



A Pattern for Meditating on the Ten Commandments

Remember a few key interpretive principles:

- Interpretive Principle #1: Each commandment must be interpreted in light of the testimony of Scripture with particular emphasis given to how Jesus interpreted the commandments. (*Matthew 5:17-48; 22:37-40; Romans 13:8-10; Galatians 5:14*)
- Interpretive Principle #2: Each commandment implies a whole constellation of positive and negative applications.
- Interpretive Principle #3: Each commandment addresses both external (visible) sins and internal (invisible) sins of the heart, mind, and will.

Take one commandment at a time and go through these steps thoughtfully:

1. Define it.

- What does this mean? What's this commandment really saying?

2. Understand it.

- What all is being prohibited or forbidden? What are all the ways I could violate the spirit of this commandment?

3. Clarify it.

- What's the essence or heart of this commandment?

4. Trust it.

- What kinds of disorder and harm is this commandment designed to prevent? How does this commandment, when practiced, promote shalom and flourishing?

5. Theologize it.

- What does this commandment reveal about the nature of God?

6. Personalize it.

- What are all the ways I could honor the spirit of this commandment?

7. Confess it.

- How do I break this commandment in thought, word, or deed, either in what I do or in what I leave undone?

8. Evangelize it.

- How does this point me to my need of a Savior and recenter my hope in Christ? How can I practice this commandment out of a heart of gratitude and love rather than a heart of fear or pride?