



We hold dear the Ten Commandments. They symbolize our belief in the infallible, inerrant Word of God. Though they are part of the Old Covenant, they are still relevant in today's world.

The Ten Commandments divide into two groups, 1-4 and 6-10, with #5 as the hinge. The first four are upward and deal with God. The last five are outward and deal with our fellowman. "Honor your father and mother" is a segue between the two.

The tenth of the Ten Commandments is special — "Thou shalt not covet (Exodus 20:17). It is the final "Word" of the "Ten Words." It serves as a transition from Law to Grace. Numbers six through nine are all external actions, but number ten moves to a different level — the heart. The sin in number ten is not an action but an attitude. It concerns the desire of the inward man. We

should not seek after what belongs to someone else — house, wife, or money.

The Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12) says we should do unto others as we would have them do unto us. Whatever would please you and bring you joy, that is what you should desire for your brother, your friend, your fellow human being.

Jesus said the second greatest commandment is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," (Mark 12:31 KJV). If I love my neighbor as much as I love myself, I will not be selfish or greedy. I will not be a hoarder.

We love to quote Philippians 2:5 (KJV), "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus," but back up and put this verse in context.

'Nuff Said

Verse 2 says, "Fulfill ye my joy." Verses 3 and 4 say, "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." I should put the welfare of others above self. JOY — Jesus first, others second, yourself third.

The Sermon on the Mount says, "Love your enemies," Matthew 5:44 (KJV). We should be givers, not takers. We should not take away another's coat or shirt (Matthew 5:40) but should share (Matthew 5:42). Our goal should not be to acquire the material possessions of others — even our enemies.

Where is this going? September 17 is ANTI-GAMBLING SUNDAY. When someone gambles, they risk a smaller amount of money trying to gain a larger amount of money. The only way for one person to "win" at gambling is for others to lose. When one gambles, he "covets" what formerly belonged to another. Thou shalt not covet.

The guy who gets the "gold" by gambling has broken the Golden Rule. Most gamblers want to win. They want others to lose. Something has gone wrong here.

If I love my neighbor as myself, I will not take from him what he wants to keep. Even if he is my enemy, I am to love him. The gambler loves money more than he loves his neighbor or enemy.

Gambling is a result of materialism. A gambler values material things more than spiritual things. Matthew 6:24 (KJV) says, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (material wealth — MONEY).

If I consider my brother better than myself, I will not take his money. Watching the soldiers gamble at the foot of the cross for Jesus' seamless robe should be enough to turn us from this pastime.

The LOTTERY is GAMBLING — 'NUFF SAID!

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Statement challenges soft view of sexual sins acceptance

NASHVILLE (BP) — A coalition of evangelical leaders that includes about 70 Southern Baptists has issued a statement on biblical sexuality to counter the idea that Christians "should agree to disagree" in their views of homosexuality and transgenderism.

The Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) announced Aug. 29 the release of The Nashville Statement, which consists of 14 affirmations and denials consistent with the church's long-held teaching on human sexuality.

The article that may gain the most attention is the document's declaration on the acceptability of evangelical disagreement regarding the issues of homosexuality and gender identity.

Article 10 says, "WE AFFIRM that it is sinful to approve of homosexual immorality or transgenderism and that such approval constitutes an essential departure from Christian faithfulness and witness. WE DENY that the approval of homosexual immorality or transgenderism is a matter of moral indifference about which otherwise faithful Christians should agree to disagree."

The statement, and Article 10 in particular, arrives at a time when some self-identified evangelicals have revised their views on human sexuality by affirming same sex relationships and marriage.

Others have asserted the issues are not essential to the Christian faith and evangelicals should be able to disagree on homosexuality and transgenderism without breaking fellowship.

The statement gained its name from a meeting CBMW convened Aug. 25 in Nashville at which a coalition of scholars, pastors, and other evangelical leaders discussed and endorsed the document.



The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) hosted the meeting during its national conference and in conjunction with its Research Institute meeting.

In "the hope of serving Christ's church," the statement includes these declarations:

■ God designed marriage as a covenantal union of only a man and a woman that is the sole context for sexual intercourse.

■ God created male and female as equals but with differences intended for human flourishing.

■ Adoption of "a homosexual or transgender self-conception" is inconsistent with God's purposes.

■ Same sex attraction is not part of God's original design, but people who experience such attraction may live fruitful lives through faith in Christ as they practice purity.

■ God graciously empowers sinners "to forsake transgender self-conceptions" and "accept the God-ordained link between one's biological sex and one's self-conception as male or female."

■ People born with a sex development disorder possess the same "dignity and worth" as all other image-bearers of God.

CBMW President Denny Burk said the statement's aim "is to shine a light into the darkness — to declare the goodness of God's design in our sexuality and in creating us as male and female."

The coalition hopes to "provide help for churches and Christian organizations that are looking for biblical guidance on how to address homosexuality and transgenderism," said Burk, also professor of biblical studies at Boyce College, the undergraduate school of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

The coalition also seeks to build a group of "like-minded evangelicals to stand together for the challenging days ahead" and to encourage young evangelicals who are under pressure to desert biblical teaching, he said in a written statement.

ERLC President Russell Moore described the statement as "an urgently needed moment of Gospel clarity." He said in a written endorsement, "The Sexual Revolution cannot keep its promises, and the church must stand ready to receive with compassion the many who are in need of a better hope."

"The Nashville Statement is part of that mission, and my prayer is that it will help anchor churches and Christians to the Gospel of Jesus Christ for years to come."

The lengthy list of Southern Baptist signers includes eight former SBC presidents; all six SBC seminary presidents; H.B. Charles, current president of the SBC Pastors' Conference and pastor of Shiloh Metropolitan Church in Jacksonville, Fl.; and five SBC entity heads.

Nashville Mayor Megan Barry, however, took exception to the name and the content of The Nashville Statement, tweeting: "The @CBMWorg's so-called 'Nashville Statement' is poorly named and does not represent the inclusive values of the city & people of Nashville."

The Nashville Statement is available online at cbmw.org.