



SMALL GROUPS  
PARTICIPANT'S JOURNAL

**J.JOHN**

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**just10** Small Groups Participant's Journal

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**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS  
ARE NOT OBSOLETE, THEY ARE  
ABSOLUTE. LAW AND LIBERTY  
ARE NOT IN OPPOSITION. LAW IS  
AT THE HEART OF LIBERTY.  
LAWS DO NOT RESTRICT US  
RATHER THEY FREE US TO LIVE IN  
ORDER AND HARMONY**

# LAWS OF LOVE

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## AN INTRODUCTION TO JUST10 BY J.JOHN

I hope this course will help you apply the ancient wisdom of the Ten Commandments to your life today, and that you are transformed as a result. Encourage and build one another up in faith as you explore the amazing Commandments God gave us.



## WHAT ARE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

The Ten Commandments are found in the Old Testament book of Exodus, written around 1445 BC. They are a set of instructions given to God's people, the Israelites. God had led the Israelites' ancestors, and then dramatically rescued the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. He then promised to love, guide and protect them forever. As a response to his love, God expected his people to keep the Ten Commandments.

For the Jews, keeping the Ten Commandments was an appropriate response to God's act of freeing them from slavery. Christians, however, live in the light of the cross and resurrection of Christ. We are not obligated to keep every Old Testament command. However, the Ten Commandments remain timeless instructions of God's principles and parameters: a framework for every culture and every generation to use for a godly life and a blessed society.

## TEACHING ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

In January 2000, I commenced a series of area-wide, inter-church missions in towns and cities across the UK, based on the Ten Commandments. Unlike the dos and don'ts most people imagine when asked about the Maker's Instructions, the principles were to be both a guideline and an encouragement; 'Thou shalt not steal' is entitled 'How to prosper with a clear conscience' and 'Thou shalt not commit adultery' is unpacked as 'How to "affair-proof" your relationships'.

Seeing the response to this series inspired me to write and teach on the Ten Commandments, developing 'just10'. To date, over one million people have attended a live talk with many more exploring God's timeless principles in their own church community.

## WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS COURSE?

This course offers you the opportunity to engage with the Ten Commandments as a small group. As you work out how to apply these biblical principles to your lives, you will encourage one another in faith and works. Each week you will take a closer look at one Commandment, watching and discussing film clips of my teaching on the subject. You'll spend time discussing each Commandment and thinking how to apply the principles today.

# SESSION ONE

# FIND TRUE CONTENTMENT

**‘You shall not covet your neighbour’s house. You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife, or his manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour.’**

Exodus 20:17, NIV

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## PART 1

People live in one of 2 tents. Content, or discontent.

Today the word we use for covet is materialism.

The desire for more doesn’t give us contentment.

Materialism can cause problems in our lives.

### 1. Materialism can cause worry

‘Beware. Don’t be greedy for what you don’t have. Real life is not measured by how much we own.’

Luke 12:15

### 2. Materialism can cause weariness

‘Don’t weary yourself trying to get rich. Why waste your time?’

Proverbs 23:4

### 3. Materialism can cause gloom

‘Some people, craving money, have . . . pierced themselves with many sorrows.’

1 Timothy 6:10

If you cannot have everything, make the best of everything you have.

God is not opposed to wealth. God is opposed to the worship of wealth.

Coveting is the motive behind breaking the other nine Commandments. We will lie, cheat, steal and commit adultery because we are coveting, because we want more.

## **PART 2: PRINCIPLES**

### **1. Be grateful for what we already have**

‘True Religion with contentment is great wealth. After all, we didn’t bring anything with us when we came into the world, and we certainly cannot carry anything with us when we die. So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.’

1 Timothy 6:6–8

Do you have an attitude of gratitude?

### **2. Recognise the limitations of wealth**

Wealth cannot deliver all that it promises.

‘Those who love money will never have enough. How absurd to think that wealth brings true happiness!’

Ecclesiastes 5:10

Possessions do not give us permanent happiness and they do not give us permanent security.

‘The rich think of their wealth as an impregnable defence; they imagine it is a high wall of safety.’

Proverbs 18:11

### **3. Focus on people, not possessions**

We can covet so much that things can become more important to us than people.

Possessions cannot compensate for unhappy relationships.

Relationships not things bring happiness.

The best thing that parents can give their children is time, not treasure; presence, not presents.

#### **4. Look beyond what is temporary**

'We fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. What is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.'

2 Corinthians 4:18, NIV

'How do you benefit if you gain the whole world but lose your own soul? . . . Is anything worth more than your soul?'

Mark 8:36–37

#### **5. Be a giver**

Giving is the antidote to coveting. Jesus said it is more blessed to give than to receive.

Live simply so that others can simply live.

#### **6. Find our significance and security in Jesus Christ**

Possessions, pleasure or power cannot give us contentment.

Happiness in life comes from purpose.

God made us for a purpose and in Jesus we find our purpose and value. God says that we are valuable. We are so valuable that Jesus Christ died on the cross for us.



## SESSION TWO

# HOLD TO THE TRUTH

**‘You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.’**

Exodus 20:16, NIV

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### PART 1

We live in a world with truth decay.

Truth has only to exchange hands a few times to become fiction.

The basic message of the ninth Commandment is to tell the truth and, specifically relating to other people, don't ruin someone else's reputation.

The Bible warns us about (against?!) three types of testimony:

1. **Gossip** – Hearing something you like about someone you don't.
2. **Slander** – Malicious untruth with the intention of doing harm.  
Trying to discredit someone.
3. **Flattery** – Saying things to a person's face that you would never say behind their back.

## PART 2: PRINCIPLES

### 1. I need to examine my own heart

Jesus said, 'Whatever is in your heart determines what you say.'  
Matthew 12:34

'The human heart is most deceitful and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is? But I know! I, the LORD God search all hearts and examine secret motives.'  
Jeremiah 17:9–10

What motivates us to lie?

One of the reasons is because we don't want to take responsibility for the things we do. We are afraid of what might happen if we tell the truth.

### 2. I need to refuse to gossip

'Hold to the truth in love.'  
Ephesians 4:15

- Is it true?
- Will it do anyone any good to say it?

The fabric of all healthy relationships is woven with truth.

Lying tears this fabric apart and destroys confidence and trust in one another.

The reason that truth is so important to God is because truthfulness is part of his nature.

### 3. Get connected with the truth

'[God] cannot lie.'  
Titus 1:2

Jesus is truth, Jesus' words are true.

Jesus is truth and spoke:

- truth about ourselves.
- truth about our world.
- truth about God.

God's Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth.



## SESSION THREE

# PROSPER WITH A CLEAR CONSCIENCE

**‘You shall not steal.’**

Exodus 20:15, NIV

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### **PART 1**

Stealing is to take something which belongs to another person.

The wrong ways to prosper:

#### **1. Dishonesty**

‘The LORD demands fairness in every business deal; he sets the standard.’  
Proverbs 16:11

‘The LORD hates cheating, but he delights in honesty.’  
Proverbs 11:1

#### **2. Defrauding**

‘If you owe taxes, pay taxes.’  
Romans 13:7, NIV

‘Do not cheat or rob anyone. Always pay your hired workers promptly.’  
Leviticus 19:13, NIV

‘Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favour, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.’  
Colossians 3:22, NIV

### 3. Downloading

This can be a very easy way to steal. We wouldn't walk out of a shop without paying, so why do we do it online?

### 4. Defaulting

Failing to fulfil an obligation we've made.

'Let no debt remain outstanding.'  
Romans 13:8, NIV

'The wicked borrow and never repay.'  
Psalm 37:21

'Do for others what you would like them to do for you.'  
Matthew 7:12

## PART 2: PRINCIPLES

The right ways to prosper:

### 1. Working

'Work brings profit, but mere talk leads to poverty!'  
Proverbs 14:23

'If you are a thief, stop stealing. Begin using your hands for honest work, and then give generously to others in need.'  
Ephesians 4:28

### 2. Saving

'Good planning and hard work lead to prosperity, but hasty shortcuts lead to poverty.'  
Proverbs 21:5

Jesus commended the wise investor in the parable of the talents.  
Matthew 25:14–21

### 3. Praying

Jesus said: 'If you sinful people know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give good gifts to those who ask him.'  
Matthew 7:11

'My God will supply all your needs from his glorious riches which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.'  
Philippians 4:19



## SESSION FOUR

# 'AFFAIR-PROOF' YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

**'You shall not commit adultery.'**

Exodus 20:14, NIV

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### PART 1

'The man who commits adultery is an utter fool, for he destroys his own soul.'  
Proverbs 6:32

'Can a man scoop fire into his lap without being burned? Can a man walk on hot coals without his feet being scorched? So is he who sleeps with another man's wife.'  
Proverbs 6:27–29

Marriage is about giving; adultery is about taking.

'A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one. Since they are no longer two but one, let no one separate them, for God has joined them together.'  
Matthew 19:4–6

Adultery breaks into the unity that two people have in marriage.

**Watch your thoughts – they become words.**

**Watch your words – they become actions.**

**Watch your actions – they become habits.**

**Watch your habits – they become character.**

'Create in me a clean heart, O God.'  
Psalm 51:10

## PART 2: PRINCIPLES

### 1. Respect

Love is built on the foundation of mutual respect.

‘Each man must love his wife as he loves himself and the wife must respect her husband.’

Ephesians 5:33

### 2. Responsibility

‘Each of you should look not only to your own interests but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.’

Philippians 2:4–5

### 3. Romance

‘May you rejoice in the wife of your youth . . . may you ever be captivated by her love.’

Proverbs 5:18–19, NIV

### 4. Resolve

‘Didn’t the LORD make you one with your wife? . . . Guard yourself; remain loyal to your wife.’

Malachi 2:15

Leonardo Da Vinci: ‘An arch consists of two weaknesses which leaning against one another make a strength.’

Root our single life or marriage in the rich soil of God’s love.



## SESSION FIVE

# MANAGE YOUR ANGER

### 'You shall not murder.'

Exodus 20:13, NIV

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## PART 1

'You have heard that it was said . . . "Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgement." But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgement.'

Matthew 5:21, NIV

There are 3 common expressions of anger:

**1. The Maniac**

People who explode, blow-up, throw things, yell, rage and spill out all over.

**2. The Mute**

People who operate with repressed anger hold their anger in, swallowing the pain. Usually our body feels the effects of repressed anger.

**3. The Manipulator**

The manipulator retaliates in an underhand way: sarcasm, jibes, little insults and hurtful humour.

## PART 2: PRINCIPLES

How do we 'manage our anger'?

### 1. Admit my anger

Admit it to yourself, your parents/friends/partner and to God. We make things worse when we pretend it's not a problem.

### 2. Deal with anger immediately

“Don't sin by letting anger gain control over you.” Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, for anger gives a mighty foothold to the Devil.  
Ephesians 4:26

### 3. Understand anger

Anger is usually covering a hurt.

If you look under the hurt you find expectation.

If you look under that expectation you find a need.

### 4. Stop and think before I speak

'Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.'  
James 1:19

'A gentle answer turns away wrath, but harsh words stir up anger.'  
Proverbs 15:1

### 5. Ask God to fill you with His Holy Spirit

'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.'  
Galatians 5:22, NIV

God's presence in our lives creates self-control.



## SESSION SIX

# KEEP THE PEACE WITH YOUR PARENTS

**‘Honour your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.’**

Exodus 20:12, NIV

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### PART 1

Honour your parents by:

1. **Accepting them**
2. **Appreciating them**
3. **Affirming them**
4. **Not abandoning them**

There is only one parent that has ever been perfect. That is our heavenly Father.

### PART 2: PRINCIPLES

The key to being good parents is to treat our children the way God treats us.

1. **God listens to us**

‘The LORD is close to all who call on him.’  
Psalm 145:18

## 2. God understands us

To be like my heavenly Father, I need to understand my children.

'By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established.'  
Proverbs 24:3, NIV

Are we perfect? NO. But God accepts us. That's called GRACE.

God wants us to exercise GRACE with our children.

- **We need to demonstrate honesty**
- **Don't imply perfection and admit it when we are wrong**
- **Keep our promises**

## 3. God loves us

The Bible is full of examples of God's love for his children.

We can express our love for our children through:

- **Affection**
- **Affirmation**
- **Attention**

## 4. God disciplines his children

'The Lord disciplines those he loves.'  
Hebrews 12:6

'If you refuse to discipline your children, it proves you don't love them.'  
Proverbs 13:24

Discipline provides a structure of safety until the child has enough structure in their character to not need it.

Parents can discipline children best by being disciplined themselves.



## SESSION SEVEN

# CATCH YOUR BREATH

**‘Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.’**

Exodus 20:8–11, NIV

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### PART 1

Like all of God’s Commandments, the Sabbath was designed not to be a burden but a blessing.

The word Sabbath means ‘cease’.

If our output exceeds our input then our upkeep will be our downfall.

If we do not come apart and rest, we will just come apart.

‘The Sabbath was made to benefit people.’

Mark 2:27

## PART 2: PRINCIPLES

### 1. The Sabbath: A day to rest our body

‘On that day no one in your household may do any kind of work. This includes you, your sons and daughters, your male and female servants and . . . livestock.’  
Deuteronomy 5:13–15

God modelled the Sabbath for us.

‘For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, but he rested on the seventh day and was refreshed.’  
Exodus 31:17

### 2. The Sabbath: A day to re-charge our emotions

‘He leads me beside quiet waters; he restores my soul.’  
Psalm 23:2–3, NIV

### 3. The Sabbath: A day to be renewed spiritually

‘Be still, and know that I am God.’  
Psalm 46:10, NIV

Worship renews our spirit as sleep renews the body.

The Sabbath is a time for being in the presence of the Holy God and letting God shape our lives.

Stop working and let God work in you.

Sabbath is:

- **A day to tune in to God**
- **A day to get our spiritual focus**
- **A day to enjoy God**

‘Keep the Sabbath day holy. Don’t pursue your own interests on that day, but enjoy the Sabbath and speak of it with delight as the LORD’s holy day.’  
Isaiah 58:13

## NOTES

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## TAKE IT FURTHER

- In your own time, or as a group, watch the rest of J. John's talk for Session 7.
- Time spent with God doesn't have to be reserved for Sundays. 1 Thessalonians 5:16–18, NIV says, 'Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.' Think of three ways in which you could weave more worship into your weekly activities.
- Psalm 34:14 tells us to 'seek peace and pursue it'. How could you pursue peace? Spend some time reflecting on this Psalm.
- How are you using your time? Fill in the table below and pray into what you see. Are there any other activities that deserve a row of their own?

## SUGGESTED READING

- *just10*, J. John (Philo Trust, 2013) ch.7, p.197
- *Too Busy Not to Pray*, Bill Hybels (IVP, 2011)
- *In Pursuit of Peace*, Joyce Meyer (Warner Books, 2004)

	ACTUAL TIME SPENT HOURS A WEEK	IDEAL TIME SPENT HOURS A WEEK
WORK		
TRAVEL		
LEISURE/SOCIAL		
FAMILY		
SPORT		
SHOPPING		
COMPUTER/PHONE USE		
TELEVISION		
HOUSEWORK/COOKING		
CHURCH		
RELAXING		
SLEEPING		

## SESSION EIGHT

# TAKE GOD SERIOUSLY

**‘You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.’**

Exodus 20:7, NIV

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### PART 1

How do we misuse God’s name?

#### 1. When we use it to insult

We have become numb to just how often and indiscriminately God’s name is taken in vain. We should be concerned when God’s name is used in a callous way. When we use God’s name frivolously, we dishonour God and display irreverence.

#### 2. Don’t use God’s name to indulge yourself

We dishonour the name of God if we profess to be that which we are not.

‘If you eat the bread or drink the cup unworthily, not honouring the body of Christ, you are eating and drinking God’s judgement upon yourself.’

1 Corinthians 11:29

To treat God Almighty as a tradition or superstition is to misuse his name.

#### 3. Don’t use God’s name to intimidate

Playing the ‘God Card’ – using God’s name to justify our own point of view and bring credibility to our own ideas.

Have you twisted the Bible to fit your own ideas and lifestyle?

## PART 2: PRINCIPLES

How do we take God seriously?

### 1. Be selective with our words

Watch what we say.

We are constantly bombarded with profanity. It comes in and unintentionally becomes part of our vocabulary. When we say what we please, does what we say please God?

Decide today not to use the name of God in an irreverent, frivolous and disrespectful way.

### 2. Be sincere in our actions

Let's make sure our life matches what we say we believe. If you are a Christian, make sure your walk is consistent with your talk.

'People claim they know God, but they deny him by the way they live.'  
Titus 1:16

He is the One who can forgive all our sins; wipe away our guilt; heal our hearts' deepest hurts and restore our dignity.

The name Jesus means Saviour. The name of Jesus carries power.

People are healed and evil spirits are cast out through the name of Jesus.  
See Matthew 7:22

'But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.'  
John 20:31, NIV

'Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'  
Romans 10:13



# SESSION NINE

# KNOW GOD

**‘You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.’**

Exodus 20:4–6

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## **PART 1**

An idol is a substitute for the real thing and God’s response to our idolatry is jealousy.

In the Old Testament, idolatry is called adultery to God, because idolatry is unfaithfulness.

Idols restrict our concept of God.

‘To whom, then, will you compare God? What image will you compare him to?’  
Isaiah 40:18

Idolatry occurs when we hold any value, idea, or activity higher than God.

**Idol One – The Body**

**Idol Two – Superstitions**

**Idol Three – Choice**

## PART 2: PRINCIPLES

How do we describe God?

Jesus Christ 'is the image of the invisible God'.  
Colossians 1:15, NIV

'The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being.'  
Hebrews 1:3, NIV

It is sad that the benefits we expect idols to give, God promises to give.

'They make idols, but the idols will disgrace their makers, for they are frauds. They have no life or power in them. Idols are worthless, they are lies!'  
Jeremiah 10:14–15

The turning point in our lives is when we stop seeking the god we want and start seeking the God who is.

The God who offers us:

1. **Forgiveness**
2. **Freedom**
3. **Friendship**
4. **Fulfilment**



# SESSION TEN

# LIVE BY PRIORITIES

**'You shall have no other gods before me.'**

Exodus 20:3, NIV

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## PART 1

This Commandment is all about putting God first in your life.

He longs for us to love him with all our heart, with all our soul, with all our strength, and with all our mind.  
See Luke 10:27.

Loving God means that having made him number one in our lives, we constantly re-affirm that decision, checking to see if he still is number one.

## PART 2: PRINCIPLES

How do we put God first in our life?

Here are five areas in our lives where God wants to have priority:

- F – Finances**
- I – Interests**
- R – Relationships**
- S – Schedule**
- T – Troubles**

### 1. Put God first in my finances

How we spend our money reveals what is important. If God comes first in our finances, it's a good sign that God is first place in our life.

### 2. Put God first in my interests

'Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all to the glory of God.'  
1 Corinthians 10:31, NIV

### 3. Put God first in my relationships

Do you find that in your relationships and in situations where you have to declare your belief system, you stand up for Jesus? If we love God we must act justly and stand up for him.

### 4. Put God first in my schedule

We can get so busy, that we forget God. Establish the habit of time alone with God, regular prayer and Bible reading.

### 5. Put God first in my troubles

We all go through problems, pressures and crises. Put God first in every area of your life including the hassles of life.

When you have nothing left but God, you begin to learn that God is enough.





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