

# Its Symptoms--the Ten Commandments

by Ernest O'Neill

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*The Ten Commandments are not commandments to obey, but symptoms of divine life that show us our true condition and the need for superhuman life.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 2:9, Exodus 20:1, John 10:10, Romans 3:20, Romans 7:7, Romans 8:3, Galatians 3:24, Ephesians 2:8, 1 John 5:12

**Topics:** "Moral Law", "Spiritual Renewal"

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## Description

Ernest O'Neill delves into the significance of our daydreams, emphasizing that Jesus of Nazareth disagreed with the world's view on human limitations and highlighted the potential for a superhuman life activated through trust in the Creator. He explores the Fall of mankind, where separation from God led to a focus on self and a life of covetousness, greed, and hatred. O'Neill discusses the Ten Commandments as laws of life, not mere behavioral guidelines, revealing mankind's struggle to emulate divine life without possessing it, leading to moralistic philosophies in religions and churches.

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## Transcript

Have you ever imagined that you were somebody famous or rich? Have you ever dreamed that you could do things far beyond your natural powers? Have you had moments when you thought, "I can be different--I can escape from this narrow, little life I live?" When we do this, the whole world usually implies we are just day-dreaming: compensating for our feelings of inadequacy or mediocrity. But the only man who overcame death and gave verifiable historic proof that he was directly related to the Creator of the world--Jesus of Nazareth--disagrees!

### Significance of our Daydreams

He says that you were made to love above the limitations you were born with. Your powers of speech, thought, and feeling are neutral, passive abilities that differ only in quantity from those of the animal. They exert power to change and effect things in the world only when they are energized by a superhuman life that is activated through personal trust in the Maker of the universe. Your dreams of a higher kind of superlife exist because that is reality. Certainly our egotism perverts it in many ignoble and childish ways, but the existence of such dreams reflects the reality that we were made to experience a superlife that is meant to power our purely human abilities.

Jesus of Nazareth indicated that the early account in the Bible of man's creation was historically reliable on this point that God made man with human powers--and then made available to him a "tree of life" that would give effectual force to those human powers. Without this superhuman life (actually his own personal life) our human abilities would deteriorate over 70 years and could produce no increase in the world's resources. The history of mankind expresses the truth of these first and second laws of thermodynamics--the energy in the world remains constant but the world-system itself is running down.

## The Fall

In mankind's early days we refused to believe this and determined to make do with what we thought were our considerable human powers. We separated ourselves from the Creator and His own life and were therefore left by Him to discover the limitations of ordinary human life. However, left without our Maker, we abandoned developing the world for him and concentrated on using it for ourselves. Without the self-esteem and security of a relationship to Him, we accustomed ourselves to extorting these things from each other. Soon after creation we had normalized this state of Godlessness so that we were blind to any life other than one of covetousness, greed and hatred. It was at this point (about 1400 B.C.) that the Creator prompted a man called Moses to describe the superhuman life we were intended to experience.

## The Ten Commandments

These were called the laws of life. Just as the laws of science describe the way matter behaves, so these laws describe the way superhuman life behaves. Newton's apple didn't have to try to fall to the ground in order to obey the law of gravity: it naturally obeyed it because it was a "heavier-than-air" object. If it had been lighter than air, it could not have behaved that way--however much it tried. The only way, for a balloon filled with hydrogen to behave the same way as the apple is for the balloon to become a heavier-than-air object by getting rid of the hydrogen.

We human beings have been so determined to live independent of our Creator that we have tried to do the impossible. We have regarded the so-called "Ten Laws" as behaviour we ought to emulate. Rather than face the fact that we lacked the life they described, we have committed ourselves to imitating the behaviour patterns of that life even though we possess only human life! The result is the frustrating, self-righteous philosophy of moralism which occupies most religions and churches today.

## Old Testament History

The purpose of the Ten Commandments was exactly the opposite--they were not commandments that we should try to obey--they were symptoms of divine life to show us our true condition. Over a period of 1400 years (documented in the Old Testament human history details man's repeated efforts to "obey" these laws without possessing the superhuman life they describe. The result is the gradual deterioration of that society until it became the most moralistic nation in the world. Though the broad principles exhibited by these laws have become the foundation of our legal system which restrains anarchy in the world, we human beings have continued to miss their essential purpose by trying to reproduce them rather than be exposed by them.

## Using the Ten Laws

Have you superhuman life? How do you know? Simply ask yourself--do I depend on people or money rather than God for my self-esteem and security? Do I wish I had what someone else has (covetous)? Do I

say things behind people's backs (bear false witness)? Do I commit adultery? Steal? Swear? Do I have to "try" to avoid these things? Stand out in the open--be honest--have you superhuman life? Or are you limping along with ordinary human powers that will run out after 70 years? Let's talk in the next article about what you can do.

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