

Encyclopedia Judaica states:

The "words" are ranged in a fairly clear descending order from matters divine to matters human, and within each group from higher to lower values. Duties to God come first; the obligation to worship Him alone precedes treating His name with reverence, and both precede the symbolic piety of Sabbath rest. Respect for parental authority naturally follows respect for God. The purely ethical injunctions are ranged in an obvious hierarchy: life, the family, right of possession, reliability of public statements. The last "word" -- the ban on guilty attempts or desires -- deals with what is both least culpable and most ethically sensitive; it acts as a safeguard against infringing any of the other ethical injunctions.

Do New Testament references to the Decalogue help us with the arrangement? Let us note six of these.

Matthew 19:16-19

Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?" {17} "Why do you ask me about what is good?" Jesus replied. "There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments." {18} "Which ones?" the man inquired. Jesus replied, "'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, {19} honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'" "

This reference includes the fifth commandment with those in the second table of the Decalogue.

Matthew 22:34-40

Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. {35} One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: {36} "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" {37} Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" {38} This is the first and greatest commandment. {39} And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' {40} All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

This reference divides the Decalogue into two groups: commandments that are summarized with "Love the Lord your God" and those that are summarized with "Love your neighbor." Into which group does "Honor your father and your mother" fall?

Mark 10:17-19

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" {18} "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good-- except God alone. {19} You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'" "