



# Update

August 2019

Vernon & Martha Hedge

## “I won’t kill him.”

We often take the power of the Word of God for granted, especially the Ten Commandments. The most powerful demonstration of that living power happened in the prison chapel at the Coffield Unit in Texas years ago. The church service had been normal that night with good attendance and good participation.

I was teaching a series on the Ten Commandments and taught that night, “You shall not murder.” I emphasized that only God has the right to kill for personal reasons. Since He owns everything and everyone by right of Creatorship, He in wisdom can take a life for any reason at any time.

We humans may only kill in self-defense, as a legally appointed executioner after due process of law, or in an act of war. When we kill for personal reasons, we put ourselves in the place of God and are acting as though we are God.

As the hundred or so men filed out of the chapel, the chaplain made it a point to ask me to stay after the class. After the men had left, he told me an inmate, a Believer, had come to him a little before the chapel service was finished and asked him to tell me the following story.

The inmate said, “I planned to kill a man here in the prison for what he has done to me and my friends. I talked to the head chaplain earlier today about it but left with the same resolve to kill the

man. I listened to the teaching tonight and it changed my whole perspective. I saw things in a completely different light.

“Before, all I could see was that this man deserves to die. Tonight, I saw that God is in charge of everything and He would take care of this man. But most important I saw how terrible it is for me to take the place of God as though I was God. I know there will be another way to deal with him. Tell Vernon I have definitely decided not to kill him.”

It is no wonder that the enemy is working so hard to remove God and His order from society. I have spent years studying the Founding Fathers and how they based the Constitution and By-Laws on Judeo-Christian principles. Even our unalienable rights all fall under one of the Ten Commandments.

### E-Newsletter

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All successful, free societies operate within God’s structure whether they know it or not. If it’s based on God’s principles, it works.

I’ve written an “expanded” version of the Commandments that I use when teaching. As a new Believer or one who has walked with the Lord for years, the students seem to be encouraged by it. As a side note. The word “shall” is a more powerful verb than the word “will.” Shall indicates something that is mandatory, inevitable, or is a command.

### 1. You shall have no other gods before me.

You shall have no person or thing that you look to as a source of life or that holds your emotions or affections in a controlling way. There is only one God, and one way to Him through Jesus Christ.

### 2. You shall not make for yourself any graven image to worship.

It is an insult to God for people to bow down either physically or in their heart to something made of stone or wood. It is equally insulting to bow down to money or any social position as a Source of life. Only God is worthy of worship.

### 3. You shall not take the name of the Lord Your God in vain.

You shall not use His name

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unless you are speaking about Him or speaking to Him. Sometimes “Oh God” is a prayer; more often it has become an expression that violates this Commandment.

**4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.**

Sabbath does not mean seven or Sunday. It means rest. One in seven should be a rest day set apart in ones thinking to honor God, to experience physical rest, and to receive spiritual food.

**5. You shall honor your father and your mother.**

As a child you shall respect, speak well of, and obey your parents. As an adult you shall honor their person, respect them, cultivate a relationship with them, and take care of them in their old age.

**6. You shall not murder.**

Hatred in the heart is first a spirit of murder which unfortunately is often carried out in the physical. You shall not emotionally remove someone from life through hatred, nor shall you for personal gain or angry reaction take someone’s life by causing physical death.

**7. You shall not commit adultery.**

You shall not be irresponsible sexually, be irresponsible with the emotional and psychological needs of another or violate the covenant of marriage. A sexual relationship outside of or before the covenant of marriage is not “free love;” it violates this commandment, which is given to protect both people from great harm.

**8. You shall not steal.**

You shall not take away a

person’s reputation through a selfish, evil report, or take away his property through deception and undue advantage or remove it behind his back. Even if it’s a “legal” loophole. Taking what’s not yours is theft.

**9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

You shall not manipulate facts to deceive or obtain undue advantage, or distort any picture of the full truth for selfish gain. Don’t lie.

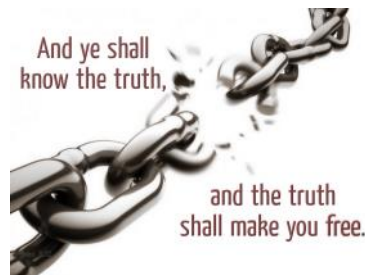
**10. You shall not covet.**

You shall not set your desire to have anyone or anything that you may not rightfully have, or that replaces God as the source of your life.

These commandments are built into our conscious God has given each of us. Even a child knows they have been treated unfairly when one of these is violated. The commandments establish what is right and what is wrong. The more absent they are in our lives and in our society, the more confusion and unhappiness will grow.

God didn’t give us these to control us and make life miserable; He gave them to us so that we could live in peace and prosperity.

That’s what the Christian inmate in the prison discovered. The truth set him free. And if the Gospel will work in prison, it will work anywhere! ✨



## Vernon’s Recovery

Thank you for your cards, letters, and calls to encourage. Vernon is making progress daily. Recovery from a stroke, which is damage to an area of the brain, takes time. More time than he would like.

To look at him, one wouldn’t know he is facing a challenge. Physically he has regained about 90% of where he was before the stroke. He can walk and completely take care of himself.

The next hurdle is communication. That’s talking, reading, and writing. He has always been mentally alert and knows what he wants to say. Sometimes the words don’t match his thoughts. That too is improving, but phone calls and texting are still limited.

Even though he can’t use the computer right now, he oversaw the writing of this newsletter. He has a treasure trove of material he has taught. We hope these thoughts will encourage and help you.

We appreciate your continued prayer support for complete recovery. You have blessed us! ✨

—Martha