

DAY 1 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

What do you think of when you hear the word “boundaries”?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Jesus said, “Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.”

Matthew 5:17-18 NLT

The Ten Commandments: Then God gave the people all these instructions: “**I am the Lord your God**, who rescued you from the land of Egypt, the place of your slavery. “You must not have any other god but me. “You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods. I lay the sins of the parents upon their children; the entire family is affected—even children in the third and fourth generations of those who reject me. But I lavish unfailing love for a thousand generations on those who love me and obey my commands.

“You must not misuse the name of the Lord your God. The Lord will not let you go unpunished if you misuse his name. “Remember to observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. You have six days each week for your ordinary work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath day of rest dedicated to the Lord your God. On that day no one in your household may do any work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants, your livestock, and any foreigners living among you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens, the earth, the sea, and everything in them; but on the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and set it apart as holy.

“Honor your father and mother. Then you will live a long, full life in the land the Lord your God is giving you. “You must not murder. “You must not commit adultery. “You must not steal. “You must not testify falsely against your neighbor. “You must not covet your neighbor’s house. You must not covet your neighbor’s wife, male or female servant, ox or donkey, or anything else that belongs to your neighbor.”

Exodus 20:1-17 NLT

Sermon Insights:

God is the author of the moral law. First and foremost, we must recognize and remember the baseline: God said, “I am the LORD your God” the ultimate and final authority!

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

In what way have you had other “gods” before the Lord your God (that you trusted to provide for you, fill you with importance, or fulfill your needs)? Is there anything competing for your heart to serve God?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for the moral law that illuminates your heart and lights my path. Thank you that you give us instruction to guide us and your grace to support us as we follow you.

DAY 2 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

What book has changed your life?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Jesus said, “Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.”

Matthew 5:17-18 NLT

Always be full of joy in the Lord. I say it again—rejoice! Let everyone see that you are considerate in all you do. Remember, the Lord is coming soon. Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God’s peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you. **Philippians 4:4-9 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

God’s moral law is here to stay! Jesus completely backs the moral law.

God will never compromise you. God will never put you in a position where you have to lie, or cheat, or deceive.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Based on the Scriptures above, what does it say about God’s character?

What does God want to accomplish through you?

What is one relationship that could be different if you choose to be “considerate in all you do”?

How would your life be different if you experienced God’s peace?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, your ways are perfect, and I’m thankful that you not only describe them to me, but you also help me walk in them. Help me to have the strength to do what my faith is prompting me to do. Fill me with your peace and guard my heart and mind as I live in Christ Jesus!

DAY 3 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

Do you believe God changes or your perspective about God changes?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Moses spoke to the Israelites in the wilderness: “This command I am giving you today is not too difficult for you, and it is not beyond your reach. It is not kept in heaven, so distant that you must ask, ‘Who will go up to heaven and bring it down so we can hear it and obey?’ It is not kept beyond the sea, so far away that you must ask, ‘Who will cross the sea to bring it to us so we can hear it and obey?’ No, the message is very close at hand; it is on your lips and in your heart so that you can obey it.

“Now listen! Today I am giving you a choice between life and death, between prosperity and disaster. For I command you this day to love the Lord your God and to keep his commands, decrees, and regulations by walking in his ways. If you do this, you will live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you and the land you are about to enter and occupy.

“But if your heart turns away and you refuse to listen, and if you are drawn away to serve and worship other gods, then I warn you now that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live a long, good life in the land you are crossing the Jordan to occupy. “Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make.

“Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live! You can make this choice by loving the Lord your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him. This is the key to your life. And if you love and obey the Lord, you will live long in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” **Deuteronomy 30:11-20 NLT**

“Come now, let’s settle this,” says the Lord. “Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make them as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, I will make them as white as wool. If you will only obey me, you will have plenty to eat. But if you turn away and refuse to listen, you will be devoured by the sword of your enemies. I, the Lord, have spoken!” **Isaiah 1:18-20 NLT**

Sermon Insights:

God’s moral law was backed by the prophets. God has not changed his nature or his moral standards. There are consequences for the moral choices we make.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Describe the difference between “religion” and a “relationship with Jesus.” How do the approaches differ in helping one obey God’s law? (see Romans 8:3-4!)

What does the world think about shifting values and moral standards? What do you think?

How do you think God’s kindness and judgment can coexist? How does Jesus’ sacrifice show us both?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for being both the perfect judge and the incredibly gracious Savior! Thank you for allowing us to live a new life!

DAY 4 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is your favorite piece of advice you have received?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture: *Jesus said, “Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved. So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God’s laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. “But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven! **Matthew 5:17-20 NLT***

Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way. When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. “Zacchaeus!” he said. “Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today.”

Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. But the people were displeased. “He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner,” they grumbled. Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, “I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!” Jesus responded, “Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. For the Son of Man [*“Son of Man” is a title Jesus used for himself*] came to seek and save those who are lost.” **Luke 19:1-10 NLT**

Sermon Insights: God’s moral law was endorsed by and fulfilled in Jesus. The religious establishment had reduced God’s law to a book of rules. It was a facade with no internal value, a religion full of rituals and traditions but absent of the power and glory of God. Jesus is making a clear statement to those who claim to be his followers. Like Moses said to the people: “choose life!” Like the Prophets, Jesus shared two great themes: *willingness and obedience*.

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

How did Zacchaeus become willing and obedient?

When have you been the most grateful for Jesus?

Have you ever been a part of a religious community that was “full of rituals and traditions but absent of the power and glory of God”?

Who needs you to “speak the truth in love”?

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for giving us SO much more than rules, rituals, and traditions. Thank you for being a living, active, loving, and powerful God—full of love and worthy of worship!

DAY 5 – SCRIPTURE, OBSERVATION, APPLICATION, PRAYER (“SOAP”)

CONVERSATION STARTER

What is your most important relationship? How can others tell?

SCRIPTURE OBSERVATION (5 MINUTES)

Scripture:

Jesus said, “Don’t misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to accomplish their purpose. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not even the smallest detail of God’s law will disappear until its purpose is achieved.

So if you ignore the least commandment and teach others to do the same, you will be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven. But anyone who obeys God’s laws and teaches them will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven.

“But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!”

“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell.

*“So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God. “When you are on the way to court with your adversary, settle your differences quickly. Otherwise, your accuser may hand you over to the judge, who will hand you over to an officer, and you will be thrown into prison. And if that happens, you surely won’t be free again until you have paid the last penny. **Matthew 5:17-26 NLT***

Sermon Insights:

Jesus tells us how God’s moral law should NOT look. What Jesus is ultimately saying here is that if those religious leaders couldn’t earn their way into the Kingdom of God, neither can you or I. So how do we enter into the Kingdom of heaven? By being in authentic relationship with the God of the universe! How? First, understand that Jesus died on the cross for our sins. This allows us to stand before God holy and forgiven. Second, trust in his blood alone to wash your sins away. Third, surrender your life to his authority. When you surrender your life to his authority, his Spirit comes to live within you to empower you!

APPLICATION SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

How can a person’s righteousness be better than the “righteousness” of professional religious experts?

When Jesus raised the bar in the Sermon on the Mount (anger being likened to murder, lust being likened to adultery, etc.), was it to supercharge his followers’ obedience or to display how obedience alone cannot change the human heart? Explain your answer.

PRAYER SUGGESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Lord, thank you for giving us the desire and power to do what pleases you!