

WELCOME TO...
The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David

March 01, 2015

THE TEN

WORDS

In Judaism the Ten Commandments are better known as the ten words.

Gathering: *The law of God is perfect, reviving the soul; the decrees of God are sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of God are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of God is clear, enlightening the eyes; the fear of God is pure, enduring forever; the ordinances of God are true and righteous altogether.*

Hymn: Teach me, O Lord (1-2)

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Opening and Confession: *Jesus, cleanser of temples and souls, at this mid point in the Lenten journey, look deep within our hearts and our lives, and clear away all that holds us back. May our minds, spirits and bodies be a Temple that is open to Your presence: and may our words and our actions be transparent to Your love and truth. We pray that this church community, will be purified in its life and mission, so that all that we do in and from here may reveal Your Gospel to others. In a moment of silence we sit before you, and name those things for which we seek your cleansing and healing, so that we may be more faithful disciples.* (silence)

Hymn: Teach me, O Lord (3-4)

80

Focus Reading: Exodus 20: 1-17: Then God spoke all these words: I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not acquit anyone who misuses his name. Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work - you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it. Honour your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. You shall not covet your neighbour's house; you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to our neighbour.

“... the whole subject of law provokes mixed reactions, especially from us Christians. When we speak about salvation and grace, we often look back to the early arguments about the law, especially in the writings of Paul (the Pharisee, as we recall). Charles Wiley suggests that "Psalm 19 cries out for an account of law that can hold together Paul's expression in Romans 7 that the law 'held us captive' and the affirmation in Psalm 19 that the law is 'sweeter than honey'." Wiley describes the three ways the early Reformer, John Calvin, described the law: as mirror, fence, and guide. The first reflects back and judges a person, and tells the cold, hard truth as it does; the second makes some kind of order possible in society, restraining bad human behavior; and the third, most important one, provides a guide for our living: "for those who have been called to salvation, the law is a gift, a guide to know how to live life as a Christian" (*Feasting on the Word Year B Vol. 2*).

- Where does our congregation get its sense of right and wrong, its sense of morality? What is the story that tells you what to do, how to live? In what ways have you experienced exodus and, in Christian terms, resurrection? Are these commandments rules from long ago that should be etched in stone, in our courthouses, for symbolic reasons perhaps more than practical ones, or are they etched deeply into our hearts, where we long for the wholeness and newness that God offers us? Do you think our society sees these commands as matters of personal, private conduct, or of a public and communal morality that would indeed care, together, for the widow, the orphan, and the stranger in our midst?

Hymn: Lord, be thy word 494

Invitation: *We, whose journeys are always beginning, We, whose mission always awaits us, We, whose visions are bent on loving, We gather here this morning. We gather in these moments to drink from a common cup and share a common loaf. We come here for communion, to create a community of our diverse and individual selves with God at its heart.*

Hymn: The son of God proclaim (1-2) 558

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *O God, for your love for us, warm and brooding, which has brought us to birth and has opened our eyes: We give you*

thanks. *For your love for us, wild and freeing, which has awakened us to the energy of creation: to the sap that flows, the blood that pulses, and the heart that sings: We give you thanks. For your love for us, compassionate and patient, which has carried us through our pain, wept beside us in our sin, and waited with us in our confusion: We give you thanks. For your love for us, strong and challenging, which has called us to risk for you, asked for the best in us, and shown us how to serve; We give you thanks. O God, we come to celebrate that your Holy Spirit is present deep within us, and at the heart of all life. Forgive us when we forget your gift of love. Awaken us to the love that Christ offers, and draw us into your presence. We come to the Table where, by the presence of the Spirit, bread becomes the grace we need, the cup offers us the hope for which we long. Taking them up, you transfigure them into that sacred meal of love which strengthens us in Christ. Amen.*

Hymn: The son of God proclaim (3-4) 558

Communion

Prayer following communion:

Hymn: The son of God proclaim (5) 558

Benediction: *Christ has no body now on earth but ours, No hands but ours, no feet but ours. Ours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion looks out to the world, Ours are the feet with which Christ goes about doing good and ours are the hands with which Christ blesses us now.*

Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn,
Moses with the Ten Commandments

