

God's Law – Done Away?

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"Paul emphasized that the *law* was a yoke of bondage from which the Christian had been set free. It was all part of that old covenant which was done away in Christ. It was 'nailed to the cross.' This is the **central teaching** of the New Testament. The first day of the week is now widely observed as the Sabbath. After His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples on four occasions which were on a Sunday. This becomes a major part of the basis of the veneration of Sunday as the 'Lord's Day,' ostensibly replacing the traditional Sabbath.

"The Hebrew Sabbath, has continued to be observed by non-Christian Jews to the present time. During the first century some Jewish Christians also continued the practice of observing the seventh-day of the week, as well as the assembly for worship on the first day of the week, but their influence on Christianity, discernible for several centuries, dwindled rapidly. It has been suggested that with the rise of anti-Semitism in the early centuries, Sunday worship was a convenient means of excluding the Jewish believers."

Aside from the *intent* to exclude Jewish believers, is the reasoning of the preacher correct? How do we view God's Law? What should your view of God's Law be? Let's review God's word for instruction on how to have the correct perspective.

Romans 7:11-14. For **sin** ... deceived me, and ... killed me. Therefore the law is *holy*, and the commandment holy and *just* and *good*. Has then what is *good* become death to me? Certainly not! But **sin** ... was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin ... might become exceedingly sinful. For we know that the law is *spiritual*, but I am carnal, sold under sin.

The law has the some of God's own characteristics: God is also holy, good, just (righteous) and spiritual. James writes:

James 1:22-25. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face *in a mirror*; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a *doer of the work*, this one will be blessed in what he does.

The law of God is a spiritual mirror into which one may look to find and see clearly the spiritual dirt —sin— on one's mind and heart. The mirror is not responsible for the presence of the dirt, or for the harm the dirt may cause. The function of the mirror —the law— is to show the dirt, so that one may do something about it. King David had a different perspective than modern preachers today about God's law. What did he write about?

Psalms 119:97. Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day.

Psalms 119:35-36: Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, For I delight in it.
Incline my heart to Your testimonies, And not to covetousness.

David begins by a petition. *Make me*. I want to walk in the right path. Our thoughts should be of praise and thanksgiving to God that we were led to the right path — we were found!

David also writes: *Incline my heart*. The only way to cure a wrong leaning is to have the mind bent in the opposite direction. Holiness of heart is the cure for *covetousness*. This vice is as injurious as it is common; it is as *mean* as it is *miserable*. When you want something you can't have it brings nothing but misery. Literature and movies abound with stories of people who "love," actually *lust*, for someone, or something, they can't have or shouldn't have. Covetousness is a degrading, cowering, submissive, hardening, deadening and cruel miserable sin, which withers everything around it that is lovely and Christ-like. The contrast is most striking.

There are the divine testimonies on the one hand, and there is "covetousness" on the other. God stands on one side, the world on the other.

The renewed man chooses between the two; he does not require long to think — God is his choice. A covetous man wants all that you have and all what your neighbor has. He's never satisfied in his greed. A *covetous* government run by man would have all that all have.

Psalm 119:113: I hate the double-minded, But I love Your law. (NKJV)
I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love. (KJV)

The opposite of the fixed and infallible law of God is the wavering, changing opinion of men: David had an utter contempt and abhorrence for this; all his reverence and regard went to the sure word of God's testimony. David loved the law and hated man's vain thoughts. The thoughts of men are vanity; but the thoughts of God are true, good, holy, just, righteous and spiritual. When man thinks his best his highest thoughts are as far below those of divine revelation as the earth is beneath the heavens. We blindly trust politician's promises of new Government programs. We also trust snake-oil remedies for losing weight without exercise, diet or pain.

David hated lying, and so should we. **Psalm 119:163**, "I hate and abhor lying, But I love Your law." David recognized that he had sinned against God.

Psalm 51:3-4 For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, *You only*, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight — That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.

When we sin, we sin against God. We transgress His Holy law. David knew about not coveting your neighbor's wife. David hurt a lot of people, including his innocent son who died. When we ask, "Mirror, Mirror on the wall, who is the *sinless* of us All?" We don't like the answer.

Romans 3:21-24. But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus

We all have sinned, but, thanks to the righteousness and loving mercy of God we can be justified, and can be made righteous before God through the redemption from the penalty of sin by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Romans 6:22-23. But now having been set free from sin... you have your fruit to holiness ... everlasting life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life ...

The Law is the mirror that shows us what sin is. We might want to destroy the mirror or, we can say: "What does the mirror know?" I think that it makes better sense to use the mirror to remove the two by four that it is in our eye. Without a mirror how do you know what you are doing to your face? Without God's law, how do you know what path to follow? How do you get out of the forest without a guide?

The central teaching of the New Testament is not that the *Law has been done away*. The central teaching of the New Testament is that God in His lovingkindness towards His creation *sent His very own Son* to pay the penalty of sin. Remember, we have all sinned: We sin, we die. We accept the gift of God and we live forever.

The claim that the "veneration of Sunday as the *Lord's Day*, replaces the traditional Sabbath" is vanity. It is not true. We should delight on the Sabbath day. Man covets the time that God has set apart for Himself to benefit us.

Psalm 119:165. Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing shall offend them. Or as the NKJV says. And nothing causes them to stumble.

The Law of the Lord should be our delight — it gives us life and lights up our path. We have Christ's own promise to us of eternal life — if we pay attention and meditate on God's laws, precepts and testimonies. To us there is only one choice, "for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."