

The Ten Commandments

In our last lesson, we mentioned we were going to study what constitutes obedience. There are many different ideas as to what true obedience is. For the next several lessons, we will deal with this subject in depth and see what the Bible has to say concerning obedience. The first portion of this series of studies will deal with the ten commandments and how God feels about our obedience to them.

There are some questions we might ask concerning our subject today, which are the following. Are the ten commandments for us today? Have they been abolished? Have they become obsolete so that we have no need of them in our society today? Did Christ do away with them when He died on the cross?

There are many questions being asked by people today. In this study and in the studies to follow, we will try to answer these questions from the Bible.

Before we get into the heart of the lesson, I will like to lay a foundation for this lesson and the lesson that will follow. With this knowledge, the two lessons will be much easier to understand.

1. **The Ten Commandments.** Exodus 20:3-17

In these verses, we find the ten commandments spoken by God. Even though there are only ten, they cover every aspect of man's relationship to each other and to God. These commandments form two categories. The first four commandments deal with our relationship with God. The last six deal with our relationship with man or our fellowman.

Now as you study these Ten Commandments, you will notice that most people will say these all should be observed, except the Fourth Commandment, as found in verses 8-11. The Fourth commandment deals with the Sabbath and which day is the Sabbath (or rest day).

There are two things we want to notice about this commandment: (1) God does not say we can keep any day that we desire. He says remember "the seventh day." The word *the* is specific. The Sabbath is "the" seventh day, not the first, second, or fourth day of the week. If God had left it up to man to decide on which day to worship him, he would have said, remember "a Sabbath day". The word *a* would mean any day we desired, but God did not say that.

(2) It says that God blessed and hallowed the seventh day. God did not do this to any other day of the week. The word *hallow* means, "to be made sacred." The other six are not holy or sacred, but the seventh day is.

2. **Who wrote the Ten Commandments?** Exodus 31:18

Notice the reference says that God wrote the Ten Commandments with his own finger. No man wrote the ten commandments. Notice what God wrote the commandments on. He wrote them on "two tables of stone." Now is stone something that soon disappears, or is it lasting? It is lasting, enduring; it is a symbol of being eternal.

3. **Where were the Ten Commandments put?** Deuteronomy 10:1-5

After Moses broke the two tables of stone, God told him to hew two tables of stone like unto the first and bring them up into the mountain to him and God would write them again. As Moses came down from the mountain, in verse 5, he put the two tables of stone "in the ark." Now remember these three things; (1) God wrote the Ten Commandments, (2) he wrote in stone, (3) the commandments were put "in the ark."

4. **Who else writes a law?** Deuteronomy 31:24-26

Here we notice that Moses writes a law. This law is not written in stone, but in a “book”. Now is a book enduring, everlasting? No, and neither was this law to be everlasting, as we will find out in our next lesson.

Notice where this law was placed. In verse 26 notes, “Take this book of the law, and put it in the ‘side’ of the ark...” This law was not put inside the ark, but “in the side” of the ark.

From here on, this law is referred to in the Bible as “the book of the Law”, “Moses law” or “the law of Moses”, because it was written by Moses as God dictated it to him.

5. **Noice the difference:**

The Commandments	Law of Moses
1. Written by God	1. Written by Moses
2. Written on stone	2. Written in a book
3. Was put in the ark	3. Was placed on the side of the ark.
4. Was eternal	4. Till the seed came.

6. **Even God makes a distinction between the two.** 2 Kings 21:8

Notice the wording here. God says, if Israel would do all that “I have commanded them” **and** all that my servant “Moses commanded them.” From this we can see that God Himself makes a difference between his law and Moses law.

This is the foundation which I wanted to lay down. Now it will be much easier to understand the scriptures when we know the Bible speaks of two different laws. People who do not know there were two separate laws become confused and are not able to “rightly divide the word”. Now let us proceed with the study and see from the scriptures that the Ten Commandments are still in force today to guide the Christian in the path of righteousness.

7. **What was Paul’s attitude toward the law?** Romans 7:7

Paul says there is not a thing wrong with the law. In fact he says “...I would not known sin, but by the law...” What law is he talking about? The Ten Commandments of course, for it mentions “lust and coveting.” If the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross, and done away with, would Paul have been fearful of “lusting and coveting”? Why no, he wouldn’t have been, for there would have been no law that said it was wrong. Once a law has been done away with, it is no longer in force.

If these two commandments were still in force in Pauls time then all the Ten Commandments had to still be in force, yes, even the commandment concerning the Sabbath. It was a part of the same law as lusting and coveting.

8. **Do we have to keep all ten?** James 2:10-12

James tells us if we keep all nine, yet fail to keep the other one, we are still breaking the law and thus a sinner. Notice again, James is referring to the Ten Commandments. Killing and adultery are a part of the Ten Commandments. Does this sound as though they have been abolished? Certainly not. In fact, James says we are a transgressing if we break even one of the commandments. We must keep all ten. Again, all ten includes the seventh day Sabbath, for God gave no other day for worship or to keep holy, but the seventh. If we keep another day or try to replace the seventh day with another day, we then become sinners before God for we have broken His law.

Also, notice verse 12. This tells us we will be judged by this same law. It is called the “law of liberty”, because if we keep it, it will free us from sin or guide us out of sin. Jesus frees us from sin by his blood, but the law shows us what sin is, thus we become free from sin and are at liberty because we are now obeying God.

This law is a very serious thing. Which law can we break and still please God? Which law is not important? Is it important not to steal? Is it important not

not to covet? Is it important not to take the name of God in vain? Which law in the ten commandments is not important? We cannot break even one law and expect to please God.

9. **What is sin?** 1 John 3:4

The bible tells us plainly “sin is the transgression of the law.” How can man transgress something that does not exist? If the law was nailed to the cross how could John say this? The law has to exist today.

10. **No law, no sin.** Romans 4:15

“...for where no law is, there is no transgression”. This seems easy enough to understand.

11. **What kind of laws are the Ten Commandments?** Romans 7:12

If you read verse 7, you will notice that Paul speaks of coveting, so he is referring to the Ten Commandments. Paul says the law is holy, just and good. Now if something is holy, just and good, what need is there to do away with it?

In the next lesson we will study concerning a law that was not holy, just, or good, so it was abolished. But the Ten Commandments were not abolished.

12. **Did Jesus come to destroy the law?** Matthew 5:17-18

In Jesus own word,s he says he came not to destroy the law. We should believe him. He came not to destroy, but to fulfill. He came and lived the perfect life, he fulfilled the law. Jesus lived up to the law, showing us, that in Him, we can do the same.

But some say, to fulfill means to do away, or to complete and do away with. Let’s see if this is true.

13. **Christ fulfilled all righteousness.** Matthew 3:13-15

Here it says that Christ fulfilled all righteousness, so did He do away with righteousness? Who could be so foolish as to say he did. The word *fulfilled* here means the same as in Matt. 5:17. Jesus completed all that was required of him, just as we must fulfill all righteousness today.

14. **Was it prophesied that Jesus would destroy the law?** Isa. 42:21

It did not say that Jesus would so away with the law, but He would magnify the law. *Magnify* means to make plain or reveal. So it was never intended the law (the Ten Commandments) would be done away with.

15. **What did Jesus tell the rich young ruler?** Matthew 19:16-17

Jesus told him if he wanted to enter into eternal life then he must keep the commandments. How can we expect to enter into eternal life and continue to break (disobey) God’s commandments. It cannot be done, not even the fourth Commandment.

Notice in verse 18, the man ask “which”? Now why do you think the man ask “which”? Simply because there were two sets of laws: Moses’ law and God’s law. Then Jesus quoted from the law He was referring to, the Ten Commandments, which we must keep.

But someone says, he didn’t mention the Sabbath. That is true, but then does he mention not having idols before us, does he mention taking the Lord’s name in vain? Can we do these things, just because he didn’t mention them here? Jesus quotes enough to let the young man know which law he is referring to. So, the thought Jesus left us, that if we expect to enter into life, we must keep the commandments.

16. **WHICH IS THE GREAT COMMANDMENT:** Matthew 22:36-39

Some people say there are only two commandments we have to keep today. This is very true. But we ask, what was Jesus referring to, was he giving something new for man to do? If you will check Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18 you will see that Jesus wasn't giving anything new. This was commanded in the old scriptures too.

Remember, I said in the beginning of our lesson, the first four commandments deal with our relationship with God, and the last six commandments deal with our relationship with man.

Here in Matt. 22:36-39, Jesus is simply giving a summary of the Ten Commandments. If we keep the Ten Commandments we will reveal our love to God and our love to our fellowman. The Ten Commandments are wrapped up in these two thoughts, "love to God and love to man". Read Luke 10:25-28 for further information on this thought.

17. A hard text in the Bible. 1 John 2:4

After reading this reference, how can we say we love God and not obey His commandments? Again, this includes the Fourth Commandment, which says the seventh day is the day we should keep holy.

18. How do we show our love to God? 1 John 5:2-3

Words are cheap and come easily. But action reveals our true feelings. No other way can we show our love to God than keeping his commandments or obeying him. If we do this, then he knows we mean what we say, when we say we love him.

19. What did God do to the seventh day in the beginning? Gen. 2:2-3

In the beginning of time, God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it. The word *sanctified* means to "set apart for a holy use." Notice, the seventh day was sanctified. This was long before there ever was a Moses. God's law has been from the beginning of time. Abraham kept God's commandments (Gen. 26:5).

20. The Gentile grafted into Christ. Romans 11:13, 17

The Gentiles are being grafted (adopted) into the family of God. Now when a father and mother adopt a child, they do not give that adopted child different laws than the other children. But the laws of the family apply to everyone, including the adopted child. God did not give one set of laws to the Jews and another set to the Gentiles. He gave one set of laws and they were for all, Jew or Gentile. See Exodus 12:47-49, and many others, especially Gal. 3:28.

21. Did the people keep the Sabbath after Christ died? Acts 13:42-44

This speaks of the Jews and Gentiles coming together on the Sabbath to hear the word, even the whole city.

22. The manner (custom) of Paul. Acts 17:2

23. Paul preached to the Jews and the Greeks (Gentiles). Acts 18:4, 11

If you notice verse 11, he continued there a year and six months preaching every Sabbath, verse 4. Now if they were to worship on the first day of the week, do you think Paul would have worshipped so long with them worshipping every seventh day (Sabbath)? I hardly think so. This was the day they were supposed to keep holy and that is why Paul continued to worship with them. The Sabbath was never changed.

24. What will the saints be doing? Revelation 13:12

The saints keep the commandments of God.

25. **Who is Satan fighting?** Revelation 12:17

26. **What is the whole duty of man?** Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

This has been the responsibility of man through the ages, and it will never change. To enter into life, we obey God. The only way we can know what pleases God is by his commandments.

SUMMARY

As we search the scriptures from Matthew to Revelation, we fail to find a commandment "Remember the first day of the week, to keep it holy." There isn't even the faintest hint of such a commandment.

Even though the world does not look upon it as sin, yet God calls it sin when we break (disobey) the Fourth Commandment and substitute another day for his Sabbath. The wages of sin is death, Rom. 6:23. Why continue in this way of life, when we can please God by obeying Him.

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Rev. 22:14