

## THE REFORMATION OF THE DECALOGUE

*The Reformation of the Decalogue* tells two important but previously untold stories: of how the English Reformation transformed the meaning of the Ten Commandments, and of the ways in which the Ten Commandments helped to shape the English Reformation itself. Adopting a thematic structure it contributes new insights to the history of the English Reformation, covering topics such as monarchy and law, sin and salvation, and puritanism and popular religion. It includes, for the first time, a comprehensive analysis of surviving Elizabethan and early Stuart ‘commandment boards’ in parish churches, and presents a series of ten case-studies on the commandments themselves, exploring their shifting meanings and significance in the hands of Protestant reformers. Willis combines history, theology, art history and musicology, alongside literary and cultural studies, to explore this surprisingly neglected but significant topic in a work that refines our understanding of British history from the 1480s to 1625.

Jonathan Willis is a reformation historian and Senior Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Birmingham. He is author of *Church Music and Protestantism in Post-Reformation England* (2010); editor of *Sin and Salvation in Reformation England* (2015); and co-editor of *Dying, Death, Burial and Commemoration in Reformation Europe* (2015) and *Understanding Early Modern Primary Sources* (2016). He is also director of the University of Birmingham’s Centre for Reformation and Early Modern Studies.

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THE REFORMATION OF  
THE DECALOGUE

*Religious Identity and the Ten Commandments in  
England, c.1485–1625*

JONATHAN WILLIS

*University of Birmingham*



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*For Adam*

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## *Notes on the Text*

Quotations from early modern printed and manuscript sources have been partially modernised for the purposes of easy comprehension: in particular *i/j* and *u/v* have been standardised in line with modern English. However, the original spelling of the titles of early modern books has been preserved.

The year is taken to begin on 1 January (e.g. New Style) rather than on 25 March (Old Style): for dates occurring between 1 January and 25 March this is clarified in the text.

Biblical quotations are taken from the Authorised (King James) Version, unless otherwise stated.

Early modern printed books are listed in the footnotes without their *Short Title Catalogue* references, except for clarity in instances where multiple editions of the same text are being discussed. STC and Wing numbers of all printed texts are given in the bibliography.

## Abbreviations

Allen, <i>Treasurie</i>	Robert Allen, <i>A tresurie of catechisme, or Christian instruction</i> (1600), STC2: 366.
Babington, <i>Fruitful</i>	Babington, <i>A very fruitful exposition of the Commandements by way of questions and answeres for greater plainnesse</i> (1586), STC2: 1095.
Barker, <i>Painefull</i>	Peter Barker, <i>A iudicious and painefull exposition vpon the ten Commandements</i> (1624), STC2: 1425.
Bossy, 'Moral'	John Bossy, 'Moral arithmetic: Seven Sins into Ten Commandments', in Edmund Leites (ed.), <i>Conscience and Casuistry in Early Modern Europe</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).
Brinsley, <i>Watch</i>	John Brinsley, <i>The true watch Or A direction for the examination of our spirituall estate (according to the word of God, whereby wee must be judged at the last day)</i> (1606), STC2: 3775.
Dod, <i>Plaine</i>	Dod, John, <i>A plaine and familiar exposition of the Ten commandements</i> (1604), STC2: 6968.
Downame, <i>Abstract</i>	George Downame, <i>An abstract of the duties commanded, and sinnes forbidden in the Law of God</i> (1620), STC2: 7104.
Dyke, <i>Knowledge</i>	William Dyke, <i>A treasure of knowledge: springing from the fountaine of godlinesse, which is the word of God</i> (1620), STC2: 7431.5.
Elton, <i>Exposition</i>	Edward Elton, <i>An exposition of the ten commandements of God</i> (1623), STC2: 7620.5.
Granger, <i>Tree</i>	Thomas Granger, <i>The tree of good and euill: or A profitable and familiar exposition of the</i>

- Commandements, directing us in the whole course of our life, according to the Rule of God's Word* (1616), STC2: 12185.
- Greenham, *Workes* Richard Greenham, *The workes of the reuerend and faithfull seruant of Iesus Christ M. Richard Greenham*, ed. H.H. (1612), STC2: 12318.
- Hooper, 'Declaration' John Hooper, 'A declaration of the Ten holy Commandments of Almighty God, 1548[9?]', in *Early Writings of John Hooper*, ed. Samuel Carr (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1843), pp. 249–430.
- Lakes, *Probe* Osmund Lakes, *A probe theologicall: or, The first part of the Christian pastors prooffe of his learned parishioners faith* (1612), STC2: 15136.
- Perkins, *Chaine* William Perkins, *A golden chaine: or The description of theologie containing the order of the causes of saluation and damnation, according to Gods word* (1600), STC2: 19646.
- Whately, *Pithie* William Whately, *A pithie, short, and methodicall opening of the Ten commandements* (1622), STC2: 25315.