

## **GIVE OTHERS THEIR DUE LOVE**

### **A Sermon on Deuteronomy 5:17–21**

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This is now my seventh sermon on the Ten Commandments as found in Deuteronomy 5. As I have preached through these Ten Commandments, I have preached Moses's law more often *from* Jesus than *to* Jesus. Yet the law bears both functions: getting us to Jesus and then guiding us after we have met him. It crushes under the weight of our inability and then guides us once God becomes for us in Christ.

For Israel, this law of Moses was to kill, to destroy (2 Cor 3:7, 9), helping them see their need for Jesus (Rom 3:20; 5:20; 10:4). The law itself declares, "It will be righteousness for us, if we are careful to do all this commandment" (Deut 6:25), yet no mere human is able to obey fully, and therefore no mere human is righteous. Instead, "cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them" (Gal 3:10; cf. Deut 27:26). This is why it took one who is not a mere human but the God-man to come in our stead.

Hearing Moses's law should have broken Israel and moved them to see their need and embrace God's provision of a substitute. Yet they should have also known that the blood of bulls and goats could not forgive their sin (Heb 10:4), and so they would be forced to hope in the one to whom their sacrifices pointed, the one whose perfect blood would satisfy God's just wrath against our iniquities (Isa 53:5, 12; Rom 5:9; Gal 3:13; 1 Pet 2:24; 1 John 4:10) and whose righteousness validated through the resurrection would secure our justification (Rom 4:25; 2 Cor 5:21). Thus, we can preach Moses law in a way that gets us to Christ.

Yet through these sermons, I have been talking to a gathered community of saints who have already encountered the living God and already come to Christ as their righteousness. On this basis, having a God who is already for you 100%, we find that the law of Moses can still guide us in paths of righteousness. The only sin we can conquer is forgiven sin, and standing on Christ and considering how he fulfills the old covenant law, we are in a position to move ahead from Jesus and benefit from Moses's law as a guide for Christians. That is what I mean that I preach from Jesus rather than to Jesus.

Today, we come to the last six of the Ten Commandments. We have covered Commands one through four, each of which stands independently. These final six, however, Moses here groups together by linking each with the conjunction "and" (the Hebrew וְ). Following the prophet's lead, today's sermon focuses on all six of these commandments as a group that expresses how mature followers of God

should live for the welfare of others over themselves. Read with me Deuteronomy 5:17–21.... Pray with me....

### **Never Murder (Deut 5:17)**

The fifth commandment forbids the murder of another human being and thus stresses the need to value and show dignity for every human life (Deut 5:17; cf. Exod 20:13). As our own Member Affirmation of Faith says, “We believe that all humans bear intrinsic and equal value as those made in God’s image and that every human life is valuable from fertilization to natural death” (#14).

The verb translated “murder” in Deuteronomy 5:17 (Qal רצח) is a neutral term meaning to “slay or kill” a human (Num 35:12), yet it most commonly refers to criminal behavior performed by persons against the community by purposefully (i.e., intentionally; Num 35:16–19, 21, 31; Deut 22:26; Judg 20:41; Job 26:14) or accidentally (i.e., negligently or recklessly; Num 35:6, 11, 25–28; Deut 4:42; 19:3, 4, 6; Josh 20:4, 5–6) killing another person. The Bible has categories for justifiably putting others to death when one is defending himself (Exod 22:2–3; Matt 26:55; Luke 22:38) or others (Acts 7:24–25; cf. Ps 82:4; Prov 24:1),<sup>1</sup> when a relative avenges the death of a family member (Num 35:12, 21, 25–28; Josh 20:3, 5; cf. Josh 21:13, 21, 27, 32, 38),<sup>2</sup> and when the government rightly uses the sword (Rom 13:4), whether through just wars (Deut 7:2, 16; 20:13–17; cf. 2:34; 3:6; 25:19; Josh 6:21; 8:2, 26; 10:40; 11:14; 1 Sam 15:3) or through the death penalty as retributive justice for capital crimes like premeditated murder (Gen 9:5–6; Exod 21:12, 14, 23–25; Lev 24:17; Num 35:16–21, 30–31, 33; Deut 19:11–13, 21; Matt 26:52; Rev 13:10).<sup>3</sup> However, what this fifth of the Ten Commandments prohibits is any form of unlawful homicide, whether by premeditation or negligence.

Growing out of the principles of human dignity and justice evidenced and taught in the creation covenant (Gen 1:26–28; 9:5–6; cf. 4:8–11, 23–24), Paul notes that, from the fall, humans have been “filled with all manner of unrighteousness” including “murder” and that, “though they know God’s decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them” (Rom 1:29, 32). Today we live in a culture of death that devalues the precious lives of the unborn and the elderly. Yet one’s stage of development does *not* determine the value of one’s life. Size, level of maturity, environment, and degree of dependency are unjustified grounds to assess who can live or die. Abortion, euthanasia, and assisted suicide are all the intentional killing of innocent human beings and are, therefore, reprehensible, morally evil acts of murder. When a culture affirms murder and governments legalize murder in the name of woman’s health or the love of a sufferer, they open themselves up to “the wrath of God [that] is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and

unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth” (Rom 1:18). To Christians, God continues to command: never murder.

### **And Never Commit Adultery (Deut 5:18)**

The verb rendered “adultery” (Qal אָנַן) in Deuteronomy 5:18 (cf. Exod 20:14) refers principally to illicit, consensual sex with a woman who is engaged or married to another man (Lev 20:10; Job 24:15; Prov 6:32; Jer 7:9; 23:14; Ezek 16:38; 23:45; Hos 4:2).<sup>4</sup> This sixth commandment highlights the value of sexual intimacy in marriage and the need to respect every married man’s sole right to such intimacy with his wife. From the moment the first man declared of his bride, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh,” and the two became “one flesh” (Gen 2:23–24), Yahweh God affirmed that sexual expression was solely for the context of marriage between one man and one woman in lasting covenant relationship.<sup>5</sup> The author of Hebrews charged, “Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous” (Heb 13:4).

Why is sexual morality and the sanctity of the marriage bed so important to God? It’s because the union in marriage of one man and one woman represents the intimate relationship Yahweh makes with his people in the old covenant and that Christ has with his Church in the new. Within the Old Testament, Yahweh’s relationship with his people was always akin to a marriage, and one way we see this is in how Judah’s idolatry is regarded as spiritual adultery. Thus, Yahweh declares of Judah, “Because she took her whoredom lightly, she polluted the land, committing adultery with stone and tree” (Jer 3:9; cf. 5:7; Ezek 16:32; Hos 3:1). Every husband is to love his wife “as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her” (Eph 5:24), and every man must guard himself from violating another man’s marriage bed. The proper display of the glory of Christ is at stake, and every person who engages in adultery denounces the sanctity of human marriage and belittles the glory of Christ. To Christians, God continues to command: never commit adultery.

### **And Never Steal (Deut 5:19)**

In contrast to the justifiable taking of plunder in times of war, to “steal” (Qal גָּנַב) in the seventh commandment (Deut 5:19; cf. Exod 20:15) refers to secretly or unexpectedly taking something belonging to another and doing so without permission or legal right and without intending to return it (Lev 19:11; Josh 7:11; Prov 6:30; 9:17; 30:9; Jer 7:9; Hos 4:2; Obad 5; Zech 5:3).<sup>6</sup> This prohibition assumes that personal property is justified and that other people’s property and very lives are to be respected and preserved rather than claimed.

Within the old covenant, God counted the theft of material goods as a civil offense concerning private disputes between citizens or organizations; in such instances justice demanded return or restitution two to five times the value of what was stolen (Exod 22:1, 4, 12 [21:37; 22:3, 11 MT]; cf. Gen 30:33; 31:19, 30, 32, 39; 44:8). However, the same verb is used of man-stealing, most commonly in relation to the capital offenses of “kidnapping” (Exod 21:16; Deut 24:7) or “abduction” (2 Sam 19:42); in these instances, the theft of a human life required the death penalty for the perpetrator.<sup>7</sup>

Jesus associates stealing with the devil, when he declares, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). Having come to Jesus, Paul asserts, “Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need” (Eph 4:28). Stealing reveals a discontentment of the soul and a lack of trust in God knows what you need and will provide. With Paul, we must affirm, “My God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:19), and with Paul we must learn “the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me” (3:12–13). To Christians, God continues to command: never steal.

### **And Never Bear False Witness against Your Neighbor (Deut 5:20)**

The eighth commandment addresses just dealings when one serves as a witness in a legal proceeding. When justice is on the line, truth must prevail. “And you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Deut 5:20; cf. Exod 20:16).<sup>8</sup> False testimony can easily destroy, for as Proverbs says, “A man who bears false witness against his neighbor [אִישׁ עֵנָה בְרֵעֵהוּ עֵד שָׁקֵר] is like a war club, or a sword, or a sharp arrow” (Prov 25:18).

Justice is about giving to people what they deserve, and this principle is built into the very nature of creation with humans made in the image of God, of whom Moses says, “The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he” (Deut 32:4). And again, “He is not partial and takes no bribe. He executes justice for the fatherless and the widow, and loves the sojourner, giving him food and clothing” (10:17–18; cf. Acts 10:34–35). The call of this commandment is to live justly, even as God is just (Exod 21:1–3; Lev 19:15–16; Deut 16:18–20).

After reflecting on the dangers of showing partiality (Jas 2:1–7), James notes, “If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself,’ you are doing well. But if you show partiality, you are

committing sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors” (2:8–9; cf. John 7:24; 1 Tim 5:21). For those who testify falsely, Moses warns later in Deuteronomy:

If a malicious witness [עֵד־הָמָס] arises to accuse a person [לְעֵנוֹת בּוֹ] of wrongdoing, then both parties to the dispute shall appear before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who are in office in those days. The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness [עֵד־שָׁקֵר] and has accused his brother falsely [וְשָׁקֵר עָנָה בְּאָחִיו], then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst. And the rest shall hear and fear, and shall never again commit any such evil among you. Your eye shall not pity. It shall be life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. (Deut 19:16–21)

With this, Revelation 21:8 warns: “As for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death.” To Christians, God continues to command: never bear false witness against your neighbor.

### **And Never Covet Your Neighbor’s Wife (Deut 5:21a)**

The ninth commandment in Deuteronomy partners with the charge against adultery by prohibiting “coveting” (חָמַד) a neighbor’s wife (Deut 5:21a; cf. Exod 20:17). A “neighbor” (רֵעֵ-עַ) is someone nearby (cf. Gen 15:10), usually one within your community that you would count among your people (Lev 19:18). The verb translated “covet” means to “desire” and consistently relates to a longing to obtain something. The object of desire is almost always tangible or material,<sup>9</sup> but context alone determines whether a subject’s craving an object is sin. Negative objects of desire include the forbidden fruit of the Garden (Gen 3:6), another’s house (Exod 20:17), another’s wife, servants, or moveable property (20:17; Deut 5:21a), land (Exod 34:24), silver and gold from an idol (Deut 7:25), Yahweh’s war spoils (Josh 7:21), the forbidden woman’s beauty (Prov 6:25), unjust gain (12:12), large trees (metaphorically of foreign influence, Isa 1:29), and idols (44:9).

Significantly, desiring or coveting is an internal act of the heart (Prov 6:25) involving a premeditated choice (Isa 1:29; cf. Mic 2:1) that God alone can judge until it goes public in outward action (e.g., in “taking” [Deut 7:25; Josh 6:18 LXX; 7:21] or “seizing” [Mic 2:2]). At this point in the Ten Commandments, however, the focus is that evil desire is itself sin, regardless of whether wicked deeds follow.<sup>10</sup> Specifically, Moses asserts that wishing another man’s woman was yours is evil (cf. Lev 20:10; Deut 22:24; Prov 6:29; Ezek 18:6, 15; 22:11). Jesus will go

so far as to say that “everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matt 5:28). To Christians, God continues to command: never covet your neighbor’s wife.

### **And Never Desire Your Neighbor’s Property (Deut 5:21b)**

The tenth of the Ten Commandments prohibits “wanting or craving” (חָמַד) the moveable and immovable property belonging to a neighbor. Whereas Exodus 20:17 uses the verb “covet” (חָמַד) twice, in Deuteronomy Moses varies his prohibitions with a synonym: “And you shall not desire [*or* want] your neighbor’s house, his field, or his male servant, or his female servant, his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor’s” (Deut 5:21b). The book of Proverbs tells us that wicked people are always longing for more, whereas the righteous person gives and keeps giving (Prov 21:26). Some crave for and acquire wealth, possessions, and honor yet never enjoy them, says the Preacher in Ecclesiastes, and this is a great evil (Eccl 6:2; cf. 5:19 [18 MT]). This prohibition in the Ten Commandments refers to a discontented soul that remains ever unsatisfied.

In contrast, “godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Tim 6:6). So, we must heed the charge of the author of Hebrews: “Keep your life free from the love of money, and be content with what you have, for [God] has said, ‘I will never leave you nor forsake you’” (Heb 13:5). And as Paul says, the rich are “to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, thus storing up treasures for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life” (1 Tim 6:18–19). To Christians, God continues to command: never desire your neighbor’s property.

### **Conclusion: A Call to Servant-Leadership, Not Male Domination**

As I bring this sermon to a conclusion, I want to reflect on the portrait of leadership Deuteronomy’s version of the Ten Commandments displays. Changes made to the Deuteronomic Decalogue suggest that after forty years in the wilderness Moses is intentionally confronting abuses to headship in the community. We already saw this in command three. In Exodus 20:11, Moses elevated God’s rest on the seventh day as a reason Israel needed to keep the Sabbath. This is never mentioned in Deuteronomy, however, as Moses instead recalls how the Israelite community was a slave in Egypt to clarify why household heads must ensure that every household member down to the male and female servants gets to rest (Deut 5:15).

Similarly, in Exodus 20:17, the charge not to covet a neighbor’s wife is embedded in a list of possessions after a neighbor’s “house,” but in Deuteronomy 5:21 the “wife” stands alone. As Daniel Block has said, this implies that the

Deuteronomic version of the Decalogue reveals “a deliberate effort to ensure the elevated status of the wife in a family unit and to foreclose any temptation to use the Exodus version of the command to justify men’s treatment of their wives as if they were mere property, along with the rest of the household possessions.”<sup>11</sup> Indeed, this is the first of several examples in Deuteronomy that stress how the community must value and protect its women.<sup>12</sup>

What I am proposing is that the Ten Commandments in Deuteronomy affirm the patricentric nature of Israelite society, in that they are addressed to male heads of households who are themselves under God and called to lead by serving, honoring, and looking out for others’ welfare, including their family members and neighbors. That is, the Ten Commandments define biblical leaders as those who must preserve *other’s* rights and not their own. Love of others and not love of self is what drives the Decalogue.

The United States has a Bill of Rights that ensures essential individual liberties for citizens such as freedom of speech, press, and religion and the right to private property and speedy trial while limiting federal power. The Ten Commandments are set up similarly but draw attention away from self to the rights others have as those made in God’s image. Paul speaks in a similar way in Romans 13, when he writes:

Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Rom 13:7–10)

In a way distinct from any other creature, humans bear a capacity to reflect, resemble, represent, and revere God, and this fact establishes human worth and clarifies why, for example, the murder of the innocent demands the death of the perpetrator, “for God made man in his own image” (Gen 9:6).<sup>13</sup> Every one of the Ten Commandments is shaped with the deepest conviction that Yahweh and those made in his image are the highest values in the universe. The Decalogue is about God not only in the way the laws themselves portray his character but also in the way they display his worth by calling humans to respect his divine rights and those conferred on everyone made in his image.

1.	Yahweh's right to exclusive allegiance (5:6–10)	Love for Yahweh and His Rights
2.	Yahweh's right to proper representation (5:11)	
3.	Yahweh's right to see his sovereignty magnified and household members' rights to humane treatment from the head (5:12–15)	Love for a Neighbor and His Rights ↓
4.	Parents' right to honor from their progeny (5:16)	
5.	A neighbor's right to life (5:17)	
6.	And a neighbor's right to sexual purity in his marriage (5:18)	
7.	And a neighbor's right to personal property (5:19)	
8.	And a neighbor's right to honest and truthful testimony in court (5:20)	
9.	And a neighbor's right to a secure marriage (5:21a)	
10.	And a neighbor's right to enjoy his property without fear that someone else will it for himself (5:21b)	

**Fig. 1. Deuteronomy's Ten Commandments as a Bill of *Others' Rights*<sup>14</sup>**

The biblical communities in both the old and new covenant are a collection of families at the center of which is the father or male household head. The layout of the Ten Commandments defines his role as leader principally as love for God and neighbor—not self-exalting but other serving. By focusing on the rights of others, the Deuteronomic version of the Decalogue confronts present or potential pride, self-elevating power, and abuses by a household head toward God, wives, other household members, and property. And if the male head could love Yahweh and neighbor rightly, the rest of the community would follow in line.

May God grant Sovereign Joy to be a community in which male servant leadership flourishes and where its members recognize that love fulfills the law and that we owe love to each other as we display God's character in our lives and as we value each on another as those made in God's image. “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does not wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom 13:10). Pray with me....

<sup>1</sup> See also Neh 4:13–14, 17–23; Esth 8:11; 9:1–2, 5, 10.

<sup>2</sup> The old covenant specifies that the blood vengeance can happen before or after the congregation has rendered a judgment but can only justly occur while the original manslayer is outside a city of refuge and before the high priest alive at the time of the slaying has died.

<sup>3</sup> Other crimes worthy of the death penalty include the following: kidnapping (Exod 21:16; Deut 24:7); rape (Deut 22:25–27); sustained insubordination to parents (Exod 21:15, 17; Deut 21:18–21); religious malpractice like Sabbath breaking (Exod 31:14–15; 35:2; Num 15:32–26), false prophecy associated with following gods other than Yahweh (Deut 13:1–5; 18:20), idolatry (Exod 22:20; Lev 19:4; Deut 13:1–18; 17:2–7), child sacrifice (Lev 20:1–5), witchcraft (Exod 22:18; Lev 19:26, 31; 20:27), and blasphemy (Lev 24:14–23); sexual offenses like adultery when married or engaged (Lev 20:10; Deut 22:22–24; cf. Gen 38:24), concealed premarital unchastity (Deut 22:20–21), rape of an engaged girl (Deut 22:25), prostitution of a priest's daughter (Lev 21:9), incest (Lev 20:11–12, 14), homosexuality (Lev 20:13), and bestiality (Exod 22:19; Lev 20:15–16); false witness in a capital case (Deut 19:16–21). While a ransom could be paid for some capital offenses, no ransom was allowed in cases of premeditated murder; the violator was always to be put to death (Num 35:31).

<sup>4</sup> Deuteronomy strongly distinguishes between adultery, which includes mutual consent and demands the death penalty of both parties (Deut 22:22, 23–24), and rape, which is a form of abuse and demands only the death of the

violator (22:25–27). Deuteronomic law fights for the protection and value of the vulnerable. For more on this, see below.

<sup>5</sup> For an argument that these verses elevate sexual intimacy as the covenant sign of marriage, see Gordon P. Hugenberger, *Marriage as a Covenant: Biblical Law and Ethics as Developed from Malachi* (Baker Books, 1994).

<sup>6</sup> By extension, it can even refer to a storm “stealing” away the life of the wicked (Job 21:18; 27:20). W. R. Domeris notes that גנב specifically refers to “secretive stealing and cheating” (e.g., Gen 31:27; 2 Sam 19:3 [4 MT]), whereas גל (“to rob”) denotes “taking something by force.” W. R. Domeris, “גנב,” *NIDOTTE* 1:863. On the distinction between “stealing” and “robbery,” with the latter being specifically against the weak, see Leviticus 19:11, 13 and Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, NICOT (Eerdmans, 1979), 267–78.

<sup>7</sup> In two instances, the verb “to steal” is cast as a justifiable action in contrast to the evil schemes of enemy rulers: (1) the “stealing” of Saul and Jonathan’s bodies after their death in battle at the hands of the Philistines (2 Sam 21:12) and the “stealing” of Joash from the rest of the king’s sons who were about to be murdered (2 Kgs 11:2; 2 Chr 22:11)

<sup>8</sup> Very literally, this eighth commandment prohibits anyone from ever “answering” (ענה) “a witness of falsehood” (עֵד שָׁוֵא, Deut 5:20) or “a witness of a lie” (עֵד שֶׁקֶר) (Exod 20:16) against his neighbor.

<sup>9</sup> The only partial exceptions are the words of God, which are “coveted” more than gold (Ps 19:10 [11 MT]), and scoffing, which scoffers “covet” (Prov 1:22).

<sup>10</sup> While the promise in Exod 34:24 that “no one will covet your land” connotes that no one will devise plans to take the land and act upon it, the verb חמד only denotes an internal desire. So, too, William L. Moran, “The Conclusion to the Decalogue (Ex. 20:17 = Dt. 5:21),” *CBQ* 29 (1967): 544.

<sup>11</sup> Daniel I. Block, “‘You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor’s Wife’: A Study in Deuteronomic Domestic Ideology,” *JETS* 53.3 (2010): 156.

<sup>12</sup> Block notes Deuteronomy evinces a high concern for widows (Deut 10:17–18), invites women to participate in worship (Deut 12:12, 18; 16:11, 14; 31:12), requires the release of female slaves (15:12; cf. Exod 21:2–11), exempts new husbands from military service (Deut 20:7), guards the rights of captive brides and second-ranked wives (21:10–14, 15–17), stresses the authority of the mother over a rebellious child (21:18–21), protects a wife who is falsely accused of lying about her virginity (22:13–21), assumes the innocence of female victims of rape (22:23–29; cf. Exod 22:16–17 [15–16 MT]), shields a divorced woman from abuses from her previous husband (24:1–4), and secures the integrity of families and estates through levirate marriage (25:5–10). Block, “‘You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor’s Wife’: A Study in Deuteronomic Domestic Ideology,” 160–67. For a detailed analysis of all relevant texts in Deuteronomy related to the role and restrictions of the head of the household, see Rebekah Josberger, “Between Rule and Responsibility: The Role of the *’ab* as Agent of Righteousness in Deuteronomy’s Domestic Ideology” (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2007); cf. Rebekah Josberger, “For *Your* Good Always: Restraining the Rights of the Victor for the Well-Being of the Vulnerable (Deut 21:10–14),” in *For Our Good Always: Studies on the Message and Influence of Deuteronomy in Honor of Daniel I. Block*, ed. Jason S. DeRouchie, Jason Gile, and Kenneth J. Turner (Eisenbrauns, 2013), 165–87.

<sup>13</sup> My former student, Dr. Matthew Rowley, established the following syllogism that clarifies why the concept of human rights is nonsensical apart from beliefs in God and in human being made in the divine image: If we give up the biblical God, then we give up the *imago Dei*. If we give up the *imago Dei*, then we give up inherent or conferred human worth. If we give up human worth, then we give up human worth violations (since a worthless thing can’t be violated). If we give up human worth violations, then there is no real enforceable wrong done by a human to another human.

<sup>14</sup> Adapted from Block, “‘You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor’s Wife,’” 145–46.