

“IT’S TIME TO CHECK OUR FOUNDATION. WHICH PILINGS ARE WEAK?”



ANNE GRAHAM LOTZ, founder and president of AnGel Ministries and a daughter of Billy and Ruth Bell Graham, is a best-selling author of six books, including “Just Give Me Jesus” and her most recent book, “Why?”
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CHECK YOUR FOUNDATION



Several years ago my husband and I asked a contractor to examine the foundation of our house to determine if it was strong enough to withstand new construction. He reported that the pilings had so weakened that anyone who walked across the floor above them would fall through. Without hesitation, we decided to rebuild the old pilings and thus strengthen the foundation of our home.

The foundation of our society at large, and of our lives, in particular, needs to be reexamined, too. Is it strong enough for the new construction—the advances in science,

technology and medicine that are opening before us in the 21st century?

We hear a lot about the “pilings” which we sometimes call values: family values, ethical values, moral values, medical values, individual values, religious values. But when was the last time you examined them as they undergird the foundation of your own life and family and business? Observing our culture, the values that seem to be generally accepted are “Whatever makes you happy or works for you or feels good.”

It’s time to check our foundation. Which pilings are weak?

Read Exodus 20:1-17

- According to Exodus 20:1, where do the values in this chapter come from?
- Give a phrase from each of the following verses that underscores the source of our values: Deuteronomy 5:12, 15, 16, 22, 32-33.
- What gives God the right to establish our values? See Genesis 1:1.

THE FOUNDATION OF SPIRITUAL VALUES

God should be pre-eminent

- Reread Exodus 20:3.
- What are some other gods that are commonly placed first in our lives? See 1 Timothy 6:10; Luke 21:34; 1 Peter 4:3; Jeremiah 45:5.
- In Matthew 22:37-38, how does Jesus confirm and restate the value of putting God first?
- What action will you take to strengthen this foundational “piling” of giving God pre-eminence in your life?

God should be worshiped

- Reread Exodus 20:4.
- How can you improve the clarity of your focus on God? See Job 33:26; Psalm 14:2, 119:11; John 1:18; 2 Timothy 2:19.
- Explain what Jesus meant in John 4:24.
- Are you the kind of worshiper that God seeks? See John 4:22-23.

God should be honored

- Reread Exodus 20:7.
- How do Leviticus 19:12 and 22:32 reaffirm this value?
- What do you think it means to profane God’s name?
- Is it possible to profane God’s name by calling yourself a Christian but not acting like one?

God should be followed

- Reread Exodus 20:8.
- How did God set the example for us in Genesis 2:2-3?
- Give phrases from Exodus 20:9-11 that refer to the basis for this value.
- In your own words, what does Isaiah 58:13-14 say about how to apply this value to our daily life and about the blessings of following God’s example in our weekly schedule?
- What will you do to set apart one day a week to follow God more closely?

THE FOUNDATION OF SOCIAL VALUES

Family relationships are important

- Reread Exodus 20:12.
- According to Ephesians 6:1 and 1 Timothy 5:4, what is one way to honor our parents?
- How are we to guard and interact with family members, according to Luke 17:3; Romans 14:10, 13; 1 Corinthians 8:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:6; James 4:11; 1 John 4:21, 5:16; Mark 3:35?
- What will you do to improve your family relationships?

Human life is sacred

- Reread Exodus 20:13.
- What is the basis for the sacredness of human life? See Genesis 1:27.
- Recognizing that all human life is sacred, how are we to treat others? See Acts 10:34; Ephesians 4:2, 32; Luke 6:31; Romans 12:10, 13:8; Galatians 5:13; 1 Peter 3:8.
- If you have not treated others as you should, what hope is there for you, according to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11?
- What difference would it make in the way you treat others if you viewed each person as one of inestimable eternal worth—someone who God created, loved and died for?

Sex has limits

- Reread Exodus 20:14.
- Who thought of sex in the first place? See Genesis 2:20-25.
- How does Jesus affirm God’s idea in Matthew 19:4-6?
- What limits has God placed on sex? See Leviticus 18:5-30; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 18, 7:2; Jude 7.
- What are some practical things you can do to not only maintain your sexual purity but to help your children maintain theirs?

Honesty is the best policy

- Reread Exodus 20:15.
- Where does John 8:44 say lying originates?
- Where does lying lead? See Revelation 21:8.
- What are some of the benefits of being honest, according to Psalm 25:21, Proverbs 11:3 and 13:6?
- How is Jesus’ example in Matthew 22:16 to be reflected in your own life, according to Titus 2:7-8?

Say what you mean, and mean what you say

- Reread Exodus 20:16.
- How does this “piling” reach all the way to heaven? See Isaiah 45:23; John 1:1, 14, 14:6.
- How are your words to reflect His? See Matthew 5:37, James 5:12, 1 Peter 4:11.
- What do you think are the “empty words” of Ephesians 5:6 and 1 Thessalonians 2:5? The controversial words in 1 Timothy 6:4 and 2 Timothy 2:14? The powerless words in Colossians 2:4?
- Take a moment now and pray Psalm 19:14 for yourself.

Be content with what you have

- Reread Exodus 20:17.
- What is the source of your contentment, according to Proverbs 19:23?
- How does your relationship with God directly affect your peace of mind? See Hebrews 13:5, Philippians 4:11-12, 1 Timothy 6:6.

I am distressed that our society is offended by the public posting of the Ten Commandments—our “foundational pilings.” However, God is more concerned that we read them, study them, apply them and live by them. Today, begin writing them on the tablet of your heart. 📖