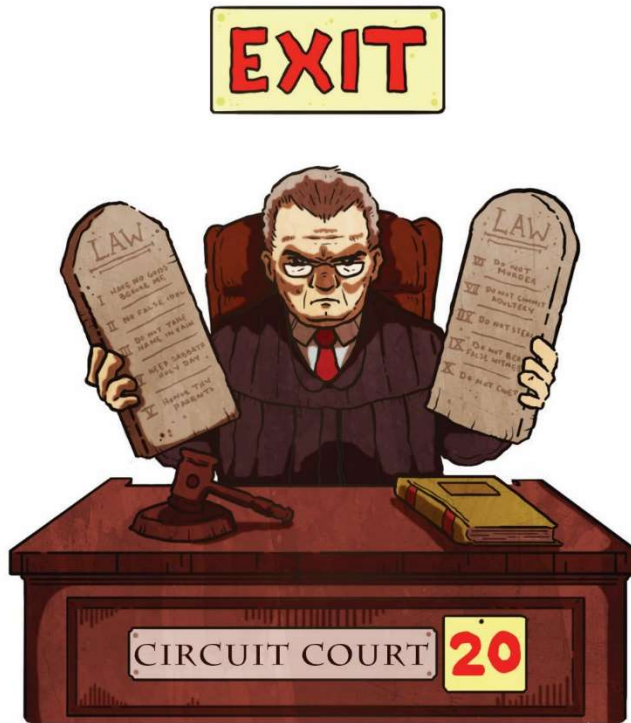


EXODUS 20: LAW



Exit sign in background, the judge for circuit court **20** holds the tablets of the **Law** (Ten Commandments).

- + God is a “Jealous God” (v.5), which does *not* mean sinful jealousy that humans experience. Sinful jealousy is motivated by insecurity; we are afraid someone will be drawn away from us, so we are angered. God’s jealousy stems from his being our Maker and rightfully deserving our reverence.
- + Often when persons are attempting to justify themselves morally they run through a list of deeds they have avoided, such as, “I never killed anyone, or had an affair.” They think that by avoiding sins of *commission* (i.e. committing a crime.) they are fine with God, and yet they may be gross violators of God’s will by sins of *omission* (i.e. omitting worship of God on a weekly basis.). All humans are guilty of both kinds of sin, and neglect of worship, failure to honor God, is a prevalent one! Though with different consequences, this is as condemnable as a sin of commission!
- + Not only adultery is wrong, but also fornication, the term for sexual intercourse outside of marriage. Just because something is legal does not mean it is acceptable! Couples who may not be living together might be having sex, and this is wrong and worldly. No Christian should be having intercourse outside of marriage. It does not matter how

many people in society do so, the Christian does not live by societal standards, but by God's standards. God will judge the immoral, "Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral" (Hebrews 13:4).

If you have fallen, compromising your sexual integrity, ask God humbly for forgiveness, and he will restore you. It is necessary to change your behavior. As Jesus said to the woman caught in adultery, whom he defended from being stoned for her sin, "... neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin" (see the account in John 8:1-11).

+ Coveting is sinful wanting, and we should distinguish between simply wanting something and wanting it sinfully. What is the difference between them? As an illustration, if a person wanted some clothes that another person was wearing, wishing to have similar clothes is not sinful. If God is honored through appropriate offerings and responsibilities to the budget are taken care of, then one might wish to save and obtain the clothes. God does allow us to obtain good blessings through wisdom and hard work.

However, if we didn't want to work for such things or consider what it might do to the budget to spend the money, but rather thought, "That person doesn't deserve to have such fine clothes, but I do," that is sinful wanting – coveting! One of the best ways to keep covetous thoughts away is to be faithful in giving our offerings to God, and to value contentment! There is a satisfaction in knowing that you have chosen to put your money to work for the Kingdom of Christ, and it is less likely that a person who is contented will covet what others have. Contentedness springs from a sense that God has given you more than you need, which is the opposite feeling from covetousness.

+ Mount Sinai was a covenant, an agreement between God and the Israelites, whom he redeemed out of slavery in Egypt. The Law of God *cannot* save sinners; the best it can do is give us a measure of what God expects, standards for godly living. It prods us to repentance when we see we have fallen short of those standards.

Jesus, conversely, kept the law of the Father perfectly, becoming a worthy substitute for us by which to offer himself as a ransom for our sin. He said, "The Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and offer himself as a ransom for many" (see Matthew 20:20-28). Mount Calvary, the traditional spot where Jesus bore our sins on the cross, demonstrating God's grace, stands in contrast to the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai.