

Jesus Christ Did Not Abolish the Commandments of God But He Did Make Them *User Friendly*

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Many sincere and dedicated Christians have found themselves frustrated and wearied by their attempts to live up to the standard of God's laws of love. Some Christians have become so exhausted and burnt-out trying to please God by their efforts, that they have given-up and walked away in a state of hopelessness. They simply did not fully understand how God's commandments apply to them as New Testament Christians.

Many of God's people lead lives of *quiet desperation*, simply because they struggle to live by the *letter* of the law and never experience the spiritual *joy* that Christ's sacrifice promised. Are you tired of giving it all you have got, and still feel like you are missing the peace and joy that the scriptures promised? Do you feel like you cannot live up to God's expectations, and therefore believe that you can never be as close to Him as you desire to be? Well, there is hope. Jesus has made it possible for the New Testament believer to walk in harmony with the law, without being overwhelmed by it.

The apostle Paul was inspired to write, "the law is holy, just and good" and it is "spiritual" (Rom. 7:12,14). Anything that is spiritual is also eternal and has neither beginning nor end. Therefore, we know that the commandments are active in today's world. The laws of God are simply the *royal conduct* by which God and Jesus conduct themselves. They are a collection of principles that teach us how to love God and our fellow man. The apostle Paul confirms this in Rom 13:10. "Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law".

The problem is not God's laws of love, but man's inability to live up to their standards. This loving code of conduct is above the capability of carnal man to achieve by himself. We are born with a fleshly nature that is very contrary to the obedience of these principles. Paul relates this truth to the church at Rome, "because the mind set on the flesh is

hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able {to do so}" (Rom 8:7 NAS). Failure to live by God's laws of love exacts the severe penalty of eternal death. Paul addressed this issue in 1 Cor 15: 56, "the sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law". The natural heart of man is not able to observe these principles without the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Therefore, the law, apart from Jesus Christ and His grace, is not the friend of mankind.

So, how does a human being get out of this horrible predicament? Who can tame the law, and bring it into the reach of mankind? Who can neutralize its death sentence over human beings? How was it made *user friendly* for the repentant believer?

Thankfully, it has been accomplished by the sacrificial death of our Savior and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. He kept the law perfectly for all mankind, because He knew it was an impossible goal for us to achieve. It was no surprise to God and Christ that we

would fail. Remember that Jesus "was slain before the foundation of the world" (Rev. 13:8). God knew that we could not rise to His level of conduct. Only *God in the flesh* could do that for us. Therefore, it is only our acceptance of Christ's grace, His *righteousness* and *obedience* to the law that can give us peace with God and makes the law our friend.

We must come to understand, that the law can never be kept by us *apart from Christ*. Remember the words of our Lord, "Without me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). That is why we are miserable and frustrated when we try to keep the laws on our own strength and efforts. Jesus (the Messiah of the Old Testament) longed for the days when He could write His Father's laws within our hearts (Jer. 31:33). This is why it is futile to tell a person to change the conditions of their life without explaining how to achieve it. It cannot be done by human effort, or by the human will alone. It is not a conscious decision one can make *outside of Jesus Christ*. The attempt to serve God apart from *a heart of faith* can only produce the kind of *self-discipline* that God rejects. A spiritual renewing has to occur within the heart of the person. A *new mind* has to be imparted to the human heart.

We need to understand how God is now dealing with the New Testament Christian. The process by which God is changing the very innermost being of His future children. This procedure works something like this:

God, who loves us and gave His only begotten Son, has given us a covering umbrella of grace through the sacrificial offering of Jesus. This covering of grace shields the Christian while the Holy Spirit sows the laws and divine nature of God within the believer. This new seed, that is now planted within the heart of the believer, will start to grow and produce the very thoughts, motives, words, deeds and principles that are the very expression of our heavenly Father's character.

***God's grace allows us to make mistakes – be forgiven – and still have access to our heavenly Father and eternal life.* Our new divine nature produces the desire for righteousness, and a yearning to live according to God's way of love, which is outlined by the law. It creates a deep desire to walk with God and our fellowman in a spirit of love and forgiveness. Our newfound love begins to fulfill the requirements of the law (Rom. 13:8). It starts redirecting our thoughts, and consequently, changing our actions. Our new spirit works in opposition to our human nature, and begins to override the thoughts and actions of the flesh. This is all accomplished through our faith in the *sacrifice, righteousness, obedience and works* of Jesus Christ. This process starts at our baptism and continues to grow throughout our lifetime. This is our free gift from God.**

In order for us to grow in grace – we must *abide in Him* who is “*full of grace and truth*” (John 1: 14). We must remember what Paul wrote in Romans 8: 2 “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death”. It is only

Jesus that save us and make us righteous in the eyes of our Heavenly Father. We can do nothing by ourselves. Christ not only took away

our sins, but He added something to us - *His righteousness* (11 Cor. 5:21). *Us in Christ - Christ in us.*

This does not mean that we should adopt a cavalier or casual attitude regarding the physical law. We should be as diligent as we can in its observance. Nevertheless, we should understand that the joy and serenity God wanted His children to experience could only come from receiving a new heart in Jesus Christ. We should strive for truth and learn all we can about the law, but never lose sight of the greater picture of our salvation. So many of our brethren are toiling to make sure they are keeping all of the physical and mechanical requirements of the law, that they seem to forget "*the singleness that is in Christ*".

The law is no longer a death sentence for those who are covered by the blood and grace of God. Jesus has taken the *bite*, or *sting* out of the law for the true Child of God. It is no longer our executioner - but a guide that shows us the path we are to walk - in Christ Jesus.

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? 56The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. 57But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 58Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord (1 Cor 15:55-58).

For true Christians, the law has now become a *guiding light* that points us to a way of love, which will bring us the blessings we all seek. In Romans 8: 4 the apostle Paul summed-up this whole subject about as beautifully as one could put into words; "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit".

My friends, we are not called to any organization – we are called to a "Person". That person is *Jesus Christ*. Let us learn to "rest and relax" in Jesus Christ and enjoy the grace of God. It is only then that we can call the Laws of God our friend. Let us totally submit ourselves to God and let our Lord write these laws upon our hearts. No, the crucifixion

**of Jesus did not abolish God's laws – but did make them *user friendly* -
for those who are covered with the shed Blood of Jesus.**