

P243

GRACE NOTES RADIO PROGRAM

TITLE: How to enjoy life - part 6

SONG: Is there a Christian in the house?

Lord I need you

INTRO: The Ten Commandments have been a source of controversy in recent times. It seems some people are offended by them. Institutions that posted them on their walls have been told to take them down – because they have no place in public affairs. Well, if they're just a bunch of rules that make no difference, then why make an issue over them? Why? Because they DO make a difference. God set them forth as standards to live by. He created man – He should know what it takes to function as a society. We NEED the Lord God and His commands in our lives. Today on Grace Notes, Barbara Sandbek will discuss the commandments as they relate to loving God and loving our fellow man. But first, let's listen as Barbara, her mom and sister sing a song that says it all.

***** LORD I NEED YOU *****

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On our last program we found that keeping the ten commandments does make life more enjoyable. But we can only do this through the help of the Holy Spirit who comes to live in us when we confess Jesus Christ as our Lord and living Savior. We obey these, not to earn salvation, but rather to show our love and appreciation for what God has done for us by giving us Jesus to pay the penalty for our sin.

In Mark 12:29-30 Jesus summarized the ten commandments into two commands saying...

The most important one is this: Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.

The phrase...'the Lord our God is one' has also been translated 'the Lord is our God, the Lord alone'. This command was given to the Israelites to use as a confession of their faith. They were to recite it morning and night. In Deuteronomy 6:6-9, God said that these commands were to be upon their hearts. They were to impress them on their children, talking about them when they sat at home or walked along the road, when they laid down or got up. They were to tie them as symbols on their hands, bind them on their foreheads and write them on the doorframes of their houses and on their gates.

In other words, this was to be a life style. Whatever they said, did or thought was to be done in such a way as to show their love for God and their dedication to Him. In this way they could influence their families for generations to come. Unfortunately, the Israelites' devotion vacillated between Jehovah God and the pagan gods worshiped by the surrounding nations. At one point Joshua said to them in Joshua 24: 14-15...

...fear the Lord and serve Him with all faithfulness. Throw away the gods your forefathers worshipped...and serve the Lord. But if serving the Lord seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve...as for me and my house we will serve the Lord!

Love's not a feeling – it's a choice - followed by an action. 1 John 5:3 says...

This is love for God: to obey His commands.

When we choose to obey God, we'll find that the feelings of love will follow. We need to serve the Lord wholeheartedly like Joshua did. It should be a life-style for us, too.

Obeying the command to love the Lord with our whole being helps us keep the second part of the command - to love your neighbor as yourself, because God's love enables us to do it. The more we love the Lord, the more we understand and reflect His love. Jesus' command concerning love for our fellow man is a summation of the last six original commands which are...

Honor your father and mother.

Do not murder, commit adultery, steal, give false testimony against a neighbor, or covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.

The apostle Paul wrote often to the churches of the importance of treating each other correctly. In Ephesians chapters 4 & 5 we see many of the ten commandments woven throughout his words, but he goes a step further. He not only tells us what not to do, he tells us WHAT to do in its place.

Ephesians 4 verses 17 & 22 say...

You must no longer live like the Gentiles..PUT OFF your old self which is being corrupted.

He follows it with verse 24...

PUT ON the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Verse 25 says...

PUT OFF falsehood.

Here's what to do...

Speak truthfully to your neighbor for we are all members of one body.

Verse 26 says...

In your anger do not sin.

Here's how to handle your anger in verse 27...

Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry and do not give the devil a foothold.

Verse 28 says...

He who has been stealing must steal no longer.

Listen to the remedy...

He must work doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Verse 29 says...

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths

Followed by...

(Say) only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

(Now that's a challenge, isn't it?)

He goes on to say in verse 32...

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you.

The best thing we can do for ourselves, our family and our friends is to do what Ephesians 5:1-2 says...

Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice.

Jessica Huffman's little two-year-old asked her for a Snoopy Band-Aid. Mom promised the needed first aid and then asked, "What happened?" The child said, "I hurt my feelings." Physical hurts are usually obvious, but emotional hurts can be much more difficult to spot. When we become more sensitive to the feelings of others we will generally find there are many people around us who need a Snoopy Band-Aid for their hurt feelings.

(Christian Parenting Today, Nov./ Dec. 1992, p. 107)

We need God and we need each other.

When asked what someone should do when feeling on the verge of a nervous breakdown, Dr. Karl Menninger responded, "Lock your house, go across the railroad tracks, find someone in need, and do something for him." Christians who feel they "aren't being fed" need to heed the good doctor's word. In ministry to others, we find the satisfaction Jesus spoke of at Jacob's Well: "My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work" (John 4:34). (Homemade, May 1991)

Proverbs 25:11 states...

"A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver".

God's healing touch can often come from the words and deeds of a Believer. It may be the only doctor someone needs.

***** IS THERE A CHRISTIAN IN THE HOUSE ****

You've been listening to Grace Notes. For more information about this ministry write to:

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