



What do the first 3 commandments have to do with my life?



GOSPEL



ANSWERS

Jesus said, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' but not do what I command? I will show you what someone is like who comes to me, listens to my words, and acts on them"— **Luke 6: 46-49**

Saints & inspirational stories

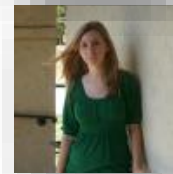
Blessed Elizabetta Canoli Mora

Blessed Elizabetta understood the importance of being faithful to her marriage and the commandments even though she lived in a difficult situation. She never saw herself as the exception to the rule, but rather lived her life to be faithful to God.



Margeaux Graham

Margeaux Graham is an example of how to stand true to what you believe and live out the commandment even when people discourage you from doing so. She knew that keep Holy the Lord's Day was a commandment – not a suggestion and being faithful cost her something she truly wanted.



Team discussion

After reading over the YOUCAT numbers on the following pages, how do you think the Youth Catechism answers the question of the week? Were there any words or ideas that you did not fully understand that you would like to understand better?

Answer in your own words:



YouCat numbers for this week



#348 “Teacher, what . . . must I do to have eternal life?” (Mt 19:16) Jesus says, “If you would enter life, keep the commandments” (Mt 19:17). Then he adds, “and come, follow me” (Mt 19:21). Christianity is more than a correct life and keeping the commandments. Being a Christian is a living relationship to Jesus. A Christian unites himself deeply and personally with the Lord and with him sets out on the way that leads to true life.

#349 What are the Ten Commandments?

1. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s day (Sabbath).
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.

#350 Are the Ten Commandments a random list? No. The Ten Commandments form a unity. One commandment refers to another. You cannot arbitrarily toss out individual commandments. Someone who breaks one commandment is violating the whole Law. What is remarkable about the Ten Commandments is that all of human life is included within them. Indeed, we men are related at the same time to God (Commandments 1-3) and to our fellow men (Commandments 4-10); we are religious and social beings.

#351 Aren’t the Ten Commandments outmoded? No, the Ten Commandments are by no means the product of a particular time. They express man’s fundamental obligations toward God and neighbor, which are always and everywhere valid. The Ten Commandments are commandments of reason just as they are also part of the binding revelation of God. They are so fundamentally binding that no one can be dispensed from keeping these commandments.

The Ten Commandments as printed nearby are not found in precisely that form in Sacred Scripture; the text is based on two biblical sources: Ex 20:2-17 and Deut 5:6-21. Centuries ago the two sources were summarized for instructional purposes, and the Ten Commandments were presented to the faithful in the present form of the catechetical tradition.

DECALOGUE (“Ten Words”, from Greek **deka** = **ten** and **logos** = **word**). The Ten Commandments are the central summary of the basic rules of human behavior in the Old Testament. Jews and Christians both look to this fundamental text for orientation.



1st commandment:

I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.

SACRILEGE:

the profanation of something sacred.

SUPERSTITION: The irrational assumption that certain sayings, actions, & objects contain magic powers.

ESOTERICISM:

a common term for spiritual teachings and practices in which man is led to a supposedly "true knowledge", which nonetheless is already in him.

PANTHEISM:

the world view that everything that exists is God, and God is everything that exists.

OCCULTISM

Examples of occult practices are Ouija boards, astrology.

ATHEISM

(Greek theos = God): the view that God does not exist.

AGNOSTICISM (Greek gnosis = knowledge): the view that God cannot be known.

#355 "You shall not have strange Gods before me." What does that mean?

This commandment forbids us:

- to adore other gods and pagan deities or to worship an earthly idol or to devote oneself entirely to some earthly good (money, influence, success, beauty, youth, and so on)
- to be superstitious, which means to adhere to esoteric, magic, or occult or New Age practices or to get involved with fortune telling or spiritualism, instead of believing in God's power, providence, and blessings
- to provoke God by word or deed
- to commit a sacrilege • to acquire spiritual power through corruption and to desecrate what is holy through trafficking (simony).

#356 Is esotericism as found, for example in New Age beliefs, compatible with the Christian faith?

No. Esotericism ignores the reality of God. God is a personal Being; he is love and the origin of life, not some cold cosmic energy. Man was willed and created by God, but man himself is not divine; rather, he is a creature that is wounded by sin, threatened by death, and in need of redemption. Whereas most proponents of esotericism assume that man can redeem himself, Christians believe that only Jesus Christ and God's grace redeem them. Nor are nature and the cosmos God (pantheism). Rather, the Creator, even though he loves us immensely, is infinitely greater and unlike anything he has created. Many people today practice yoga for health reasons, enroll in a meditation course so as to become more calm and collected, or attend dance workshops so as to experience their bodies in a new way. These techniques are not always harmless. Often they are vehicles for doctrines that are foreign to Christianity. No reasonable person should hold an irrational world view, in which people can tap magical powers or harness mysterious spirits and the "initiated" have a secret knowledge that is withheld from the "ignorant". In ancient Israel, the surrounding peoples' beliefs in gods and spirits were exposed as false. God alone is Lord; there is no god besides him. Nor is there any (magical) technique by which one can capture or charm "the divine", force one's wishes on the universe, or redeem oneself. Much about these esoteric beliefs and practices is superstition or occultism.



CONQUEST WEEKLY ACTIVITY GUIDE

#357 Is atheism always a sin against the First Commandment? Atheism is not a sin if a person has learned nothing about God or has examined the question about God's existence conscientiously and cannot believe. The line between being unable to believe and being unwilling to believe is not clear. The attitude that simply dismisses faith as unimportant, without having examined it more closely, is often worse than well-considered Atheism.

#358 Why does the Old Testament forbid images of God, and why do we Christians no longer keep that commandment? In order to protect the mystery of God and to set the people of Israel apart from the idolatrous practices of the pagans, the First Commandment said, "You shall not make for yourself a graven image" (Ex 20:4). However, since God himself acquired a human face in Jesus Christ, the prohibition against images was repealed in Christianity; in the Eastern Church, icons are even regarded as sacred. The knowledge of the patriarchs of Israel that God surpasses everything (transcendence) and is much greater than anything in the world lives on today in Judaism as in Islam, where no image of God is or ever was allowed. In Christianity, in light of Christ's life on earth, the prohibition against images was mitigated from the fourth century on and was abolished at the Second Council of Nicaea (787). By his Incarnation, God is no longer absolutely unimaginable; after Jesus we can picture what he is like: "He who has seen me has seen the Father" (Jn 14:9).

2nd commandment:

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

3rd commandment:

Remember to keep holy the Lord's day (the Sabbath)

#359 Why does God want us to "hallow" his name (that is, keep it holy)? To tell someone your name is a sign of trust. Since God has told us his name, he makes himself recognizable and grants us access to him through this name. God is absolute truth. Someone who calls Truth himself by his name but uses it to testify to a lie sins seriously. One must not pronounce the name of God irreverently. For we know him only because he has entrusted himself to us. The Holy Name, after all, is the key to the heart of the Almighty. Therefore it is a terrible offense to blaspheme God, to curse using God's name, or to make false promises in his name. The Second Commandment is therefore also a commandment that protects "holiness" in general. Places, things, names, and people who have been touched by God are "holy". Sensitivity to what is holy is called reverence.

#362 Why do Jews celebrate the Sabbath? The Sabbath is for the people of Israel the great sign commemorating God, the Creator and Redeemer. The Sabbath recalls in the first place the seventh day of creation, when God "rested, and was refreshed" (Ex 31:17), this, so to speak, authorizes all men to interrupt their work and replenish their energies. Even slaves were supposed to be allowed to observe the Sabbath. This recalls the second great commemorative sign, the liberation of Israel from slavery in Egypt: "You shall remember that you [yourself] were a servant in the land of Egypt . . ." (Dt 5:15). The Sabbath is therefore a feast of human freedom; on the Sabbath all breathe freely; on it the division of the world into masters and slaves is abolished. In traditional Judaism this day of freedom and rest is also a sort of foretaste of the world to come.



SABBATH (Hebrew, approximately “break for rest”): the Jewish day of rest commemorating the seventh day of creation and the Exodus from Egypt. It begins on Friday evening and ends on Saturday evening. In Orthodox Judaism it is observed with a host of rules for maintaining the Sabbath rest.

#363 How does Jesus deal with the Sabbath? Jesus observes the Sabbath, but at the same time he deals with it very liberally, as one who has complete command over it: “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mk 2:27). The fact that Jesus claims the right to heal on the Sabbath and to interpret the Sabbath laws mercifully poses a dilemma for his Jewish contemporaries: Either Jesus is the Messiah sent by God, which makes him “Lord even of the Sabbath” (Mk 2:28), or else he is merely a man, in which case his actions on the Sabbath are a sin against the Law.

#187 How important is Sunday? Sunday is the center of Christian time, for on Sunday we celebrate Christ’s Resurrection, and every Sunday is a miniature Easter. If Sunday is disregarded or abolished, only workdays are left in the week. Man, who was created for joy, degenerates into a workhorse and a mindless consumer. We must learn on earth how to celebrate properly, or else we will not know what to do in heaven. Heaven is an endless Sunday.

#366 Why is it important for the State to preserve Sunday? Sunday is a genuine service to the good of society, because it is a sign of opposition to the total absorption of man by the working world. Therefore in lands that have a Christian character, Christians not only demand the governmental preservation of Sunday, they also do not ask others to do work that they themselves do not want to do on Sunday. Everyone in creation should take part in this “breather”.

#364 Why do Christians replace the Sabbath with Sunday? Christians replaced the celebration of the Sabbath with the celebration of Sunday because Jesus Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday. The “Lord’s Day”, however, does include elements of the Sabbath. The Christian Sunday has three essential elements: (1) It recalls the creation of the world and communicates the festive splendor of God’s goodness to the passage of time. (2) It recalls the “eighth day of creation”, when the world was made new in Christ (thus a prayer from the Easter Vigil says: “You have wonderfully created man and even more wonderfully restored him.”). (3) It includes the theme of rest, not just to sanctify the interruption of work, but to point even now toward man’s eternal rest in God.

#365 How do Christians make Sunday “the Lord’s day”? A Catholic Christian attends Holy Mass on Sunday or on the vigil of Sunday. On that day he refrains from all work that would prevent him from worshipping God or disturb the festive, joyful, restful, and restorative character of the day. Since Sunday is an Easter celebration that occurs each week, Christians from the earliest times have gathered together on that day to celebrate and thank their Redeemer and to reunite themselves with him and with others who are redeemed. So it is a central duty of every conscientious Catholic Christian to “keep holy” Sunday and the other holy days of the Church. One is exempted from it only by urgent family duties and important responsibilities in society. Because participation in the Sunday Eucharist is fundamental for a Christian life, the Church explicitly declares that it is a serious sin to stay away from Sunday Mass without good reason.