

# Christianity 101

## Week 6

(revised 08/04/17)

### LIVING AS A CHRISTIAN - GOD'S LAW & RIGHTEOUSNESS

#### MISUNDERSTANDING LIFE WITH GOD

##### MORALISTIC THERAPEUTIC DEISM

THE FIVE TENETS OF MTD	
1. A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth	Deism
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.	Moralistic
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.	Therapeutic
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.	Deism
5. Good people go to heaven when they die	Moralistic

“I’LL BE THE JUDGE OF WHAT’S WRONG AND RIGHT”

NO INTEREST IN BEING CHANGED

GOD CREATED US, THEREFORE HE KNOWS WHAT’S BEST FOR US

GOD’S LAW FIRST INTRODUCED IN THE OLD COVENANT

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS (DECALOGUE)

- 1 *And God spoke all these words, saying,*  
*"I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.*  
*"You shall have no other gods before me.*
- 2 *"You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or 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 the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.*
- 3 *"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.*
- 4 *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.*
- 5 *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.*
- 6 *"You shall not murder.*
- 7 *"You shall not commit adultery.*
- 8 *"You shall not steal.*
- 9 *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*
- 10 *"You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's."*  
 -Exodus 20:1-17

TAILORED FOR ISRAEL'S THEOCRACY

TIMELESS PRINCIPLES = BLUEPRINT FOR BEHAVIOR

DISOBEDIENCE IS HARMFUL TO US

OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAW IS THE PATH TO FULFILLMENT

THE OLD COVENANT FAILED TO CHANGE THE HUMAN HEART

ONLY CHRIST FULFILLED THE OLD COVENANT

OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE NEW COVENANT

ENTERED INTO THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST

SEALED IN BAPTISM

RE-AFFIRMED IN HOLY COMMUNION

CHRIST EMPOWERS US TO IMITATE HIS LIFE BY TRANSFORMING OUR HEARTS

Jeremiah 31:31-34:

*Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant...*

*...I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more...*

*... And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.... they shall all know me...*

*... I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts.*

*And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. - Ezekiel 36:26*

THE NECESSITY OF LEARNING THE LORD'S COMMANDS

*Where there is no revelation, people cast off restraint; but blessed is the one who heeds wisdom's instruction.*

- Proverbs 29:18

## TRANSFORMATION ONLY COMES THROUGH LIVING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD / LIVING BY THE SPIRIT

Question: Which laws still apply?

### CEREMONIAL LAWS DO NOT APPLY

*And the pig, because it parts the hoof but does not chew the cud, is unclean for you. Their flesh you shall not eat, and their carcasses you shall not touch.*

- Deuteronomy 14:8

*You shall not wear cloth of wool and linen mixed together.* - Deuteronomy 22:11

*Command the people of Israel that they put out of the camp everyone who is leprous or has a discharge and everyone who is unclean through contact with the dead.*

- Numbers 5:2

### CHRIST MADE CEREMONIAL LAWS OBSOLETE

*Jesus said, "Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus he declared all foods clean.)*

- Mark 7:18-19

*For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near.*

- Hebrews 10:1

*Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh... - Hebrews 10:19-20*

### MORAL LAWS DO APPLY

*Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished." - Matthew 5:17-18*

TEN COMMANDMENTS STILL APPLY - ALL AFFIRMED IN NEW TESTAMENT

CIVIL PUNISHMENTS DO NOT APPLY

*Jesus said, "...repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. - Luke 24:47*

TEN COMMANDMENTS = THE ACTIONS WE WERE CREATED FOR

JESUS' TWO GREATEST COMMANDMENTS SUMMARIZE THEIR AIM: LOVE

*And Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." - Matthew 22:37-40*

*...the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.  
- Romans 13:8*

JESUS' SERMON ON THE MOUNT = THE HEART WE WERE CREATED TO HAVE

Matthew 5-7

### **COMMANDMENTS 1-4: LOVE GOD**

*"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment."  
- Matthew 22:37-38*

**First Commandment:** *"You shall have no other gods before me."*

THE SACREDNESS OF GOD – PART 1

PUT GOD FIRST

OTHER GODS

Question: What other gods could one have?

OUR GOD IS ANYTHING WE ALLOW TO RUN OUR LIVES

**Second Commandment:** *“You shall not make for yourself a carved image...”*

THE SACREDNESS OF GOD – PART 2

*You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or 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 the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. - Exodus 20:4-6*

IMAGINATION

DON'T 'BUILD-A-GOD'

CREATING A MENTAL IDOL

HONOR GOD BY SUBMITTING OUR THOUGHT-LIFE TO SCRIPTURE

**Third Commandment:** *“You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain...”*

THE SACREDNESS OF OUR WORDS

IRREVERENCE

*Job would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings... For Job said, “It may be that my children have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts.” - Job 1:5*

PROMISE KEEPING

*Jesus said, “Let what you say be simply ‘Yes’ or ‘No’; anything more than this comes from evil.” - Matthew 5:37*

**Fourth Commandment:** *“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy...”*

SABBATH & LORD’S DAY

Question: But how do we keep the Sabbath?

KEEPING IT HOLY

*Jesus went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. - Luke 4:16*

*Jesus said to them, "If one of you has a child or an ox that has fallen into a well, will you not immediately pull it out on a sabbath day?" - Luke 14:5*

*"...ought not this woman... be set free from this bondage on the sabbath day?" - Luke 13:16*

*And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some... - Hebrews 10:24-25*

#### THE SACREDNESS OF OUR TIME

*Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. - Ephesians 5:15-17*

SATAN WOULD PREFER EVERY MINUTE WE HAVE BE MISUSED

#### COMMANDMENTS 5-10: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR

*"And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets." - Matthew 22:39-40*

**Fifth Commandment:** *"Honor your father and your mother..."*

*Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death. - Exodus 21:17*

#### THE SACREDNESS OF THE FAMILY

Question: Why is this important to God?

*"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you." - Exodus 20:12*

Jesus answered them, "And why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? <sup>4</sup> For God commanded, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die'..."  
- Matthew 15:3-4

‘HONOR’ DOES NOT ALWAYS MEAN ‘OBEY’

LOYALTY TO PARENTS TRUMPED BY LOYALTY TO CHRIST

*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

- Ephesians 6:4

FAMILY LIFE A BIG CHALLENGE FOR LOVE

**Sixth Commandment:** *“You shall not murder.”*

SACREDNESS OF PEOPLE

HUMAN LIFE IS GOD’S GIFT

HUMANS ARE MADE IN GOD’S IMAGE

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.*

- Genesis 1:27

ENDING HUMAN LIFE IS GOD’S PREROGATIVE

NOT JUST MURDER

CRUELTY / VIOLENCE

ANGER, HATRED & CONTEMPT

*Jesus said, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council." - Matthew 5:21-22*

*Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.*

- 1 John 3:15

ANGER: IT’S WHAT YOU DO WITH IT THAT MATTERS



ABORTION

SUICIDE

EUTHANASIA

HATE

**Seventh Commandment: “You shall not commit adultery.”**

SACREDNESS OF MARRIAGE

MARRIAGE IS INTENDED AS A RELATION OF LIFELONG FIDELITY

DIVORCE

*Jesus said, "It was also said, 'Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.' But I say to you that everyone who divorces his wife, except on the ground of sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery, and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery."*  
- Matthew 5:31-32

THERE'S ALWAYS FAULT IN 'NO-FAULT DIVORCE'

BUT DIVORCE IS NOT AN UNFORGIVABLE SIN

PROHIBITION OF DIVORCE = CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

SACREDNESS OF SEX

SEX IS FOR MARRIAGE ONLY

GOD IS PRO-SEX

SEX IS NOT JUST PHYSICAL

*Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.*  
- Genesis 2:24

SEX SHOULD BE DIRECTED BY LOVE

## FALSE TRAILS

## SEX OUTSIDE OF MARRIAGE (FORNICATION)

*Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness. - Galatians 5:19*

## HOMOSEXUALITY

*For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men. - Romans 1:26-27*

*Jesus answered, "Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, 'Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? - Matthew 19:4-5*

## SEXUAL CELIBACY/ABSTINANCE IS POSSIBLE

## MASTURBATION

## PORNOGRAPHY

## LUST

*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. - Matthew 5:27-28*

## SEXUAL LUST: IT'S WHAT YOU DO WITH IT THAT MATTERS

## LUST = ANY OBSESSION OF THE MIND

## ALL ADDICTIVE BEHAVIORS

**Eighth Commandment: "You shall not steal."**

## BIBLICAL VIEW = STEWARDSHIP, NOT OWNERSHIP

*To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability... - Matthew 25:15*

## SACREDNESS OF STEWARDSHIP

*Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. - Ephesians 4:28*

## WAYS OF STEALING

### THEFT OF TIME

### CASHING IN ON ANOTHER'S NEED

*A full and fair weight you shall have, a full and fair measure you shall have, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.  
- Deuteronomy 25:15*

### STEALING FROM GOD

*For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you. - 2 Chronicles 29:14*

*Every tithe of the land, whether of the seed of the land or of the fruit of the trees, is the Lord's; it is holy to the Lord. If a man wishes to redeem some of his tithe, he shall add a fifth to it... - Leviticus 27:30-32*

### LEAVING DEBTS UNPAID

*Owe no one anything, except to love each other...  
- Romans 13:8*

### GOSSIP!?!?! = STEALING A REPUTATION

*You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor: I am the Lord. - Leviticus 19:16*

## MAKE AMENDS

**Ninth Commandment:** *"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."*

## SACREDNESS OF TRUTH

### FALSE WITNESS

## WHY LIE?

FOR SOMEONE'S DETRIMENT = MALICE

TO IMPRESS = PRIDE

OTHER REASONS...

## LYING IS NOT OF GOD

*Jesus said, "When the devil lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies."*

- John 8:44

Question: Is it ever okay to lie?

ALL ABOUT LOVING YOUR NEIGHBOR

## Tenth Commandment: "You shall not covet..."

*Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. - Colossians 3:5*

## COVETING IS THE ROOT OF ALL SOCIAL EVIL

## CALL TO CONTENTMENT

*But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. - 1 Timothy 6:6-9*

TRUE CONTENTMENT FLOWS ONLY FROM CHRIST

ENEMY TO CONTENTMENT: WORRY

*Jesus said, "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on..." - Matthew 6:25*

#### CONTENTMENT FOSTERED BY PRAISE OF GOD

*Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" - Hebrews 13:5-6*

#### **IN CONCLUSION...**

GOD FIRST, OTHERS SECOND, SELF LAST

PROMISE OF FULFILLMENT MAKES OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S LAW DESIRABLE

PARADOX: FULFILLMENT ONLY KNOWN FROM THE INSIDE

THE "YOU" OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS WAS PLURAL

WE ARE ONLY MADE LIKE CHRIST THROUGH CHRIST

*"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. <sup>26</sup> You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean. - Matthew 23:25-26*

## Spiritual Principle & Practice to help us live the life God intends for us...

### Principle #1:

God is sovereign over all the world and anything that could come our way in life, over forces that we are powerless over. And God is good.

### Practice #1:

Turn control of my whole life over to the care of God and His direction, every day: including my relationships, my finances, my plans, my choices, my day

### Principle #2a:

God created us to receive our sense of value & identity and to hold him responsible for our needs, rather than from other people.

### Practice #2a:

Look to God, rather than other people, for my sense of value and identity.

### Principle #2b:

In Christ, I am a beloved child of God.

### Practice #2b:

Receive and live in the truth that I am a beloved child of God, who wants to cares for my needs.

### Principle #3:

God's intention is to transform me more and more into the likeness of Christ

### Practice #3:

Open ourselves up to and cooperate with God's process of transformation

### Principle #4:

Insofar as it depends on us, we are to live at peace with everyone.

### Practice #4a:

Confess our sin to another

### Practice #4b:

Take responsibility for the wrongs we've done to others, when to do so will not cause further harm

### Practice #4c:

Surrender past grievances unto God, forgiving others for the wrongs they've done to us



## **Guidelines for Writing a Spiritual Autobiography for Confirmands, Receptions, and Reaffirmations in the Diocese of San Joaquin**

The Bishop's usual practice is to try and meet in person with candidates for Confirmation, Reception, or Reaffirmation prior to the laying on of hands service, in order to hear from them – in their own words – the story of their faith thus far and why they want to take this step in their faith. However, from time to time and in certain years, this type of one-on-one meeting will not be possible.

In order to be certain that the Bishop is still able to get to know the candidates, he requires that each candidate write a brief spiritual autobiography, with the help of their sponsors and/or clergy. The following are some minimum guidelines (not exhaustive) for the types of information a spiritual autobiography of this sort should provide:

- What is your faith background? Did you grow up in a Christian home environment, some other faith, or with no faith at all?
- When did you begin your relationship with Jesus? Has it been ongoing since your baptism as an infant, or were you older?
- What impact has following Jesus had on your life? What role has your faith played in your day-to-day activities, whether school, work, or social/recreational?
- What do you think Confirmation is, and why is being Confirmed/Received or Reaffirming your faith something you want to do right now
- What does being an Anglican mean to you?
- Do you believe the Nicene Creed? Why is it important?

Again, these are just some minimum guidelines for the types of things that should be included in the spiritual autobiography. These autobiographies should be in the Bishop's possession no later than two weeks prior to the date of Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation.