

Life Hacks: 10 Things To Live By

Opener: What's an example of a life hack? (For a hint see question one below.)

Scripture: And God spoke all these words: ² "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.



³ "You shall have no other gods before me.

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷ "You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns. ¹¹ For in 6 days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the 7th day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

¹³ "You shall not murder.

¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵ "You shall not steal.

¹⁶ "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor." Exodus 20:1-17

Discussion Questions

1. In popular vernacular, a "life hack" is a simple and clever tip or technique that increases productivity and efficiency. Life hacks are all about eliminating life's frustrations in deliciously clever ways, that in retrospect seem obvious. How could that phrase possibly apply to the Ten Commandments?
2. "You shall have no other gods before me." God's first commandment establishes that our entire relationship with God is based on our obligation to have no other gods before Him. What "other gods" do people put before Him? How does recognizing that qualify as a life hack? Exodus 20:3
3. "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth." Idolatry is worshipping anything or anyone other than the one true God. What are some things we idolize or put before God today? Why do we do that? How does idolatry limit God's power in our lives? Exodus 20:4-6

4. “You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God.” What does it mean to misuse or take God’s name in vain? What does swearing, profanity, blasphemy and misusing God’s name say about our relationship with the Lord and reflect what’s in our heart? Exodus 20:7
5. “Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.” For Christians, the Sabbath is Sunday in honor of Christ’s resurrection. What does it actually mean to keep the Sabbath holy? Exodus 31:12 says, “You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you.” How is it a sign to us and to others? Ex. 20:8-11
6. “Honor your father and your mother.” How can children who still live at home honor their parents? How can adults honor their parents, even when they’re unkind or abusive? Ex. 20:12
7. “You shall not murder.” Does that prohibit killing in any form? Why or why not? What’s not considered murder under the law, and are such exceptions Biblical? (e.g., capital punishment, war, self-defense) Exodus 20:13
8. “You shall not commit adultery.” How has society normalized adultery and tried to make it appear victimless? How is adultery the opposite of a life hack? How can we deal with marital unhappiness without engaging in an affair? Exodus 20:14
9. “You shall not steal.” We steal when we take something that doesn’t belong to us without permission or legal right without intending to return it. What are some common and creative ways people steal and why do they do it? Exodus 20:15
10. “You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.” How can someone do that outside a courtroom? In your experience, how does it start, progress, and end? Was it a life hack or the exact opposite? Exodus 20:16
11. “You shall not covet.” We covet when we yearn to possess or have something without regard for the rights of others. What attitudes trigger coveting? What’s the difference between admiring something that belongs to someone else and coveting? Exodus 20:17



Wrap Up

My favorite life hack is “don’t put it down till you put it up.” But that pales in significance to the life hacks expressed in those Ten Commandments God gave the Israelites so long ago. Their life was complicated and dreary. They didn’t know which way was up. Their natural choices took them into idolatry, superstition, and conflict. God simplified everything for them and provided absolute clarity when it came to knowing and loving Him and one another.

Years have passed, Jesus came, grace reigns and we’re free from the law—but those Ten Commandments continue to provide clarity while increasing productivity and eliminating frustration. Just don’t lose sight of this: the ultimate life hack is God Himself.