



The Ten Commandments: What They Mean, Why They Matter, and Why We Should Obey Them

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The Ten Commandments were foundational to the lives of the ancient Israelites, but many Christians don't know how the list relates to their lives today. Are they still relevant? If so, which rules still apply? What do these commands mean in light of God's grace and mercy shown in Jesus? In this book, Kevin DeYoung delivers critical truth about God's Ten Commandments as he makes clear what they are, why we should know them, and how we should apply them. Revealing the timelessness and goodness of God's ancient commands, this accessible and important book helps readers know, obey, and delight in God's law--and everything it means for their lives today.

The Ten Commandments: What They Mean, Why They Matter, and Why We Should Obey Them Details

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From Reader Review **The Ten Commandments: What They Mean, Why They Matter, and Why We Should Obey Them** for online ebook

David Steele says

Ask anyone if they are familiar with the Ten Commandments and the answer will be in the affirmative. But ask that same person to recite the ten commandments by memory. The results will not be as encouraging, even among professing Christians.

Kevin DeYoung devotes his latest book, *The Ten Commandments* to explaining and exploring these ten imperatives. The subtitle describes the essence of the book: *What They Mean, Why They Matter, and Why We Should Obey Them*.

DeYoung carefully guides readers through each commandment, grounding his exposition in Scripture and applying his explanation to the real-world needs of contemporary people. Each chapter focuses on one commandment in particular and is set forth in a clear and understandable way.

I found *The Ten Commandments* to be deeply encouraging and challenging. DeYoung's writing is engaging and draws readers from different backgrounds to one conclusion: These commandments are for today. But in the final analysis, they lead us directly to the cross of Christ. Indeed, as DeYoung writes,

“We can no longer keep the Ten Commandments rightly unless we keep them in Christ, through Christ, and with a view to the all-surpassing greatness of Christ. As new creations in Christ, the law is not only our duty but also our delight. If we want to love Christ as he deserves and as he desires, we will keep his commandments.”

I received this book free from the publisher. I was not required to write a positive review.

Rachel Menke says

I had listened to Kevin DeYoung preach through the 10 Commandments as a part of his series in Exodus and had found these sermons to be hugely helpful and so I was thrilled to find out that a book was coming out! While the book is essentially his sermons in book form (which is sometimes really obvious in a funny way) they are no less helpful or enjoyable than when I listened to them.

The purchase price of the book is worth it for the chapter on the 9th commandment alone (which is super convicting but so rich). DeYoung does a great job taking the Commandments and helping us to see how we violate these commands and the heart issues that are behind that disobedience. Some chapters (just like sermons) are better than others but all are a great blend of conviction, correction, and encouragement. It's a little book that packs a big punch for your sanctification!

Tomsugi says

Kevin DeYoung, *The Ten Commandments: What They Mean, Why They Matter, and Why We Should Obey Them* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018)

Kevin DeYoung provides a practical exposition of the Ten Commandments from Exodus 20 and shows how these ancient Israelite laws are still applicable to Christians today. He provides a brief introduction and epilogue, then spends a chapter expounding each commandment.

DeYoung writes like a pastor and preached much of this material in the local church. He is careful to thoroughly explain each commandment, then to offer ideas for application as well. In the chapter on honoring parents, he takes the time to speak directly to children. In the chapter on murder, he tackles tough topics such as suicide, abortion, and medically-assisted euthanasia. In the chapter on stealing, he shows how we are not as guiltless of theft as we think. Over and over, he demonstrates practical ways we can obey or disobey God's Ten Commandments. For each chapter, he concludes the conversation with gospel truths.

I was most helped by his chapter on the Sabbath which emphasizes the important priorities of worship and rest. He addresses some of the more difficult questions about practicing the Sabbath by focusing on the purpose of the Lord's Day. His position challenged my own thinking and teaching on the subject, but he is gracious enough to recognize that many Christians have varied ways of observing the Sabbath.

The final chapter on coveting opened my eyes by describing this commandment as a summary of all ten. Coveting prevents us from loving God because of discontentment and from loving our neighbor because of jealousy. DeYoung shows how this commandment reveals the idolatrous desires of the heart and how this heart focus distinguishes the Ten Commandments from all other ancient moral law codes.

One concern is that although his theology is consistently biblical, DeYoung sometimes relies on the Heidelberg Catechism instead of Scripture to structure his thoughts. This may be disconcerting to the reader who is not from a catechetical tradition. It may have been helpful to provide more context before discussing these catechisms.

DeYoung also includes a helpful study guide for personal or small group study, a general index, and a Scripture index. Overall, this is a very helpful book for both pastors and laypersons.

* Crossway has provided a complimentary copy of this book through the Blog Review Program.

Heather Persing says

I received this book from Crossway through Netgalley. All opinions are my own.

I thought Kevin DeYoung dug into each of the Ten Commandments in a way that exposed sin and left me even more grateful for the Gospel. I appreciated the first few chapters that explained why the commandments are still important today. I'd definitely recommend this book.

Hobart says

This originally appeared at The Irresponsible Reader.

My initial thought when I saw this book was: do we need another popular-level work on The Ten Commandments? We've got so many already, like: Ryken's **Written in Stone**, Horton's **The Law of Perfect Freedom**, Packer's **Growing in Christ**. We've got Douma's, Watson's and Durham's (newly republished) on the heavier end of the spectrum, too. Why bring out a new book by DeYoung? Still, I was intrigued, so I requested a copy.

Not too surprisingly, I'm glad I did. This is typical DeYoung: a strong, affectionate, orthodox take on the Law delivered in a very accessible and affable manner. He made me think, he made me reconsider a thing or two, and he reminded me of a few things I needed reminding of.

He begins this work against the framework of the secular "anything goes" point of view, where everything certainly *does not* go -- as much as we as a culture might rail against an external source of morality -- there are things that simply cannot be said or done. Giving us a choice between humanity's unwritten, assumed code -- or God's revealed will. DeYoung then goes on to list reasons for the study as well as the following of God's Law.

The other important groundwork comes from the midst of his very strong chapter on the First Commandment in which he describes the role of the Law for New Covenant believers. It's still applicable, still binding -- just in a different manner. I think this could've been developed more -- maybe in its own chapter, but what we got here was good. I do particularly appreciate his metaphor of transposition. The Law in the New Covenant is the same for believers as it was in the Old, it's just in a different key.

Following the introduction where he lays out his framework, DeYoung turns to consider the commandments individually. This is the bulk of -- and the heart of -- the book, with a chapter devoted to each commandment. If the book has any value, it'll be found here, and there's a lot of it to be found. I briefly considered summarizing each chapter, but why steal his thunder. Also, he's not carving out anything new here, so there's little need. What's new is his expression of the timeless truths, his way of explaining and applying them. If you want a quick summary of what he'll say about each commandment read The Heidelberg Catechism questions 92-115 or the Westminster Shorter Catechism questions 39-85, and you'll get a pretty good idea.

Instead, I'll just comment on a few highlights and a couple of problems I had (your mileage may vary). I found his comments regarding the Fourth Commandment to be helpful, but hesitant -- in his effort to not be legalistic, or overly dogmatic, he comes across as wishy-washy. I appreciated most of what he had to say about the Second Commandment, but again, he's hesitant enough in some of his application to stumble a bit. Which is not to say that the bulk of those chapters weren't good and helpful -- they were. I think he could've been more consistently so.

Conversely, the chapters on the Eighth and Tenth commandments were incredibly helpful. If you ask me, these two are where the American Church and American Christians stumble more often than we realize (or care about). Publicly, Protestants are expounding so much energy on certain applications of the Sixth and Seventh commandments that one would be tempted to think that 8-10 are concerns of the past. DeYoung doesn't let the reader think that for an instant, and if you don't come away from these chapters with a good

dose of conviction of your own sin, you probably didn't read it too closely.

The chapter on the Third Commandment was invaluable also. It's far too easy for Western Christians to reduce this to "don't be a potty mouth" and far too hard for us to really get what the importance of "name of the Lord" is. DeYoung does a yeoman's job on both fronts and does a good job expounding the meaning of this commandment.

You'll never walk away from any of these chapters thinking that DeYoung is writing a hellfire and brimstone jeremiad against the Church, you, or anyone. He's sharply critical of a lot of general culture, and individual inclinations, but that's to be expected. There's conviction and inspiration both to be found in these pages -- all delivered in DeYoung's warm, almost conversational, style -- a strong blend of wit and charm with the steel in his words. I won't get into it, but his chapter on the Third Commandment contains one of the funniest anecdotes (more in the telling than the story) I've read from him. Ignoring his content for a moment, his writing style is what will keep me coming back to DeYoung's books for years to come.

I think I've said before, I'm not a big one for study/discussion questions in books -- I like to think the engaged reader doesn't need them and someone leading a discussion/study of a book will be clever enough to come up with their own. But, I'm obviously swimming against the tide on this because publishers keep printing them. That said, on the whole, this is a pretty good set of questions and would help someone who likes those kind of questions for their own use or for those using the book in Family Worship, Sunday School, or Bible Study.

In the end, my question, do we need another popular-level book on The Ten Commandments? Is answered yes: we need frequent -- constant -- reminders of the revealed will we've been called to obey, so we never stop striving for that perfection and never cease calling on the Spirit's assistance. We also need to remember how great our sin and misery are so that we constantly live lives of repentance. So bring on DeYoung's good summary. And others as well -- and we need to read them, as well as the older popular-level works. And then we need to push ourselves and read some of the less-popular level ones as well.

This is a good, short set of meditations and reflections on the perfect law, the law of liberty for a contemporary audience. It's approachable, it's warm, it's pointed, and it's Gospel-centered. It's not perfect, but it's good. It functions well as a refresher for those who need one, and a good starting point for their own study of The Ten Commandments. I'm buying a copy (at least one) for my personal library and will be encouraging my household to read it -- and anyone else who asks.

Disclaimer: *I received this eARC from Crossway via NetGalley in exchange for this post -- thanks to both for this.*

Paul says

Kevin DeYoung continues to patch the hole in our holiness. This book is an accessible exposition of the ten words, with relevant applications, and lots of quotes from John Calvin as a bonus. Listened to the audiobook in December 2018.

Jeremy says

Excerpt here. Video here.

E says

There are other useful treatments of the ten commands available (see Packer, Douma, Ryken, etc.), yet DeYoung's is a welcome addition to the pile. His chapters are quite sermonic, as I believe the source of the material was his previous pulpit ministry. He relies a lot on the Heidelberg Catechism's answers on the ten commandments, rarely turning to Westminster's more thorough answers. DeYoung does a good job of drawing out the implications of the various commandments, although he relies less on Christ's treatments in the Sermon on the Mount than one might think.

All of the chapters were thought-provoking. Let me provide an excellent example from his discussion of the third commandment:

"If we use the name of God to ascribe a false sense of authority to our ideas, plans, or opinions, we violate the third commandment. . . . I've always tried to keep this in mind when leading the church. When we were in the middle of a capital campaign and the elders found an existing church to buy and renovate, we were careful not to overstate our case. It would have been easy to say, 'We've prayed about this and God has provided an open door. God wants us to have this building. But we need you to give generously. Will you be obedient to the Lord as we follow him?' Church leaders say that sort of thing all the time, and it's not fair. We can't claim divine authority for a capital campaign. What we can say is, 'We've sought the Lord and spent a lot of time researching all the options. As your leaders, we all feel that this is the right move for the church, and we think God will be honored if we move forward together.'"

I found this really helpful, and it is representative of the sort of applications found throughout this book. Compare this to a recent Baptist treatment of the Holy Spirit I read, which claimed that the Spirit gives conflicting directions to various believers' consciences! I wonder if that claim was not a violation of the third commandment.

Coyle says

"...this is an internal discussion between Christians of good intent. Heck, in a sense this is little more than the long-standing discussion between Lutherans and Calvinists. The Lutherans emphasize our freedom in Christ from the weight of our obligation to obey the Law and the weight of our guilt from our failure to obey/our active rebellion against the Law's demands. The Calvinists emphasize our calling to a new and holy life of obedience in Christ. In one sense, the sides are talking past each other, given that Calvinists of course believe in freedom in Christ and Lutherans of course believe in holy living. And yet, there is always going to be a tension between these two truths. We are free in Christ and as Christians we are called to be holy."

Read the rest here: <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/schaeff...>
