

## God's Rules for Living

What would happen if there were no traffic laws on our roads? Imagine drivers going as fast as they wanted, driving on either side of the road, and turning wherever they liked. Imagine intersections with no stop signs or traffic lights – they would be deadly. If we had no traffic laws our roadways would be utterly chaotic!

Human governments establish rules for driving (traffic laws) to keep our roads safe. Those rules are not in place to hinder personal freedom, but to ensure a safe driving experience. In this lesson you will learn that God gave His people some rules for living. Obeying those rules makes life safe and happy, but disobeying them results in chaos and hurt.

After two months of traveling through the wilderness, the children of Israel arrived at **Mount Sinai** (see the map on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**). God called Moses up to the top of the mountain where He gave him rules by which the Israelites were to live. We often call these rules the Ten Commandments.

**Ex. 20:1**      Who spoke these words?

**Ex. 20:2**      How did He identify Himself?

The first 4 rules describe how man is to relate to God.

**Ex. 20:3**      The 1<sup>st</sup> commandment is:

God deserves pre-eminence (first place) in our lives. Any object, any activity, or any person that assumes pre-eminence in our lives is another “god” that has taken the Lord’s rightful place.

**Ex. 20:4**      What is the 2<sup>nd</sup> commandment:

**Ex. 20:5**      What were they not to do with idols?

Why did God say this?

**Ex. 20:7**      What is the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment?

What did God say about those who violate this rule?

**Ex. 20:8**      What is commandment number 4?

**Ex. 20:9-10**    How were they to keep this commandment?

**Ex. 20:11**     Why did God want them to remember the Sabbath?

The next six rules tell how people should relate to one another.

**Ex. 20:12**     What is the 5<sup>th</sup> commandment?

What did God promise those who do this?

**Ex. 20:13**      What is the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment?

The word translated **kill** in this verse literally refers to murder. It does not forbid all killing (such as capital punishment, self defense, or acts of war), nor does it forbid the killing of animals.

**Ex. 20:14**      What is the 7<sup>th</sup> commandment?

**Ex. 20:15**      What is commandment number 8?

**Ex. 20:16**      What is the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment?

**Ex. 20:17**      What is the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment?

What things are we not to covet?

The Ten Commandments, while they are the most familiar to us, were not all of the rules God gave His people. In fact, chapters 21 – 23 are filled with specific rules governing various areas of life.

The Ten Commandments may be summarized as follows:

1. You must not worship any other gods.
2. You must not make or worship any idols.
3. You must not use the Lord's name in a vain, frivolous, or disrespectful manner.
4. You must honor and keep the Sabbath day (Saturday).
5. You must honor your parents.
6. You must not commit murder.
7. You must not commit adultery.
8. You must not steal.
9. You must not lie.
10. You must not covet (desire) anything that belongs to someone else.

**Concluding Thoughts:** God gave those ten rules to the Israelites over 3,000 years ago. Do they still relate to us today? In fact, nine of the Ten Commandments are repeated in word or principle in the New Testament. The only one modern Christians are not required to obey is the one about the Sabbath day (Saturday). The Bible does not tell New Testament Christians to honor the Sabbath because Christians worship on Sunday (the Lord's day) to commemorate Christ's resurrection.

Some might think God's rules are restrictive and that they rob people of fun – but they are wrong. You see, foolish people view the speed limit as a hindrance to their personal freedom, but wise people understand that traffic laws are in place for their safety. The same is true of God's rules – they are designed to give us peace and safety. Imagine what a happy and peaceful place the world would be if everyone simply obeyed God's rules.

You can't control anyone's behavior but your own. Read over the Ten Commandments listed above. Do you obey the ones that apply to you (1-3 & 5-10)? Which ones have you violated? Confess your sins and ask God to enable you to obey His rules.

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**Project:** Take note this week of how many problems in today's world can be traced back to violating God's rules for living.