that school and so I don't even know how he knew that but he knew that and he called me out on it and I thought to myself, you know, jerk, you know, because there's a lot of pressure to say, listen, you know, I mean, that's why I think a lot of preacher's kids end up being kind of the bad, some of the worst ones because there's a lot of pressure put on them but if we're honest, there's a lot of pressure put on most of us.

You, your parents, even though they might not have, you know, served in ministry, been pastor or whatever, they still wanted you when you left the house, you represent us and you need to act a certain way.

That's a part of what the law of God is, particularly the Ten Commandments is that we're part of the family and we need to represent. We're part of the family and we need to look like God.

You know, when we go, it's like what you were saying, we're kind of right up there next to God. When I go places, I ought to live in such a way that the people around me recognize that I'm representing God, I'm living for Him, right?

Right? Our lives, when we live out these commandments, they display that we're a part of the family of God and it becomes a tool for us to witness about God's family to those around us.

[ 22 : 45 ] It helps us to have inroads because honestly, if you lived by the Ten Commandments faithfully, the people around you would think you're weird. they would look at you and be confused.

You know, you just take one commandment. You take the idea of do not murder and you look at how Jesus gave us the full understanding of that by saying that if you're angry with someone, that's the same as murder, right?

So, my anger is never justified and holy and righteous. I mean, there might be a righteous anger somewhere, but I'm not sure I've ever experienced it.

And so, so if you go out in the world around you and something bad happens to you and your lost friends around you look at you and go like, well, shouldn't you be angry? They would be confused by the lack of anger, by your trusting God for these things rather than seeking to get vengeance because that's what the world does.

So, we represent him, we live out the family name when we obey these things, right? Okay, let's look at one final thing, one final reason and it is his redemption.

[ 24 : 01 ] His redemption. Now, how did he redeem them out of Egypt? What did he do? He brought them out of the house of Egypt.

How did he do that? Yeah, he sent Moses and the plagues. That's where we want to get to. Let me, let me just say this.

When we think about God doing this, we know he sent Moses. Moses is nothing more than like a hammer, right? He's nothing more than a hammer. He's a tool. He's an instrument. God did this and he did it by sending these plagues.

Now, if you'll think about the plagues for just a second, we won't go into great detail on this, but every one of those plagues aimed at one of the religious affections of the Egyptians.

They had numerous gods. There was a god that looked like frogs, so when the frogs came up, Osiris was connected to the Nile River, so when the river turned blood, it was as though God killed Osiris.

[ 25 : 08 ] So every one of these plagues gets at something. When it went dark, do you know what god that was for the Egyptians? The sun god. His name was Ra.

And when the firstborn of everyone, including of Pharaoh, it was after Pharaoh himself because Pharaoh considered himself a god. And so what God did in delivering his people is he sent and he destroyed the enemy, but that was not the final aspect of the deliverance.

They needed more because as they left, Pharaoh and the Egyptians started coming after them. And so they get to the Red Sea and God opens the Red Sea for them to go across so that they leave, they leave the country that they were in, they leave the land of Egypt, they were taken out of the house of slavery, slavery, and God did that by letting them cross the Red Sea and get to the other side.

That kind of brings us back to this right here. And Michelle, I'm picking on you.

So I want you to think to yourself, okay, I think that strap is good. Yeah, just, okay, however you want good. You good? You gotta be ready. You gotta be ready. Okay. So we understand the burden of slavery.

[ 26 : 31 ] That's where Egypt, that's where Israelites were. They were in Egypt in slavery and that was a burden to them that they had to bear. But the thing is, is that being in the house of slavery and there's proof of this in the book of Joshua and several, in the book of Deuteronomy, the Israelites had left their one true God and they had begun to worship the idols of Egypt.

So they had begun to build a new burden in their own life of sin, right? And that becomes a weight that they, that they can't bear, you know?

And not only that, but because they're serving these other gods, it causes them to sin against one another. Oh gosh. You remember when Moses found two Israelites fighting with each other?

Why is that? Because they're not serving the one true God. So he sets them free through the Red Sea. So they get out of the house of slavery, but they still have a problem. They have a burden of sin.

How do we get rid of a burden of sin? How do we do that? God, give it to him. There's only one way.

[ 27 : 47 ] There's only one way. His greatness, his goodness, his redemption. All that does though is get you physically out of the land to get rid of a burden of sin is only one way.

That's the cross. Jesus has to come, take the burden from you, put it on himself, and go to the cross and take your place that this deserves.

And that's what Israel still needed. And part of the Ten Commandments helps us get there. But the point is is that all of this sort of illustrated, hey, listen, there's more to be done than just getting out of Egypt.

You've got to get out of sin. And so that's why Jesus came, is to die on the cross and take our burden. So I want us to think then, because of that, I want us to think about this verse.

John chapter 1, verse 12, But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name. Because of what Jesus did, we can receive Jesus, and because of receiving Jesus, we can be children.

[ 29 : 06 ] We can have our hearts set free because of what he has done. And it is those who have been redeemed and set free who, because of God's goodness and because of God's greatness, ought to be the ones who obey him.

So here's the thing I want you to think about. they had these, think about the Ten Commandments. We went through our fingers and we talked about them. God did not say, obey these Ten Commandments and then I will let you out of Egypt.

It's because he took them out of Egypt that he gave them the Ten Commandments. That's right. So the same thing happens for us.

He doesn't tell us to obey these Ten Commandments so that we can get rid of our sin and be saved and go to heaven one day to be with him. He saves us and then expects us to obey him because we are already saved.

Because we can't earn anything, right? So then, what place does the law have in our life? We're going to study the Ten Commandments.

[ 30 : 18 ] What should we be getting out of it? How should it help people who don't need it to go to heaven? That's a big question, right? Well, three things.

Number one, the law is like a flashlight or a light of any kind. And as a flashlight, it illuminates for us the character of God.

Okay? So, when you look at these Ten Commandments and you see what they say, do not murder, do not steal, honor your father and mother, that reveals something about the character of God.

Think about honor your father and mother. What do you think that reveals about the character of God? That he... He's our father and we're supposed to honor him too.

Right. He is that ultimate authority. He loves authority. He loves that... the structure in our lives. He puts that there. It tells us he's a God of order and a God of authority.

[ 31 : 24 ] What about do not murder? How does that reveal God's character? He gave us life and no one has survived. He gave us life.

No one can take it with him. Yeah, I would say it's basically the same thing about human life. That's right. What did Jesus say? He says, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

He is life himself. So, you know, as we go through and we study this, one of the reasons we do so is so that we gain a bigger picture of the character of God. Okay?

But secondly, we study it because it's like a mirror. It's like a mirror. And if you look in a mirror, who do you see? You see yourself.

When you look at the law, you should see yourself. So when you see it say, do not murder, do not steal, do not lie, there's a way in which you should be able to look at that and go, oh, that's me.

[ 32 : 26 ] Because one of the things about the law of God is that it's not just this bare thing of do not murder. Let's go back to what Jesus said, right? Jesus gave the full understanding of that, of that our anger is murderous anger.

Our anger is breaking of this commandment. So when I look at the commandment and it says, do not murder, I have to think to myself, who have I been angry with?

Did I murder them in my anger? Now, none of you have done this, I am sure. But when I was a kid, teenager, and my parents would tell me no about something, I would get so angry and I would stuff it that I would actually visualize in my mind them dying somehow because I was so angry and of course after a span of time all of a sudden I'd snap out and realize what a terrible person I am.

And here's the thing, we all struggle with different things. Maybe yours is not the murder commandment, maybe it's a different commandment, but it's a mirror that shows us the ugliness of who we are so that we run to Jesus Galatians in the book of Galatians chapter 3 Paul says that the law is a tutor that leads us to Christ.

So as this mirror we're supposed to see ourselves and when we do run to Jesus. Even as a Christian I still sin and the law of God helps me see my sin so that I go back to Jesus and like 1 John 1 9 I say confess my sins and he's faithful and just to forgive me of my sin.

[ 34 : 07 ] I still need the mirror and my life. And the third thing is it's like a map. It tells us which way to go. It tells us how to live.

You know there's a lot of people in this world Christians included who would love to see for God to drop out of the sky and with his own finger write something down that tells them this is how you ought to live.

I'm just saying well he did that. It's called the Ten Commandments. You know and so like we worry about like well what house should I buy and who should I marry and when should I retire and all these kinds of questions and God is more concerned with how about you not lie how about you not steal how about you not commit adultery and so I think if we get these things right I think those other things fall into place and so as this map it shows us how we are to navigate life how we're to live in such a way that pleases God that honors him and there's a lot into these things you know like just that one commandment do not murder like that's the simplest one for me because that's the one I struggle with but like that is not just don't get angry but that is about protecting life so now there's all kinds of things that you think about in protecting life I think this is where the idea of protecting your family from intruders in your own home comes from I think this is the idea of where being against abortion comes from

I think this is the idea this commandment is where we get the idea of being against like euthanasia right because we want to protect life and so it gives us directions about how to live and navigate this world and here's the interesting thing it's not just about me and what I'm going to do but it's also about I've got people in my life that I'm responsible to share truth with and the people in your life who are lost who don't know God who don't love him they need you to know how to use the law like a mirror so you can hold it up to them and they can see their own sin so that they will run to Jesus right that conscience has to be convicted about what their problem is so that they run to Jesus there are some people in your life young Christians that maybe they just don't know how they ought to follow God they need for you to know how to use the law of God like a map so you can show them how they ought to walk and please God and then you and the rest of us in your life we need you to know how to use God's law like a light so that you can help us see the character of God in his law so that it stirs our hearts for worship stirs our hearts to love him to adore him so that's the goal that's the goal is we we try to get into the ten commandments and we're going to take them each one commandment at a time so it's going to take us about ten weeks to get through that then we'll have a couple weeks of wrap up or whatever but we just want to look at all of this and see what we can see about it and really just grow grow in our understanding of it so I pray that the Lord would help us to do that and I pray it would inspire you to really dig into these things so let me pray for us and then we'll take some questions after that okay