

Orthodoxy: Law - People, Purity, and Possessions

New City Catechism Question 11: What does God require in the sixth, seventh, and eighth commandments?

Answer: Sixth, that we do not hurt, or hate, or be hostile to our neighbor, but be patient and peaceful, pursuing even our enemies with love. Seventh, that we abstain from sexual immorality and live purely and faithfully, whether in marriage or in single life, avoiding all impure actions, looks, words, thoughts, or desires, and whatever might lead to them. Eighth, that we do not take without permission that which belongs to someone else, nor withhold any good from someone we might benefit.

For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." - Romans 13:9

Our Creator would populate his earth with neighbor loving creatures who:
Are patient, peaceful, and pursuing love - not - hateful, hurting, and hostile.

Are sexually oriented in married or single life in purity and faithfulness - not - impure and unfaithful in actions, looks, words, thoughts and desires.

Are generously sharing with others for the common good - not - greedily using life for one's own advantage.

As John and Paul famously wrote, and The Beatles popularly sung,
"All you need is love
All you need is love
All you need is love, love
Love is all you need"

And Love is all God gave, and all we have given back is rebellion. We all think we are civil law abiding citizens, at least compared to someone else. We buy our groceries, we don't steal them. We drive our cars on the right side of the road and obey the signs, at least within reason. We all think we are moral law abiding citizens of God's kingdom, at least in comparison to others. We go to church. We read our Bibles. We even pray a little. We might even give some money, and help someone with something. After all we don't murder and take another person's spouse. But we're fooling ourselves when we think we do what the law requires.

We are no different than those in Jesus' time who say, 'We know the law says, not to commit adultery, and we don't.' To which Jesus replies, "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 5:28). Have we lusted, desired, or wanted someone or something that has not been gifted to us? Then we are law breakers. Then we do not do what the law requires. We have not desired and wanted God only. We have coveted showing ourselves to be idolaters. We have wanted someone or something that does not belong to us demonstrating our spiritual adultery. We have robbed another one of God's creatures rather than blessing them with loving generosity and service. As Martin Lloyd Jones wrote, "You see, as our Lord comes to interpret the law, he shows that an evil desire is as damnable as a deed. A thought and an imagination are as reprehensible in the sight of God as the act committed."

So, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." Jesus Christ, the Son, was patient, peaceful, and pursuing love, not hateful, hurting, and hostile. The Son was sexually pure and faithful in desires, thoughts, words, looks, and actions. The Son generously shared with others for their common good. He did not greedily use life for his own advantage. Jesus Christ, the Son, gave himself for people who are hateful, hurtful, and hostile. He gave himself for people who have been and are sexually impure and unfaithful. The Son gave himself for people who use others and abuse life for their own advantage. God the Father gave the Son, and the Son gave himself unto death and was raised to life to create a new humanity in his humanity and the power of his deity. So, by grace a people can be saved, and in that same grace live in union with the Son fulfilling God's law.

The places where our Creator and Redeemer plants his new creations can be garden cities revealing his glory in love. The garden cities need hoeing, weeding, watering, planting, and harvesting. They need the constant care of the Gardener's grace. But they can be places of his pleasure where there are people living by faith who:
Are patient, peaceful, and pursuing love, repenting of being hateful, hurting, and hostile.
Are sexually oriented in married or single life in purity and faithfulness, repenting of being impure and unfaithful in desires, thoughts, words, and actions.
Are generously sharing with others for the common good, repenting of using God's gifts for their own advantage.

Our Global Mission

Our church's Global Mission Team (GMT) desires to send a special financial gift of \$1,000 to each of our missionaries at the end of 2019. Christ Covenant Church has funds remaining in the GMT Budget. The GMT's desire is to divide that sum into equal amounts and send them as gifts to each of the missionaries that have received support and/or have been connected to either Christ Church and Covenant Presbyterian. The GMT's goal is to increase that amount to \$1,000 per missionary. Therefore, the GMT is trusting the Lord to provide additional funds to accomplish this goal. Therefore, we are going to be taking a special Thanksgiving offering during the morning service on Sunday November 24th (the Sunday before Thanksgiving) for the Global Missions Offering. The aim of this offering is to enable us to accomplish the GMT's goal of giving a year end gift of \$1,000 to all the Missionaries that CCC is supporting. We will take two offerings on the 24th. The first will be for your regular tithes. The second offering will be the Global Missions Thanksgiving offering. We are asking that you pray seeking God's grace that in gratitude, faith, and joy you can give a gift beyond your tithe. Your additional check can be made payable to Christ Covenant Church and will go into the General Fund, but it will be used specifically for the Global Missions Thanksgiving Offering. If you have any questions you may contact Bruce Braswell, the Chairperson of the GMT. babraswell@earthlink.net

Today in Church History - November 17th

Joseph Alleine died November 17, 1668. He was 34 years old. He was an English Puritan born in 1634 at Devizes, Wiltshire. He loved and served the Lord from childhood. His older brother Edward was a pastor, and when he died Joseph pleaded with his family that he would be able to study so that he could enter the ministry in his brother's place. He began at Oxford as a 16 year old. He studied under John Owen, Thomas Goodwin and others. He graduated in 1653 with a Bachelor of Arts degree and became a tutor and chaplain of Corpus Christi College at Oxford.



In 1655, Alleine accepted the invitation of George Newton, a vicar of St. Mary Magdalene Church, to become his assistant. This church was in Taunton, a wool-manufacturing city of about 20,000 people. Soon after moving to Taunton, Alleine married his cousin, Theodosia Alleine, whose father, Richard Alleine, was a minister nearby in Batcombe. Early in their marriage, she ran a home school of about fifty pupils, half of them were boarders. She also wrote a biography of her husband's life.

Joseph's ministry in Taunton as preacher and pastor was very fruitful. Richard Baxter explained Alleine's explanation and application of the Scriptures as "melting, convincing, and powerful." Alleine was also an excellent teacher, devoting much time to instructing his people, using the Westminster Standards Shorter Catechism. He was also a passionate evangelist. One person wrote that he was "infinitely and insatiably greedy of the conversion of souls."

Alleine was ejected from the church for nonconformity in 1662. Though he did not have a pulpit he continued to preach publicly until he was arrested and put in the, Ilchester prison. While in prison he continued to preach through the prison bars to any who would listen. During this time he also wrote numerous pastoral letters to people he had ministered to, and several theological articles. He was released in May 1664 and arrested again in 1665 after resuming his forbidden ministry of preaching. He was released again only to experience troubles and persecutions. It was in the winter of 1668 after returning to Taunton that he became ill. He suffered his illness for another nine months before dying at the age of 34. Alleine died in full assurance of faith, praising God and saying, "Christ is mine, and I am His— His by covenant."