**Small Group Notes – 6 Dec 2020**

**Ten of the best – Exodus 20:1-17**

**The context of the Ten**

The context is the deliverance of God’s people, from slavery in Egypt and their subsequent arrival at Mount Sinai. Exodus 20 begins with an introduction not a command. *“And God spoke all these words”* – verse 1. These ten words **originate from God**. They are not the work of human minds; these laws come from God himself.

**The purpose of the Ten**

**Firstly,** the law was not designed to bring the Hebrews into a relationship with God. Israel, was already in a relationship with God. God had made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants centuries earlier. God had delivered them from Egypt as a direct result of that covenant. Likewise, the Ten Commandments are not designed to bring you and me into a relationship with God.

**Secondly,** the law was not designed to serve as some type of entrance exam to get into heaven. Observing the law will not gain you acceptance before God. If that is not what the Ten Commandments are about, then what is the purpose of the Law?

* The law is designed to reveal to us God’s character
* The law serves as a mirror, showing us our sin.
* The law serves as a guide leading us into right living and good works.

The Law shows us how we are to live towards God and our neighbour. It tells us what to pursue and what to avoid. So let’s be really clear, the Law is good but it has its limitations as to what it can accomplish. Not because it is weak but because we are. It cannot set us free and it cannot justify us before God. **Only Jesus can do that.**

**The relevance of the Ten**

* They express God’s will for his people
* They establish a healthy fear of God.
* They don’t change over time.

The world may have changed in many ways over 3000 years but mankind hasn’t. We have the same heart condition as our ancestors. Therefore, Gods commands are as relevant today as they were when God gave them to Moses on Mt Sinai.

If we want to live as God’s chosen and distinct people we need to take seriously these ten words that God has given to us. Obey them. But a word of warning: keeping then is not to be done in the flesh, in a legalistic oppressive way, but through the power of the Holy Spirit.

*“I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit in you. I will remove your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws”.*

Ezekiel 36:25-27

**Questions**

* What would a world without Laws and rules look like?
* What was God’s intention in giving his people these Ten Commandments?
* *“And God spoke all these words”* Exodus 20:1. When was the last time you heard God speak to you? How did he speak and what did he say?
* How have the Ten Commandments guided your life? Is there one command in particular that you have found more challenging?

**Worship**

Read Psalm 19:7-11. Lift up your hearts in prayer & praise.

**Reminders**

* Zoom midweek reflections @ 12.30pm – 9, 11, 14 & 16 Dec
* Christmas Carol Service at NMBC Friday 18 Dec at 8pm and Wednesday 23 Dec at 3pm.

Please book your place with Sue in the Church office. Max of 40 guests.   
The service will also be recorded and streamed live on Friday 18 Dec.

* Zoom Christmas Family Service – 20 Dec @9.30am. No service at 10.30am
* Zoom Christmas Day Service – 25 Dec @10.30am
* Sunday 27 December - No Zoom Service at NMBC. Join with MMCC Zoom Service at 4pm
* Wed 30 December - Zoom reflection @12.30pm
* Christmas cards to deliver to the roads in the community. Speak to Sue or Simon B.
* Free Kat Mills Hope from Heaven Christmas CD available from the Church office.