

# THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

## The HISTORY of the TEN COMMANDMENTS in AMERICAN PUBLIC EDUCATION

The Ten Commandments were a prominent part of American public education for almost three centuries. Around the year 1688, The New England Primer became the first published American textbook and was the equivalent of a first grade reader. The New England Primer was used in public schools throughout the United States for more than one hundred fifty years to teach Americans to read and contained more than forty questions about the Ten Commandments.

The Ten Commandments were also included in public school textbooks published by educator William McGuffey, a noted university president and professor. A version of his famous McGuffey Readers was written in the early 1800s and became one of the most popular textbooks in the history of American education, selling more than one hundred million copies. Copies of the McGuffey Readers are still available today.

The Ten Commandments also appeared in textbooks published by Noah Webster in which were widely used in American public schools along with America's first comprehensive dictionary that Webster also published. His textbook, The American Spelling Book, contained the Ten Commandments and sold more than one hundred million copies for use by public school children all across the nation and was still available for use in American public schools in the year 1975.

## The COMMANDS in the NEW TESTAMENT

1. **There is only one God** - 1 Corinthians 8:6;  
Ephesians 4:5; John 17:3

2. **Keep from idols** - 1 John 5:21; Revelation 21:8

3. **Do not swear** - Matthew 5:34

4. **Worship on the first day of the week** -  
1 Corinthians 16:2; Acts 20:7

5. **Honor your father and mother** - Ephesians 6:1-2; Colossians 3:20

6. **Do not murder** - Revelation 21:8; 1 John 3:15

7. **Do not commit adultery** - 1 Corinthians 6:9,10; Hebrews 13:4

8. **Do not steal** - Ephesians 4:28; 1 Corinthians 6:9,10

9. **Do not lie** - Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9

10. **Do not covet** -  
Colossians 3:5; 1 Corinthians 6:10

• Came into effect approximately AD 33 for all people of the earth.

1. I AM the LORD thy God.  
Thou shall have no  
other gods before me.
2. Thou shall not make  
to thyself any  
graven images.
3. Thou shall not take  
the Name of the Lord  
thy God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath  
day, to keep it holy.
5. Honor thy father and  
thy mother, that thy  
days may be long upon  
the land which the Lord  
thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou shall not kill.
7. Thou shall not  
commit adultery.
8. Thou shall not steal.
9. Thou shall not bear  
false witness against  
thy neighbor.
10. Thou shall not covet  
thy neighbor's house.  
Thou shalt not covet  
thy neighbor's wife,  
nor his manservant,  
nor his maidservant,  
nor his cattle, nor  
anything that is  
thy neighbors.

## HISTORY of the 10 COMMANDMENTS

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- It was ONLY given to the nation of Israel (The Jews)
- It became an effective law to the Israelites only after the exodus from Egypt
- The Ten Commandments and the law were given through Moses

- The Ten Commandments were discontinued as a law about AD 33
- The Ten Commandments are NO LONGER in effect (Colossians 2:14)

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