

1. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: Core Morals

a. Introductory matters

i. The Significance of the Ten Commandments

1. They have been central to the morality of Israel and the Church since the beginning.
2. One of several biblical texts which were often committed to memory.
3. Almost always included in catechisms
4. Have been publicly displayed in Churches and public buildings
5. Treated in depth by Thomas Aquinas, Martin Luther, and John Calvin
6. At times have been considered as a focusing of Natural Law.
7. Their importance is underscored in Torah by being given twice (Exodus & Deuteronomy)
8. Given to Moses directly-written with the finger of God on stone.
9. Only these (not the statutes and ordinances) were placed in the Ark of the Covenant
10. These have been viewed as the essential statements concerning Israel's relationship with God and one another.

ii. Miller's assumptions which guide his treatment of the commandments

1. There is a tension between their universality and their particularity
2. There is a tension between their simplicity and their complexity
3. They must be interpreted

4. The commandments are the starting point of a rich trajectory through the prophets, the New Testament, and down to the present.
5. They function in a way like our national constitution.
6. No matter how they are stated, all the commandments have both a positive and a negative meaning.
7. There are different ways of numbering them
 - a. The differences stem from the way the first words are divided
 - b. Most Protestants divide the first words into two commandments. Catholics include everything including the commandment concerning idols under the first commandment.
8. Miller believes the commandments should be memorized by children as part of their Christian education. He also believes they must be preached in a series of sermons from time to time, and included in some way in the liturgy.