Connect Study 30 June –Ten Commandments (Part 1)

Jesus did not come to abolish the law but to fulfil it (Matt 5:17-19). He asserted that NOT even the smallest detail of the law would disappear and that those who obey and teach the law will be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven. In fact, Jesus ramped up the law. Previously in the Ten Commandments, we are told not to murder, but now even those who are angry with their fellow believers are considered to have committed murder in their heart; And those who look lustfully at another woman are considered to have committed adultery in their heart. The law is now lifted to point where it is impossible to fulfil it on our own strength. The law is there to show us that our only hope is in Jesus Christ. Gal 3:24 says “Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith” (NASB)

Now that we understand this, has anything changed from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant? From Ez 36:25, it shows that the law is now written on our hearts. It is no longer about external motivation but internal motivation. The Ten Commandments are still important because they are ten postures that affect our relationship with God and other people.

* “You shall have no other gods before me”

The first commandment about having no other God before me is a covenant. The Hebrew word for ‘covenant’ is ‘berit’. It carries the concept of a cutting off (dying), a binding together (or joining together), and eating together (pleasure). You cannot build any permanent relationship without first dying to self.

* You shall not make for yourself any graven image/idol

The second commandment is about face-to-face relationship. God wants face-to-face relationship with us. And in our relationships with each other, we need to learn to interact face-to-face especially in this increasingly digital world.

* You shall not take the name of the Lord your god in vain

It’s about how we speak to each other. Beware of the “Four horsemen of the apocalypse of relationships” which are criticism, contemptuous talks, defensiveness or disengagement and stonewalling.

* You shall remember the Sabbath

This speaks of spending quality time and your date time with God. Jer 31: 31 exhorts us to enjoy the Sabbath and speak of it with delight as the Lord’s holy day. In the New Testament, we are told not to neglect our meeting together.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why did Jesus ramp up the law?
2. What does it mean to you to be in covenant relationship with God? *(answers could be sense of security e.g. even when we are unfaithful, God remains faithful, He is the provider, etc.)*
3. *(For married people)* How can you practice dying to self in your marriage relationship?

*(For singles)* How do you develop the capacity to die to self in relationships? Consider the balance between the need to be sacrificial and have healthy boundaries so that you do not become an enabler of someone else’ issues.

1. How can you improve your face-to-face intimacy with God and your spouse (for married people)?
2. Rate yourself from 0 (needing drastic improvement) to 5 (excellent) as whether you are generally critical in your conversation with your spouse or others. How can you improve?