



**These tools** offer you an opportunity to dive into the text of God's Word and breathe it deep into your life. You have the chance to flex and strengthen your meditation, reflection, journaling, and prayer spiritual disciplines in a daily personal rhythm. Our prayer is that this extended time listening to God speak in his Word will enrich your understanding of God and your response to Him.

**For the Individual:** Quiet your mind with a bit of silence, then read the scripture text and meditate daily. Use a couple of translations if you like but return to the text daily letting God's message seep into your heart. If a week lists more than one text branch out into the others during the week considering how they relate to each other. Use a paper journal or pad or electronic note system to commit your thoughts in writing. Each week you'll find several directions to go with those thoughts. You might take them one each day, or you might commit yourself to an extended study and reflection time during the week to tackle them all. If you spread them out during the week you may find that you have something new to add or understand to your entries on previous days.

**Couples** may want to share each other's observations and understandings as a daily exercise or a weekly summary of their individual quiet time with God. This could be a great date night habit to form!

**Friends or Spiritual Buddies** could commit together to doing the daily rhythm individually and sharing together on the phone or some electronic platform or over coffee (appropriately and safely distanced). Consider this option if your small group does not meet during the summer. Maybe a friend or neighbor would welcome this kind of contact, especially if they are alone during our sheltering in.

**Families** with kids K through High School - Many families have rediscovered family meals during our sheltering in. You can read the text (or an appropriate portion of it) at the beginning of a daily meal together, then during the meal use one of the thought directions for a family conversation each day. Feel free to rephrase or adapt the text or questions as you are inclined. You might ask older kids to do the paraphrasing. You might choose one key phrase for younger children. Close your meal with the prayer points you noted.

**Note to Parents:** Use the adult processing piece for your personal quiet time as a way for God to fill you up for these conversations.

**Small Groups** may be on a summer break but plan on a periodic social gathering. Consider making a commitment to each other to keep this individual rhythm of quiet time and when you do gather, have maybe 20 - 30 minutes of SHARE time together reporting in on a significant personal insight or step taken. Keep in touch weekly with updates from your prayer points.

## The Zero-eth Commandment

The whole point of the ten commandments isn't the thunder and light show on Mount Sinai. It's all about God claiming us as his people and describing what that looks like in our daily living. His loving act of redeeming us gives us a new perspective on him and our relationship with him which will seep into our relationship with each other. This week's focus is not on dos and don'ts, it's about who God is and what he has done to redeem us for a life in relationship with him.

**Exodus 19:3-6 (ESV)** While Moses went up to God. The LORD called to him out of the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob, and tell the people of Israel: <sup>4</sup> 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; <sup>6</sup> and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel."

**Deuteronomy 6:1-4 (ESV)** "Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you, that you may do them in the land to which you are going over, to possess it, <sup>2</sup> that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son's son, by keeping all his statutes and his commandments, which I command you, all the days of your life, and that your days may be long. <sup>3</sup> Hear therefore, O Israel, and be careful to do them, that it may go well with you, and that you may multiply greatly, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has promised you, in a land flowing with milk and honey. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.

**2 Corinthians 5: 17-20 (ESV)** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. <sup>18</sup> All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; <sup>19</sup> that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup> Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.

### Directions your thoughts may take:

- What are you hearing about God, his character, his titles or names we could apply to him?
- What are you hearing about God's action, power, ability?
- What new attitude would you like to adopt in the light of the truths in God's Word?
- What new routine would help you stay focused on this message from God's Word or help you to display it in your life?
- As a family, how can you/we demonstrate this attitude toward God to each other, to our neighbors?
- What might people understand about God when they see me live this way?

As you write your reflections, jot down points to talk to God about... thanks, praise, confess, ask for help. Then have that prayer conversation!

## The Zero-eth Commandment Family Conversation

Choose one of these texts or even one phrase as appropriate for your family. If your children have a Bible they can look it up.



<sup>3</sup> Then Moses went up the mountain to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, “This is what you must say to the descendants of Jacob. Tell the Israelites, <sup>4</sup> ‘You have seen for yourselves what I did to Egypt and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to my mountain. <sup>5</sup> If you carefully obey me and are faithful to the terms of my promise, then out of all the nations you will be my own special possession, even though the whole world is mine. <sup>6</sup> You will be my kingdom of priests and my holy nation.’ These are the words you must speak to the Israelites.” Deuteronomy 19:3-6 GW

<sup>17</sup> Whoever is a believer in Christ is a new creation. The old way of living has disappeared. A new way of living has come into existence. <sup>18</sup> God has done all this. He has restored our relationship with him through Christ, and has given us this ministry of restoring relationships. <sup>19</sup> In other words, God was using Christ to restore his relationship with humanity. He didn’t hold people’s faults against them, and he has given us this message of restored relationships to tell others. <sup>20</sup> Therefore, we are Christ’s representatives, and through us God is calling you. We beg you on behalf of Christ to become reunited with God. 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 GW

**Pick one of these conversation directions each day:**

- If God were wearing a name tag during this conversation what name or description would be on it?
- What is God able to do?
- Knowing God has done that, what attitude do you have toward God?
- As a family, how can you/we demonstrate this attitude toward God to each other, to our neighbors?
- What reminders will help us to hang on to that attitude or help you to display it in your life?
- What might people understand about God when they see me live this way?

As you have your conversation, jot down points to talk to God about... thanks, praise, confess, ask for help. Then have that prayer conversation!