

AN EASY EXERCISE

The Decalogue, or the Ten Commandments, is a list of moral responsibilities, but it also is a list upholding negative rights. In the column on the right, underneath each negative right listed, write the number or numbers of the commandments(s) that specifically apply.

Exodus 20:3-17

1. You shall have no other gods before Me.
2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image—any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing mercy to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes His name in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.
5. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

The Decalogue, or the Ten Commandments, which is a list of moral responsibilities, also is a list upholding negative rights. Among these rights are the following.

- A. The right not to be defamed or maligned
9
- B. The right to own and manage property
8, 10
- C. The right to be respected and honored in one's family and as a member of one's family
5, 7
- D. The right to life
6
- E. The right to worship God
1, 2, 3, 4
- F. The right to work and accumulate wealth
4

Today, however, Americans view rights differently. Most see rights as entitlements shaped, crafted, and granted by government. As we've already implied, this flies in the face of these words from the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. — That to secure [or make secure, protect] these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed...."