

LifeSavers Bible Studies

#6: God's Law Still Needed

There's a great deal of confusion today about the law of God. Many say His laws were nailed to the Cross with Jesus and that we are no longer obligated to keep them since the New Testament says we are saved by grace. Yet, no one seems eager to *completely* ignore them because they are the pattern for the laws of our present society. Certainly, no Christian would support murder, stealing, adultery, idol worship, or any of the other sins that are prohibited in the Ten Commandments.

Key to dispelling the confusion, we need to understand that "God's law" encompasses more than the Ten Commandments. Originally, when His law was expressed, it included health laws that were given to insure physical and mental strength (see Leviticus 11-15), which still makes sense to today. His law also included civil laws that were designed to protect the rights of citizens within their community, (i.e. Deuteronomy 17-25). In addition, there were many religious and ceremonial laws which were designed to teach lessons about God and His plan of salvation. These laws can be found throughout the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. The *Decalogue* (literally, ten words), which we recognize as the Ten Commandments, is considered the moral law. Each classification of law was separate and distinct from the other. Some were modified as living conditions changed from wilderness to city dwelling, but the Ten Commandments were never subject to modification.

Check one answer for each question:

I. The Moral Law. (Exodus 20:3-17, and Deuteronomy 5:7-21)

1. The moral law is still helpful and useful.

Romans 3:20; 7:7: TRUE FALSE

2. The Commandments will play a role in God's final act of judgment

James 2:10-12: TRUE FALSE

3. The law is an appropriate standard for use in the judgment because it is "holy, just and good".

Romans 7:7, 12: TRUE FALSE

4. God's law only applies to righteous and holy people.

1 Timothy 1:9-10: TRUE FALSE

5. According to Paul, there aren't any righteous.

Romans 3:9-12: TRUE FALSE

If the law is meant for the unrighteous, and everyone falls into that category, then the law is for everyone, "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." Romans 3:23.

6. Even though the law's purpose is to condemn, it plays a pivotal role in the salvation process.

Galatians 3:24-25: TRUE FALSE

It's only as we realize our desperate need for help that we are willing to accept what Christ offers. Paul says we'd be completely unaware of our desperate condition if God had not given the law to reveal our need (Romans 7:7, 9, 12-14). That's why James refers to God's law as a mirror. (James 1:22-25).

7. According to the Psalmist, God's law is able to convert our soul, bring joy to our heart and enlightenment to the eyes of our understanding.

Psalms 19:7-8: TRUE FALSE

8. After we have received forgiveness and are no longer under the condemnation of the law, we should no longer feel a need for God's law.

Romans 3:27-28, 31: TRUE FALSE

9. We can never be justified (or saved) by keeping the law.

Galatians 2:16: TRUE FALSE

When we accept Christ's "perfect life" on our behalf, we are viewed by God as sinless! When people try to keep God's laws apart from Christ, they negate the merits of Christ's sacrifice in their behalf.

10. Christ brings an end to legalistic religion.

Romans 10:1-4: TRUE FALSE

Christ is the end of the law for *righteousness*, but not the end of the law.

11. Jesus clearly said He would never do away with moral law.

Matthew 5:17-19: TRUE FALSE

12. Isaiah said Christ would exalt the law and make it honorable.

Isaiah 42:21: TRUE FALSE

13. In His teaching Jesus magnified and clarified the law.

Matthew 5:21, 22, 27-28: TRUE FALSE

14. The Ten Commandments can be summarized by our need to love God and one another.

Matthew 22:37-40: TRUE FALSE

The first four of the Ten Commandments deal with our relationship with God, and the last six deal with our relationship(s) with one another.

It's very clear that Jesus did not intend to put an end to the Ten Commandments, nor did He nail them to His cross. Yet the record says that He "Blot[ted] out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross" Colossians 2:14. And, "Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances..." Ephesians 2:15.

II. What Was Abolished by Christ at the Cross?

15. Daniel was shown that the time would come when the sacrificial system would cease to have meaning.

Daniel 9:26, 27: TRUE FALSE

Sacrifices and oblations (sin offerings) were clearly outlined in the ceremonial laws of the Jewish system. Every aspect of worship was designed to point their minds to the coming Messiah so that they would be prepared to transfer their faith over to Him whom the services foreshadowed. When Jesus fulfilled His mission by dying on the cross, the laws that were shadows of His ministry were removed so that there was no longer a need to discover God's plan through the semblance of ritual.

16. Paul refers to the ceremonial system (with its foods, festivals and sabbaths) as a shadow of things to come.

Colossians 2:16-17: TRUE FALSE

Meat and drink offerings and various holy days are connected with the sanctuary service. Leviticus 23 outlines seven ceremonial feast days that were called "sabbaths" because, like the seventh-day Sabbath, no work was to be done on them. They were: *The Passover, The Feast of Unleavened Bread, The Feast of First Fruits, The Feast of New Grain Offering, The Feast of Trumpets, The Day of Atonement, and The Feast of Booths*. These were to be kept like a sabbath, but were "beside the Sabbaths of the Lord" (verse 38). Likewise, these were abolished at the cross and are not associated with the seventh-day Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

17. Paul clearly states that the ceremonial system has been replaced by Christ's atoning sacrifice.

Hebrews 10:1-14: TRUE FALSE

"For the law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never, by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, they would not have ceased to be offered....For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins. Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering Thou has not desired, but a body Thou has prepared for me'; then He said, 'Behold, I have come to do Thy will.' He takes away the first in order to establish the second. By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all."

The first offering of bulls, sheep and goats was taken away by the arrival of the second offering, Jesus Himself; a much better Sacrifice than the first.

18. Far from abolishing the moral law, with the new covenant Jesus promises to write His laws in our hearts.

Hebrews 10:16-18: TRUE FALSE

19. I want to accept Jesus' plan for my life and allow Him to write His law in my heart so I can say, "I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart."

Psalms 40:7-8: YES NO

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