

PURPOSE OF STUDY: To show that God has a moral standard – an absolute – for all people to follow; that for the born again Christian, keeping this law is a requirement of the gospel, not in order to be saved, but because it is what we have been saved for – obedience to God.

TEXTS:

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| 1. 2TI 3:1-5 | 10. JAS 1:23-25 |
| 2. DT 12:8 (PR 21:2) | 11. GA 3:24 |
| 3. JE 17:9 (PR 14:12; 28:26) | 12. RO 3:31 |
| 4. PS 119:172 | 13. RO 6:14-15 |
| 5. EX 20:1-17 | 14. HEB 12:28 (TT 2:11-14) |
| 6. 1JN 3:4; RO 7:7 | 15. PS 40:8 (PS 119:97) |
| 7. JAS 2:10-11 | 16. MT 5:17-18 (EX 31:18) |
| 8. RO 3:19-20 | 17. 1JN 2:3-5 |
| 9. RO 7:14; 8:7 | 18. REV 14:12 |

THE STUDY:

- 1. How does the Bible describe the last days? 2TI 3:1-5**
A dangerous time when people are self-absorbed and completely immoral.
- 2. What is the cause of this state of immorality? DT 12:8 (PR 21:2)**
People don't seem to know the difference between right and wrong.
- 3. But won't my heart tell me the difference between right and wrong? JE 17:9 (PR 14:12; 28:26)**
No. Our feelings are often contrary to reason and good judgment. Feelings have never been a safe guide to tell right from wrong.
- 4. Then how can we know right from wrong? PS 119:172**
We need a moral standard. God law, the Ten Commandments, is the standard of right and wrong.
- 5. What are the Ten Commandments? EX 20:1-17**
- 6. How does the Bible define sin? 1JN 3:4; RO 7:7**
Sin is defined as "the transgression of the law" (KJV), or "lawlessness". Paul exclaimed that he would never have known his personal sin except by the Ten Commandment law of God. It is God's law that defines right from wrong and brings conviction of sin.
- 7. What does the Bible say about breaking just one of the Commandments, and why? JAS 2:10-11**
Breaking one is the same as breaking them all, because every act of disobedience of the law is an act of rebellion against the lawgiver.
- 8. Doesn't the Bible teach that we can't be saved by keeping the law? RO 3:19-20**
Yes it does. The Bible is crystal clear that no one can ever be justified by their law keeping. But it should be noted that God's law was never intended to provide salvation, but rather to give us a knowledge of sin.
- 9. If the law is the standard of right and wrong, why can't keeping it save us? RO 7:14; 8:7**
Paul says that the law is spiritual, while we are naturally carnal. A carnal person cannot obey a spiritual law until they become a spiritual person. There has never been anything wrong with the law of God itself; the problem is in fallen man's inability to live in harmony with a spiritual law.

10. What does the Bible compare the law to? JAS 1:23-25

The law is likened to a mirror. A person may never realize the smudge on their face until they look into a mirror. Although the mirror reveals the smudge, that same mirror can't wipe it away. It is the same with the law of God – it may reveal our sin, but it can't cleanse us from sin.

11. When the law reveals our sin, Who does it point us to for cleansing? GA 3:24

The law points us to Jesus Christ so we can be justified by faith.

12. Doesn't faith do away with the need to obey God's law? RO 3:31

Not at all! In fact, it's the very opposite. By faith we "uphold the law" (NIV).

13. Doesn't the Bible teach that once we find grace, we are no longer under the law? RO 6:14-15

Yes. We have been freed from the dominion of sin. It no longer can have the mastery over us! This is why the Bible continues by saying "Shall we sin because we are... under grace? God forbid!"

14. What is the purpose of God's grace? HEB 12:28 (TT 2:11-14)

We receive grace so we may "serve God acceptably". The grace of God always leads to obedience.

15. How should born again Christians feel about God's law? PS 40:8 (PS 119:97)

God puts His law in our hearts and minds so that it becomes our delight.

16. Did Jesus ever teach that the law would be changed or done away with? MT 5:17-18 (EX 31:18)

On the contrary, Jesus taught that the slightest jot of the law would remain until heaven and earth pass away. When God delivered His law to Moses, He wrote it with His own finger on tables of stone. Since that time the expression "written in stone" has been used to describe a thing's unchangeable nature.

17. What is the genuine test of knowing God? 1JN 2:3-5

If a person says he knows God, but refuses to obey His commandments, God calls him a liar. The one who truly knows God delights to please Him, and will be found obeying His will.

18. In Revelation's final call to a planet rapidly disintegrating into lawlessness, how does God describe His people? REV 14:12

God's people at the end of time are characterized by their keeping of God's Commandments. Their faith in Jesus, as well as their love for Jesus, is demonstrated by their joyful obedience to Him.

APPEAL:

A genuine commitment to God leads to loving obedience. At end-time God will have a group of people who reveal to the whole universe the joy of living according to God's moral standard. They have been saved by grace. They love God so much that they enthusiastically obey Him. They accept His standards of conduct. They are convinced His way is best. Won't you choose today to take your stand with God's commandment-keeping people?

DIFFICULT TEXTS/OBJECTIONS:

- 1. Didn't the Ten Commandments originate at Mt. Sinai for the Jews only? JN 8:44; RO 4:15**
The Bible tells us that the devil sinned from the beginning – that he was a liar and a murderer (Jn. 8:44); but without a law to say lying and murdering is wrong, he could not have violated it (Ro. 4:15). Noah kept God's law (Gn. 6:5); Abraham kept God's law (Gn. 26:5); Joseph kept God's law (Gn. 39:9), all before Sinai. The law was *spoken* at Sinai, not *made* at Sinai.
- 2. Ro. 10:4: "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." Some will use this text to say that the believer in Christ "ended" the law.** The word "end" actually means "outcome" or "purpose." The same Greek word is translated "fulfillment" in Lk. 22:37 (NIV); "result" in Rom. 6:22 (NIV); and "purpose" (ESV) and "outcome" (NASB) in Jas. 5:11. Paul's point is that the *purpose of the law* is fulfilled in Christ; that a person must go to Christ to get righteousness. His life is the result of obedience to the law; He alone has obeyed it perfectly, and embodies its principles. If you apply the interpretation that "end" means the law has ended, then you must apply the same to Romans 6:22 and say eternal life has ended; or better yet, to James 5:11, and say that God has ended!
- 3. Mt. 22:37-40 (Jn. 13:34-5): "Jesus gave us a new commandment to love one another so we don't need to keep the ten commandments anymore."** In Matthew, Jesus talks about the "two great commandments," love to God and love to man. In John, He speaks of love to man as "a new commandment." The commandments given in Matthew are quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, respectively. Neither were "new." However, the concept was "new" to the people Jesus was talking to; it was something they had forgotten. In 1 John 2:4-6, he says that anyone who claims to know Jesus and yet refuses to keep His commandments is a liar; he says we should "walk just as He walked". Jesus said of Himself, "I have obeyed my Father's commandments," (Jn. 15:10). In 2 John 4-6, he says that the commandment to love one another is not a new commandment, but one we have had "from the beginning." Then he defines that love relationship by saying, "this is love, that we walk according to His [the Father's – see v. 4] commandments." Paul sums it all up in Romans 13:8-10, when He says that since the motive of love doesn't lead us to harm our neighbor and thus violate the Ten Commandments, then love must be a fulfilling of the law (not an abolishment of the law!).
- 4. Ro. 6:14: "Christians who are under grace are not under obligation to obey the law."** Some Christians attempt to use the concepts of faith and grace as a way of relieving themselves from the obligation of obeying God's law. It must be understood that to be under law refers to being under obligation to obey the law *in order to be saved* (and not *as a result* of salvation). Consequently, being under the law means being under the condemnation of the law, because "all have sinned" (Ro. 3:23). Jesus Himself was "made" to be under the law's condemnation for our sakes, in order to redeem us (Ga. 4:4). To be under grace means we realize that if we are to be saved, it must be through God's mercy, and not by our own works. But the work of salvation is to save us from our sin – our lawbreaking – so we may give acceptable service to God. The text says that "sin shall not have dominion"- that is, lawbreaking shall not rule our lives – because we are "under grace." If lawbreaking doesn't rule our lives, then the only other alternative is lawkeeping, not *in order* to be saved, but *because we are saved*. The next verse, Romans 6:15, says "Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? God forbid!" And in Romans 3:31 the Bible says "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law!"
- 5. "The law is Old Covenant. We are in the New Covenant, and don't need to worry about keeping the law."** It is true we are in the New Covenant; the reality is that nobody is ever saved under the Old Covenant. Both Old and New Covenants are based upon the Ten Commandments. The Old Covenant was based on the law written in stone (2 Co. 3:6-7); the New Covenant is the same law written in our hearts and minds (Heb. 8:10). The Old Covenant was based on the promises of the people (Ex. 19:7; 24:7); the problem with the Old Covenant was that the people broke their promises to God (Heb. 8:8-9). The New Covenant is established upon "better promises" and a better Priesthood (Heb. 8:6), but the law is the same.