

- Q42. What is the sum of the Ten Commandments?
A42. **The sum of the Ten Commandments is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.**

Matthew 22:37-40

- DQ1: Would you consider the Ten Commandments as a command to love? If so, why? If not, why not?
- DQ2: To whom were the Ten Commandments given?
- DQ3: What do the Ten Commandments prohibit?
- DQ4: What do the Ten Commandments require?
- DO5: How do you keep the 4th Commandment? And, do you keep the 4th Commandment?
- DO6: How do you keep the 5th Commandment? And, do you keep the 5th Commandment?
- DQ5: What happens if you do not keep the Ten Commandments?

Notes:

Clearly, the Ten Commandments are a command to love. Yet, most people do not connect the Ten Commandments with love. There are some reasons for this. **First**, we think that the Ten Commandments is very Old Testament and thus legalistic. Some may even be influenced by certain erroneous Biblical and theological views in that the Ten Commandments are not in effect in the New Testament time periods. **Second**, the Ten Commandments can seem harsh and cold. Some people have trouble reconciling how such harsh and cold Commandments could express love. **Third**, the Ten Commandments are simply not understood correctly. Some may have memorized them but never understood their true meaning. Like the Pharisees and Sadducees, they may have the head knowledge of the Ten Commandment but certainly do not have the ability to love God and others.

The Ten Commandments were given to Moses for the benefit of Israel, God's people. Although the moral law is the standard set forth by God for everyone for the purposes of pointing out sin, the true audience is God's people who are required to keep the command, not as a condition of redemption but as a consequence of their status and relationship with God. "And God spoke all these words: 'I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.'" (Exodus 20-1-2) It is clear that God meant to give the moral law to His people. Not everyone could live according to the Ten Commandments because those who do not know God would immediately violate the very first commandment.

The Ten Commandments contain certain prohibitions and requirements. Take a look at the Ten Commandments one more time and see if you can determine which Commandment prohibits and which Commandment requires. All of the Commandments, except for the Fourth and Fifth Commandments, are prohibitions. What is the difference between the prohibitions and

requirements? Why is it that certain things are prohibited and certain things are required? Why are we to keep the Sabbath Day holy and honor our parents?

You will study both the Fourth and Fifth Commandments in depth. For now, the distinction between the prohibitions and requirements should be pointed out briefly. The Fourth and Fifth Commandments contain explicit promises and blessings. For this reason alone, you should have an increasing level of curiosity for understanding them.

Keeping the Ten Commandments perfectly on our own is impossible. Regardless, there are consequences of the breaking the Ten Commandments. It is clearly sin. It is sin not only because the commands are broken but also because of lack of love of God and of others. The Ten Commandments do not merely impose behavioral prohibitions and requirements (which they do) but, more importantly, they reveal the sinful state of one's heart and the humanity.