

Name: _____

Date Due: 11/09/2025 _____

SESSION #5: THE FIRST THREE



Please read the provided material and answer the questions to the best of your ability. Please turn your work into Matt Jennerson or Mark Vallone before the due date.

- 1** In your own words, how do the first three commandments help someone respond to God's invitation into relationship?

- 2** Give one modern "idol" (e.g., achievement, image, money) and explain how you would re-order it so God is first.

- 3** Why does speaking God's name with reverence matter for your relationship with Him and your example to others?

- 4** Describe one concrete way to keep the Sabbath holy when your weekend is busy.

- 5** Using Jeremiah 17:7-8 or 1 John 5:3, name one attitude or action that shows trust and love for God in daily life and explain why.

Main Point 1:

God invites human beings into a relationship with Him. The first three commandments teach us how to love and adore God in response to His invitation.

- It's always exciting to receive an invitation. Whether it's to a wedding, a birthday party, or just a night out with friends, any invitation is often accompanied by excitement, anticipation, and the honor of your presence being desired at the event.
- Now, think about the greatest invitation ever extended — an invitation from God Himself to enter into a relationship with Him.
- This invite is at the heart of the first three of the Ten Commandments, which guide us in responding to God's love and presence.

SCRIPTURE

Project and read **Exodus 20:1-11** or invite a leadership teen to read it.

- The Ten Commandments are not just arbitrary rules; they are rules for our benefit given out of God's immense love for us.
- Just as a loving parent sets boundaries for their child's well-being, God provides these commandments to guide us toward a fulfilling and meaningful life.
- The First Commandment teaches us to place God above all else: "You shall have no other gods before me." (**Exodus 20:3**)
- This commandment is about trust and loyalty to God, acknowledging that He alone is our ultimate source of happiness and fulfillment. (**CCC 2084**)
- When we put other things before God, whether it's money, status, internet fame, or even relationships, we misplace our priorities and become unsatisfied.

Tell a personal story about a time when it was difficult to put God first but doing so provided you with comfort, clarity, or a sense of peace.

- The Second Commandment tells us to respect God’s name: “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.” **(Exodus 20:7)**
- Honoring God’s name means treating it with the utmost reverence and avoiding any misuse or disrespect. **(CCC 2142-2144)**
- Our words have power, and using God’s name in a casual or disrespectful way diminishes its significance and our respect for Him.
- Using God’s name in vain or swearing to God may seem like no big deal. After all, God’s name is frequently misused. But we are called to a higher standard of speech that sets an example of giving God the reverence and honor He is due.

Share a personal story about improving your habits of speech to better honor God, whether a dramatic change or small improvements that softened your heart toward God.

- The Third Commandment calls us to keep the Sabbath holy: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.” **(Exodus 20:8)**
- The Sabbath is a gift from God, a day set aside for rest, worship, and reflection, allowing us to reconnect with God and rejuvenate our spirit by going to Mass. **(CCC 2176)**
- In the busyness of our lives, we often forget to pause and acknowledge God’s presence. The Sabbath reminds us to take that essential time.
- When we follow these commandments, we respond to God’s invitation with love and adoration, recognizing His rightful place in our lives. **(CCC 2083-2086) (Going Deeper #1: “The Jewish Roots of the Commandments”)**
- Jesus reminds us that obedience is a reflection of our love for God and our desire to honor Him.
- By understanding and living out the first three commandments, we enter into a deeper relationship with God, experiencing His love and guidance more profoundly. **(CCC 2062-2063)**
- These commandments are not just rules but pathways to a fulfilling and meaningful relationship with our Creator. We need to remember that the commandments are meant to lead us to true freedom.
- They free us from the chaos and harm that comes from ignoring God’s will and instead lead us to a life of peace and purpose. Understanding this call sets the foundation for how we live our daily lives.

Main Point 2:

We are called to honor God by trusting in Him alone, respecting His name, and taking time to worship and rest.

Ask the teens to think about a time when they trusted someone completely — a friend, a family member, or a mentor — and how that trust brought a sense of security and peace.

- God asks us for this kind of trust, to rely on Him alone and to place our faith in His providence.
- The First Commandment teaches us to trust in God completely, rejecting any form of idolatry or placing anything above Him. **(Exodus 20:3)**
- Idolatry can take many forms today: money, fame, power, or even personal achievements. When our time, effort, and attention are given more to these things than to God, they become idols that take the place of God in our hearts. **(CCC 2114)**

SCRIPTURE

Project and read **Jeremiah 17:7-8** or invite a leadership teen to read it.

- This passage assures us of the blessings that come from putting our faith in God. When we trust in Him and make Him first in our lives, we are like a tree planted by streams of water that flourishes and bears much fruit in every season.
- While following God's commandments brings blessings, it's important to acknowledge that it doesn't always make life easy. We will still face challenges, but we can navigate them with the strength and hope that comes from living according to God's will.
- The Second Commandment instructs us to respect and honor God's name. This goes beyond just avoiding using curse words; it involves speaking and living in a way that glorifies God's name. **(CCC 2142-2144)**
- Using God's name in vain diminishes our reverence for Him and weakens our witness to others about the importance of God in our lives.
- When we speak God's name with respect, we acknowledge His holiness, and our relationship with Him becomes a testimony to others.
- The Third Commandment calls us to observe the Sabbath, a day of rest and worship.
- Many of us may have wondered, "Why do I have to go to Church every week?" Attending Mass is a profound way to keep the Sabbath holy. It allows us to encounter Jesus in the Eucharist and connect with our faith community, providing the spiritual nourishment we need to face the week ahead.
- Taking time to worship God every week also reorients us to what is most important in life and reminds us of what our lives are ultimately about. Going to Mass on Sunday is more than a one-hour block of time; this dedicated time gives us a perspective that should permeate the rest of our week.
- This commandment is a reminder to prioritize our relationship with God, setting aside regular time to honor and glorify Him. **(CCC 2176)**
- In today's fast-paced world, taking a Sabbath rest can seem challenging, but it's vital for our spiritual well-being and our relationship with God.

SCRIPTURE

Project and read **1 John 5:3** or invite a leadership teen to read it.

- By dedicating time to worship and rest, we honor God and acknowledge His role in our lives. **(Going Deeper #2: “The Theology of Sacrifice”)**
- These practices help us to keep our focus on God and prevent the distractions of daily life from pulling us away from Him.
- Reflecting on these commandments, we see that they are designed to protect our relationship with God and ensure that He remains at the center of our lives.
- Honoring God through trust, respect, and dedicated worship prepares us to receive His blessings, which are the source of all contentment and joy.

Main Point 3:

When we follow the first three commandments, we experience the blessings and contentment that come from a life ordered toward the highest good.

- God desires for us to live our lives in harmony. When we acknowledge Him as our greatest good and receive all of His blessings, we experience a deep and abiding peace and contentment that surpasses our momentary feelings.
- However, when the good things in our lives get out of order, we experience the effects in our souls — anxiety, boredom, depression, listlessness, emptiness, loneliness, and more.
- The first three commandments help us to order our lives correctly, placing God at the center and allowing His blessings to flow through every aspect of who we are.
- When we trust in God alone, we experience a profound sense of peace and security, knowing that He is in control and has our best interests at heart. **(CCC 2083-2086)**
- Honoring God’s name helps us to live with integrity, as our actions and words reflect our commitment to Him. This builds trust and respect in our relationships with others. **(CCC 2142-2144)**
- Observing the Sabbath allows us to rest and recharge, both physically and spiritually. It provides us with the opportunity to deepen our relationship with God by receiving Him in the Eucharist and to reflect on His goodness and blessings in our lives. **(CCC 2176)**
- Following the commandments aligns our lives with God’s will, opening ourselves to His blessings and guidance.

- This alignment brings joy and fulfillment as we live according to the purpose for which we were created — to love and serve God.

SCRIPTURE

Project and read **John 14:21** or invite a leadership teen to read it.

- This verse reassures us that our obedience to God’s commandments is a sign of our love for Him and brings us closer to His love and presence.
- The saints provide us with powerful examples of living out these commandments. St. Clare of Assisi and St. John Paul the Great are two such examples.
- St. Clare trusted in God completely, renouncing worldly possessions to follow Him. Her life of poverty and prayer demonstrates the joy that comes from placing God above all else.
- St. John Paul the Great, through his reverence for God and his dedication to worship and prayer, inspired millions to deepen their faith and live according to God’s commandments.
- By emulating the lives of these saints and following the first three commandments, we can experience the fullness of life that God desires for us.
- Living in accordance with God’s commandments is not a burden but a pathway to true freedom and happiness, as it leads us to the highest good — a life in communion with God.