



*Ten: Words of Life for an Addicted, Compulsive, Cynical, Divided and Worn-Out Culture*  
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Hailing from Norwich, England, **Sean Gladding** has lived in the U.S. for the last two decades, serving in various forms of pastoral ministry. Sean served as a co-pastor at Mercy Street, a church in Houston, Texas, for seven years, after which Sean and his wife, Rebecca, and their two children returned to Lexington, Kentucky, to rejoin friends at Communality – part of the family of New Monastic communities – where they are seeking the welfare of the city. Sean is also the author of *The Story of God, the Story of Us*.

## From Rules in Stone to Real Freedom

- This book has its origins in a sermon series on the “Ten Words” you preached as a pastor at Mercy Street, but you chose to write *Ten* as a story instead of nonfiction. Why?
- The pastor in the story refers to the Ten Commandments as the Ten Words. Why does he do that and what difference does it make?
- Your characters come from a variety of backgrounds: some Christian, some not, some adults in recovery and others students in high school. In real life, how would you bring a diverse group like this together?
- A quick glance at the table of contents reveals you’re going in reverse order here. What’s your reason for starting with the last commandment and working your way backwards to the first?
- If envy equals desire plus resentment, how can we work through that resentment and find contentment?
- What does it mean to tell the truth that *transforms* reality rather than merely *describes* reality?
- How does the commandment against stealing connect to the global economy?
- In a sex-obsessed culture, how might the prohibition against adultery bring freedom?
- What’s the difference between killing and murdering and which is the proper translation of the commandment?
- As far as “honoring your father and mother” goes, how would you counsel a person who’s been abused by a parent?
- Why is the context of the Israelites so critical in understanding the command to keep the Sabbath?
- What might it mean to actually “hallow” God’s name in our lives?
- How do you define an idol today?
- How can the Ten Words counter individualism?