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Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry provides on-site pastoral care and Bible discussion groups for the students, faculty, staff, and administration in the collegiate communities in and around Columbia, Missouri.



### **Acknowledgments:**

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**Bring a friend, make a friend!**

## **Heidelberg Colloquy 05: The Ten Commandments - Overview**

Note: Different church bodies number these commands differently. Lutherans and Roman Catholics divide two similar commands at the end into a ninth and tenth. Anglicans, Reformed, and Orthodox church bodies divide the beginning into a first and second command, then keep the commands at the end as one tenth command. These commands are found in Exodus chapter 20. The passage in the original does not have numbers. Translations differ slightly.

We present the commands as numbered by Lutherans and Roman Catholics, with an explanation written by Martin Luther in 1529 in smaller print below the corresponding command.

### **First Commandment: You shall have no other gods.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

(Here Anglicans, Reformed, and Orthodox bodies separate a second command, “You shall not make for yourself a carved image” which the Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches consider part of “having no other gods.”)

### **Second Commandment: You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not curse swear, use Satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.

### **Third Commandment: Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.

**Fourth Commandment: Honor your father and your mother.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not despise or anger our parents and other authorities, but honor them, serve and obey them, love and cherish them.

**Fifth Commandment: You shall not murder.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body but help and support him in every physical need.

**Sixth Commandment: You shall not commit adultery.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

**Seventh Commandment: You shall not steal.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor's money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

**Eighth Commandment: You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

**Ninth Commandment: You shall not covet your neighbor's house.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not scheme to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, or get it in a way which only appears right, but help and be of service to him in keeping it.

(Anglican, Reformed, and Orthodox church bodies combine the ninth and tenth commandments, both having to do with coveting.)

**Tenth Commandment: You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not entice or force away our neighbor's wife, workers, or animals, or turn them against him, but urge them to stay and do their duty.

The commandments urge us to study other parts of Scripture. We see they tell us what not to do, what to do, and how we worship God in light of the commandments.

**For Further Consideration:**

The commandments of God are summed up in the New Testament as "Love God, love your neighbor." See if you can find specific moral or ethical situations where this is particularly workable. Also see if there are any for which it will not work.

How does this passage of the Law serve to direct our attention to our need for Christ?

We'll start walking through the specific commands, finding Biblical passages that help to clarify each one.