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CATECHIZING THE MEMBERS OF CREEK ROAD BAPTIST
CHURCH IN SHARONVILLE, OHIO, IN THE DECALOGUE:
A MIXED METHODS STUDY

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CATECHIZING THE MEMBERS OF CREEK ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH IN SHARONVILLE, OHIO, IN THE DECALOGUE: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

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This work is dedicated to my wife, Denise,
whose love and sacrifice allowed me to study;
and to my sons, Adam, and Aaron, and their children,
for whom I leave a legacy.

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PREFACE

I am grateful to the Lord, who enriched me by the work and study I engaged in during my seminars and for this project. I am thankful to my professors, Dr. Donald Whitney, Dr. Joseph Harrod, Dr. J. Stephen Yuille, Dr. Shane Parker, Dr. Michael Wilder, and Dr. Danny Bowen, who invested in me. I am grateful to my fellow-students who demonstrated patience and grace toward me, especially Dr. Christopher Osterbrock. The Lord knew I needed Chris Osterbrock's encouragement and example.

My supervisor, Dr. Joseph Harrod, guided me through my poor writing, weak methods, and uncertainty with patience and grace. He asked me at the beginning if I wanted a finished product of excellent quality. Of course, I said yes. He told me it would be hard, but we would work together to make it so. If there is anything excellent about this document, it is because of his kind and expert leadership. I hope that what is contained herein honors him and the faculty of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

May the bride of Christ be beautified by this project.

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Sharonville, Ohio

December 2019

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary pastors often fail to catechize the members of their congregations. This failure allows a false spirituality to insert itself among the membership leading to spiritual ruin. The church, affected by this condition, declines in attendance as well as in commitment to Christian priorities. Apathy toward the things of God is a mark of this false spiritual condition. It is shaped largely by popular culture and life experiences rather than by the Scriptures. Pastors must recommit to teach their people Bible truths and to equip them to live according to a biblical world-view. This project addresses the need for catechetical instruction among the people of Creek Road Baptist Church and provides a method and means of fostering a biblical spirituality. Additionally, it is hoped that other pastors will be inspired to equip their congregations using this method.

Context

Creek Road Baptist Church (CRBC) is located in Sharonville, Ohio, a small city within the Greater Cincinnati area. The church experienced steady growth from the fall of 1998 through the summer of 2001 and dreamed of expanding the facilities. As a result of the September 11, 2001 attacks, CRBC experienced a large influx of families, which compounded the need for more space. While at the height of growth, CRBC employed an assistant pastor of worship, and US-C2 interns who were responsible for outreach to a local college campus and youth ministry. The US-C2 program was a North American Mission Board placement of college graduates who volunteered to give two years of service to the mission board after graduation. We were fortunate to have two couples over a five-year period.

Even though the church initiated a building program, church leadership recognized that a desire to grow was not wide spread. Others, who initially assented to the idea, backed away when commitments were required to move forward. As Creek Road was unable to proceed with the planned expansion, growth plateaued.

By 2005 CRBC average attendance was 90 persons in Sunday Morning worship. By 2016, this number declined to 42 persons. Sunday school followed this same trajectory, reporting an average of 30 individuals in class in 2016. Declining attendance hindered church staffing. The volunteer base dried up, and leaders left who had ministered to the children, homebound, and widows. These reductions severely impaired ministries and reinforced apathy among existing members. Yet, a small core of committed members remained. These members devoted themselves to missions, associational involvement, evangelistic Bible teaching, and worship. These strengths notwithstanding, several weaknesses caused concern. The most outstanding was the inadequate job of reaching and teaching marginalized members as a false spirituality and apathy began to grow among them.

As leaders and volunteers left CRBC, the responsibilities for the ministries they left behind fell on the pastor. Care for physical plant maintenance and administrative needs of the church overwhelmed the need to correct and instruct distracted members. Due to this lack of attention, those who were most vulnerable slipped away.

Rationale

Spirituality is the lived experience of the Christian life. The Bible, theology, personality, culture, and history shape one's spirituality to greater or lesser degrees. Marginalized members at CRBC adopted a spirituality shaped largely by popular culture and their own life circumstances. To address the problem outlined above, this project provides a positive, biblical means for formation through the use of catechesis. A thoughtful program of instruction can reverse these secularizing influences and prepared marginalized members to better engage a spirituality shaped by the Bible. Following the

long standing Christian practice, the proposed catechesis creates a series of interactive Bible studies based on the Decalogue.

The apostle Paul, speaking to the elders of Ephesus exhorted them to “take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).¹ Richard Baxter exhorted ministers in his day by saying, “What else are we overseers for?”² The pastor’s responsibility is to feed the church the Word of God which is the best medicine for the sickness of a false spirituality. Pastors should apply Baxter’s direction to personally catechize the members of their congregations. As the writer of the book of Hebrews said, “And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed” (Heb 12:13).

The program of catechizing strengthens a daily approach to Bible study, fosters an understanding of the Ten Commandments, encourages engagement in the congregation, challenges the false spiritual ethic, and motivates the adoption of a biblical spirituality. This instruction requires direct pastoral involvement. Scripture presents a model for this kind of program in Paul’s address to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:28), John’s words to Gaius (3 John 11), and Paul’s instruction to Titus (Titus 2:15). The platform for this instruction uses podcasting to deliver the content. The podcast is an underutilized tool for the pastor’s job of catechizing his flock. J. I. Packer, in his introduction to *The Reformed Pastor*, confronts the minister with telling questions:

Have I set myself, as Baxter set himself, to find the best way of creating situations in which I can talk to my people personally, on a regular basis, about their spiritual lives? How to do this today would have to be worked out in terms of present circumstances, which are very different from those Baxter knew and describes; but Baxter’s question to us is, should we not be attempting this, as a practice constantly necessary? If he convinces us that we should, it will not be beyond us to find a method of doing it that suits our situation.³

¹Unless otherwise noted all Scripture references are from the King James Version.

²Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*, ed. William Brown (1897; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974), 124.

³James I. Packer, introduction to *The Reformed Pastor*, ed. William Brown (1897; repr.,

Today, podcasting is such a method. Its ease of use and growing accessibility make it a perfect tool for publishing the gospel and instruction in the Word of God. This project employs podcasting as a method of delivery for direct pastoral catechizing of church members.

May this work be a template for small church pastors who sense the need for instructing their people. They may face the obstacle of distance due to a widely scattered flock. Podcasting can help reach into the homes of their people and extend their ministry. They may face the obstacle of time restraint due to a bi-vocational ministry setting. A prerecorded podcast can assist the bi-vocational pastor in teaching families who have limited exposure to him. It will also be of assistance to the pastor of a large congregation for whom a personal touch with each family is simply not feasible. The use of the technology in this way will extend his ministry and allow him to influence his people toward a biblical spirituality.

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to use podcasting to catechize members of Creek Road Baptist Church in the Ten Commandments.

Goals

Four goals guide this project. They were sequenced in a way that produced the best outcome for the members of Creek Road Baptist Church.

1. The first goal of this project was to measure the knowledge of the Ten Commandments among a group of pastor-selected members of CRBC.⁴
2. The second goal was to develop a three-week, five-day-a-week podcast covering the basics of the commandments.

Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974), 18–19.

⁴The group of pastor-selected members include 18 adult (18+) members. Of that group, 5 members were considered inactive in attendance and 1 was a non-member.

3. The third goal was to develop a fifteen day written devotional guide to be used alongside the podcasts to engage the participants in a daily study of the commandments.

4. The fourth goal was to measure the change in knowledge of the Ten Commandments among the pastor-selected group of CRBC members.

Research Methodology

The first goal of this project was to measure the knowledge of the Ten Commandments among a group of eighteen pastor-selected members of CRBC. In keeping with CRBC's context, this select group of members included active and inactive adult church members, both male and female. This goal was measured by administrating a pre-survey.⁵ This survey contained forty-one Likert-scale statements and was distributed electronically using Google Forms and also as a hard copy for members unable to access the electronic survey. The surveys were completed anonymously. Participants provided a unique PIN in lieu of their names. The survey was pilot-tested by a member not participating in the project. The purpose of the pilot-test was to improve clarity and determine time requirements. Following this pilot period, surveys were distributed and allowed one week for completion. Fulfillment depended on receiving completed surveys and analyzing the results of the survey in order to gain a clearer understanding of the participants' knowledge of the Ten Commandments.

The second goal was to develop a fifteen day pre-recorded podcast teaching the basics of the commandments. A panel—aided by a rubric—evaluated the biblical faithfulness, clarity, and relevance of the podcasting series.⁶ Each podcast was approximately ten minutes in duration, in keeping with good practice in the media's content delivery. Reviewers received internet links to each podcast before the files were

⁵See appendix 1. All of the research instruments used in this project were performed in compliance with and approved by the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Research Ethics Committee prior to use in the ministry project.

⁶See appendix 2. This panel was composed of three individuals. Two were active pastors and one was a retired business woman.

released to project participants. Reviewers sent electronic copies of their completed rubrics via email. This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of each rubric evaluation indicators met or exceeded the sufficiency level. If the 90 percent benchmark was not initially met, the material was revised until it met the standard. Once completed, participants accessed the podcasts by a YouTube playlist.⁷

The third goal was to develop a fifteen day written supplement used alongside the podcasts to engage the participants in their daily study of the commandments.⁸ The same expert panel identified in goal two utilized a rubric to evaluate the devotional supplement's biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum.⁹ Reviewers returned completed rubrics electronically. This goal was considered successfully met when a minimum of 90 percent of the evaluation criterion met or exceeded the sufficient level. If the 90 percent benchmark was not initially met, the material was revised until it met the standard. Participants accessed the written curriculum via a Google Drive link.¹⁰

The fourth goal was to increase the knowledge of the Decalogue among the project group. The use of a post-survey determined the change in participants' knowledge of the Ten Commandments.¹¹ As with the pre-survey, this instrument was delivered electronically via Google Forms. The participants also completed this survey anonymously, providing a unique PIN in lieu of their name. The results of this survey were compared to the pre-survey using a t-test for dependent samples. A t-test for dependent samples "involves a comparison of the means from each group of scores and

⁷This material can be found at <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLBIdHyUEUuwXUk9WVZxJaahlq4kkLE0Dx>.

⁸See appendix 4.

⁹See appendix 3.

¹⁰The Google Drive folder the panel accessed is found at <https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ca-BmPPzyfdd3Ym4se0qQ0h3F3S1m0C1>.

¹¹See appendix 1.

focuses on the differences between the scores.”¹² Since this project involved a single group of the same subjects being surveyed under two conditions, a t-test of dependent samples was the appropriate test statistic.¹³ This goal was considered successfully met when the t-test for dependent samples demonstrated a positive, statistically significant difference in the pre and post-survey scores.

Following the completion of the post-study survey and its evaluation, qualitative questions were created for the follow-up period interviews.¹⁴ The interviews were conducted with two adult members of the project group. The information gleaned from the interviews added texture to the data collected from the quantitative study.

Definitions and Limitations/Delimitations

This ministry project contains the following key terms:

Biblical spirituality. For the purpose of this project, biblical spirituality is defined as follows: “Biblical Spirituality is a living and dynamic communion with the Father, mediated through the Son, empowered by the Spirit and practiced in the church. It is grounded and guided by God’s self-revelation in Scripture and has for its goal the conformity of the believer to the image of Christ.”¹⁵

Catechizing. This project understands Catechesis as “a ministry of rigorously grounding and growing believers in the Christian faith. This includes a comprehensive concern for our beliefs about God, our communion with God, and our obedience to God.”¹⁶

¹²Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008), 191.

¹³Salkind, *Statistics for People*, 189.

¹⁴See appendix 5.

¹⁵Joseph Harrod, “Spirituality in the Local Church” (lecture, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, KY, January 4, 2017).

¹⁶J. I. Packer and Gary Parrett, *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old-Fashioned Way* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), 30.

Podcasting. A term originally meant to describe an audio program broadcast for an iPod. Today Podcasting exists in both audio and video formats and is easily accessible by way of the internet over a wide variety of platforms and devices.¹⁷

Ten Commandments. The scriptural scope of this project focused specifically on Exodus 20:1–17. Some Protestant expressions, such as Lutheranism, teach a hybrid version of this passage leaving out Exodus 20:4–6 and dividing verse 17 into two commandments.¹⁸ This project examines all seventeen verses of the Exodus passage.

Two limitations apply to this project. First, the accuracy of the pre- and post-surveys was dependent upon the willingness of the respondents to be honest about their knowledge and understanding of the Ten Commandments. To mitigate this limitation, the respondents and their answers remained anonymous. Second, effectiveness was dependent on the participants listening to the podcasts and reading the material provided. To mitigate this limitation, the podcasts were down-loadable so learners could listen at their leisure.

Two delimitations were placed on the project. First, the project was executed among the eighteen selected individuals. It addressed spiritual leadership in the home but not in the church. Spiritual leadership in the home includes leading the family to be active in church, but the training did not address the exercise of spiritual leadership in the life of the church itself. Second, the project was confined to a twenty-week timeframe. This gave adequate time to prepare and distribute the written materials and podcasts. It also allowed for conducting the post-survey after the teaching was complete.

Conclusion

The need to train the church in foundational doctrines should motivate the

¹⁷Nicole Hennig, “Why Podcasts?” *Library Technology Reports* 53, no. 2 (February/March 2017): 5, accessed July 17, 2017, <https://journals.ala.org/index.php/ltr/article/view/6229>.

¹⁸Martin Luther, *Luther’s Small Catechism with Explanation*, trans. Kleine Katechismus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing, 1986), 9.

pastor to engage in an on-going, systematic teaching ministry. A review of this need for systematic instruction is demonstrated in how the church historically has interpreted Exodus 20:1–17. Chapter 2 of this project examines Exodus 20:1–17, as well as relevant New Testament passages and how both tables of the law apply to the church today.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS FOR CATECHESIS USING THE DECALOGUE

Introduction

After the events of the revival at Cambuslang, Scotland, in 1742, the pastor, William McCulloch, recorded interviews with many of those converted. These sessions revealed that early childhood training at home with a catechism laid a foundation of faith that bore fruit during the revival. The catechisms mentioned were *The Westminster Larger Catechism*, *The Westminster Shorter Catechism*, Thomas Vincent's *An Expository Catechism*, and two by John Willison *The Mother's Catechism, for the Young Child*, and *The Young Communicant's Catechism*.¹ The ongoing religious education in the home made an impact in preparing whole families for the Lord's work. Many of McCulloch's examinees mentioned how the Spirit of God reminded them of a passage of Scripture learned as a child. One of the examinees, Margaret Lap, reported, "Next morning shortly after I arose from bed, these words (in Acts 16:31) struck my heart with great Power, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved': After which I thought I was in some measure enabled to believe in Christ."² The experiences of the people of Cambuslang speak to the use of catechesis as a teaching tool for later spiritual growth.

The Ten Commandments are an integral part of the catechisms used by the families involved in the Cambuslang revival. Another McCulloch examinee said that as a

¹Keith Edward Beebe, ed., *The McCulloch Examinations of the Cambuslang Revival 1742*, critical ed. (Woodbridge, England: Scottish History Society, 2013), 1:396–98.

²Beebe, *McCulloch Examinations*, 21.

child she was instructed in the home. Then, during the revival, something wonderful happened to her. “At the table, I got a deep sense of my unworthiness and emptiness and of the exercise of faith. After I came away, I was much cast down, for my rushing into his presence so unpreparedly, and then that word came in, ‘shewing mercy to thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.’”³ Much like the training these young people received in their homes, the purpose of this project is to use catechesis to teach the Decalogue, found in Exodus 20:3–17, to strengthen Christian discipleship and prepare hearts to receive the Lord.

Does the Law have a place in a faith community? Does it simply have an historical function, a temporary measure meant to help provide national identity as a civil code? Was it a way to teach ethics to a newly released group of slaves? Or, was it a standard meant to restrict religious access to the place of worship? Rifat Sonsino claims, “The original purpose and function of the Ten Commandments in the Bible remains obscure, and its connection to the rest of the biblical laws is also debatable.”⁴

However, John Calvin in his *Institutes* presented a threefold use for the Law. He taught that the primary use of the Law is to convince a man of his unworthiness, his inability to satisfy the Law, and to lead him to call out for mercy. This approach agrees with Paul’s similitude and conclusion in Galatians 3:22–24 of the Law as a school master.⁵ The second use of the Law restrains those who are not affected by the Law’s first use. However, because of what Calvin calls the “dread” of the Law they are either fearful or ashamed to execute the designs of a corrupt heart. Calvin argues that “dread” is a necessary use of the Law for the peace and safety of human community. The Reformer

³Beebe, *McCulloch Examinations*, 172.

⁴Rifat Sonsino, *And God Spoke These Words: The Ten Commandments and Contemporary Ethics* (New York: URJ Press, 2014), 20.

⁵John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, The Library of Christian Classics, 20 (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), 357.

finds support in the apostle as he addresses the use of the Decalogue in 1 Timothy 1:8–10.⁶ The third use of the Law finds its highest purpose in the church. The individual Christian receives justification the moment they believe. The righteousness of God is imputed to them, so they no longer need to seek for a righteousness from the Law (Gal 3:21). They have the Law of God written on their hearts according to Jeremiah’s prophecy (Jer 31:33). What then is the function of the Law for the church? Calvin says it is the perfect instrument to teach the “nature of the Lord’s will” and to open minds to its nature. He says obedience is strengthened and sin avoided by daily consideration. This third use is foundational for instructing believers, so that the benefit of the Law may be enjoyed.⁷

Other voices also speak to the issue of the Law in relation to the gospel. Willem A. VanGemeren proposes a continuation of revelation which from creation through the writings of the apostles is consistent with the will of God. He examines each of six periods in chronological order and how they reveal the character of God. These, he says, are not in conflict with one another but support each other and testify to the compassionate God who displayed them.⁸ He argues that the Law is not replaced by the gospel, grace, or the indwelling Spirit of God rather it is empowered. “The Spirit of Christ guides the Christian in all truth and godliness. . . . In this way, Christians grow in a new lifestyle that shows a concern for being in harmony with the will of God by living in obedience to the law of God (Gal. 5:18; cf. vv. 22-23).”⁹

⁶Calvin, *Institutes*, 358.

⁷Calvin, *Institutes*, 360–61.

⁸Willem A. VanGemeren, “The Law Is the Perfection of Righteousness in Jesus Christ: A Reformed Perspective,” in *The Law, the Gospel and the Modern Christian: Five Views*, ed. Wayne G. Strickland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993), 16–17.

⁹VanGemeren, “Perfection of Righteousness,” 42.

Greg L. Bahnsen argued for a theonomic point of view. Like VanGemeren, he established a continuation of the moral code of the Decalogue into the church age and beyond. He agreed with VanGemeren's Spirit-empowered use of the law as a basis for holiness. Bahnsen said,

While the New Testament condemns any legalistic (i.e., Judaizing) use of God's law to establish one's personal justification or sanctification before him, and while the New Testament rejoices in the fact that the word of Christ has surpassed the legal foreshadowings and rituals of the old covenant, we never find the New Testament rejecting or criticizing the moral demands of the Old Testament law. They are at every point upheld and commended.¹⁰

However, he stretched his argument into the civic arena by focusing the application of the law on both government authorities and citizens. He called on believers to work politically to transform their communities. According to this theonomic view, the secular, culturally driven law must be removed and replaced with a biblical model based on the commandments.¹¹

Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., approaches the relationship between the Law and the gospel with an examination of Paul's position. He replies to those whom he thinks have misunderstood the apostle's position by saying, "The law cannot be properly understood unless it moves toward the grand goal of pointing the believer toward the Messiah, Christ. The law remains God's law, not Moses' law (Rom 7:22; 8:7). It still is holy, just, good, and spiritual (Rom 7:12, 14) for the Israelite as well for the believing Gentile."¹² He draws a distinction between the Law as a unity and the Law in its different parts such as the civic codes, the dietary laws, the sacrificial ordinances and observances completed

¹⁰Greg L. Bahnsen, "The Theonomic Reformed Approach to Law and Gospel," in Strickland, *The Law, the Gospel and the Modern Christian*, 113.

¹¹Bahnsen, "Theonomic Reformed Approach," 117–18.

¹²Walter C. Kaiser, Jr., "The Law as God's Gracious Guidance for the Promotion of Holiness," in Strickland, *The Law, the Gospel and the Modern Christian*, 188.

in Christ. Kaiser argues that the Decalogue still stands because it relies on the, “character and nature of God,”¹³ which never changes.

Wayne G. Strickland explains the relationship between the Christian and the Law from a dispensational view. Strickland argues against continuity of the Law for use by the church. He treats the pertinent passages from Paul’s writings as he counters the theonomic, reconstructionist and reformed views. Strickland sees no merit in Calvin’s third use of the law. He says there is an absence of evidence to suggest any divisions in the law along ceremonial, dietary, or civil lines.¹⁴ However, he concludes that the law does have a role in the life of a believer. “In this regard, the law has abiding application to the life of a believer even in the church age. The nature of the law has not changed, so its revelatory purpose transcends the Mosaic economy and remains valid in the church dispensation.”¹⁵

Douglas J. Moo teaches a modified Lutheran view of the relationship between the Law and the gospel and argues for a “salvation history” plan. He says, “This is not, of course, to deny the continuity of salvation history—a continuity rooted in one God, carrying out one plan, in one people. But it is to insist that this one continuous and eternal plan unfolds in successive and distinct stages.”¹⁶ He then places the law in the “stage” before the Messianic period. He gives both a negative and positive perspective on the Law and decides for a cessation of its moral demands. However, in his conclusion he says, “I am not, then, suggesting that the essential ‘moral’ *content* of the Mosaic law is not applicable to believers. On the ‘bottom line’ question of what Christians are actually

¹³Kaiser, “God’s Gracious Guidance,” 197.

¹⁴Wayne G. Strickland, “The Inauguration of the Law of Christ with the Gospel of Christ: A Dispensational View,” in Strickland, *The Law, the Gospel and the Modern Christian*, 261.

¹⁵Strickland, “Inauguration of the Law of Christ,” 278.

¹⁶Douglas J. Moo, “The Law of Christ as the Fulfillment of the Law of Moses: A Modified Lutheran View,” in Strickland, *The Law, the Gospel and the Modern Christian*, 321.

to do, I could well find myself in complete agreement with, say, a colleague who takes a traditional Reformed approach to the Mosaic law.”¹⁷

This summary shows that the relationship between the Law and the church is not simply or consistently a cross section of the relationship between the Law and the gospel but demonstrates how it has been treated by the church in its Protestant expression. While by no means exhaustive, these viewpoints express the variety of opinions found in the church concerning the Law and its relationship to the believer. Yet, each one understands the moral demands of the Law as foundational to the life of the church.

An Overview of Exodus 20:1–17

Translation

So God spoke all these words saying; I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of servitude. You will not have another God before me; you will not make for yourself an image or any likeness of that which is in heaven above or which is on the earth beneath or which is in the waters under the earth; you will not bow down to them, nor will you serve them, for I am the LORD your God, a jealous God visiting the fathers’ iniquity upon the children unto the third and unto the fourth of those who hate me; but performing mercy for thousands of those who love me and who keep my commandments. You will not take up the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave unpunished the one who takes up his name in vain.¹⁸

¹⁷Moo, “Christ as the Fulfillment of the Law,” 376.

¹⁸This represents my translation of the passage. I followed the BHS accents for punctuation. Due to the absence of the *sop pasuq* in places where an English period would be expected I used a semi-colon to indicate the break. Even though there is a *sop pasuq* at the end of verse 1, I used a semicolon to preserve the flow of thought. I followed the *Petucha* for paragraph returns. William R. Scott and H. P. Ruger, *A Simplified Guide to BHS: Critical Apparatus, Masora, Accents Unusual Letters & Other Markings with an English Key to the Latin Words and Abbreviations and the Symbols of Biblia Hebraica*

Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it; six days you shall labor and do all your work but the seventh is a Sabbath to the LORD your God, you will not do any work, neither you nor your sons nor your daughters, your male servants nor your female servants nor your beasts nor your sojourner who is in your gates; for six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all which is in them, and he rested on the seventh day, therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it. Honor your father and your mother, in order that your days may be prolonged upon the land which the LORD your God has given you. You will not murder. You will not commit adultery. You will not steal. You will not testify against your neighbor a false witness. You will not covet your neighbor's house, you will not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant nor his female servant nor his cattle nor his ass nor anything which belongs to your neighbor.

Excursus: Masorah Parva

The following section provides detailed consideration of the marginal notes for thoroughness. The Masorah Parva (Mp) provides an accounting of unique, defective, or unusual spellings of words or phrases in the Masoretic text. This includes the number of occurrences and where they are found in the Bible. In Exodus 20:1–17 there are several notes of interest.¹⁹ The most common note in the Mp is יְלִי or simply לִי. This designation signifies a unique occurrence of a word or phrase. The designation לִי occur 12 times in these 17 verses. Ten stand alone with no other comment. Two of the twelve are embedded in a fuller note. Of the 12, 8 are found in the second table (Exod 20:12–17).²⁰

Stuttgartensia (North Richland, TX: BIBAL Press, 1995), 1.

¹⁹Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, ed. and trans. E. J. Revell, *Masoretic Studies* 5 (Riga, Latvia: Scholars Press, 1980), 64–65.

²⁰Yeivin, *Introduction*, 65.

The largest entry in the Mp concerning this passage is found in the margin of verse 13. Page Kelley translates this as “One of 8 verses where אָלֹף appears 4 times (in this case, in verses 13, 14, 15, and 16, which are treated as if they were only one verse); and this is one of 22 verses in which there is neither a *vav* nor a *yod*.²¹ While the BHS provides verse divisions for each of the six verses in the second table, an examination of a reading scroll reveals what the note suggests—the scholars saw this as one verse. An examination of Exodus 20:13–17 reveals there are only two verses marked even though the *sop pasuq* occurs in the same locations as in the BHS text. In this reading the fourteenth verse comes after the first phrase of the tenth commandment לא תחמד בית רעך.²²

Another common note in the Mp is חסיר or חס meaning “defective” or “lacking.” The translation of defective for this note may leave the reader with a wrong impression. Marcus Jastrow suggests that it is defective in the same way that a calendar month of twenty-nine days is defective because it is lacking a single day to make it a full month. Thus, defective does not mean flawed but rather missing a small detail. This note often appears opposite of מלא or *plene* meaning full or complete. In the Exodus passage חס only occurs once in verse 5 where it points to אבות.²³ Kelley says that the “defective” note usually highlights a word where a ה or a י would be expected to appear. Here, the word “fathers” appears with a *holem* instead of a *holem vav*. The *plene* form would then be אבות.²⁴

²¹Page H. Kelley, Daniel S. Mynatt, and Timothy G. Crawford, *The Masorah of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: Introduction and Annotated Glossary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 127.

²²Nachum Y. Kornfeld and Abraham B. Walzer, [תקון קוראים המפואר] [Practice for the readers of the weekly portion] (Union City, NJ: Gross Brothers, 1998), 84. For the purpose of this project the translation of Exod 20:1–17 follows the verse divisions of the English Bible. To introduce another tradition of verse division may create unnecessary confusion.

²³Marcus Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York: Judaica Press, 1996), 1:489.

²⁴Kelley, Mynatt, and Crawford, *The Masorah*, 107. While there are more Mp notes to be

BHS Apparatus

The *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia* (BHS) contains the text of the Leningrad Codex, the Marsorah parva in the margin, and the Masorah magna notes just beneath the text. Below the Masorah magna a critical apparatus appears. These entries are in Latin and refer to other manuscripts which provide an alternate rendering of words or phrases. Various symbols are used which are keyed to a list within the Prolegomena of the BHS.²⁵

The first note in the apparatus is for the word אֱלֹהִים in Exodus 20:1. Here, both the Septuagint and the Vulgate have an alternate reading of κυριος. The Targum Onkelos, an Aramaic translation of the book of Exodus, agrees with the variant reading placing the Tetragrammaton here. Israel Dravin says that the word translated “Lord” implies the attribute of mercy. The Targums avoid the theological distinction and the possible misconception of numerous gods implied in the plural ‘Elohim’ by using the Tetragrammaton consistently. LXX does sometimes, as in this verse.”²⁶ The translators of the Targum Onkelos worried that the simple minded might misunderstand אֱלֹהִים to suggest polytheism or that it is God’s actual name. Therefore, they completely avoided its use. When the text called for a generic use of the word, not referring to the Deity but to a false god, they would write it only in a singular form.²⁷

Of the thirty notes in the BHS apparatus referencing the verses of Exodus 20:1–17, fifteen look to the Septuagint for a variant reading. The Septuagint is a Greek translation of the Hebrew text but unlike other witnesses such as the Targums, it used a variety of Hebrew sources. This makes it ideal for exegesis and textual criticism.²⁸

treated in this passage, I have only briefly touched on these due to time and space constraints.

²⁵Scott and Ruger, *Simplified Guide to BHS*, 19–22.

²⁶Israel Drazin, *Targum Onkelos to Exodus: An English Translation of the Text with Analysis and Commentary* (Denver: Ktav Publishing, 1990), 197.

²⁷Drazin, *Targum Onkelos to Exodus*, 45.

²⁸Emmanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 135, PDF eBook, Bayt Agoodah PDF Library.

Another frequently occurring source in the BHS apparatus for this passage is the Nash Papyrus. It occurs thirteen times in thirty notes. Emmanuel Tov gives some background saying, “This text contains the Decalogue according to a mixed formulation of Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5 as well as the *shema’* pericope (Deut 6:4–5).” He goes on to say, “The Nash papyrus probably reflects mainly the text of Deuteronomy rather than that of Exodus, even though part of the Sabbath commandment gives the text of Exodus (20:11).”²⁹ Quell’s use of the Nash papyrus provides variant spellings that in five of the thirteen notes are not reflected in other manuscripts. It does align itself with the parallel passage in Deuteronomy 5:6–21 adopting תְּהִזֵּה, meaning to desire or lust after, instead of תְּחִמֵּד as in the tenth commandment of Exodus 20.³⁰

After considering the alternate readings from the Targum Onkelos, the Septuagint, and the Nash Papyrus, the text of Exodus 20:1–17 does not seem weakened by these other traditions but rather strengthened in its own uniqueness. While it is interesting that these other readings exist, it is not incumbent upon the student of the Bible to adopt them rather than what is revealed in the text of Exodus 20 found in the Leningrad Codex.

Many Christian and Jewish traditions number the commandments differently. This project will follow a Protestant model of four commandments in the first table and six in the second. Scholars of good faith such as Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum argue for a division of three commandments in the first table of the law and seven in the second. “Analysis based on discourse grammar has clarified the issue decisively. If one pays attention to the presence or absence of the word “and” in the Hebrew text, the

²⁹Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 118.

³⁰Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown – Driver – Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon: With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1979), 16. While there is a great deal of information in the BHS apparatus I have only mentioned the two most frequently occurring sources due to constraints of space.

numbering intended is clear.”³¹ This illustrates the variety of thought on how the Decalogue is numbered.

The New Testament Witness

Matthew. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets” (Matt 5:17). Coming after the nine “blessed” statements of the Beatitudes Jesus sets the stage for his affirmation of the Law.³² Adam Clarke suggests that Jesus’ death was the element that the Law lacked. Prior to the crucifixion it was ineffectual in making peace between God and men. The grace of God demonstrated on the cross allows men to fulfill both tables of the Decalogue by loving God and loving the neighbor.³³

The church’s teaching ministry is not for the sake of putting men under the bondage of the Law but to instruct in the way of God in both its civic and moral requirements. Clarke suggests that Christians must continue to preach and hear the Law when he says, “We may infer that our Lord intimated, that the law and the prophets were still to be taught or inculcated by him and his disciples; and this he and they have done in a most pointed manner.”³⁴ Jesus continues, “I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil” (Matt 5:17). He repeats the statement found in the first phrase, “to destroy” and sets himself and his mission firmly against that end. The Law and the prophets should be considered the

³¹Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *God’s Kingdom Through God’s Covenants: A Concise Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), 151.

³²John A. Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Alvah Hovey, An American Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 1 (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1886), 98.

³³Adam Clarke, *Matthew*, in *The Ultimate Bible Commentary* (n.p.: Amazon Digital Services, 2016), loc 29241–48, Kindle.

³⁴Clarke, *Matthew*, loc. 29241–48.

entirety of the revelation of the Hebrew Scriptures. Broadus says, “No part of the existing scriptures was to be set aside.”³⁵

For the gospel writer, Matthew, the subject of verse 17 is not the Law and the prophets but rather Jesus. His coming, his work on the cross, and his resurrection make possible a fulfilling of the Law that is actualized in the church. W. D. Davies says, “Fulfillment can only confirm the Torah’s truth not cast doubt upon it. And while Jesus’ new demands may surpass the demands of the OT, the two are not contradictory (see on 5.21-48; 9.14-17; 12.1-14; 15.1-20; 19.3-9). Rather do the words of the Torah remain the words of God (cf. 15.4), their imperatival force undiminished (cf. 5.18; 23.23).”³⁶

Jonathan Pennington points out that law is thought of in terms of code rather than covenant. It is God’s gracious work which the Savior came to complete and affirm. Jesus is not releasing men from the safety of the Decalogue’s ethical worldview. Jesus affirms it and takes it even further. Pennington says, “Matthew’s Jesus is striking at the knees of any misunderstanding of Christianity as anti-Semitic, antinomian, or unrefined and flat-footed. Jesus has not come haphazardly, irreverently, or thoughtlessly to attempt to abolish, overthrow, disregard and snidely ignore the Mosaic covenant and God’s work among his chosen people in the past.”³⁷ The Savior has come to reveal how it will continue to function for the church.

The conclusion is in teaching. Jesus said in Matthew 5:19, “Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.” The Law is destroyed or broken by doing/teaching or affirmed and fulfilled by doing/teaching. The word “break” is related to

³⁵Broadus, *Matthew*, 99.

³⁶W. D. Davies, and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, vol. 1, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988), 487.

³⁷Jonathan T. Pennington, *The Sermon on the Mount and Human Flourishing: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 173, Kindle.

the word “destroy” found in verse 17. Jesus did not come to destroy the Law, neither then should the members of his kingdom. His teaching affirms the Law as a standard for living life, a moral high-ground and a foundation for holy living. He finishes with the opposite, “but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Greatness should characterize the teaching ministry of the church.³⁸

Romans. Paul discusses the righteousness of God received through Christ’s work. He says, “But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets” (Rom 3:21). Since righteousness is achieved apart from the Law what role does the Law now have? Brunner argues that the received righteousness of God in the Christian is manifested by those very works of the Law. His reasoning follows Paul’s when in Romans 3:31 he affirms the “establishment” of the Law by faith rather than its emptiness because of faith. “The better righteousness, the righteousness of faith, cannot undercut the righteousness of the Law. It must prove itself as true righteousness by helping to realization what the Law demands. Thus through the righteousness of faith the Law is not annulled but rather confirmed.”³⁹

The Greek word *καταργούμεν* means to “nullify” or “make invalid,” and the KJV renders it “void.”⁴⁰ The same word is used to draw a similar distinction between unbelief and faith. Here, the contrasting word *ιστανομεν* is translated “establish” and means to “confirm” or “make valid.”⁴¹ So just as faith is not made invalid by unbelief

³⁸Broadus, *Matthew*, 101.

³⁹Emil Brunner, *The Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1938), 32.

⁴⁰William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: and Other Early Christian Literature: A translation and adaption of Walter Bauer’s Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristianlichen Literatur*, 4th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), s.v. “καταργούμεν.”

⁴¹Arndt and Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “ιστανομεν.”

neither is the Law nullified because of faith. The Law plays a role in the Christian walk.⁴² The book of Romans, in its own catechetical style, teaches the indispensable nature of the Old Testament as a foundation for the New Testament. The early reformers understood its usefulness in this way. This understanding caused Melanchthon to use Romans as the pattern for a catechism teaching Christian doctrine.⁴³

Speaking of the Law in relation to the redeemed Paul states, “That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom 8:4). The apostle describes a use of the Law that is similar to what Calvin described as the “third” use. Now, not as a law to humble men but one fulfilled in Christ Jesus. Barth says of this walking after the Spirit, “He therefore does not only liberate those who believe in Jesus Christ from the Law of sin and death but he also—as we shall hear in due course—positively sets them free for a life in obedience (8:12–16), hope (8:17–27) and innocence (8:28–39), in a word: for a life in the *Spirit*, under his will of grace.”⁴⁴ Barth argues that walking in the Spirit is the dominating influence in the believer’s life. The will of the flesh is still present, yet the law of sin and death still beckons. However, because the believer walks under the power of the Savior the goal is not the keeping of the Law for salvation but an invitation to daily receive God’s grace.⁴⁵

Paul presents the dilemma of sin aided by the Law in the previous passage (Rom 7:14–25). The individual is imprisoned by sin and worse, “sold under sin,” (Rom 7:14) by a nature in which, “dwelleth no good thing,” (Rom 7:17). The Law has compounded man’s crime and condemned it. In Romans 8:1–4 the apostle demonstrates the power of Christ’s sacrifice in that it frees men from the just commendation of the

⁴²Brunner, *The Letter to the Romans*, 32.

⁴³Karl Barth, *A Shorter Commentary on Romans* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1959), 11.

⁴⁴Barth, *Shorter Commentary on Romans*, 88.

⁴⁵Barth, *Shorter Commentary on Romans*, 91.

Law. Now those in Christ are freed from its penalty and able to, “walk after the Spirit” (Rom 8:1). The believer pursues the covenant of love empowered by the Spirit of God. Schreiner says, “The use of the participle ‘walk’ shows that the concrete obedience of believers is in mind (rightly Stott 1994: 223).”⁴⁶

The church has not been freed by the work of Christ and empowered by the indwelling Spirit of God to walk away from the Commandments. Believers are actually able to follow the moral demands of the Decalogue and to experience the liberty of fulfilling the two great commandments. Schreiner presents this argument when he says, “Even though life under the law involved bondage to sin, it does not follow that moral norms must be jettisoned for believers to live by the power of the Spirit. What Paul argues is that those who have the Spirit actually keep the law.”⁴⁷

The Christian must be concerned with executing the Spirit-led life according to the pattern of truth set forth in this revelation. Both tables of the Decalogue present the believer with a pattern for holy living, both in respect to God and to the neighbor. Christ has freed the church from the curse and penalty of the Law, from the requirements which no man could meet, and from the expectation of failure. Now Christ’s righteousness is functioning in the believer. The apostle calls it in Romans 8:2, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.”⁴⁸

The Old Testament saints were unable to achieve this liberty from duty. Newell says, “Throughout the Psalms, and all the Old Testament Saints’ experiences, we find that there is under the Law, an almost constant striving and groaning after a righteous state,—seen, but not experienced, because the Law consisted of outer enactments, to be fulfilled

⁴⁶Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 406.

⁴⁷Schreiner, *Romans*, 406–7.

⁴⁸William R. Newell, *Romans Verse by Verse* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1938), 296.

by man.”⁴⁹ With those “outer enactments” removed the church is freed from the restraints that the Old Testament worthies could not be released from. The Law then becomes for the church, not a barrier, but a pattern. It is a guide for life and peace, the essence of spiritual mindedness.⁵⁰

Galatians. The “law of Christ” is the engine of Christian social action to those within the church as well as to those outside. Galatians shows that the Law teaches compassion to restore one another and bear one another’s burdens. “Galatians, which in attacking ‘Judaistic’ legalism proclaims the true freedom based on Christ, consequently contains more exhortation, admonition, and summons to obey the ‘law of Christ’ (Gal 6:2) than any other letter, and to quite a remarkable degree—a third of the whole letter.”⁵¹ This Law finds its strength in love. The idea of loving both God and men is rooted firmly for the church in the words of Jesus as he designates the two great commandments. Paul follows by teaching that the whole Law finds its fulfillment in love.⁵²

In Galatians 3:10 Paul mentions the “works of the law.” These are not rooted in the love of God but rather in the pride of merit. The apostle warns his readers of the danger of depending on the Law for righteousness. This is an important distinction when arguing for the inclusion of the Decalogue in a Christian teaching ministry. Strickland says,

Paul was not speaking of revolt against God when referring to ‘works of the law,’ but rather compliance with the commands of the law. His point to the Judaizers was that any attempt to gain merit or salvation by compliance with the law would result

⁴⁹Newell, *Romans Verse by Verse*, 296.

⁵⁰Newell, *Romans Verse by Verse*, 296.

⁵¹Gunther Bornkamm, *Paul*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 83.

⁵²Bornkamm, *Paul*, 216–17.

in failure and curse, because no one was able to comply with all the law on the procurement of salvation.⁵³

The teaching of the commandments is a privilege that blesses not only the church but society and leads the lost to the Savior. Luther in his commentary on Galatians 3:19 speaks of the way the Law affects both the secular world and its primary role in leading men to Christ. The Law of God, codified in the Decalogue, restrains the corrupt impulses of men but does not lead to a works righteousness. Instead, the Law highlights the terror and consequences of sin. It provides order for conducting peaceful transactions between individuals and lays a foundation for how such intercourse can be accomplished. Here the second table of the Law is in full view.⁵⁴

Luther says,

This, as it is the proper and the principle use of the law, so it is very profitable and also most necessary. For if any be not a murderer, an adulterer, a thief, and outwardly refrain from sin, as the Pharisee did which is mentioned in the Gospel (Luke xviii.11), he would swear (because he is possessed with the devil) that he is righteous; and therefore he conceiveth an opinion of righteousness, and presumeth of his good works and merits. Such a one God cannot otherwise mollify and humble, that he may acknowledge his misery and damnation, but by the Law.⁵⁵

Paul points out the ethical implications of the Law by quoting the admonition of Leviticus 19:18 which is also found in Matthew 19:19, Luke 10:27 and Romans 13:9. This is not the Law which leads to indebtedness and bondage but a freed commandment which informs a Spirit-led Christian ethic. Bruce, commenting on Paul's language in Galatians 5:14, "For all the law," says that these are not the ordinances that lead to destruction. He writes that it is, "the law as a whole—the spirit and intention of the law."⁵⁶ According to Bruce, Paul is closely following the teaching of Jesus. The Law

⁵³Strickland, "Inauguration of the Law of Christ," 255.

⁵⁴Martin Luther, *A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians: Based on Lectures Delivered by Martin Luther at the University of Wittenberg in the Year 1531*, ed. Philip S. Watson (Westwood, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, n.d.), 297–98.

⁵⁵Luther, *Epistle to the Galatians*, 299.

⁵⁶F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1982), 241.

provides the church with a framework for ethical and holy living. A lifestyle of love motivated by the indwelling Spirit of God that empowers the church to fulfill the second great commandment.⁵⁷

On balance, the New Testament teaches the keeping of the Decalogue not as a means of salvation but as a guide for holy living. The imputed righteousness of Christ now allows the believer to be in fellowship with the God whose character is reflected in the Law. The church is given the privilege to teach the Law as an aid to gospel ministry. For believers, this teaching leads to growth in Christ-likeness. In the Law the individual believer is given an indispensable guide and rule for the struggle of continuing sanctification. For unbelievers, this ministry leads them to see their corrupt nature and God's remedy in the cross. Jesus points to the importance of this work. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 5:19).

Exodus 20:1–2

So God spoke all these words saying; I am the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, from the house of servitude.

The way the Commandments are numbered varies. Many Jewish scholars accept verse 2 as the first commandment and in some versions include verse 3. Other Jewish sources have verses 3 and 4 as the second commandment. Most Christian traditions separate these into the first and second commandments.⁵⁸ Despite these differences Everett Fox says, "The language and the content of the Decalogue, then,

⁵⁷Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 242–43.

⁵⁸Everett Fox, *Now These Are the Names: A New English Rendition of the Book of Exodus* (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), 113.

cooperate to create a lofty and challenging ethical code, which both the people of Israel and the Western world in general have struggled with ever since.”⁵⁹

Jewish commentators both ancient and contemporary saw Exodus 20:2 as the first of the commandments. It is traditionally known as the First Word. Although there is not a command set forth, they believe this verse is the foundation for an understanding of God as One. This “first command” presents an initiative to believe that God is and should be obeyed.⁶⁰

Christian scholars have traditionally seen this as a subordinate clause preparing the reader for what is to follow. Medieval Jewish thinkers considered this verse to be an introduction of the speaker to the people via Moses, in that it tells the reader who is addressing them. It sets the table for the commands. In a sense, the nature of the speaker raises the stakes in all that follows.⁶¹

Benno Jacob gives a beautiful explanation of the first two verses of chapter 20. He says the Lord is defining who he is in relation to his audience by adopting the first person singular pronoun “I” in verse 2. This removes אלהי אֱלֹהִים as the subject of the sentence as it was in verse 1 and makes it the predicate of verse 2. Such an arrangement sets up the use of second person singular pronoun used throughout the passage creating a dialog between the Lord and his people.⁶² Both the Septuagint and the Targum Onkelos have the Tetragrammaton in verse 1. However, Jacob proposes that אלהי אֱלֹהִים is the appropriate word since it sets up the unveiling of who this God really is. This unmasking was foundational for the people who he had just delivered from slavery. It remains significant for them and

⁵⁹Fox, *These Are the Names*, 115.

⁶⁰Sonsino, *God Spoke*, 31–32.

⁶¹Sonsino, *God Spoke*, 32.

⁶²Benno Jacob, *The Second Book of the Bible: Exodus*, trans. Walter Jacob (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing, 1992), 544.

for the church. He delivered them from serving the Egyptians to a life of service for him which he begins to outline in verse 3.⁶³ Jacob says,

‘I, y-h-v-h, am your God’—the ‘I’ showed HIM, your God, as a living personality, an ‘I,’ not an object or a mere thought. This alone enabled Him to address ‘you,’ the person, and appeal to man’s life experiences. He created man and now appealed to his conscience.⁶⁴

He goes on to say, “The opening three words of the Decalogue engaged God in an eternal covenant of love. ‘I am yours’ is the counterpart to ‘you shall be Mine’ (19.5f).”⁶⁵

The First Table

This project’s thesis is that catechizing people in the Decalogue will strengthen Christian discipleship and prepare hearts to receive the Lord. An examination of the first table of the Law (Exod 20:3–11) supports this proposition by grounding proper worship on God’s character and work.

Exodus 20:3

You will not have another God before me;

The creation of a relationship, as Jacob suggests, begins in verse 2 and continues throughout the commandments. In verse 3 the Lord demands an exclusive relationship with Israel just as a husband does his wife. The first command of “no other gods” calls on the people to abandon all idols and make the same exclusive choice that the Lord himself is making. There are many religious expressions vying for attention and demanding worship. They call, tempt and aggravate the focus of the worshiper. This commandment finds meaning not in the absence of other gods but in an environment where they beckon for allegiance.⁶⁶

⁶³Jacob, *Second Book of the Bible*, 545.

⁶⁴Jacob, *Second Book of the Bible*, 544.

⁶⁵Jacob, *Second Book of the Bible*, 545.

⁶⁶John I. Durham, *Exodus*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 3 (Waco, TX: Word Books,

This first commandment is more than just a command, it is the doorway into a relationship with the Lord. These words cannot be more personal and direct, like an oath sworn at a marriage altar. The combination of verse 2, “I am the Lord your God,” and verse 3, “You shall not have any other gods before me,” is the foundational equation of a covenant relationship. Covenantal language provided meaning for Israel and still finds meaning for the church today.⁶⁷

Exodus 20:4–6

You will not make for yourself an image or any likeness of that which is in heaven above or which is on the earth beneath or which is in the waters under the earth; you will not bow down to them, nor will you serve them, for I am the LORD your God, a jealous God visiting the fathers' iniquity upon the children unto the third and unto the fourth of those who hate me; but performing mercy for thousands of those who love me and who keep my commandments.

The second commandment continues the self-revelation and relationship themes established in verses 2 and 3. The exclusion of other gods includes the image that could represent them. The פָּסָל according to Jacob is “any object hewn from wood or stone which had been shaped into a three-dimensional image.”⁶⁸ God delivered Israel from Egypt where images abounded. They were heading to the land of Palestine where the resident people bowed down to images as the center of their worship. Idols were a fixture on the religious scene of their day. However, this practice was wholly inadequate to represent the revelation of the Lord. The introduction of the commandments, and the Jews’ First Word is אֶنְכִּי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִיךְ . The “I Am” of Exodus 3:14 revealed himself not in an image but by his spoken word. He created all things by his spoken word. Childs adds,

The reason why images are forbidden in Israel is not because they are a ‘vehicle of the spirit.’ Nor is there a polarity here between dynamic history and static picture which can be sustained. Rather, the issue turns on Yahweh’s testimony to himself

1987), 284–85.

⁶⁷Durham, *Exodus*, 285.

⁶⁸Jacob, *Second Book of the Bible*, 547.

set over against man's. The prohibition of images is grounded in the self-introductory formula, 'I am Yahweh', which summarizes God's own testimony to himself.⁶⁹

Verse 5 reintroduces the relational theme of the introduction. In verse 2 the First Word or Childs' "self-introductory formula" is found. "I am the Lord your God." This phrase is repeated in verse 5 where more information is communicated concerning the relational covenant between God and the individual. The restrictions of not making, not bowing down, or serving idols are followed by an explanatory 'כ' clause that begins, "For I am the Lord your God, a jealous God." Donald Gowan suggests how central the word נָאֵן is. "The word represents God's zeal for this relationship; it is no sideline for him. It is both associated with his anger and with his love."⁷⁰ While jealousy in humans is flawed and corrupted by selfishness, divine jealousy is pure. His claim upon Israel is stated in verse 2, where he reminds them of their deliverance from the land of Egypt and the house of servitude. God is jealous of this relationship and expresses the same in this commandment.

Exodus 20:7

You will not take up the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave unpunished the one who takes up his name in vain.

The old saying about words never hurting is a fantasy that men would like to believe. However, the truth is quite different. The third commandment targets words, but not just any words. The words spoken concerning God's name are the focus of this verse. The relational power of verse 2 is still in force as the individual is again addressed. How is God's name to be spoken? Is swearing an oath in his name forbidden? The record seems to favor such behavior. Passages such as Deuteronomy 6:13, 10:20 and Joshua

⁶⁹Brevard Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical Theological Commentary*, The Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), 409.

⁷⁰Donald Gowan, *Theology in Exodus: Biblical Theology in the Form of a Commentary* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 181.

2:12 are just a few of the examples where swearing fealty to his name is a positive act.⁷¹ Testimony from tractate Avot suggest a broader meaning. “Avtalyon says: Sages, watch your words, lest you become liable to the penalty of exile and are carried off to a place of bad water, and lest the disciples who follow you [there] drink and die, and the name of Heaven be thereby profaned.”⁷² Chaim Stern comments on this passage saying, “Teachers (sages) must not mislead: those who do and those who are misled are in ‘exile,’ a ‘place of bad water’—confusion, loss of faith, error, etc. Thus the teacher profanes Heaven’s name, by failing to serve God properly.”⁷³ Taking up the name of God under false pretenses is the core of breaking the third commandment.

The meaning of the word נוֹשֵׁל is necessary to understanding this command. What does it mean to lift up in vain? Brown, Driver, and Briggs define this as “emptiness” or “vanity.” However, they suggest an etymological root meaning of evil, foul or unseemly.⁷⁴ They also point to this word being used in connection with idols in Jonah 2:9, Jeremiah 18:15 and possibly Hosea 5:11. A reading that connects נוֹשֵׁל with idols fits with the previous command. Verses 4 through 6 provide the instruction not to make, bow down to or serve them (speaking of the image). The imperative not to take up the name of God in false or “vain” worship of the idol makes sense as well.⁷⁵ Sonsino points out the intention of this command was to prevent God’s name from being used in a situation where magic was practiced. The combination of Jewish faith and pagan ritual could produce an occasion where the name of God is used in a magic spell. “My

⁷¹Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 410.

⁷²Chaim Stern, *Pirke Avot: Wisdom of the Jewish Sages* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing, 1997), 19.

⁷³Stern, *Pirke Avot*, 19.

⁷⁴Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Lexicon*, 996.

⁷⁵Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Lexicon*, 996.

impression is that the original intention was to make sure no one uttered the name of God in magic or sorcery to manipulate the Divine into doing things in their favor.”⁷⁶

The third commandment is even broader in its meaning. Childs suggests the language of verse 7 is intentionally vague to open the possibilities of interpretation. He says, “It would seem therefore that there was an effort made in the formulation of the commandment to broaden its application beyond its original concrete setting. What specific issues were at stake seem difficult to assess accurately.”⁷⁷ So this third commandment’s scope goes far beyond the mere words used and targets the motivations of the heart of the speaker.

Exodus 20:8–11

Remember the Sabbath day to sanctify it; six days you shall labor and do all your work but the seventh is a Sabbath to the LORD your God, you will not do any work, neither you nor your sons nor your daughters, your male servants nor your female servants nor your beasts nor your sojourner who is in your gates; for six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all which is in them, and he rested on the seventh day, therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and sanctified it.

The fourth commandment is the last one in the first table of the Law. It breaks the chain of negative commands up to this point (you will not have, you will not make, and you will not take up). The word זכור also interrupts the string of second person singular imperfect verbs. It stands in contrast to the passage in Deuteronomy 5:12 where שמר is used in its place. However, the Septuagint, Targum Onkelos, and Nash papyrus preserve the Exodus rendering.⁷⁸ The reason for this “remembering” is given in verse 11. Another כי clause presents the reader with the rationale for the Sabbath day. The Lord recalls the days of creation and the rest that followed (Gen 2:1–3). Childs says, “The

⁷⁶Sonsino, *God Spoke*, 66.

⁷⁷Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 412.

⁷⁸According to the BHS critical apparatus, only the Samaritan Pentateuch has the Deuteronomic spelling.

etiology grounds the sanctity of the sabbath in the creative act of God; it is built into the very structure of the universe.”⁷⁹

Calvin takes this idea of remembering in a different direction. “The purpose of this commandment is that, being dead to our own inclinations and works, we should meditate on the Kingdom of God, and that we should practice that meditation in the ways established by him.”⁸⁰ So for Calvin meditation is an avenue to keeping the Sabbath. He also gives “three conditions” in which remembering the sabbath day is framed. First, the sabbath advertised spiritual respite from vain works. Second, it is a day of pious activity. Third, it is a day of physical rest for men to have relief from their labors of the week.⁸¹ Still reflective of the covenant language of love and devotion the Lord is only asking his people to do what he himself has done—sanctify the day. As Durham points out, “Israel could hardly do otherwise.”⁸²

The Second Table

The thesis of this project is that catechizing people in the Decalogue will strengthen Christian discipleship and prepare hearts to receive the Lord. An examination of the second table of the Law (Exod 20:12–17) supports this proposition by describing proper interpersonal relationships based on the sanctity of human life and the honor due each individual as made in God’s image. In the first table of the Law each of the commandments rests on the foundational statement in verse 2 אָנֹכִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהִיךָ. The second table of the Law, which begins in verse 12, focuses on the relationship of individuals toward one another. The final six commandments also depend on God’s self-

⁷⁹Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 416.

⁸⁰Calvin, *Institutes*, 394.

⁸¹Calvin, *Institutes*, 395.

⁸²Durham, *Exodus*, 290.

revelation in verse 2. He continues to speak but now the covenant between God and the individual is reflected by a man's relationship with his neighbor.⁸³

Exodus 20:12

Honor your father and your mother, in order that your days may be prolonged upon the land which the LORD your God has given you.

Honoring parents is not always an automatic response in humans. The Bible is filled with occasions when a child does the opposite. Such was the case of Absalom (2 Sam 15:1–16:23) who dishonored his father a little at a time until the public act in 2 Samuel 16:22–23. Sonsino defines the word, כְּבָד. “In the Bible, the verb *kabeid*, ‘to honor,’ literally means to ‘give weight,’ ‘to give importance,’ ‘to reward and make rich.’”⁸⁴ Compare this definition with the dishonor of Absalom’s actions and the contrast is stark. Wenham says that the Hebrew word translated “honor” is often reserved to describe the reverence due to God or to the king. He says, “It may be that parents are envisaged as representing God to their children and this would explain the very severe penalties prescribed for those who dishonour their parents (Ex. 21:15, 17; Dt. 21:18–21).”⁸⁵ However, the penalties should not distract from the blessing attached to obedience in this commandment. Wenham argues that a healthy family, the smallest societal unit, will ensure a blessed nation for which the promise of prolonged days is a great good.⁸⁶

The parent, father or mother, are both mentioned, and marked by the sign of the direct object נָא. In contemporary American society the need to honor parents is finding new meaning since so many households now have three and sometimes four

⁸³Durham, *Exodus*, 290.

⁸⁴Sonsino, *God Spoke*, 101.

⁸⁵Gordon Wenham, “Law and the Legal System in the Old Testament,” in *Law, Morality and the Bible: A Symposium*, ed. Bruce Kaye and Gordon Wenham (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1978), 32.

⁸⁶Wenham, “Law and the Legal System,” 32.

generations living in them. This is not unlike the robust home of the Old Testament family. Andreas Kostenberger notes that an ancient Israelite family was composed of husband, wife, unmarried children, married children and their children, and the families of servants and slaves.⁸⁷ Today, the needs of the aging parents are often met by children raising their own families. The parents are brought into the home where their children, their grandchildren and great grandchildren are living.⁸⁸

Faith is necessary for honor to be properly displayed. Human love is not strong enough to be a foundation for honor. The emotion of love cannot be the starting point for obedience to parents. What if they are not lovely or lovable? What if they have abused or misused their position as parents? It must be based in a response to the Creator. Baxter answers, “In that measure that you love God, you will heartily and delightfully do all your duty to him; and so far as you love your parents or neighbors, you will gladly promote their honour, safety, chastity, estates, rights, and all that is theirs, and hate all that is against their good.”⁸⁹

Exodus 20:13

You will not murder.

This section of the Decalogue, beginning with verse 13, attracted the attention of the authors of the Masorah. Four complete sentences with no connecting ו to join them. Three of the four with just three component parts. First, the voice of God thunders in the נִצְחָן, the negative particle. Second, the imperfect verb commands, not as an imperative but

⁸⁷Andreas Kostenberger and David W. Jones, *God, Marriage and Family: Rebuilding the Biblical Foundation*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 86.

⁸⁸Sonsino, *God Spoke*, 103.

⁸⁹Richard Baxter, *The Catechizing of Families: A Teacher of Householders How to Teach Their Households* (London: Thomas Parkurst, 1683), 231, Early English Books Online, PDF eBook.

as a future duty. Third, the object, the second person singular pronominal particle is affixed to the verb.⁹⁰

God himself addresses individuals who are in relationship with him. The first of these commands, “You will not murder,” sets the table for those which come after. Jacob speaks to the propriety of this command. “The sequence of the Hebrew text is correct, as demonstrated by its internal logic. Safety of property must be preceded by security of life, which represented the first priority of every individual; this, therefore, had to be the first concern of society and of our commandments. Respect for even the lives of strangers had to be guaranteed.”⁹¹ Does **מַתֵּן**, mean killing in a general sense? Or, does it mean intentional, premeditated killing? Childs suggests that based on the usage of the word in Numbers 35:16–21 a sense of its usage in the Decalogue is revealed. “The term has now become equated with murder. The motivation behind the act has become the decisive factor.”⁹²

Exodus 20:14

You will not commit adultery.

From the tractate Avot, Chaim Stern translates Avot 1:5.

Yose Ben Yochanan of Jerusalem says: Let your house be opened wide, and let the poor be members of your household. And do not talk too much with women. (Even to one’s wife—how much more to another man’s wife. This led the sages to say: Who talks too much with a woman brings disaster upon himself, begins to neglect Torah, and ends up an heir to Gehenna.)⁹³

The rabbis were keen to build a fence around the Law. While this works for the men of the community what about the women? The sixth commandment is not just for men.

⁹⁰J. Weingreen, *A Practical Grammar for Classical Hebrew* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 100.

⁹¹Jacob, *Second Book of the Bible*, 572.

⁹²Childs, *The Book of Exodus*, 421.

⁹³Stern, *Pirke Avot*, 9.

Again, the second person singular “you” addresses the individual. Just as the father and mother were to be honored in verse 8 so men and women are to be warned in verse 14. Adultery is a danger for both.

The Lord finished all things in six days and mankind was the crown of all his works. Adultery is a breach of the unity of creation. It is murderous to the completed man and makes less-than the perfect will of God for the couple.⁹⁴ As Baxter said of adultery, “Besides the aforesaid evils that are common to it and fornication, it is a perfidious violation of the marriage covenant, and destroys the conjugal love of husband and wife, and confoundeth progeny, and as is aforesaid, corrupteth family order and humane education.”⁹⁵

Exodus 20:15

You will not steal.

The world is filled with things and most of those things are the property of others. The eighth commandment demonstrates how the covenant relationship with God influences an individual’s rapport toward his neighbor’s property. Just as adultery is murderous to marriage and the covenant between a man and a woman, so theft strikes a blow against the heart of community. Thomas Watson suggests the causes of theft are twofold. First is the matter of unbelief. Faith looks to the promises and expects God to provide. Even “a table set in the presence of my enemies” (Ps 23:5) as David put it, is no problem for the Lord God. Yet when unbelief creeps in men are willing to take matters into their own hands and set the table themselves with what belongs to others. Second is the temptation of the Devil. The human proclivity to laziness opens the door to Satan’s attacks. Watson says, “An idle person tempts the Devil to tempt him.”⁹⁶ The individual is

⁹⁴Jacob, *Second Book of the Bible*, 573.

⁹⁵Baxter, *The Catechizing of Families*, 327.

⁹⁶Thomas Watson, *A Body of Practical Divinity Consisting of Above One Hundred Seventy Six*

tempted to provide for himself without work and to take the fruit of what another produces.⁹⁷ William Propp says these commands are guarantees of the rights within the faith community. Those in relation to the Eternal God are required to behave with respect toward others in the community. That respect includes those things with which the Lord has blessed them.⁹⁸

Exodus 20:16

You will not testify against your neighbor a false witness.

The language suggests the setting of a courtroom where witnesses are called to testify. The reputation and good name of the neighbor is at stake. The court asks for testimony to verify or reject claims of the prosecution. The elements of this verse present to the covenant member a vivid scene. The verb **עָנוֹת** used here means in its most basic form “to answer” or “respond.”⁹⁹ The object of the action which was absent in the previous three verses is supplied here. The **עַד** “neighbor” is identified and it is his reputation that is on the line. The word **עֵד** suggests a witness in a courtroom.¹⁰⁰ However, it is modified by a word that demonstrates what kind of testimony this is, **שְׁקָרֶב**. Here and in five other cases (Deut 19:18, Ps 27:12, Prov 6:19, 14:5, and 25:18), the phrase **עַד שְׁקָרֶב** is used to describe the person willing to lie even before a court. Just as theft does damage

Sermons on the Lesser Catechism Composed by the Reverend Assembly of Divines at Westminster: With a Supplement of Some Sermons on Several Texts of Scripture (London: Thomas Parkurst, 1692), 379, Early English Books Online, PDF eBook.

⁹⁷Watson, *Practical Divinity*, 376–78. Watson’s discussion of the various types of theft are instructive but too lengthy to include in the body of the paper. The reader would profit from exploring his nine forms of stealing and the three uses of this commandment.

⁹⁸William Propp, *Exodus 19–40: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 2006), 179.

⁹⁹Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Lexicon*, 772.

¹⁰⁰Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Lexicon*, 729.

to a community how much more does perjury which undermines the security individuals long for in their justice system.¹⁰¹

The ninth commandment does not stop with the behavior of individuals before a court. It addresses truthfulness spoken in less formal settings. Calvin says, “But it makes no difference whether you understand here a solemn and judicial testimony, or a common one couched in private conversation. For we must always come back to this: one particular vice is singled out from various kinds as an example, and the rest are brought under the same category, the one chosen being an especially foul vice.”¹⁰²

Exodus 20:17

You will not covet your neighbor’s house, you will not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant nor his female servant nor his cattle nor his ass nor anything which belongs to your neighbor.

The tenth commandment ends the passage. It reminds the reader of just how easily men slip into sin. Achan is a good example of why an injunction against covetousness stands at the end of the commandments.

And Achan answered Joshua, and said, ‘Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done: When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.’ (Josh 7:20–21)

Achan used the same word that is found in verse 17, קַנְתָּ, and translated “covet.” Durham provides a good definition saying that it means, “desire, yearn for, covet, lust after someone or something, specifically for one’s own use or gratification.”¹⁰³ He says this command encapsulates all of the previous commands because it strikes at the condition of the heart, not an action. The previous four, “do not kill,” “commit adultery,”

¹⁰¹Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *Lexicon*, 1055.

¹⁰²Calvin, *Institutes*, 411–12.

¹⁰³Durham, *Exodus*, 297.

“steal” or “testify falsely” are all manifestations of an evil intention. Where is that intention born? Just like in Achan’s case, its genesis is in the coveting heart. Durham says, “It was perhaps set last in the Decalogue precisely because of this uniquely comprehensive application.”¹⁰⁴ Murder, adultery, theft and false testimony could be employed to take what belongs to the neighbor but it is covetousness which is the first step in perverting that relationship. The motivation not to covet is rooted in the covenant of love the Lord is outlining in the Decalogue.

Calvin says, “The purpose of this commandment is: since God wills that our whole soul be possessed with a disposition to love, we must banish from our hearts all desire contrary to love.”¹⁰⁵ The tenth commandment is a reminder that when in relationship with God men are to be controlled by love. As Paul says in Roman 3:10, “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” Coveting is the place where transgressions start. It imagines the “what if” scenario and entertains the creation of a fiction drawn against the will of God. It perverts the mind and sets the heart on a course contrary to the Lord, “which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Exod 20:2).

Conclusion

Richard Baxter says that the Ten Commandments are “the law of Christ, it binds all Christians.”¹⁰⁶ He says this not based on the need for believers to look to the Law for redemption but for believers to look to the Law as a foundation for holiness. The love of God is expressed in the Decalogue as the Lord describes the covenant of love he

¹⁰⁴Durham, *Exodus*, 298–99.

¹⁰⁵Calvin, *Institutes*, 413.

¹⁰⁶Baxter, *The Catechizing of Families*, 230.

entered into with his people, Israel. The church has also entered into that same covenant of love based on the same principles of loving God and neighbor.

This chapter reviewed New Testament witnesses to the Decalogue, the passage of Exodus 20:1–17, and each of the Ten Commandments. It shows the relevance of these words for living a contemporary life of faithfulness to the Lord. It demonstrates the need for the church to understand and teach the Ten Commandments.¹⁰⁷ The Decalogue is also a missional document. Moses challenged Israel to keep the commandments to demonstrate to the nations the greatness of God. “Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people” (Deut 4:6). A faithfulness to holy living by the church, according to the Ten Commandments, shows a concern for the nations by pointing them to Christ. In chapter 3, this project examines the use of catechesis by the church to teach the Commandments as well as new methods of delivery.

¹⁰⁷The Decalogue is mentioned in other passages of both the New and Old Testaments. Space constraints of this project excluded many of those from being considered.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL/PRACTICAL HISTORICAL ISSUES RELATED TO USING CATECHESIS TO TEACH THE DECALOGUE

Introduction

Catechesis as a method of instruction goes back into antiquity. The command of God to diligently teach (**שׁנָה**) and talk (**רְבַד**) of the commandments in Deuteronomy 6:7 is a primary impulse of both the Jewish and the Christian experience. The tractate of the Mishnah called *Avoth* is a wonderful example of simple instruction in Jewish Law and tradition meant for easy comprehension. Phillip Carrington says, “*Pirke Aboth* is a transcript of an oral scholasticism, based on scripture, and embodied in a didactic succession.”¹ With this kind of systematized learning in place, it is not surprising to find the church developing its own method of instruction in doctrine and tradition. This chapter examines a brief history of catechetics in a select list of documents dating from the third century to the present. The chapter will conclude by proposing a new method of catechizing by the use of podcasting.

Brief History

The Greek word κατηγεω found in Acts 18:25, Romans 2:18, 1 Corinthians 14:19, and Galatians 6:6 means to teach or instruct.² John Westerhoff says, “By catechesis we mean every activity used by the church to celebrate and imitate the word or

¹Philip Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Catechism: A Study in the Epistles* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 5.

²William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: and Other Early Christian Literature: A translation and adaption of Walter Bauer's Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristianlichen Literatur*, 4th ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1954), s.v. “κατηγεω.”

actions of God. Through catechesis the community of faith proclaims its faith in word and deed and calls itself to a more living, conscious, and active faith.”³ Other words used in connection to this idea are: catechumenate, the process of instruction; catechumen, the individual being instructed; catechism, the material used by the catechumen to learn; and catechist, the individual teaching the material. Michael Dujarier suggests precursors of early church catechesis are embedded within Acts and Hebrews.⁴

At the close of the New Testament period believers found themselves under heavy persecution. A hostile culture surrounded the church in the form of other competing religious perspectives. To survive, Believers created a learning curriculum for the pagan with no understanding of the Christian religion. Gerald Sittser argues for the early church’s survival because of that development. “Without the formation of a training program like the *catechumenate*, the Christian movements either would have remained little more than a marginal cult or would have become just one more option in a culture already crowded with other religious alternatives, both old and new.”⁵

Before Christianity became the religion of the state in the early fourth century, the individual who came to Christ paid a very high price. Societal rejection at every station of life awaited the believer as well as potential martyrdom. Those who sought baptism were serious about their faith but after 313 all that changed. Christianity became the religion of the empire. Durjarier suggests that literature from the period paints a grim picture: “When the obstacles confronting the baptismal candidates began to disappear, it became easier to enter the Church. The motivation for the step the new Christians were

³John H. Westerhoff, “The Challenge: Understanding the Problem of Faithfulness,” in *A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis*, ed. John H. Westerhoff and O. C. Edwards, Jr. (Wilton, CT: Morehouse-Barlow, 1981), 2.

⁴Michael Dujarier, *A History of the Catechumenate: The First Six Centuries*, trans. Edward J. Haasl (New York: Sadlier, 1979), 15.

⁵Gerald L. Sittser, “The Catechumenate and the Rise of Christianity,” *Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* 6, no. 2 (2013): 182, accessed July 19, 2018, <http://journals.biola.edu/sfj/volumes/6/issues/2/articles/179>.

taking was far from always supernatural and often was grounded in self-interest.”⁶

During this period, baptism was not pursued and apathy was rampant.⁷

Beginning in the Middle Ages, from the fall of Rome in 476 until the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the catechumenate changed.⁸ The church became the dominant religious institution in society. Catechizing pagans became unnecessary so the church turned the catechumenate into a training program for Christians.⁹ John McHugh and Charles Callan say that localized education by the priests was encouraged: “Already in 529 the Council of Vaison had obliged the priests of Gaul to take boys into their household and teach them to read ‘the Psalms and the Holy Scriptures, and to instruct them in the law of God.’ This same Council refers to a custom of this kind already existing in Italy.”¹⁰

At the end of the Middle Ages catechesis became nothing more than a formality for individuals to learn before coming to their annual confession. Denis Janz says, “Because of the invention of printing, on the eve of the Reformation, catechetical materials could come into widespread popular use for the first time.”¹¹ The Reformers used this new technology to their advantage. Just as the catechumenate was central to the growth of the early church so the printed catechism was to early Protestantism. Tom Nettles writes, “Both Luther and Calvin placed high priority on instruction by catechetical method and considered the success of the Reformation as virtually dependent

⁶Dujarier, *History of the Catechumenate*, 79.

⁷Dujarier, *History of the Catechumenate*, 81–84.

⁸William R. Cannon, *History of Christianity in the Middle Ages: From the Fall of Rome to the Fall of Constantinople* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1960), 7.

⁹Sittser, “Catechumenate,” 202.

¹⁰John A. McHugh and Charles J. Callan, trans., *Catechism of the Council of Trent for Parish Priests: Issued by Order of Pope Pius V* (New York: Joseph F. Wagner, 1958), xiii.

¹¹Denis Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms: Catholic, Anabaptist, Lutheran* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1982), 6.

on the faithfulness of Protestants to this process.”¹²

The church today faces many modern forms of Gnosticism, Pelagianism, and Antinomianism. These competing worldviews effect the education of children and how new believers are trained. Michael Horton writing about the profound shift in Christianity in America says, “In the American Religion, as in ancient Gnosticism, there is almost no sense of God’s difference from us—in other words, his majesty, sovereignty, self-existence, and holiness. God is my buddy or my inmost experience, or the power-source for living my best life now.”¹³ The church needs to revive catechesis and once again instruct both the pagan and the Christian in the basics of the faith.

Catechesis as Polemic

Faced with these competing worldviews, the church created catechisms to serve as vehicles for polemic. Some catechetical writings however opposed the Protestant faith. The Council of Trent published a catechism as an antidote to the Reformers. The preface to the 1687 edition declares, “In the mean time it was wonderful to behold how greatly Luther’s heresy crept abroad; and impiety, the child of war, had overspread almost all Europe, and there scarcely remained so much as the bare shadow of religion.”¹⁴

Robert Barclay’s Quaker catechism is in direct response to the general body of Protestant churches of his day. Barclay, Born in 1610, was the son of David Barclay, a Scottish member of parliament. Robert followed his father into Quakerism and became its leading apologist. He published *A Catechism and Confession of Faith* in 1673.¹⁵ He

¹²Tom Nettles, *Teaching Truth, Training Hearts: The Study of Catechisms in Baptist Life* (Amityville, NY: Calvary Press, 1998), 17.

¹³Michael Horton, “Your Own Personal Jesus,” *Modern Reformation* (May/June 2008): 16.

¹⁴McHugh and Callan, *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, 2.

¹⁵F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd rev. ed., s.v. “Barclay, Robert,” accessed November 20, 2018, <http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.sberts.com>.

attacks his Protestant opposition by striking at their use of the Scriptures. He says of them, “The most grievous, and indeed the greatest calumny cast upon them is, that they vilify and deny the Scriptures, and set up their own imaginations instead of them. To disprove which, this catechism and confession of faith is complied.”¹⁶

Catechisms can themselves be foils for a polemical argument. *The Jesuit Catechism: According to St. Ignatius Loyola* printed in 1679 is an attack against Protestant reforms that undermined the authority of the Pope. The author of its preface presents the catechism as a reason why the Pope should be ignored by the British Crown. He concludes opening piece by saying, “It’s the true interest of England to advance the Protestant religion; the doctrine and discipline thereof being apostolic and evangelical, and settled here in Britain before the Roman Catholic religion was settled by Saint Peter in Rome.”¹⁷ Then he presents his audience, the Earl of Shaftsbury, with the *Jesuit Catechism*. The very first question is, “What is the Pope?” The answer follows, “He is the Vicar of Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, and there is but one and the same judgment-seat belonging to God and the Pope, so that all the world is obliged to stand to his judgment.”¹⁸

As a vehicle for polemic, catechisms are concerned with correcting ideas they find unhealthy. The effectiveness of catechetics established their role in presenting a contra argument. They sometimes left the realm of Christian doctrine and embraced other themes. Such is the case of *A Political Catechism intended for the use of Children of a Larger Growth and Respectfully Dedicated to the Republicans of the Counties of Morris*,

[edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780192802903.001.0001/acref-9780192802903-e-651](https://www.acref.org/edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780192802903.001.0001/acref-9780192802903-e-651).

¹⁶Robert Barclay, *A Catechism and Confession of Faith: Approved of and Agreed unto by the General Assembly of the Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles, Christ Himself Chief Speaker, in and Among Them*, 2nd ed. (n.p., 1676), 6, PDF, Early English Books Online.

¹⁷*The Jesuits Catechism, According to St. Ignatius Loyola: For the Instructing and Strengthening of All Those Which are Weak in That Faith* (n.p.: 1679), 6, PDF, Early English Books Online.

¹⁸*Jesuits Catechism*, 9.

Essex and Sussex in the State of New Jersey. The author's opinions of the War of 1812 are obviously set forth. It contains fifty-three questions and answers covering the subjects of the nature and form of governments, the specific form of American governance and patriotism.¹⁹

Another catechism that demonstrates the power of catechesis to present opinion is *The Nonconformist's Catechism*. Samuel Palmer wrote and published it in 1772, on the centennial anniversary of the Great Ejection. He divides it into seven sections with sixty-one questions and answers, covering the subject of liberty of conscience from the perspective of the ejected ministers. He argues for a rejection of the Church of England from both a civil and ecclesiastical viewpoint. Palmer lays specific charges against their prayer book and the oversight of men who do not have scriptural warrant to take church authority to themselves.²⁰

These examples demonstrate the power of catechesis to argue for an idea and to instruct men in that idea at the same time. These authors demonstrate an ability to take passionately held beliefs and weave them into a systematic delivery using questions and answers. This delivery method distills the information into a manageable size without losing the energy of the argument. This reveals the versatility and power of the catechism and invites the contemporary church to rediscover its utility for instruction.

Catechesis and Pastoral Ministry

Catechisms course with the heartbeat of the pastor. Augustine communicates this warmth, when writing to Deogratias, as he helps him perfect his skill in catechizing those preparing for baptism.²¹ Puritan pastor Thomas Watson contends that, “Knowledge

¹⁹A Political Catechism, Intended for the Use of Children of a Larger Growth (Morristown, NJ, 1812), 12, PDF, Early American Imprints.

²⁰Samuel Palmer, “The Nonconformist’s Catechism,” in *Sermons of the Great Ejection* (1962; repr., East Peoria, IL: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2012), 259.

²¹Joseph P. Christopher, trans., *St. Augustine: The First Catechetical Instruction, Ancient*

of fundamentals is the golden key that opens the chief mysteries of religion; it gives us a whole system and body of divinity exactly drawn in all its lineaments and lively colors.”²² John Westerhoff categorically states, “Catechesis is a pastoral ministry.”²³ The pastor’s ministry must teach and lead the community of faith, to both guard itself and grow in the knowledge of the Lord.

Catechesis is rooted in the evangelical soil of the church. It serves as a corridor to bring men and women to faith. It strengthens the church against false teaching and provides an understanding of all there is in Christ. Speaking of the “trivium” of Christian education Tom Nettles says, “The ‘grammar’ of Christian witness and world-view is Scripture memory and catechism.” He goes on to say, “The ‘logic’ is more catechism and systematic theology.”²⁴ This education is the central theme of the pastor’s ministry in the local church.

A Chronological Review of Selected Catechetics

Introduction

This section examines twenty different documents beginning in the third century with *The Apostolic Tradition*, to the twenty-first century and the *New City Catechism*. These reflect a variety of perspectives that include Anabaptist, Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Early Church fathers, Jewish, Lutheran, Moravian, Presbyterian, Puritan, Reformed, and Quaker. This review is comparative, not exhaustive. The purpose is to observe how catechetics changed and, in many ways, stayed the same over the

Christian Writers: The Works of the Fathers in Translation 2 (Westminster, MD: Newman Bookshop, 1946), 13.

²²Thomas Watson, *A Body of Practical Divinity Consisting of Above One Hundred and Seventy Six Sermons on the Lesser Catechism Composed by the Reverend Assembly of Divines at Westminster: With a Supplement of some Sermons on Several Texts of Scripture* (London, 1692), iii, PDF, Early English Books Online.

²³Westerhoff, “The Challenge,” 5.

²⁴Nettles, *Teaching Truth*, 39.

centuries. This section also examines how each document treats the Decalogue.

Nearly half, nine of twenty, of these documents were produced during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries. Nettles calls this period “The Golden Age of catechisms.”²⁵ This is a small sample of the great volume of catechisms released during those centuries. They provide a glimpse at the theology of both the Reformation and Counter-Reformation and set the stage for the growth of catechisms that come after. The catechetical works of the eighteenth through the twenty-first centuries lean heavily upon the work from this period.

The Apostolic Tradition

Hippolytus wrote *The Apostolic Tradition* around 217. The work has a four-part division. The first gives the tradition of appointing church officers: bishop, presbyter, deacon, confessor, and widow. The second contains instructions for admitting a catechumen. The vetting process included examining their motives, and interviewing their sponsors. The candidates then began their lengthy study, usually lasting two to three years. At the end of that period, intensive instruction prepared them for baptism. The third section covers the Lord’s Supper, the common meal, alms giving, gift giving, and burial. The fourth section teaches the times of prayer, church attendance, Bible reading, and the use of the sign of the cross.²⁶

Hippolytus’ *Tradition* is instruction meant for church leadership as well as the church membership. Its intention is to preserve the traditions of church practice up to the third century. It does not reference the Apostles’ Creed, the Decalogue, or the Lord’s Prayer. However, it does provide the contemporary church with a glimpse of the catechumenate process during persecution.

²⁵Nettles, *Teaching Truth*, 17.

²⁶Burton S. Easton, trans., *The Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus* (1934; repr., Ann Arbor, MI: Archon Books, 1962), 3–57.

Baptismal Instructions

Baptismal Instructions are a collection of twelve catechetical sermons that John Chrysostom preached to catechumens preparing for baptism during the Lenten season of 390 at Antioch.²⁷ Twelve sermons make up the text as he compares salvation to marriage and to military service. Chrysostom compares the discipline of the catechumen to that of a wrestler. He says, “So also for you, these thirty days are like the practice and bodily exercises in some wrestling school. Let us learn during these days how we may gain the advantage over that wicked demon. After baptism we are going to strip for the combat against him; he will be our opponent in the boxing bout and the fight.”²⁸ Chrysostom does not directly address the Decalogue but he makes it clear for the new believers that breaking the commandments is to run afoul of God’s way.²⁹ In sermon nine he treats the topic of swearing and says, “If we find negligence or transgression of the law anywhere, we must show great zeal in fleeing it.”³⁰

First Catechetical Instructions

Augustine wrote *First Catechetical Instructions* around the year 407 as both method and catechesis. He wrote in response to a friend’s request for information on how to train inquiring seekers. Augustine, in a loving manner, shows how to improve instruction, how to deal with different learners’ abilities, how to deal with distractions, and what the attitude of the catechist should be while teaching.³¹

The second part provides the method for an address to the catechumen. Augustine uses the history of the Old Testament beginning with creation as a template to

²⁷Paul W. Harkins, trans., *St. John Chrysostom: Baptismal Instructions*, Ancient Christian Writers: The Works of the Fathers in Translation 31 (New York: Newman Press, 1963), 18.

²⁸Harkins, *St. John Chrysostom*, 140–41.

²⁹Harkins, *St. John Chrysostom*, 144–45.

³⁰Harkins, *St. John Chrysostom*, 144.

³¹Christopher, *St. Augustine*, 4–5.

teach Christian doctrine. “But we ought to present all the matter in a general and comprehensive summary, choosing certain of the more remarkable facts that are heard with greater pleasure and constitute the cardinal points in history.”³² He does not include a review or recitation of the Decalogue. However, Joseph Christopher says, “Augustine is the first writer on catechetics to point out that the Decalogue, as summed up in the two great commandments of love of God and love of our neighbor, is the foundation of Christian morality.”³³

Catechetical Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas composed *The Catechetical Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas* at Naples during the Lenten season of 1274. Aquinas served as a Dominican monk, an ordained Catholic Priest and a professor of theology serving in that capacity at Rome, Naples, and Paris.³⁴ His *Instructions* represent the state of catechesis during the Middle Ages as an oral transmission through teaching. Aquinas’ work reaches into the Reformation period and influences the *Catechism of the Council of Trent*. His work covers five areas of instruction. The first section is an explanation of the Apostles’ Creed. Then he takes up the Ten Commandments, the Seven Sacraments of the church, the Lord’s Prayer, and concludes with an explanation of the Hail Mary. This is a very traditional layout with the inclusion of two distinctively Catholic elements: the Sacraments and the Hail Mary. For Aquinas, the sacraments involve more than just baptism and the Supper. His explanation includes confirmation, penance, extreme

³²Christopher, *St. Augustine*, 18.

³³Christopher, *St. Augustine*, 5–6.

³⁴Joseph B. Collins, trans., *The Catechetical Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas* (New York: Joseph Wagner, 1939), vii–ix.

unction, holy orders, and matrimony.³⁵

Aquinas' *Instructions* reflect a Catholic understanding of the order of the Commandments. In this construction the second commandment (Exod 20:4) and the first commandment are combined. Although he does not point directly to the second commandment when arguing for the dignity of God but rather to Romans 1:23. There is also an absence of any mention of images as degrading to the worship of God. Aquinas still maintains ten by saying, "Now God, in delivering the law to Moses, gave him Ten Commandments written upon two tablets of stone. Three of these commandments that were written on the first tablet referred to the love of God; and the seven commandments written on the other tablet related to the love of our neighbor."³⁶ To achieve this formation the tenth commandment is split in half. Apparently, Aquinas follows the Deuteronomic reading for the ninth and tenth commandments but switches the order to reflect the order of the Exodus passage. He entitles his comments, "The Ninth (Tenth) Commandment," and gives it as "Thou Shalt Not Covet thy Neighbor's Goods."³⁷ His tenth (ninth) Commandment is, "Thou Shalt Not Covet Thy Neighbor's Wife."³⁸

A Fruitful Mirror

Dietrich Kolde wrote *A Fruitful Mirror* and published it in 1470. Kolde joined the Augustinians at the age of twenty and served with them for fifteen years. After the publication of his catechism, he left the Augustinian order to become a Franciscan. He ministered in Brussels and Cologne, Germany during a plague outbreak. His work during that period won him great acclaim.³⁹ His catechism saw wide distribution and translation

³⁵Collins, *Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas*, ix.

³⁶Collins, *Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 69.

³⁷Collins, *Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 111.

³⁸Collins, *Instructions of St. Thomas Aquinas*, 113.

³⁹Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 7.

into many European languages. Janz says, “It was probably the most widely used Catholic catechism before and during the early years of the Reformation. All of this would suggest that we have here a work that is truly representative of late Medieval piety.”⁴⁰

Kolde divides the catechism into forty-six lessons or chapters. Janz says that they follow a three-part division. “The first lesson: how one is to believe. The second: how one is to live. The third: how one is to die.”⁴¹ In the first division Kolde treats the Decalogue, in lessons 9 through 11. Lesson 9 contains an introduction to the Ten Commandments and a unique poetic piece. Kolde suggests memorization to assist the catechumen with understanding.⁴² Lesson 10 is a review of the two great commandments and how they summarize the Decalogue. Lesson 11 is perhaps the largest of all the chapters. The division of the commandments follows the model found in Aquinas. He reverses the second commandment and includes it with the first commandment. Kolde says, “Further, in this commandment we are also ordered to demonstrate honor and esteem for the saints, and especially for the blessed mother of God, Mary, and for the holy angels.”⁴³ He goes on to say that those who break this commandment are, “Those who contemptuously paint, write, erect or lay images of saints or the holy cross in an improper place.”⁴⁴ Like Aquinas, he follows a reading of Deut 5:21 for his presentation of the ninth and tenth commandments.

A Christian Catechism

Balthasar Hubmaier wrote *A Christian Catechism* in 1527. The early

⁴⁰Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 7–8.

⁴¹Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 32.

⁴²Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 46.

⁴³Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 50.

⁴⁴Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 51.

Reformers influenced Hubmaier. After re-baptism he preached and wrote for the Anabaptists and produced an Anabaptist catechism. Suffering visited his home in 1527. The authorities jailed, tortured, and convicted him of heresy. In 1528 they burned him at the stake and days later drowned his wife in the Danube.⁴⁵

Hubmaier's wrote his catechism as a narrative conversation between two men. He explains that he, "composed a dialogue or conversation, in which I introduce two persons, namely Leonhardt and Johannsen, who in a brotherly way converse with one another on the articles concerning a Christian life."⁴⁶ The conversation between the two men takes the form of question and answer. Janz says Hubmaier's dialogue represents an important evolution in catechetical literature that other catechisms build upon.⁴⁷

The first section of the catechism treats the foundational elements of faith. This includes the Decalogue, the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed. Hubmaier sees the commandments as the lens through which the sinner understands sin, which leads to repentance and prayer. The second part deals with issues related to cult. The subjects of sacrament, prayer, salvation, calling, preaching, heaven, and hell are in focus. This section feels less like a catechism and more like a tract against Catholicism.

Luther's Small Catechism

Martin Luther wrote *The Small Catechism* in 1529. Luther designs the catechism with six sections. The first three follow a code, creed, cult pattern. The last three treat the sacraments that for Luther include baptism, confession and the Lord's Supper. Annexed to the catechism is a chapter of prayers to be prayed throughout the day and a chapter of duties that govern the various relationships in the Christian's life. Janz

⁴⁵Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 12–13.

⁴⁶Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 139.

⁴⁷Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 13.

says of this catechism, “Luther’s *Small Catechism* is often seen as the beginning of catechesis in the modern sense because of the enormous influence it had on all subsequent catechisms, both Protestant and Catholic.”⁴⁸

Luther begins with the Decalogue to help show the catechumen his or her need of Christ in light of their inability to keep the Law. Luther follows a Catholic reading of the Ten Commandments, excluding Exodus 20:4–6 (the second commandment) and dividing Exodus 20:17 into the ninth and tenth commandments. Unlike Aquinas and Kolde, he does not depend on a Deuteronomy 5:21 reading for his last two commandments.

Each answer to his ten questions about the commandments begins with “We should fear and love God.”⁴⁹ Timothy Wengert argues that for Luther all of the commandments are to be seen in light of the first commandment. He suggests that Exodus 20:3 is the binding agent that keeps the catechumen’s eyes firmly fixed on the sovereign God. The statement, “We should fear and love God,” points the learner back to that reality and leads them to worship God alone.⁵⁰

The Catechism for the Curates

The Catechism for the Curates: Composed by the Decree of the Council of Trent published in 1556 is a guide for pastors of Catholic parishes who were struggling against Protestantism. Its inception and creation were polemic. The introduction mentions Luther’s “heresy” and the damage felt at both the church and state level.⁵¹ The fourth and final article of the introduction gives the reader reasons why this document should be

⁴⁸Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 14.

⁴⁹Janz, *Three Reformation Catechisms*, 189–92.

⁵⁰Timothy J. Wengert, *Martin Luther’s Catechisms: Forming the Faith* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 26–27.

⁵¹*The Catechism for the Curats, Compos’d by the Decree of the Council of Trent and Publish’d by the Command of Pope Pius the Fifth* (London, 1687), A2r, PDF, Early English Books Online.

used in the churches. “The advantages of this catechism of the Council of Trent are so many, as the necessities of the church are; if heresy is to be prevented, that the Devil sow it not, and that it disturb not Catholics: let the curates often explain this catechism.”⁵²

Four sections divide the work: the Apostles’ Creed, the sacraments, the Decalogue, and the Lord’s Prayer. The section on the sacraments contains the same list as Aquinas and Kolde: baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony. He treats the Decalogue not as an instrument to bring men to Christ but as a guide for believers to follow in Christian living. “Now that God has declared his will, wherein is contained our salvation, will stir up the minds of the faithful, not only to keep the commandments of God, but also to be thankful to him.”⁵³

This catechism includes the introduction of the Decalogue and what is generally taught as the second commandment as part of the first. It argues for the veneration and invocation of saints, angels, and devotion toward their relics as actions commanded by the first commandment. It also defends the position of not recognizing Exodus 20:4–6 and Deuteronomy 5:8–10 as a commandment. “Some thinking this to be another commandment, will have the two last to have the force of one commandment only: but S. Austin dividing those last, will have these words to belong to the first commandment; which opinion because it is most celebrated in the church, we willingly follow.”⁵⁴

The Heidelberg Catechism

The Heidelberg Catechism composed by Zacharius Ursinus and Caspar Olevianus and published in 1563 contains three large sections divided into fifty-two

⁵²*The Catechism for the Curats*, B3v.

⁵³*The Catechism for the Curats*, 334–35.

⁵⁴*The Catechism for the Curats*, 348.

portions, one for each Sunday of the year. There are 129 questions and answers. The large sections treat the misery of men, their salvation and thankfulness to God. A recitation and explanation of the Apostles' Creed is found in questions 23–58.⁵⁵

Lyle Bierma says that the purpose of this work is three-fold. Like many catechisms, its first purpose was to instruct children in a single, systematic, unified faith. Next, to help the clergy teach and preach in such a way as to lead adults to faith in Christ. Finally, that the use of this catechism would unite the various Christian factions around one doctrinal identity.⁵⁶

Questions 92–114 treat the Ten Commandments. Question 115 asks, “Why, then, does God have the ten commandments proclaimed to us so strictly if no one can keep them in this life?”⁵⁷ The answer shows that for Ursinius and Olevianus the Decalogue served as both a tutor to bring men to Christ and a guide or standard for the Christian’s daily walk.

First, that all our life long we may learn more and more to know our sinful nature, and so more eagerly seek forgiveness of sins and righteousness in Christ; secondly, that we may continually apply ourselves and ask God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may more and more be renewed in the image of God, until we attain the goal of full perfection after this life.⁵⁸

This is a departure from Luther’s *Small Catechism* that treated the Decalogue as the tool to help men recognize their sin and inability to please God.

Kevin DeYoung argues for a similar combination of these views. The commandments are not to be viewed from a distance but embraced as a rule for living a life of faith. He says, “Do they serve to show us our sin and lead us to the cross?

⁵⁵Thomas F. Torrance, trans. and ed., *The School of Faith: The Catechisms of the Reformed Church* (London: James Clarke, 1959), 67–68.

⁵⁶Lyle D. Bierma, “The Purpose and Authorship of the Heidelberg Catechism,” in *An Introduction to the Heidelberg Catechism: Sources, History, and Theology*, ed. Lyle D. Bierma (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 50–52.

⁵⁷Torrance, *School of Faith*, 93.

⁵⁸Torrance, *School of Faith*, 93.

Absolutely. But the commandments also show us the way to live, the way to love our neighbor, and the way to love God with all our heart and soul.”⁵⁹

Thomas Torrance explains the reason for the combination of both views. “While the influence of Calvin and Peter Martyr is apparent throughout it, the exposition brings together both Lutheran and Reformed teaching and as such has exercised a powerful mediating influence.”⁶⁰ This use of the Decalogue’s two views is repeated in Collins’ *Orthodox Catechism* and also in the *New City Catechism*.

The Principles of the Christian Religion

The Principles of the Christian Religion written by James Ussher in 1603 is a shorter catechetical instrument containing 118 questions and answers. Ussher says in his address to the reader that it contains, “. . . the more necessary and plainer principles thereof, fit to be known of all.”⁶¹ He does not address the Apostles’ Creed or treat the petitions of the Lord’s Prayer. Ussher’s *Principles* does include the importance of the Word of God, the nature of God, creation, the fall, salvation in Christ, the Decalogue, the sacraments, and last things. The commandments, positioned after salvation in his scheme answer the question, “What rule have we for the direction of our obedience?”⁶² The answer coming, “The moral law of God: the sum whereof is contained in the Ten Commandments.”⁶³ Questions 64–90 treat the commandments and their application to a Christian’s daily walk of obedience. This material comprises nearly a third of the total questions making it the largest of the eight topics covered by Ussher.

⁵⁹Kevin DeYoung, *The 10 Commandments: What They Mean, Why They Matter, and Why We Should Obey Them* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 170.

⁶⁰Torrance, *School of Faith*, 67.

⁶¹James Ussher, *The Principles of the Christian Religion; with a Brief Method of the Doctrine Thereof* (London, 1678), A2v, PDF, Early English Books Online.

⁶²Ussher, *Principles of the Christian Religion*, 9.

⁶³Ussher, *Principles of the Christian Religion*, 9.

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

The Shorter Catechism composed in 1647 contains 107 questions and answers divided into three sections. First, the person, nature, and work of the Trinity described in questions 1–38. This includes the fall of man from perfection and the two covenants (life and grace). The second section describes the duties of men required by God. Here the Divines treat the Ten Commandments in questions 39–81. This section ends with a discussion of God’s plan of escape. The third and final section teaches the means of redemption in questions 88–107 which are the Word of God, the sacraments (baptism and the Lord’s Supper), and prayer. Although the Apostles’ Creed is never mentioned the first section covers the topics found in the Creed. Section two covers the Decalogue, which the Westminster Divines used to expose the learner’s inability and lead them to redemption in Christ. The third section treats issues of cult that includes the Lord’s Prayer.

In the *Westminster Shorter Catechism* The Decalogue receives a full treatment. The catechism asks in separate questions what is required and what is forbidden by the commandment under consideration. Certain verses have larger explanations that the catechism treats by asking, “What is the reason annexed?”⁶⁴ The section concludes with questions 82–84 asking if there is anyone who is able to do what the Law commands. The Westminster Divines were concerned to use the Decalogue as a lead in to teach the saving work of Christ as well as the duty of believers to live by its rule.

A Practical Catechism

Henry Hammonds wrote *A Practical Catechism* while at Oxford in 1645. He was asked to serve on the Westminster Assembly, ministered at Christ Church, Oxford and served as chaplain to Charles I.⁶⁵ He intended his popular catechism to be used as a

⁶⁴*The Shorter Catechism Composed by the Reverend Assembly of Divines with the Proofs Thereof Out of the Scriptures, in Words at Length* (Boston, 1683), 28, PDF, Early English Books Online.

⁶⁵F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd rev.

second stage of learning for the student who had passed through the elementary understanding of doctrine and yet still desired to grow in knowledge. Hammonds explains his purpose as “Instilling those distinct principles which most naturally and directly and immediately tend to Christian practice.”⁶⁶

He accomplishes this by creating a dialogue between the learner or as Hammonds styled her, a “scholar” and a teacher that he calls, “catechist.”⁶⁷ He divides his catechism into six books. The first covers the two covenants: the person, nature and offices of Christ, and selected doctrines of the Christian faith. Books 2 through 4 follow the outline and subject matter of Matthew 5–7, the Sermon on the Mount. Book 5 treats the Apostles’ Creed and book 6 covers the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

The majority of the catechism follows the outline of the Sermon on the Mount. At the beginning of book 2 Hammonds describes why he uses this method by saying, “Which I have heard commended for an abstract of Christian Philosophy, an elevating of his disciples beyond all other men for the practice of virtue.”⁶⁸ Doing so benefits both the scholar and the catechist since the Decalogue as well as the Lord’s Prayer can be found in those chapters of Matthew’s gospel. As Hammonds studies the sermon, he tracks with Christ’s explanation of the Law that does not follow a descending order of the commandments but moves back and forth between the first and the second table.

A Catechism and Confession of Faith

Robert Barclay published *A Catechism and Confession of Faith* in 1673 as a polemic against the Protestant church of his day. It never acknowledges the Apostles’

ed., s.v. “Hammonds, Henry,” accessed November 20, 2018, <http://www.oxfordreference.com.ezproxy.sbps.edu/view/10.1093/acref/9780192802903.001.0001/acref-9780192802903-e-3108>

⁶⁶Henry Hammonds, *A Practical Catechism* (London, 1670), A4r, PDF, Early English Books Online.

⁶⁷Hammonds, *Practical Catechism*, 1.

⁶⁸Hammonds, *Practical Catechism*, 90.

Creed nor does it reference the Lord's Prayer. Barclay rejects the doctrine of election and defends universalism. He teaches a modified works salvation and declares that observance of the commandments is necessary, although, he never identifies which commandments he believes are essential. Barclay argues against security of the believer, a trained ministry, and the Lord's Supper.

His questions are answered by the full text of a Bible passage or passages. The catechism contains fourteen chapters, the first three chapters could be considered creedal since they touch on the nature of God, the Scriptures and Christ. Chapters 4 through 8 take up the Quaker understanding of salvation. Chapters 9 through 11 could be considered a Quaker treatment of cult since Barclay covers the doctrines of baptism, the Supper, worship, church, and Christian ministry. It ends with chapters 13 and 14 dealing with civil government and final resurrection of the dead.

Chapter 12 he entitled, "Concerning the life of a Christian, in general, what and how it ought to be in this world."⁶⁹ Most other catechisms would include a treatment of the Decalogue under this title looking to Calvin's "third use" as a guide. He briefly touches on the need for children to honor their parents but from the perspective of Ephesians 6:1–4. There is not one reference to Exodus 20 or Deuteronomy 5 anywhere in the catechism.

An Orthodox Catechism

English Baptist pastor Hercules Collins wrote *An Orthodox Catechism: Being the Sum of Christian Religion, Contained in the Law and Gospel*, in 1680. One of the first of the Baptist catechisms, Collins principally follows the *Heidelberg Catechism*.

In what I have written you will see I concenter with the most orthodox divines in the fundamental principles and articles of the Christian faith, and also have industriously expressed them in the same words, which have on like occasion been

⁶⁹Barclay, *Catechism and Confession*, 93.

spoken, only differing in some things about church-constitution, wherein I have taken a little pains to shew you the true form of God's house.⁷⁰

After the treatment of the Apostles' Creed the *Heidelberg* inserts a section on the sacraments. Here Collins departs from following the *Heidelberg Catechism* and adds six additional questions and answers dealing with the mode and the candidate of baptism. He gives great attention to why the infant is not a viable nominee.

The treatment of the Decalogue comes in the final division where he adds three additional questions and answers: "What is the preface to the Ten Commandments? What learn we from this preface? and Do these things belong unto us?"⁷¹ Collins also makes a change in the answer to the question about the teaching of the fourth commandment. He seems to be more concerned about the day of observance than the *Heidelberg*.⁷²

A Sacramental Catechism

John Willison, a Scottish Presbyterian pastor, published *A Sacramental Catechism* in 1720. He wrote several works on the subject of the Lord's Supper. Willison's ministry coincided with the Cambuslang revival that took place during a yearly celebration of the Supper in 1742.⁷³ His catechism is an example of catechetics used in a specific way. Usually these documents are found to cover an elementary course in divinity. Or, as in the case of James Ussher's *Sum and Substance* a larger, more detailed body of divinity. He produced several works of great devotional quality on the Lord's Supper. Willison's work provides a glimpse into the use of a catechism on a single topic. He said his purpose in writing was to, "instruct, direct, and confirm some, and to

⁷⁰Hercules Collins, *An Orthodox Catechism: Being the Sum of Christian Religion, Contained in the Law and Gospel* (London, 1680), A3r, PDF, Early English Books Online.

⁷¹Collins, *Orthodox Catechism*, 49–50.

⁷²Collins, *Orthodox Catechism*, 55–56.

⁷³John Willison, *A Sacramental Catechism or Familiar Instructor for Young Communicants*, ed. Don Kistler (1720; repr., Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, 2000), v–vi.

confute, reprove, and reform others.”⁷⁴

Willison does not directly address the Decalogue in this document. However, in the first section he covers the three covenants. There, in a question about why the Lord commands sinners to obey the covenant of works, he answers that it is meant to lead them to resignation of their own righteousness and a humble adoption of the covenant of grace.⁷⁵ In his section on preparation for the Lord’s Supper Willison speaks of coming to Christ by a “law-work” and being driven to faith by “law-terrors.”⁷⁶ In these ways Willison weaves elements of the Ten Commandments into his catechism.

A Catechism of Bible Teaching

A Catechism of Bible Teaching written by Baptist pastor and professor John Broadus, was published in 1890 by the American Baptist Publication Society and the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board.⁷⁷ It covers fifteen lessons with ten to twenty questions per lesson. Each lesson has several advanced questions and answers for further study. The work concludes with a suggested list of passages to be memorized.

Broadus’ work contains portions of the Decalogue. In lesson 1, advanced question C, he addresses the subject of God and asks, “Why is it wrong to use images of God in worship?”⁷⁸ His answer references Exodus 20:4–5. He devotes all of lesson 12 to Sabbath keeping. In lesson 13 he focuses on the responsibilities of a Christian’s life. In these two chapters the fourth, eighth, ninth, and tenth commandments are referenced. He

⁷⁴Willison, *Sacramental Catechism*, xiv.

⁷⁵Willison, *Sacramental Catechism*, 9.

⁷⁶Willison, *Sacramental Catechism*, 157.

⁷⁷John Broadus, *A Catechism of Bible Teaching*, ed. Jeffery Brown (1890; repr., n.p.: Amazon Digital Services, 2012), loc. 108, Kindle.

⁷⁸Broadus, *Catechism of Bible Teaching*, loc. 257–70.

reveals that these are ways a believer should walk in, as he calls them, “duties.”⁷⁹

Catechism of the Moravian Church

The Catechism of the Moravian Church (the Brethren’s Church) produced in 1893 by their General Synod meeting in Philadelphia and then published in 1896. It stands on the shoulders of United Brethren catechisms dating back to 1502. The first of those entitled, *Christian Instruction in the Faith, in the Form of Questions, for Little Children* written by Luke, Bishop of Prague. It focused mainly on the Apostles’ Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord’s Prayer.⁸⁰

This edition contains seven sections with 182 questions and answers. Each section covers a different subject arranged in the following order; creation, sin, salvation, personal salvation, the Decalogue, the church, and end times. Its introduction establishes the need to follow the Scriptures in all things. Section 6 treats not only the doctrine of the church but also the history of the Moravian Church.

Question 25 cites the Apostles’ Creed in the answer to the question, “How do we confess our faith to the Triune God?”⁸¹ Prayer finds its place in section four. Question 107 asks, “Which is the model prayer?”⁸² Nothing more is said about the Lord’s Prayer or its individual petitions. Section 5 contains the Decalogue that the Synod authors entitled, “God’s Law of Holy Living.”⁸³ Questions 112–115 reveal that the will of God is made known in the Ten Commandments. The catechism makes plain its view that Jesus fulfilled the Law but that the Decalogue is an eternal guide for the spiritual life of the church. After treating each command individually the section concludes with question

⁷⁹Broadus, *Bible Teaching*, loc. 1780, Kindle.

⁸⁰*Catechism of the Moravian Church* (Bethlehem, PA: Moravian Publication Office, 1896), i.

⁸¹*Catechism of the Moravian Church*, 12.

⁸²*Catechism of the Moravian Church*, 40.

⁸³*Catechism of the Moravian Church*, 41.

127 that asks who is able to do the Ten Commandments. The answer, “We can not keep them perfectly in this present life; but by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, we may grow in this holiness more and more to the end.”⁸⁴

The Jewish Holidays

Mordecai Soltes, Director of Education for the National Jewish Welfare Board, wrote *The Jewish Holidays: A Guide to Their Origin, Significance and Observance* in 1931.⁸⁵ It contains five parts. The first two explain the meaning and history of the Jewish holidays. The fourth and fifth provide other books for further study and a glossary of Hebrew and Yiddish related to Jewish holidays and feast days. The third section is catechetical. Soltes produced 250 questions and answers to assist the student in learning the important dates and facts.

Soltes gives a reasoned argument for catechizing Jewish youth in their traditions. “To inculcate in our youth an enduring interest in and attachment to Jewish life, performance of rites and ceremonies should be motivated as early as possible by a sympathetic understanding of their symbolic significance, and an appreciation of the larger ends which they are intended to serve.”⁸⁶ While this catechism does not proceed from a Christian perspective it does stand as an example of the use of catechesis to train up children.

Faith. Hope. Love: The Christ-Centered Way to Grow in Grace

Mark Jones published *Faith, Hope, Love* in 2017. It examines the New

⁸⁴*Catechism of the Moravian Church*, 49.

⁸⁵Mordecai Soltes, *The Jewish Holidays: A Guide to Their Origin, Significance and Observance, Including 250 Questions and Answers* (1931; repr., New York: National Jewish Welfare Board, 1945), ii–iii.

⁸⁶Soltes, *The Jewish Holidays*, 5.

Testament use of faith, hope and love. He seeks to fill the void of contemporary Reformed voices teaching on these doctrines. Jones uses these foundational ideas as a guide for Christian growth. He says, “The whole Christian life, in terms of our living in response to God and his new work in us, springs from faith, hope and love. Everything we do as Christians relates to these three virtues.”⁸⁷ He creates a catechism of fifty-eight questions and answers divided between the three subjects. He leans heavily in his commentary on Puritan thinkers such as Edwards, Manton and Owens. He also looks for support from the Westminster Larger Catechism.

The Decalogue is found in Jones’ catechism and commentary in the third section treating the doctrine of love. He writes, “Many in the past have looked at love from the perspective of the Ten Commandments, which is ideal and proper in my view.”⁸⁸ This section of the catechism focuses on how keeping the commandments manifests a love for God and a love for the neighbor. Jones’ creatively treats each of the commandments in questions 39–55. Questions 56–58 end the catechism by reminding the catechumen that love, as expressed in the Decalogue, is the representation of God’s character and the revelation of Jesus Christ. For the believer, there can be no higher goal.

The New City Catechism

The Gospel Coalition published *The New City Catechism* in 2017. It contains three sections each with fifteen to twenty questions, to make up a collection of fifty-two total questions and answers. The Gospel Coalition leans heavily on other catechisms for its content. At least twenty-two are similar in wording and structure to the *Heidelberg Catechism*. Seven other questions and answers are like the wording in the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*. The Apostles’ Creed is cited in a single answer for question 31. The

⁸⁷Mark Jones, *Faith. Hope. Love.: The Christ-Centered Way to Grow in Grace* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 14.

⁸⁸Jones, *Faith. Hope. Love.*, 16.

Lord's Prayer is also cited in a single answer to question 41. It also addresses four questions and answers in the Decalogue.

The New City Catechism's treatment of the commandments is unique. It groups them in such a way as to destroy the distinction between the two tables. It gives no explanation for this downsizing. Having the Decalogue at the beginning of the document suggests that the authors are treating it as a gateway to faith. If the creedal section came first and the Ten Commandments followed then one can assume that the authors were suggesting the Decalogue as a pattern for holy living. However in *The New City Catechism*, seems to adopt both views. Question 15 asks the Law's purpose. They answer, "That we may know the holy nature and will of God, and the sinful nature and disobedience of our hearts; and thus our need of a Savior. The law also teaches and exhorts us to live a life worthy of our Savior."⁸⁹

Conclusion

This list of nineteen selected documents does not represent the entirety of catechetical material produced since the third century. It does provide an overview and establishes a foundation for the rationale behind this project. The catechism is a time honored method of instruction in the doctrines of God. While they differ and range greatly in style and substance, reflecting the influence of period, culture, and circumstance, almost all capture some portion of the Decalogue as a significant part of their instruction. The effectiveness of a catechumenate teaching the Ten Commandments would be a great benefit for any church's educational ministry.

Podcasting as a Tool for Catechesis

Just as the printing press gave the Reformers a way to distribute their

⁸⁹*The New City Catechism: 52 Questions & Answers for Our Hearts & Minds* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2017), 45.

catechisms so the contemporary pastor has a relatively new tool. The podcast is an inexpensive way to broadcast instruction and pastoral care to a listening audience. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines podcast as “A digital audio file of speech, music, broadcast material, etc., made available on the Internet for downloading to a computer or portable media player; a series of such files, new installments of which can be received by subscribers automatically.”⁹⁰ The recorded content is sent to a podcasting host site that assigns it an RSS (Real Simple Syndication) feed. The RSS allows the listener to subscribe to the podcast and receive a notification every time a new episode is uploaded to the Internet. Listeners can then download the episode or enjoy it on-demand. The benefit of downloading a podcast episode is that it can be played at will. The devices able to handle an RSS feed continue to grow. A desktop computer, smart phone, smart speaker, tablet, and smart televisions are all capable of playing audio and video podcasts. Podcasting makes listening to quality audio content more accessible.

In 2004 the word, “podcast” was born. It described audio broadcasts meant for the iPod, thus pod-cast.⁹¹ Over the past ten years the number of people consuming podcasts has steadily grown. Only 9 percent of Americans were monthly podcast consumers in 2008. Those numbers are up to 26 percent in 2018. The same is true for weekly listenership, only 7 percent in 2008 compared to 17 percent in 2018. Overall, 44 percent said they listened to a podcast sometime in the past.⁹² This suggests that one out of four Americans are listening at least monthly. The number of podcasts are growing yearly as are the ranks of its consumers.⁹³ The view going forward for this technology is

⁹⁰*Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. “Podcast,” accessed September 24, 2018, <http://www.oed.com/ezproxy.sbs.edu/view/Entry/273003>.

⁹¹Nicole Hennig, “Why Podcasts?” *Library Technology Reports* (February/March 2017): 5.

⁹²Elisa Shearer, “Audio and Podcasting Factsheet,” Pew Research Center: Journalism & Media, July 12, 2018.

⁹³Hennig, *Why Podcasts?*, 6.

positive. These numbers only reflect research conducted on an American audience. The number of listeners world-over would significantly increase the statistics. That being the case, it is imperative for the local church pastor to more fully engage the souls of his congregation and community, as well as those around the world listening weekly to podcasts.

An examination of contemporary podcasting reveals that practically every discipline is represented. Businesses, universities, media outlets, civic groups, and religious organizations use podcasting to reach their audiences. These broadcasts include instruction, in-depth news reporting, inspiration, comedy, story-telling, music, poetry, and commentary on a wide range of topics. These content creators are tapping into the need of individuals looking for specific material. Michael Altman says,

Though it borrows heavily from radio's formats, the podcast is not a social media. By that I mean, people do not gather around to listen to a podcast together the way social groups once gathered around the radio or television. The individuality of podcasts has meant that producers can find niche audiences, experiment with formats and content, and bring a entrepreneurial spirit to their work.⁹⁴

The simplicity of producing a podcast allows for in-depth specialization that finds an audience of diverse individuals all sharing an interest in a niche topic.

The cost of podcasting is within reach of the local church pastor. To get started a podcaster will need to have on hand audio editing software, a laptop or desktop computer, and a microphone. The editing software can be purchased but there are free, high quality versions available for download. Some operating systems come with their own audio editing application. The microphone is a different subject. This is where the majority of the expense lies. A USB microphone is the most economic choice for the beginning podcaster. A good quality analog microphone is more expensive and will require extra hardware. The installed microphone on your machine is also an option but

⁹⁴Michael Altman, "Podcasting Religious Studies," *Religion* 45, no. 4, (2015): 575.

the quality is usually poor.

The next step is selecting a podcast host. The host allows the podcaster to upload their recordings and then assign them an RSS feed address. The host becomes home-base for the podcast. From there it goes out to all the distribution points on the web such as YouTube, Facebook and iTunes. There are several sites that invite podcasters to register their work as long as they have an RSS feed address. The greatest expense in the entire endeavor is that of time. Whether publishing daily, weekly, or monthly it takes time to develop, write and record each episode. The podcaster must also maintain a steady stream of new material. Commitment on this point is important; keep publishing. Podcasting audiences do not forgive infrequent delivery.

After the investment of finances and time, what is the benefit for the local church pastor? Why use podcasting? Altman says that podcasting creates an “intimate” connection between the listener and the communicator.⁹⁵ Howard Harris and Sungmin Park describe four characteristics of educational podcasting. In their overview of the service-driven model, they say, “The podcast here is used as a private conversation, consequently it is an ‘idiosyncratic’ service-driven collation that users can use to access relevant streams of content and information.”⁹⁶ This technology allows the pastor to go beyond the limits of his preaching ministry on Sundays. It removes the restriction of time and place. It expands the possible ministry settings and occasions by virtue of its portability, affordability, and convenience.

Podcasting also opens up new opportunities to share the gospel. Harris and Park say that, “podcasting is a communication enabler, reaching out to a wider

⁹⁵Altman, “Podcasting Religious Studies,” 573.

⁹⁶Howard Harris and Sungmin Park, “Educational Usages of Podcasting,” *British Journal of Educational Technology* 39, no. 3 (2008), 549.

community.”⁹⁷ The mandate to preach the gospel to all comes into focus. Podcasting provides an opportunity for the evangelistic work of every pastor to be multiplied. The world is listening. Finally, a study by Stephen M. Walls et al., in the journal *Computers & Education* suggests that the use of podcasting actually aids learning.

With podcasting’s ability to provide opportunities to the learner to repeatedly access content and directly control the speed and pace of the verbal and visual stimuli being offered, students can adequately process content before subsequent information is presented and lost, and thereby, decrease cognitive overload.⁹⁸

The pastor, Sunday school teacher, or small group leader will add a new dimension to their instruction by the use of this new teaching tool.

In the past, the steep cost of live broadcasting meant that media technology was out of reach to the average congregation. Not only did it require finances but in-house personnel resources to support a multi-media ministry. Today neither of those things has changed. Radio and television costs are still a challenge. For the small membership congregation personnel resources may also be an issue. In 2004 podcasting technology entered the scene. It leveled the playing field and provided some powerful benefits to the minister who desires to educate his congregation. Whether the pastor is serving a small church or a large congregation, in a rural or an urban setting, he is now able to enter the lives of his people and provide intimate instruction. As a way to teach and reach people for Christ, the podcast is a tool every pastor should consider.

Conclusion

This chapter briefly looked at the history of catechetics, examined a select list of catechetical material dating from the third century to the present and looked at technology to assist the pastor in creating a contemporary catechumenate using

⁹⁷Harris and Park, “Educational Uses of Podcasting,” 551.

⁹⁸Stephen M. Walls et al., “Podcasting in Education: Are Students as Ready and Eager as We Think They Are?” *Computers & Education* 54 (2010): 372.

podcasting. The combination of a new technology like the podcast with a tried format such as a catechism to teach a specific passage of Scripture will produce a positive result for members of today's active congregation.

The wonderful variety of catechisms presented in this chapter reveal a singular focus of teaching men the Christian religion. James Ussher said of catechizing, “If men will be Christians, which is their greatest honour, they must hold it no disgrace to learn Christ. Noble Theophilus held it none, who was thus catechised, as Luke sheweth, chap 1.4. likewise Apollos, Acts 18.26.”⁹⁹ Catechetical instruction will help the church to be effective during this increasingly secular season.

Just as instructive as the priority to help men to “learn Christ” is the thread of the Decalogue that appears in nearly all these examples. The gospels and the writings of the New Testament are not at odds with the Ten Commandments. These catechisms show just the opposite. The commandments create a foundation for the theology of the New Testament. This is particularly striking in Henry Hammonds’ *A Practical Catechism* and Mark Jones’ *Faith. Hope. Love.* The reader comes away from their works with a sense that the Decalogue is tightly woven into the fabric of New Testament theology. If men are to learn Christ, and if Christian men are to walk in the Spirit of Christ, then the Decalogue cannot be ignored but must be taught.

A need exists in the church today for catechetical instruction that includes the Ten Commandments. As a pastor teaches his people using a catechism he will be able to point back to lessons already learned to reinforce doctrines and practices. Most church members are dealing with issues involving their neighbor and how they should live toward them. Whether that neighbor is a co-worker or a family member, the Decalogue’s relevance as a way of living cannot be overlooked. In chapter 4 this project outlines the

⁹⁹James Ussher, *A Body of Divinity: Or, the Sum and Substance of the Christian Religion*, 7th ed. (London, 1677), 2, PDF, Early English Books Online.

implementation of a program of catechesis in the Decalogue using podcasting as the delivery method.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTING A CATECHESIS TO TEACH THE DECALOGUE

Introduction

This chapter covers the period of preparation for the project beginning in January 2019. After reviewing the selected list of catechisms in the previous chapter, I decided to use the Westminster Shorter Catechism (WSC) for the study curriculum. The WSC's brevity and direct language lends itself to the kind of devotional Bible study that this project created. After the expert panel members were selected and instructed, they received the survey, curriculum, and podcasts for review. When the panel finished their reviews, participants for the study were selected, the curriculum was corrected according to the rubrics, and preparation made to launch the study.

In June 2019 the study was launched with eighteen active and inactive members of CRBC. During the three weeks of implementation, I made a few adjustments to unforeseen logistical problems, but for the balance of those fifteen days, the study experienced no major issues. The follow-up period began with the participants receiving the post-study survey. A list of questions was developed for qualitative interviews after the surveys were complete. The interviews were conducted and all the quantitative and qualitative material compiled. What follows here is a detailed description of this process from preparation to follow-up.

Preparation Period

Survey Development

In January 2018, I participated in seminar 80950; Applied Empirical Research.

One of the requirements for that course was a post-seminar research project using the method of my choice. I created a quantitative survey to determine the level of disengagement of inactive church members using Google Forms. I developed that instrument hoping to use it as a foundation for this project's pre- and post-survey. However, I realized it was insufficient as a template for the pre- and post-surveys needed for this research. On February 18–21, 2019, I created two new survey instruments linking the survey statements to the curriculum.

After finishing the survey drafts, I asked my wife (who was not going to be a participant in the study) to take the survey while I timed her. It took fifteen minutes for her to answer the forty-one items on the form. She made suggestions to improve clarity and ease of use which I incorporated into my next series of edits.

On April 12, 2019 I sent a copy of the survey to my supervisor for his corrections and suggestions. His thoughtful comments helped me to reword some of the statements that suggested a “strongly agree” response in the pre-study survey, giving me no room for growth in the post-study instrument. The order of the statements on the survey concerning the Decalogue was randomized to make it more difficult to recall the commandments from memory. Most people have a passing familiarity with the Ten Commandments, so to gain a true sense of the participants’ knowledge, the order was shuffled on the survey. One participant told me that he thought the randomization of the questions helped him be more honest. If I had placed the questions in order, it would have been easier to give a positive answer. However, the randomization exposed a lack of knowledge.

On the Saturday after the pre-study survey went out, I was attending a graduation party for one of our high school seniors. One of the study participants was attending and was surprised to find out that there is a difference between the Lutheran Church’s commandments and those of the rest of the Protestant churches. (She married

into a Lutheran family.) This prompted an intense debate between her and her husband. We talked about the differences and why I had chosen the Exodus 20 passage instead of the one in Deuteronomy. Just taking the survey caused great excitement for her to be involved in the project. She told me that she and her husband would use the study as their family devotion every day.

Curriculum Development

A fifteen-day curriculum was created to teach the Ten Commandments based on the WSC, chosen for its brevity and thoroughness. Of all the catechisms studied during the research for this project, the WSC provided an ease of use which lent itself to the parameters I set for the curriculum. The number of questions and answers the WSC used to teach the commandments set the length of the curriculum to fifteen days.

In January 2019 I participated in seminar 80960; Foundations of Teaching. One of the requirements was a post-seminar project to create a comprehensive educational curriculum for use in my ministry context. My professor approved the creation of this project's curriculum to be used in fulfillment of that course objective. The first draft of the material was completed on February 14, 2019. Subsequent edits and drafts lead up to the final draft and presentation of the work for seminar credit on February 21, 2019.

Knowing that the curriculum would go out as an electronic file to both my participants and the peer reviewers, I began looking for a suitable site that was both accessible and easy to use. On February 26, I decided to use Google Drive to host the material. On Wednesday, February 27, through Thursday, February 28, 2019, I set up a master file on my Google Drive containing all fifteen days of curriculum. I created an introduction to the study and set up two rubrics to be used by my peer reviewers. Then I created three files nested within the master file, one for each of my reviewers and copied the curriculum, rubrics, and introduction to them. This was edited again for grammar and

formatting.

Podcast Development

In preparation to record the podcasts I made notes on each day's curriculum document to aid in production of the recordings. On March 4, 2019, I began recording the fifteen podcasts to be used with the curriculum and the introduction. I recorded each session using a USB microphone and Audacity recording software. These files were then edited and converted to a .wav format and then to an .mp3 format.

After the files were recorded and converted I uploaded them to my Spreaker.com account. I then created a playlist on March 8, 2019, on my YouTube channel entitled "The Ten Commandments Podcasts" to host the files. I instructed Spreaker to send the files to YouTube which were then placed in the new channel playlist. The playlist identified incoming uploads by tags. By tagging the file with a keyword that I designated, the playlist looked for that tag in the incoming uploads to the channel and automatically populated itself. The playlist was then ready to be a shareable platform, accessible to my reviewers and study participants.

Selecting Peer Reviewers

At the end of January 2019 after returning home from my seminar week, I began recruiting peer reviewers. Originally I planned to recruit from the pastors within my association of churches in Cincinnati. My supervisor encouraged me to look outside my list of neighboring pastors, to reviewers who were not familiar to me nor I to them. He also suggested I recruit a non-ministerial female for my expert panel.

My supervisor suggested I look to a recent graduate of the Doctor of Educational Ministry program and suggested a few names. I approached one of these men who agreed to be a part of my expert panel on January 21, 2019. I then looked for a female panel member who was an accomplished business woman in the Greater

Cincinnati area. The wife of an associational leader came to mind, a retired engineer from Proctor and Gamble. I approached her husband and then spoke to her. She was immediately interested and agreed to be one of my peer reviewers. The final member of my panel came as a suggestion from my son, who lives in North Carolina he suggested his pastor, who has a Doctor of Ministry degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. My son made the introductions; his pastor was excited to be a part of this research and agreed to be an expert panel member on February 12, 2019.

I sent out a group email on February 18, 2019, thanking them for agreeing to help me refine the study material and podcasts. On March 11, 2019, a link was sent via email to the Google Drive folder which I had individualized for each of them. At the same time, I sent a link to the YouTube playlist where they could find the podcasts. I explained the use of the rubrics and suggested they create new copies from the master copy in their folders. I addressed the use of the YouTube link and how it gave them access to all of the podcasts. They needed then only to pair the right podcast to the right day's study. I suggested that the reviews be finished between April 15–26, 2019. This was a two-week period after Easter and gave the panel a seven-week time frame in which to make their reviews. There was some initial trouble with one of the email addresses. This issue was corrected, and the information re-delivered. No further problems occurred with electronic delivery or the expert panel's ability to access the materials on-line.

Two of my panel members bowed out of completing their reviews two weeks following the deadline. One sent five rubrics covering the first five days of the study, and one left without returning any rubrics. My final panel member completed all the rubrics and returned them on May 1, 2019.

On May 10, 2019, I contacted my supervisor to inform him of the problem with the two panel members. He approved my use of the rubrics received and whatever partials I might acquire going forward. Beginning on May 27, 2019, I made corrections to

the curriculum based on the feedback received from my reviewers.

Selecting Study Participants

After the last peer review was back, I started selecting participants for the study. Twenty-eight potential candidates were initially identified. Of those, 17 were active members, 9 were inactive, and 2 were non-members. From this pool I invited men and women with varying degrees of involvement, length of membership, and engagement with the teaching ministry of CRBC. Eighteen were invited to participate in the study. Twelve were active members, 5 inactive and 1 was a non-member.

According to their survey responses, all of them considered themselves to be Christians, and all reported being baptized. The division of male to female participants was 55.6 percent female and 44.4 percent male. Their ages reflect the demographic profile of Creek Road Baptist Church. Table 1 shows the breakdown.

Table 1. Age demographic percentiles

Age	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Percent of population	17	5	28	39	11

Launching the Study

The week before the study started (May 27–31, 2019), I sent out an email blast to all the participants. This made sure that the addresses were correct and that I had not entered any of them incorrectly. I asked everyone to respond to the email and got all but four replies back immediately. Eventually, the four missing replies were returned successfully connecting me to all of the study participants.

The pre-study survey went out on Friday, May 31, 2019. All the participants

were asked to finish this instrument before they began the study. On Saturday, June 1, 2019, I sent out the study introduction with its companion podcast. The introduction covered basic information about things they would need such as their Bible, and some extra paper to write notes on, the length of the study, the daily commitment, and the unique elements of each day's curriculum. Sending the introduction out also allowed me to test mass mailing the curriculum and podcast links together to eighteen people at one time. Overall it seemed to go well with this initial communication. Only one person had trouble accessing the information. Their problem turned out to be with their server and not with the links.

On Sunday evening, June 2, 2019, I sent out an email containing the links for the Day 1 study. In that correspondence I detailed the delivery schedule of the material as Sunday evenings through Thursday evenings. I also encouraged them to complete the pre-study survey as soon as they could.

Implementation

Weeks 1–3

During the first week of the study the remaining pre-study surveys came in. However, 4 of the 18 did not put down a personal identification number. My supervisor told me I should have made that a required response since Google Forms allows users to toggle whether a response on their form is required or not. Also during that week, one of the participants emailed and wanted to know if participants needed to respond to the study by turning in a completed curriculum sheet showing their work. On Monday evening, in the Day 1 email, I addressed this question to all the participants and told them the only responses I needed were the completed surveys.

Two of the participants had trouble receiving the Day 2 material. One experienced a delay, and one received nothing. I addressed the problem in the Day 3 email, sending two separate correspondences each night, one with the curriculum and one

with the podcast link. Following this procedure made the outgoing size smaller and seemed to correct the problem.

At the end of the week I was attending another graduation party, and one participant's wife came up to me and said, "Pastor, you have visited my house every day this week." I did not understand at first, and then she said that she could hear me teaching as her husband listened to the podcast in his office every evening. This encouraged me as I thought of the pastors who could maximize their teaching presence in the life of their membership by this method of distribution. Weeks 2 and 3 went smoothly; no problems were reported with the emails, links, or curriculum.

Attendance Statistics During Implementation

Before launching the study, I hypothesized that participation for each day's lesson would be high. I based this on the assumption that the students would find the material easy to access. I also believed that not having a set time or place for the study would allow them to find their own time to engage the material.

At the end of the third week of implementation, I downloaded statistics from Spreaker's content management system (CMS) for my podcasts. I was shocked to find out how wrong I was about daily participation. The initial numbers were not good, but I needed to wait three days after the final lesson for all the YouTube plays to be posted to Spreaker's system. At the beginning of the fourth week I had all the numbers from YouTube.

Table 2. Activity per day

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Sum of Plays	22	21	16	13	14	9	10	9	8	7	7	6	7	7	8

Table 2 shows that a slight decline in activity is revealed during the first week, but the second and third week of implementation show engagement barely reaching ten plays per day either week. Days 1 and 2 show numbers higher than the number of participants engaged in the project. Most of those extra plays can be attributed to the difficulty a few of the participants had at the beginning accessing the podcast. However, there was one outside play registered by Spreaker which came from Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. Overall, I was surprised by the poor attendance as recorded by Spreaker's CMS.

The information accessed by the CMS led me to address the issue during the interview stage of the research. The interviewees suggested that they had a hard time keeping up with the material. One participant agreed to be a part of the study even though a family vacation was planned during the second week. Another said he had a hard time getting it in every day and would catch up on several at a time after two or three days of missing the lessons.

The days following the end of the project, from June 22, 2019 to July 4, 2019, Spreaker recorded 42 plays over YouTube. This data demonstrates that a number of participants were catching up before they took the post-study survey. One participant, who is a business owner, missed several lessons but promised to make them up before taking the post-study survey. All of the post-study surveys were back by July 5, 2019.

Follow-up Period

Week 1

The post-study surveys went out on Friday evening, June 21, 2019. This was the last day of the study, and I wanted the participants to have the survey as soon after the study as possible. On Monday, June 24, 2019, I closed the playlist on YouTube so that I might get clean statistics on plays during the follow-up period.

One of the participants emailed and asked what would happen if a participant forgot their personal identification number (PIN). I said just to leave it blank and I would attempt to match the unnumbered surveys by demographic information. Another participant wrote me to say he was not done with all the lessons and was trying to catch up. His business responsibilities overwhelmed him and caused him to lose pace. Due to these two concerns, I sent out a notice to all the participants regarding the importance of using their PIN, and I asked for all the surveys to be completed by the weekend of June 28–30. During the week, a participant contacted me asking if I could resend Day 2 curriculum and podcast. Apparently, there was a transmission error, and the email never arrived. I re-sent the next day. Study participants returned only ten completed post-study surveys by Thursday, June 27, 2019.

Week 2

By Thursday, July 4, 2019, all the post-study surveys were returned. Most came back without a PIN attached. One came back with an age that did not match any of the other surveys. I discarded six sets of surveys (one set equals a pre- and a post-study survey), which I could not identify or match to its mate. That left me with twelve identifiable participants. The t-test calculation showed positive change using those twelve surveys; $t_{(11)}=4.49$, $p=.0005$. On Friday, July 5, 2019, I examined different categories taken from the surveys for inclusion in my evaluation.

Week 3

During the third week after the study I constructed a pool of possible candidates to contact for interviews. I wanted to be strategic in the selection being sensitive to demographics and membership status. Two participants that I approached agreed to be interviewed. The first interviewee was male, handicapped, a long-time member, and a leader in the congregation. The second interviewee was female, a new

member to Creek Road Baptist Church, and new to the Southern Baptist denomination. The interviews took place on Wednesday, July 10, 2019. I contacted two inactive members who participated in the study, but they were unwilling to be interviewed for follow-up research.

Conclusion

The original proposal for this project assumed a period of twenty weeks for the preparation, implementation, and follow-up. My supervisor said it would take me longer than twenty weeks to accomplish such a robust project. He was right. From preparation to follow-up took twenty-five weeks and three days. I did not anticipate that length of time because I was unaware (at the time of my proposal) of the amount of detailed work I needed to produce. I am grateful for a wise supervisor who helped shepherd me through this period.

CHAPTER 5

EVALUATING THE USE OF A CATECHESIS TO TEACH THE DECALOGUE

Introduction

After the preparation, implementation and follow up periods I began the process of evaluation. This chapter will examine the project's stated purpose and goals, and the project's strengths and weaknesses, as suggested by the research. Following those evaluations I will engage in some theological and personal reflections, and suggest generalization of this program. The chapter concludes with a look at the need for future research and a personal note.

Evaluation

Purpose

The stated purpose of this project was to use podcasting to catechize the members of Creek Road Baptist Church in the Ten Commandments. A weak biblical spirituality resulted in apathy which manifested in slack attendance at worship, and a cooling of devotional interest. The hope was that this program of catechizing using the delivery of a podcast would strengthen engagement in the congregation and deepen their devotional life.

To this end the project was successful, making a positive change in the participants knowledge of the Decalogue, and making them more discriminatory in their decisions. I hope that this project will be a model for other pastors who seek to affect change in their people by adopting this method of catechizing using podcasting.

Goal 1

The first goal of this project was to measure the knowledge of the Ten Commandments among a group of eighteen pastor-selected members of CRBC. In keeping with the church's context, this select group of members included active and inactive adult church members, both male and female of various ages.

Table 3 shows answers to the pre-study survey statements regarding familiarity with the commandments. Each of the survey choices, strongly disagree to strongly agree, were converted to a numerical value, 1–6. This table shows a high degree of familiarity with the first four commandments. The participants' knowledge was measured using a pre-study survey. A series of statements embedded in the survey asked participants whether they could recite a specific commandment from memory. For example, survey item 8 states, "I can recite the second commandment from memory." These statements were randomized throughout the survey. The randomization was intended to make the participant think about the order of the commandments and test their knowledge without the aid of providing an order in the survey statements.

Table 3. Pre-study familiarity with the Decalogue

Participant		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Item 1	I can recite the first commandment from memory.	6	4	6	4	4	3	5	2	3	6	5	6	54
Item 8	I can recite the second commandment from memory.	6	4	6	4	2	3	5	2	3	6	4	6	51
Item 12	I can recite the third commandment from memory.	5	4	6	4	1	4	5	2	3	6	4	4	48
Item 5	I can recite the fourth commandment from memory.	6	4	6	4	3	4	4	2	3	6	4	3	49

Participant		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Item 34	I can recite the fifth commandment from memory.	5	4	6	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	4	1	42
Item 30	I can recite the sixth commandment from memory.	5	5	5	4	2	4	4	2	3	4	4	1	43
Item 38	I can recite the seventh commandment from memory.	5	4	5	4	2	5	4	2	3	5	4	1	44
Item 22	I can recite the eighth commandment from memory.	6	3	5	5	2	4	4	2	3	3	4	1	42
Item 26	I can recite the ninth commandment from memory.	5	3	5	5	2	3	3	2	3	6	4	1	42
Item 18	I can recite the tenth commandment from memory.	5	3	5	5	2	3	3	2	3	6	4	1	39

The responses to the last six commandments show a drop in confidence.

Participants 7 and 12 show the greatest degree in declining knowledge. This downgrade is born out in the interviews. One of the interviewees said the first table was more easily recalled than the last table. However, for them, the study helped remedy that deficiency.

I did not anticipate the difference between their knowledge of the first table and the knowledge level of the second table. More research on this specific subject would be interesting. The difference may be as simple as the way one memorizes lists. The first and last items on any list are the easiest to recall. Perhaps the reason the first table is more easily recalled is due to the brevity of the items, that is, four items are easier to manage than six. It might also be that the church has done a better job teaching the first table considering it the highest goal of the Decalogue.

The pre-study survey also gauged life applications connected to the

commandments and the information in the WSC. These statements were meant to chart any change in the participants' affected judgments. Table 3 reports the scores for each participant to the statements probing this theme.

Table 4. Pre-study survey of affected judgments

Participant		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Item 3	Idolatry is a problem that men still struggle with.	6	5	6	5	6	5	6	3	6	5	6	6	65
Item 7	I am careful not to irreverently speak God's or Jesus' name.	6	5	6	6	5	6	5	3	5	5	6	1	59
Item 10	Throughout my day, I often think about how I can honor God.	5	4	4	5	2	5	4	3	5	4	5	3	49
Item 14	When I miss Sunday worship it affects the rest of my week.	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	2	6	4	5	5	53
Item 20	I am on guard against sexually immoral things in my life.	6	4	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	6	3	3	55
Item 21	When I hear someone being slandered by gossip I stop listening.	5	4	4	5	3	4	5	4	4	4	4	3	49
Item 25	Violence is not a part of my speech or lifestyle.	5	5	6	6	4	5	5	6	4	6	4	6	62
Item 27	I know what unjust taking of life includes.	5	6	5	4	4	4	4	6	4	6	4	5	57
Item 29	I usually change the channel when a television show gets too racy.	5	3	5	3	2	3	4	3	5	2	4	1	40
Item 33	When I see a person who has more	5	5	4	5	3	5	5	4	5	3	4	2	50

Participant		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
	wealth than I do, I don't get jealous.													
Item 37	Protecting what belongs to others is important to me.	5	3	5	5	4	3	5	6	5	5	4	4	54

Table 4 reports pre-study survey results and show a relatively high score for most of the statements. Survey item 3 shows the highest score across all participants. This should have been reworded to personalize the statement such as, “Idolatry is a problem that I struggle with.” As it stands anyone can objectify idolatry onto others and exclude themselves. This is what might be called a “Sunday School” answer. The question was too general in nature and left no room for improvement.

Survey item 29 received the lowest score but probably was the most honest of responses and showed the highest amount of change on the post-study survey. This item was a wording change suggested by my supervisor which I am glad I included in the instrument. Item 29 clearly shows a problem with a sliding morality in regards to pornography within the church. However, the post-study survey showed a marked difference between the pre-study and post-study surveys.

Table 5. Post-study survey item 29 results

Participants	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Item 29	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	4	2	4	5	6	55

Table 5 reveals the increased recognition of the role of the Decalogue in making this kind of judgment. Again, I was surprised by these results. If someone had

asked me if the people of my congregation had a low standard when it came to discriminating their entertainment choices, I would have said no. However, I am grateful that the application of this project's curriculum made a change in their behavior.

Since this goal depended on receiving completed surveys and analyzing the results of the survey in order to gain a clearer understanding of the participants' knowledge of the Ten Commandments these results indicate that this goal was sufficiently met.

Goal 2

The second goal was to develop a fifteen day pre-recorded podcast to supplement the written curriculum. A panel—aided by a rubric—evaluated the biblical faithfulness, clarity, and relevance of each podcast in the series. On March 11, 2019, an email was sent to each reviewer containing a link to the YouTube play list. This gave them access to all the podcasts, so they could listen to as many as they wanted at one time.

As detailed in the previous chapter, not all of the reviewers returned completed rubrics for the podcast material. However, of those that did, the goal of a 90 percent standard set for each completed rubric as sufficient or exemplary was met. The reviewers were generally complimentary of the presentation and the clarity of the material.

One of the reviewers mentioned that he enjoyed my reading of the Scriptures as I taught the material. He found it to be helpful during the study. However, one of my interviewees said that he did not like the reading of the passage. He explained that with the material in front of him there was no need for me to read it. Rather, he wanted me to use the time explaining the material. This speaks to the variety of ways adult learners engage their material.

Goal 3

The third goal was to develop a fifteen-day written supplement used alongside the podcasts to engage the participants in their daily study of the commandments. The same expert panel identified in goal 2 utilized a rubric to evaluate the devotional supplement's biblical faithfulness, teaching methodology, scope, and applicability of the curriculum. On March 11, 2019, an email with a link to a Google Drive folder was sent to each reviewer. On my Google Drive I created a unique folder for each reviewer containing the introduction, each day's curriculum, and blank rubrics for both the podcasts and the written curriculum.

Of the completed rubrics, the goal of a 90 percent standard set for each completed rubric as sufficient or exemplary was met. Helpful comments were received which aided with editing the curriculum before implementation. My supervisor, in his remarks about the curriculum, rightly assumed that the language "reasons annexed" would hinder understanding for someone not familiar with the Westminster Shorter Catechism. One of the reviewers expressed concern with that expression. After reviewing all the completed rubrics I went back through the written material and included the word "added" in italics beside the word "annexed" to aid the reader in understanding.

Goal 4

The fourth goal was to increase the knowledge of the Decalogue among the project group. The use of a post survey determined the change in participants' knowledge of the Ten Commandments. I rejected a null hypothesis for the results and instead posited that the post-study survey score would be greater than the corresponding pre-study survey score. Therefore, the research was one-tailed with a risk level of .05 percent.

I selected a t-test of dependent samples since I was measuring knowledge in the same group of people between two points in time. After completion of both the pre

and post surveys I obtained a t value of 4.49. The mean score for the pre-study survey was 167.91 and the corresponding statistic for the post-study surveys was 213.25. As already indicated, I could use the surveys of only twelve participants, which lowered my degree of freedom to 11. The value needed, for a one-tailed t-test with a risk level of .05 percent and a degree of freedom of 11, to reject the null hypothesis was 1.796.¹

The value obtained after comparing the surveys was 4.49 which is higher than the critical value of 1.796; ($t_{(11)}=4.49$, $p=.0005$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and a positive change is seen between the two surveys. This validates the hypothesis that the application of the Ten Commandments curriculum augmented by the Westminster Shorter Catechism made a positive difference in the knowledge of the participants. Since the probability value is less than .05 percent the likelihood that the t-score is influenced by chance is also rejected.

Project Strengths

The participants engaged this project through the curriculum containing the Ten Commandments, the Westminster Shorter Catechism, and the podcasts which supplemented the written material. What actually made the positive change reflected in the statistics? The Decalogue was familiar to the students, especially the first table as I outlined above. Even one participant, who recently came to faith as an adult but was raised in a Catholic home, said she had no trouble navigating the difference between the Catholic version and the Exodus 20 passage as taught by the WSC. The Ten Commandments set the theme of the study. They also helped to set the parameters of the study. However, because everyone thinks he or she knows the commandments, this project needed something else to create the change recorded by the statistics.

¹Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People Who (Think They) Hate Statistics*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008), 403.

The podcasts were simply part of the background. As a delivery tool the students seemed comfortable with it. It neither excited nor hindered the learning process. This technology is no longer new enough to create interest on its own. As a method of delivery its utility is recommended. It should be employed as an andragagogical resource for the teacher of adult learners. It played an important role in this project but only a supporting role.

The use of the WSC made the greatest difference in the learning experience. One of the interviewees said, “Some of it I knew but the expansion with the catechism always makes you add more to your general knowledge. It makes some of those like ‘thou shalt not kill,’ mean so much more than just don’t go murder somebody. Most of us aren’t doing that and don’t think about doing that.” The teaching of the Ten Commandments aided by the WSC was very effective in creating the positive change in the participants of this project. I would say the WSC is a strength.

Another strength of this project is what Knowles, Holton, and Swanson say in their book, *The Adult Learner*, “Responsibility for planning traditionally has been assigned almost exclusively to an authority figure (teacher, programmer, trainer). But this practice is so glaringly in conflict with the adult’s needs to be self-directing that it is a cardinal principle of andragogy (and in fact, all humanistic and adult education theory).”² This project required no space to be used and assigned no time constraints thus allowing the learner to study where and when it best suited them. This freed the participants to plan for themselves a more conducive study environment.

Another strength is the life span of this work. A project of this scope requires a small investment of time and finances (if hardware or software is needed). But for that investment, the material, once produced, can be used over and over again with no

²Malcom S. Knowles, Elwood F. Holton III, and Richard A. Swanson, *The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Development*, 8th ed. (New York: Routledge, 2015), 58.

reproduction cost for the pastor or the congregational budget. Most study materials find their way onto a library shelf when the course is finished. After the initial use of the project materials, the podcasts can be used to bless a global audience. Over the years this material can reach more than just the membership of a single congregation.

A final strength is how it benefits those with sight issues. One of the interviewees was handicapped due to a stroke that damaged his vision. When asked about the benefit of the podcasts, he said, “I think the podcasts were beneficial. Especially with my situation with my eyesight. Hearing and then also being able to read it separately at a later time was a reinforcing thing.” They also said, “I think that hearing it and also having a hard copy as a reinforcement is highly beneficial. The limitations that I have are helped by the computer technology. I can make the display font bigger.” When planning this project I never considered how it might benefit the handicapped community. This, for me, is an unexpected benefit.

Project Weaknesses

One weakness of this project is its dependence on technology. A small segment of church goers will not be comfortable with the technological prerequisites necessary for participation. Generally speaking, the very young and the very elderly will find this challenging. The optimal candidate for this study falls into a demographic of teens and active adults, thereby narrowing the scope of project participants.

Another weakness is the language of the Westminster Shorter Catechism. Many in the above demographic will not find the older English text appealing. Since I use the KJV text in preaching, and because I read from the WSC, and the Heidelberg Catechisms during Sunday worship, the people of CRBC are familiar with the language so it was not a shock. However, it may be prudent to rewrite the text of the WSC updating the language, and use a newer version of the Scriptures.

People learn in different ways, which was evident from the interviews and the

peer reviews. This method of distance instruction may not be the most profitable for a visual learner. Text and audio combined may not be enough for someone who needs to see the instructor, or graphic illustrations, or who needs the aid of video. Also, some may find the brevity of the material an issue. While it was the intention of this project to produce a Bible study that could be completed in ten minutes, some may want a more in-depth approach. Such a study could be produced using this material and the project bibliography as a foundation.

What I Would Do Differently

Unidentifiable surveys were a major obstacle for this project. My supervisor told me after I had received the pre-study surveys to turn on the required question option on my Google Form. In hindsight, I wish I had required the personal ID from the beginning. I did not anticipate that remembering a personal ID number would be so difficult over a three-week period. If it had been a required question from the start, the participants may have taken it more seriously.

The podcasts statistics experienced very little pollution from plays outside the participant pool; however, there were a few. I should have made the show private on Spreaker.com and on YouTube as well. The result would have yielded cleaner results for the period of the study.

While I am tempted to say I should have made different choices for my reviewers, there is no way I could have known ahead of time the struggles they experienced. I did not stay in regular contact, asking for updates or any questions they had about the material. I was more attentive with the participants since I was sending them links every evening. In the emails to the participants I included notes of thanks for participation and encouragement for the study. If I had done this with the expert panel I might have achieved better results from them.

To mitigate the drop in attendance, a simulcast or video conference could be

attempted. Doing so would allow roll to be taken, and participants who were struggling in attendance could be addressed before the problem became chronic. However, this would remove the flexibility of listening at a time of the participants own choosing. While this is an option, I am not sure I like the way it damages the freedom that the podcast format brings to the Bible study.

Finally, I should have tested the email links more diligently prior to sending them out to the participants. I could have recruited friends to assist with this work and in that way identified any potential weaknesses.

Theological Reflections

“Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt 5:19). Of all that is written in the law, the prophets, and the writings of the Old Testament, Jesus points to the right teaching of the commandments as a mark of greatness. At the beginning of this journey I hypothesized that the commandments taught well would make a difference in the lives of the people who received the instruction. Now it is no longer a hypothesis.

I did not attempt by this project to instruct in evangelism or church growth. I understand how unappealing it is to churchmen today to speak of teaching something that does not promise an immediate growth in numbers. Several months ago at a local pastors' lunch, one of the brethren asked me what my research and project would cover. I explained that I proposed a project to teach the Decalogue using a catechism. His eyes immediately glazed over as he turned away to speak to another attendee. While this is not a popular idea, I believe it is necessary. To teach all that Jesus commanded is Great Commission work. If the church does not set the bar high for believers to walk in holiness, then they will adopt the lowest common denominator for their behavior. The

place to begin a walk of holiness is with a right understanding of the Ten Commandments.

Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil” (Matt 5:17). We cannot fulfill the law on our own, but with the indwelling power of God’s Spirit we attempt to imitate our master. The teaching of the Ten Commandments is not meant to gain salvation or even favor in God’s sight but as Paul said in his prayer for the Colossians, “That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col 1:10). May the knowledge of God grow and abound in the church.

Personal Reflections

This project was a benefit to me. The teacher is always the first student. Writing the theological and historical backgrounds for my research along with the work I was doing for my seminars was foundational to the curriculum I created. Putting together the material and recording the podcasts left a deep impression on me as a believer. It gave me a chance to explore my passion for teaching, study, and podcasting. I always wanted to focus the use of podcasting to a specific group instead of constantly broadcasting to an unknown audience. I was not sure how to do that or if I should. Studying a variety of catechisms across the Christian centuries inspired me to develop the method recorded by this project. That exercise of study, creation, writing, and research introduced me to men such as Ussher, Hammond, and others who deepened my theology and inspired my teaching. This experience gave me a chance to develop a closer connection to some of the people under my pastoral care. A fact for which I am grateful.

A friend of mine likes to say, “The truth is fine as long as it makes for a good story.” The truth is, this program and this project made a lasting impact on me. Three years ago I was finalizing my application to the Doctor of Educational Ministries program in Biblical Spirituality, and my hope was to become a better teacher. Studying

with Donald Whitney, Joseph Harrod, J. Stephen Yuille, Michael Wilder, Shane Parker, and Danny Bowen made me a better Christian. These men and the men to whom they introduced me in books and in person gave me something unique. I did my best to include that uniqueness, focused by my peculiar lens, into this project. I know that I am not an expert on the Decalogue or on Christian Catechisms. If anything, I know how much I do not know about those subjects. However, the academic rigor combined with the constant need for application to my ministry gave me a depth that no other discipline could produce.

Application, Future Research and Conclusion

Even though this research used a confidence level of 95 percent and achieved an interval of .0005 percent, it is not possible to generalize to other congregations. The population size of the participants in this study was too small to generalize. This means that, when this research is applied to other congregational settings it will not necessarily produce the same results. These findings imply that the research instruments, the curriculum, the podcasts, the subject matter, and the Westminster Shorter Catechism all applied in the manner outlined in this research could not be used in any other congregational setting with a similar outcome.

As successful as this endeavor was, more work is needed. Perhaps the next iteration of this should be a brand new catechism written by a pastor specifically for his people to address a spiritual need such as this project uncovered in survey item 29. That catechism could take up another theological theme, a world-view issue, or simply teach a passage of Scripture like Henry Hammond's catechism teaches the Sermon on the Mount. In whatever way it is developed, it will certainly add new information to what little I found here.

This research project sought to help believers grow and deepen their knowledge of the Ten Commandments. I hoped this would in turn strengthen their

devotional life as well as their communal life in the church. At the beginning of my studies I overheard one of my professors say that the purpose of the Ministry Research Project was to beautify the bride of Christ. I was inspired by the thought that my work might help other pastors better catechize their congregations. I hope I achieved that end.

APPENDIX 1

TEN COMMANDMENTS SURVEY

Agreement to Participate

The research in which you are about to participate is designed to help you grow in your knowledge of the Ten Commandments. This research is being conducted by David B. Smith for purposes of his project research. In this research, you will interact with regularly scheduled devotional content. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses. *Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time.*

By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent for the use of your responses in this research.

Personal Identification Number: _____

Directions: Answer the following multiple-choice questions by placing a check next to the appropriate answer.

1. Do you consider yourself a Christian?

- _____ A. Yes
_____ B. No

2. Have you been baptized?

- _____ A. Yes
_____ B. No

3. What is your age in years?

- _____ A. 18-24
_____ B. 25-34
_____ C. 35-44
_____ D. 45-54
_____ E. 55-64
_____ F. 65 and over

Answer these questions using the following scale: SD = strongly disagree, D = disagree, DS = disagree somewhat, AS = agree somewhat, A = agree, SA = strongly agree; please circle the appropriate answer.

Statement	Scoring	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. I can recite the first commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
2. I know what is required in the first commandments.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
3. Idolatry is a problem that men still struggle with.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
4. I understand what is forbidden in the third commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
5. I can recite the fourth commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
6. I understand what is meant by “before me” in the first commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
7. I am careful not to irreverently speak God’s or Jesus’ name.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
8. I can recite the second commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
9. I know the reason added to the third commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
10. Throughout my day, I often think about how I can honor God.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
11. I know what is required by the second commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
12. I can recite the third commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
13. I understand the reasons added to the fourth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
14. When I miss Sunday worship it really affects the rest of my week.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
15. I understand the reasons added to the second commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	

Statement	Scoring	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. I know what is forbidden by the fourth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
17. I know how Jesus summed up the first four commandments.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
18. I can recite the tenth commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
19. I understand what is required in the fifth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
20. I am on guard against sexually immoral things in my life.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
21. When I hear someone being slandered by gossip I stop listening.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
22. I can recite the eighth commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
23. I understand what is required in the sixth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
24. I know the promise added to the fifth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
25. Violence is not a part of my speech or lifestyle.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
26. I can recite the ninth commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
27. I know what unjust taking of life includes.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
28. I understand the role discontentment plays in the tenth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
29. I usually change the channel when a television show gets too racy.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
30. I can recite the sixth commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	

Statement	Scoring	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. I know what is required in the tenth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
32. I know how the eighth commandment affects my neighbor.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
33. When I see a person who has more wealth than I do, I don't get envious.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
34. I can recite the fifth commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
35. I understand what is required in the eighth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
36. I know what is foundational to keeping the ninth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
37. Protecting what belongs to others is important to me.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
38. I can recite the seventh commandment from memory.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
39. I understand what is required by the ninth commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
40. I understand what is required by the seventh commandment.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	
41. I know how Jesus summed up the last six commandments.	SD	D	DS	AS	A	SA	

APPENDIX 2
PODCAST EVALUATION RUBRIC

Name of evaluator: _____ Date: _____

Ten Commandments Podcast Evaluation Tool					
Lesson to be Evaluated:					
1=insufficient, 2=requires attention, 3=sufficient, 4=exemplary					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The material is clearly relevant to the issue of studying the Decalogue.					
The material is biblical and theologically consistent.					
The audio is delivered in a clear and understandable way.					
The program clearly lays out the need for a believer to understand and apply the Ten Commandments.					
The points of the audio broadcast match the points of the written material.					
The podcast contains points of practical application.					
The lesson is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the subject.					
Overall, the podcast was a helpful supplement to the written material.					

Please include any additional comments regarding the podcast below:

APPENDIX 3

**DEVOTIONAL CURRICULUM
EVALUATION RUBRIC**

Name of evaluator: _____ **Date:** _____

Ten Commandments Curriculum Evaluation Tool					
Lesson to be Evaluated:					
Criteria	1	2	3	4	Comments
The material is clearly relevant to the issue of studying the Decalogue.					
The material is biblical and theologically consistent.					
The material includes vital information for Christian faith and personal devotional growth.					
The material clearly lays out the need for a believer to understand and apply the Ten Commandments.					
The points of the material clearly support the purpose laid out in the thesis and are easy to grasp.					
The lesson contains points of practical application.					
The lesson is sufficiently thorough in its coverage of the material.					
Overall, the lesson is clear and could be re-taught by another person.					

Please include any additional comments regarding the curriculum below:

APPENDIX 4

TEN COMMANDMENTS CURRICULUM

Introduction

This educational program is intended to further understanding of the Ten Commandments, the role they play in the church and the individual believer's life.

- **15 Days:** This curriculum is intended to be studied over fifteen days not counting Saturdays and Sundays. Although, you can study whenever and at whatever pace you like.
- **Everyday:** Each lesson contains a set of questions and answers from the Westminster Shorter Catechism (abbreviated as WSC), their scriptural proofs and material for further study.
- **Your Bible:** Please use whatever translation you favor. Using a translation other than the AKJV will aid your understanding as it will add more color to the picture.
- **Additional paper required:** The questions pertaining to the scriptural proofs require interaction with the catechism and the Bible. This engagement will require recording answers, thoughts and further questions in separate notes.
- **The podcast:** This audio portion is approximately ten minutes in length and can be started and stopped as needed. There is a podcast for each of the fifteen lessons which supplements that day's study.
- **Consider:** At the end of each day's lesson is an application section entitled, "Consider." This challenges further thought and application of the principles learned during that day's lesson.
- **For Meditation:** This step requires that one of the Scripture passages or a question and answer from the catechism be written down for meditation during the day.

Day One, No Other God: The First Commandment (Part 1)

1. What is the first commandment?

Answer. The first commandment is, *You shall have no other gods before me* (Exodus 20:3). (WSC)

2. What is required in the first commandment?

Answer. The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God and to worship and glorify him accordingly. (WSC)

- **Knowing God:** Read 1 Chronicles 28:9 *And you, Solomon my son, know you the God of your father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind: for the LORD searches all hearts, and understands all the imaginations of the thoughts: if you seek him, he will be found of you; but if you forsake him, he will cast you off for ever.*

What role does seeking and serving play in knowing God?

- **Acknowledging God:** Read Deuteronomy 26:16–17 *This day the LORD your God has commanded you to do these statutes and judgments: you shall therefore keep and do them with all your heart, and with all your soul. You have avouched the LORD this day to be your God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to listen to his voice:*

What does it mean to make the Lord your God?

How does walking, keeping and listening to his voice demonstrate that he is your God?

- **Worshiping God:** Read Matthew 4:8–10 *Again, the devil takes him up into an exceeding high mountain, and shows him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And said to him, All these things will I give you, if you will fall down and worship me. Then said Jesus to him, Get you hence, Satan: for it is written, You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.*

What are some things that tempt you to worship them? (Money, worldly distractions?)

How might knowing this commandment help you as it helped Christ Jesus?

Consider: How can you seek and serve God today? What will that look like during your day?

For Meditation: Write down the first commandment and take it with you as you go about your day. When you have opportunity, look at it and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Two, Worshiping God: The First Commandment, (Part 2)

1. What is forbidden in the first commandment?

Answer. The first commandment forbids the denying or not worshiping and glorifying the true God as God and our God and the giving that worship and glory to any other, which is due to Him alone. (WSC)

· **Denial of God's truth:** Read Psalm 14:1 *The fool has said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that does good.*

What does this verse teach us about denial? How is denial different from what David told Solomon (1 Chronicles 28:9)?

· **Denial of God as God:** Read Romans 1:20–21 *For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

What are the consequences of not glorifying God as Paul reports it here in Romans?

· **Denial of God's worship:** Read Psalm 81:11–12 *But my people would not listen to my voice; and Israel would none of me. So I gave them up to their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels.*

Why does the commandment warn against not worshiping him as our God?

· **Giving worship to another god:** Read Romans 1:25 *Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.*

When we worship something other than God what is it that we are worshiping?

What do you think Paul meant by “served the creature.”

2. What are we especially taught by these words (*before me*) in the first commandment?

Answer. These words (*before me*) in the first commandment teach us that God who sees all things, takes notice of and is much displeased with the sin of having any other God. (WSC)

· **God sees all:** Read Psalm 44:20–21 *If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god; Shall not God search this out? for he knows the secrets of the heart.*

Is it possible to hide heart motives from the Lord? Why or why not?

Consider: The WSC focused on worship today. How can you improve or correct your worship? In what way can you add worship to your routine today?

For Meditation: Write down the first question and answer of today's study. As you go about your day look at it and rehearse the words to yourself focusing especially on the phrase "which is due to Him alone."

Day Three, Make No Idols: The Second Commandment (Part 1)

1. What is the second commandment?

Answer. The second commandment is, *You shall not make to you 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. You shall not bow down yourself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And showing mercy to thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments* (Exodus 20:4–6). (WSC)

2. What is required in the second commandment?

Answer. The second commandment requires the receiving, observing and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and ordinances, as God hath appointed in his Word. (WSC)

· **God's will for worship:** Read Deuteronomy 32:45–47 *And Moses made an end of speaking all these words to all Israel: And he said to them, Set your hearts to all the words which I testify among you this day, which you shall command your children to observe to do, all the words of this law. For it is not a vain thing for you; because it is your life: and through this thing you shall prolong your days in the land, where you go over Jordan to possess it.*

Where do we discover God's will concerning how to conduct his worship?

What did Moses mean when he said "it is your life?"

· **In spirit and in truth:** Read Deuteronomy 12:30–32 *Take heed to yourself that you be not snared by following them, after that they be destroyed from before you; and that you inquire not after their gods, saying, How did these nations serve their gods? even so will I do likewise. You shall not do so to the LORD your God: for every abomination to the LORD, which he hates, have they done to their gods; for even their sons and their daughters they have burnt in the fire to their gods. What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: you shall not add thereto, nor diminish from it.*

Is it possible to add things to God's worship that he never intended? If so, how?

Consider: Write down the elements of your worship? What are they? Do you find support for each one in the Bible? Where?

For Meditation: Write down the second commandment and take it with you as you go about your day. When you have opportunity, look at it and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Four, Take Heed to Yourself: The Second Commandment (Part 2)

1. What is forbidden in the second commandment?

Answer. The second commandment forbids the worshiping of God by images or any other way not appointed in his Word. (WSC)

- **No images:** Read Deuteronomy 4:15–16 *Take you therefore good heed to yourselves; for you saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spoke to you in Horeb out of the middle of the fire: Lest you corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female,*

Why can't images be used in the worship of God?

Why do men make images for worship?

- **Nothing extra please:** Read Colossians 2:18 *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,*

When the practice of worship is based on some man's vision in addition to God's word it is false.

How do men practice idolatry without idols?

Is this a danger for the Christian? Why or why not?

2. What are the reasons annexed (*added*) to the second commandment?

Answer. The reasons annexed (*added*) to the second commandment, are God's sovereignty over us, his propriety in us and the zeal he has to his own worship. (WSC)

- **His sovereignty over us.** Read Psalm 95:2–3 *Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the Lord is a great God, and a great King above all gods.*
- **His propriety in us.** Read Psalm 45:11 *So shall the king greatly desire your beauty: for he is your Lord; and worship you him.* (see also the preface to the commandments Exodus 20:2.)

- **His zeal to his own worship.** Read Exodus 34:14 *For you shall worship no other god: for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God:*

Consider: Based on this information are there any images or idols obstructing your worship of God? What can be done to remove them today?

For Meditation: Write down the second WSC question and answer in today's study. As you go about your day look at it and rehearse the words to yourself focusing especially on the phrase "his propriety in us."

Day Five, The Name of the Lord: The Third Commandment (Part 1)

1. What is the third commandment?

Answer. The third commandment is, *You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain* (Exodus 20:7). (WSC)

2. What is required in the third commandment?

Answer. The third commandment requires the holy and reverent use of God's names, titles, attributions, ordinances, word and works. (WSC)

- **God's names:** Read Psalm 29:2 *Give to the LORD the glory due to his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*

How can we speak the name of God in such a way that glorifies him?

- **God's titles:** Read Revelation 15:3-4 *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are your works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are your ways, you King of saints. Who shall not fear you, O Lord, and glorify your name? for you only are holy: for all nations shall come and worship before you; for your judgments are made manifest.*
(see also Revelation 4:11 and 5:13.)

List some of your favorite titles and attributions of the Lord here.

- **God's ordinances:** Read Ecclesiastes 5:1 *Keep your foot when you go to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.*

Can we speak too much when at church?

What would happen if we intentionally listened more than we spoke?

- **God's Word and works:** Read Psalm 138:2 *I will worship toward your holy temple, and praise your name for your loving kindness and for your truth: for you have magnified your word above all your name.* And, Job 36:24 *Remember that you magnify his work, which men behold.*

Is it possible to treat God's Word and his creation as ordinary?

How do we recapture a proper reverence for them?

Consider: The mouth is in view with the third commandment. How do you use yours? What can you change today to begin a healthier pattern of speaking?

For Meditation: Write down the third commandment and take it with you as you go about your day. When you have opportunity, look at it and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Six, Abusing the Name of the Lord: The Third Commandment (Part 2)

1. What is forbidden in the third commandment?

Answer. The third commandment forbids all profaning, or abusing of any thing whereby God makes himself known. (WSC)

- **Profaning God's revelation:** Read Malachi 2:2 *If you will not hear, and if you will not lay it to heart, to give glory to my name, said the LORD of hosts, I will even send a curse on you, and I will curse your blessings: yes, I have cursed them already, because you do not lay it to heart.*

(Check out Malachi 1:6-8)

Malachi 1:6-8 6 A son honors his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is my honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? said the LORD of hosts to you, O priests, that despise my name. And you say, Wherein have we despised your name? 7 You offer polluted bread on my altar; and you say, Wherein have we polluted you? In that you say, The table of the LORD is contemptible. 8 And if you offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? offer it now to your governor; will he be pleased with you, or accept your person? said the LORD of hosts.

How were the priests in Malachi's day abusing the way God made himself known?

Is it the same for us today? Why or why not?

2. What is the reason annexed (*added*) to the third commandment?

Answer. The reason annexed (*added*) to the third commandment is, that however the breakers of this commandment may escape punishment from men, yet the Lord our God will not suffer them to escape his righteous judgments. (WSC)

- **Remember the reason:** *for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that takes his name in vain* (Exodus 20:7).
- **Righteous judgments:** Read Deuteronomy 28:58–59 *If you will not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that you may fear this glorious and fearful name, THE LORD THY GOD; Then the LORD will make your plagues wonderful, and the plagues of your seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses, and of long continuance.*

How is “observing to do” connected with fearing the name of the Lord?

Consider: As you pray today ask the Lord to reveal to you any stray words that profaned or abused God’s revelation. Repent of those words and ask the Lord for forgiveness.

For Meditation: Write down Malachi 2:5–6 and take it with you as you go about your day. When you have opportunity, look at it and rehearse the words to yourself. Ask the Lord to give you a mouth and lips like Levi.

Day Seven, The Sabbath: The Fourth Commandment (Part 1)

1. What is the fourth commandment?

Answer. The fourth commandment is, *Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall you labor, and do all your work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD your God: in it you shall not do any work, you, nor your son, nor your daughter, your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger that is within your gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: why the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it* (Exodus 20:8–11). (WSC)

2. What is required in the fourth commandment?

Answer. The fourth commandment requires the keeping holy to God such set times as he has appointed in his Word, expressly one whole day in seven, to be a holy sabbath unto himself. (WSC)

- **One whole day:** Read Leviticus 19:30 *You shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.* And, Deuteronomy 5:12 *Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it, as the LORD your God has commanded you.*

How do we keep one day holy?

What lifestyle changes would be necessary for that to happen?

3. Which day of the seven has God appointed to be the weekly sabbath?

Answer. From the beginning of the world, to the resurrection of Christ, God appointed the seventh day of the week to be the weekly sabbath and the first day of the week ever since, to continue to the end of the world, which is the Christian sabbath. (WSC)

· **From creation:** Read Genesis 2:3 *And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.* Is this a rest from physical labor only or does this represent something else? (see also Hebrews 4:9–11)

· **Since the resurrection:** Read Acts 20:7 *And on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached to them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.* And, Revelation 1:10 *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,*

Consider: What can you do to sanctify the Christian Sabbath? What changes can you make to your routine to make space for the regular observance of that day?

For Meditation: Write down the fourth commandment and take it with you as you go about your day. When you have opportunity, look at it and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Eight, Holy Resting: The Fourth Commandment (Part 2)

1. How is the Sabbath to be sanctified?

Answer. The Sabbath is to be sanctified by an holy resting all that day, even from such worldly employments and recreations as are lawful on other days and spending the whole time in public and private exercises of God's worship except so much as is to be taken up in the works of necessity and mercy. (WSC)

· **Worldly employments and recreations:** Read Leviticus 23:3 *Six days shall work be done: but the seventh day is the sabbath of rest, an holy convocation; you shall do no work therein: it is the sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings.* And, Matthew 12:11–12 *And he said to them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out? How much then is a man better than a sheep?*

Why it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.

What things do we allow to rob us of rest on the Sabbath?

Is it possible to pass up works of mercy for religious reasons? Explain.

2. What is forbidden in the fourth commandment?

Answer. The fourth commandment forbids the omission or careless performance of the duties required and the profaning the day by idleness or doing that which is in itself sinful or by unnecessary thoughts, words, or works, about worldly employments or recreations. (WSC)

- **Profaning the Sabbath:** Read Malachi 1:13 *You said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and you have snuffed at it, said the LORD of hosts; and you brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus you brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? said the LORD.* (see also Ezekiel 23:38 and Isaiah 58:13)

How do we engage in a careless performance when we go to worship?

3. What are the reasons annexed (*added*) to the fourth commandment?

Answer. The reasons annexed (*added*) to the fourth commandment are, God's allowing us six days of the week for our own employments, his challenging a special propriety in the seventh, his own example and his blessing the Sabbath day. (WSC)

- **Making the Sabbath holy:** Read Exodus 31:17 *It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.*

Consider: How could you improve your Sabbath experience? What could you do today to prepare for this coming Sunday?

For Meditation: Write out Exodus 31:17 and take it with you today. When you have opportunity rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Nine, Honoring Parents: The Fifth Commandment (Part 1)

1. What is the fifth commandment?

Answer. The fifth commandment is, *Honor your father and your mother: that your days may be long on the land which the LORD your God gives you* (Exodus 20:12). (WSC)

2. What is required in the fifth commandment?

Answer. The fifth commandment requires the preserving the honor, and performing the duties belonging to everyone in their several places and relations, as superiors, inferiors or equals. (WSC)

- **Superiors:** Read Ephesians 6:1 *Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. And, Ephesians 6:5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as to Christ;*

We all have someone who is over us either in our employment or our home. What duties do we owe to those whom God has placed over us?

- **Inferiors:** Read Romans 13:1 *Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.* And, Ephesians 6:9 *And, you masters, do the same things to them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*

If God has placed us in a position of superiority over others then what duties do we owe them so that we might preserve their honor?

- **Equals:** Read Romans 12:10 *Be kindly affectionate one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another;*

We are in fellowship every day with people who are our equals, whether at work, at school or in the home. What does “kindly affectioned” and “preferring” mean in this context?

Consider: What are some actions you can take today to show honor to those with whom you interact? Is there a relationship in your life that this commandment speaks to? What relationship would that be?

For Meditation: Write down the fifth commandment and take it with you as you go about your day. When you have opportunity, look at it and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Ten, Our Duty: The Fifth Commandment (Part 2)

1. What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?

Answer. The fifth commandment forbids the neglecting, or doing anything against the honor and duty which belongs to everyone in their several places and relations. (WSC)

- **Neglecting honor:** Read Romans 13:7–8 *Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. 8 Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loves another has fulfilled the law.*

Have you ever been tempted not to meet the obligations you owe to others?

How did you overcome the temptation?

We are not to be in debt but we are indebted to one another to show love. What do you think love looks like in this context?

2. What is the reason annexed (*added*) to the fifth commandment?

Answer. The reason annexed (*added*) to the fifth commandment is, a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God's glory, and their own good) to all such as keep this commandment. (WSC)

- **The Reason:** *that your days may be long on the land which the LORD your God gives you* (Exodus 20:12).
- **The Promise:** Read Ephesians 6:2–3 *Honor your father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth.*

Notice that the land is not the center of the promise for the church but long life and prosperity.

Imagine a local congregation where all the members kept this commandment. How would that change the climate of that church?

Consider: What steps can you take today to begin to change the way you respond to those around you? Is there someone you've neglected to love and honor? Who?

For Meditation: Write down Romans 13:7–8. As you go about your day look at it and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Eleven, Preserving Life: The Sixth Commandment

1. What is the sixth commandment?

Answer. The sixth commandment is, *You shall not kill* (Exodus 20:13). (WSC)

2. What is required in the sixth commandment?

Answer. The sixth commandment requires all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life and the life of others. (WSC)

- **Our own life:** Read Ephesians 5:29 *For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church:* In what ways can we nourish and cherish our life?
- **The life of others:** Psalm 82:3–4 *Defend the poor and fatherless: do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.* And, Job 29:13 *The blessing of him that was ready to perish came on me: and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy.*

How can we preserve the life of others? What would that look like in your context?

3. What is forbidden in the sixth commandment?

Answer. The sixth commandment forbids the taking away of our own life or the life of our neighbor unjustly and whatsoever tends thereunto. (WSC)

- **Our own life:** Acts 16:28 *But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do yourself no harm: for we are all here.*

How is suicide an unjust act?

In what other self-destructive ways do we harm ourselves?

- **The life of others:** Genesis 9:6 *Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.*

How is murder an assault on God?

- **Our motives:** Proverbs 24:11–12 *If you forbear to deliver them that are drawn to death, and those that are ready to be slain; If you say, Behold, we knew it not; does not he that ponders the heart consider it? and he that keeps your soul, does not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works?*

Is it possible to kill another human without wielding a weapon?

What role do the intents and affections of the heart play in killing another?

Consider: As you think about Proverbs 24:11–12 what is at the root of turning a blind eye to the plight of another? How can you begin to correct that in your own life?

For Meditation: Write down the sixth commandment and the WSC answer to what is required in the sixth commandment. As you go about your day find time to look at them and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Twelve, Chastity: The Seventh Commandment

1. What is the seventh commandment?

Answer. The seventh commandment is, *You shall not commit adultery* (Exodus 20:14). (WSC)

2. What is required in the seventh commandment?

Answer. The seventh commandment requires the preservation of our own and our neighbor's chastity in heart, speech and behavior. (WSC)

- **Sanctification of self:** Read 1 Thessalonians 4:3–4 *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that you should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor;*

In what ways does sanctification differ from fornication?

- **Sanctification of heart:** Read 2 Timothy 2:22 *Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

How can we guard against lust? (Paul gives us the answer in this verse.)

- **Sanctification of behavior and speech:** Read Colossians 4:5–6 *Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer every man.*

Why does the seventh commandment require the preservation of speech and behavior?

What effect does it have on your neighbor?

3. What is forbidden in the seventh commandment?

Answer. The seventh commandment forbids all unchaste thoughts, words and actions. (WSC)

- **Unchaste thoughts:** Read Matthew 5:28 *But I say to you, That whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

Where does adultery begin?

- **Unchaste actions and words:** Read Ephesians 5:3–4 *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.*

Consider: What changes can you begin to make today to remove unchaste thoughts, words, and deeds from your life?

For Meditation: Write down the seventh commandment and the WSC answer to what is forbidden. As you go about your day find time to look at them and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Thirteen, Our Outward Estate: The Eighth Commandment

1. What is the eighth commandment?

Answer. The eighth commandment is, *You shall not steal* (Exodus 20:15). (WSC)

2. What is required in the eighth commandment?

Answer. The eighth commandment requires the lawful procuring and furthering the wealth and outward estate of ourselves and others. (WSC)

- **Lawful procuring:** Read Romans 12:17 *Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.* And, Proverbs 27:23 *Be you diligent to know the state of your flocks, and look well to your herds.* What part does honest, diligent work play in our spiritual life?
- **The outward estate of others:** Leviticus 25:35 *And if your brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with you; then you shall relieve him: yes, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with you.* And, Philippians 2:4 *Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.*

How can we help others improve their outward estate?

What role does that play in our spiritual life?

3. What is forbidden in the eighth commandment?

Answer. The eighth commandment forbids whatsoever does or may unjustly hinder our own or our neighbor's wealth and outward estate. (WSC)

- **Hindering our outward estate:** Read 1 Timothy 5:8 *But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.* And, Proverbs 28:19 *He that tills his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that follows after vain persons shall have poverty enough.*

Can an individual harm or hinder his or her own ability to provide for material needs?

How?

- **Hindering our neighbor:** Proverbs 21:6 *The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a vanity tossed to and fro of them that seek death.* And, Job 20:19–20 *Because he has oppressed and has forsaken the poor; because he has violently taken away an house which he built not; Surely he shall not feel quietness in his belly, he shall not save of that which he desired.*

How does wealth acquired by dishonest means effect our neighbor?

How does it affect the person doing it?

Consider: Are there any avenues of your income that are not consistent with the eighth commandment? What will you do today to begin to live according to this commandment?

For Meditation: Write down the eighth commandment and the WSC answer to what is required. As you go about your day find time to look at them and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Fourteen, A False Witness: The Ninth Commandment

1. What is the ninth commandment?

Answer. The ninth commandment is, *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor* (Exodus 20:16). (WSC)

2. What is required in the ninth commandment?

Answer. The ninth commandment requires the maintaining and promoting of truth between man and man and of our own and our neighbor's good name especially in witness-bearing. (WSC)

- **Speaking truth to our neighbor:** Read Zechariah 8:16 *These are the things that you shall do; Speak you every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:*

Is it possible to maintain truth? How can you promote truth?

- **Our witness is on the line:** Read 1 Peter 3:16 *Having a good conscience; that, whereas they speak evil of you, as of evildoers, they may be ashamed that falsely accuse your good conversation in Christ.* And, Acts 25:10 *Then said Paul, I stand at Caesar's judgment seat, where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no wrong, as you very well know.*

What happens to the Christian's witness if they besmirch their reputation?

- **Right judgment is at stake:** Read Proverbs 14:5 *A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies.* And, 14:25 *A true witness delivers souls: but a deceitful witness speaks lies.*

How is the community affected when judgments are based on lies?

3. What is forbidden in the ninth commandment?

Answer. The ninth commandment forbids whatsoever is prejudicial to truth or injurious to our own or our neighbor's good name. (WSC)

- **Truth as foundational to order:** Read Romans 13:3 *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Will you then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and you shall have praise of the same:*

How is the church affected when its members do not tell the truth?

- **Our integrity and our neighbors' good name:** Read Psalm 15:3 *He that backbites not with his tongue, nor does evil to his neighbor, nor takes up a reproach against his neighbor.*

Consider: What can you do today to lay the groundwork for future truth-telling? What can be done to restore yours or your neighbors' good name?

For Meditation: Write down the ninth commandment and the WSC answer to what is required. As you go about your day find time to look at them and rehearse the words to yourself.

Day Fifteen, Covetousness: The Tenth Commandment

1. What is the tenth commandment?

Answer. The tenth commandment is, *You shall not covet your neighbor's house, you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is your neighbor's* (Exodus 20:17). (WSC)

2. What is required in the tenth commandment?

Answer. The tenth commandment requires full contentment with our own condition, with a right and charitable frame of spirit towards our neighbor and all that is his. (WSC)

- **Our condition:** Read Hebrews 13:5 *Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as you have: for he has said, I will never leave you, nor forsake you.*

How does the promise at the end of this verse lead us to contentment?

- **The condition of our neighbor:** Read Romans 12:15 *Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.* And, 1 Corinthians 13:4–6 *Charity suffers long, and is kind; charity envies not; charity braggs not itself, is not puffed up, Does not behave itself unseemly, seeks not her own, is not easily provoked, thinks no evil; Rejoices not in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;*

How do we cultivate a right and loving frame of spirit toward what belongs to our neighbor?

3. What is forbidden in the tenth commandment?

Answer. The tenth commandment forbids all discontentment with our own estate, envying or grieving at the good of our neighbor and all inordinate motions and affections to anything that is his. (WSC)

- **Discontentment and envy:** Read 1 Corinthians 10:10 *Neither murmur you, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.* And, Galatians 5:26 *Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.*

Why is murmuring about our condition a bad thing?

What effect does it have on the soul? How does envy change us?

- **Idolatry:** Read Colossians 3:5 *Mortify therefore your members which are on the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:*

How are these things (including covetousness) equivalent to idol worship?

Consider: Search your heart for the idol of covetousness. Once you identify it, what steps will you take today to tear it down?

For Meditation: Write down the tenth commandment. As you go about your day find time to look at them and rehearse the words to yourself. For extra credit meditate on James 3:16.

APPENDIX 5

POST-SURVEY QUALITATIVE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you feel you were more familiar with the first four commandments than the last six before the study began?
2. In what ways did the podcasts help the study or were they a hinderance?
3. Was it difficult to access the podcasts?
4. Did you find the material to be a restatement of what you already knew?
5. What did you find profitable in the study over all?
6. What, in your opinion, could have been left out?
7. Was it difficult to stay current with the lessons?
8. What did you take away that was immediately applicable to your daily life?
9. In what ways did you find the “For Meditation” section of the curriculum an aid in memorizing the material?
10. In your opinion, was the Westminster Shorter Catechism a help or a hinderance?

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ABSTRACT

CATECHIZING THE MEMBERS OF CREEK ROAD BAPTIST CHURCH IN SHARONVILLE, OHIO, IN THE DECALOGUE: A MIXED METHODS STUDY

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This project was designed to catechize the members of Creek Road Baptist Church in Sharonville, Ohio, in the Decalogue. Chapter 1 presents the context, rationale, purpose, goals, and methodology of the project. Chapter 2 sets forth the biblical and theological basis for catechizing Christians in the Decalogue. This chapter presents a translation of Exodus 20:1–17, a brief look at textual witnesses, an overview of the New Testament’s commentary, and an examination of the commandments. Chapter 3 delves into the theoretical, historical and practical issues of using catechesis to teach the Decalogue. A chronological review of selected catechisms is conducted, followed by an argument for podcasting as a tool for the modern day catechist. Chapter 4 describes the podcast and curriculum development, recruitment of participants, and the implementation of the project. Chapter 5 evaluates the successful results of the project; its strengths, weaknesses, and concludes with some personal reflections.

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