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## The Setting of the Law – Embedded in Relationship

**I. Opening Question:** What is your natural tendency toward rules/laws in general? Do you naturally tend to be a law-keeper? Or are rules and laws just, “more what you'd call "guidelines" than actual rules?” (Secular Bonus Points: Which character says this in which movie?) Does your attitude depend on the situation? How do you think your natural tendencies could be helpful as we study the ten commandments? How do you think they could be unhelpful?

### II. 3 Main Categories of Law

1. Moral – 10 commandments; how we interact with God and other people. Relevant today.
2. Civil – instructions for government and for specifics of living together as a community. Principles are relevant today. E.g. I Cor. 9
3. Ceremonial – instructions for how to worship God. Many foreshadow Christ and have been fulfilled in Christ and thus we don't follow them today. However, they can still be instructive in seeing how God desires to be worshipped and to get a renewed sense of his holiness. E.g. Exodus 25 – 30, instructions for building the tabernacle.

### III. Linguistic Notes - pointing toward relationship:

1. Torah - the first 5 books of the Old Testament
  - definitions in Hebrew: instruction, direction, law
2. Ten Commandments: In Hebrew, they are referred to as the ten words. *asseret hadevarim*. (Deut. 4:13, Deut. 10:4, Exodus 34:28)
  - significance of “words” in ancient near eastern cultures
  - significance of “words” in the Bible

### IV. Timeline Activity:

Put the following events in the history of God's people on the timeline in chronological order.

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|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Gen. 15: 7-21     | 2. Exodus 12: 29 – 32 | 3. Ex. 16: 2-4, 13-15 |
| 4. Exodus 20: 1 – 17 | 5. Exodus 32: 1-5     | 6. Joshua 21:43-45    |

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What is significant about the order of events?

**V. Specific Setting of The Giving of the Ten Commandments: Exodus 19**

1. What is the purpose of this gathering?
2. What do you learn about God's character?
3. What do you learn about who we are made to be?

**VI. Covenant:** an agreement between 2 people or 2 groups of that involves promises on the part of each to the other.

1. What does God promise to do for his people in the Mosaic Covenant? (Ex. 19: 4-6, Ex. 20: 1-3, Deut. 6:1-3)
2. What do God's people promise to do for him in the Mosaic Covenant? (Ex. 19:8, Ex. 20:1-17, Ex. 24: 7-8.)
3. How does Jesus change the way we view the law this side of the cross? (Rom. 8: 1-4)

**VII. Personal Reflection:**

1. How does the deep relational context of the 10 commandments change the way I perceive or interact with the law?

God's blessing was a gift of grace to be appropriated and enjoyed through obedience. – Wright, p. 93.