



SAVED TO SERVE

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SHOULD WE KEEP THE TEN COMMANDMENTS TODAY?

1. In this Sabbath School Lesson, we will study whether the Law of God should be kept today or if it was done away at the cross. Let's begin by investigating the need for law and order in the world we live in.

“When the binding claims of the fourth commandment are presented, many use every subterfuge to avoid the conclusion that God requires the observance of the day which he sanctified and blessed. When every other argument against keeping the commandments of God is shown to be vain, the opposers of his law take refuge in the delusion that there is no law, that the commandments of God were abolished by Christ at the cross. What an astonishing statement, that God has no law! Kings of the earth have laws whereby the nations are governed, and has the God of the universe no law?” {ST October 2, 1893 par. 4}

2. Does God have a government? On what principles are His government based? Psalm 103:19; 89:14
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3. **Note:** A throne denotes a government (Isaiah 9:7). Every earthly government is based on a set of laws and standards that rule its subjects. Furthermore, the Bible tells us that everything should be done decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40). God's government is no different; it is ruled by His law, the Ten Commandments. Since God ever was and ever is, that means His law has always been and will always remain (See Psalm 90:2).

4. To better understand the law of God, we must define the term sin. What is sin? 1 John 3:4
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5. Did God's law exist when the fallen angels were kicked/cast out of heaven? 2 Peter 2:4; 1 John 3:8
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“The will of God is expressed in the precepts of His holy law, and the principles of this law are the principles of heaven. The angels of heaven attain unto no higher knowledge than to know the will of God, and to do His will is the highest service that can engage their powers.” {MB 109.1}

“But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of. In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. Love for God makes their service a joy. So in every soul wherein Christ, the hope of glory, dwells, His words are re-echoed, “I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.” Psalm 40:8.” {MB 109.2}

6. Was God's law known by Adam & Eve? Romans 5:12, 19; 1 Corinthians 15:21, 22
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7. Who else knew and obeyed the law of God before the Jewish nation was established? Genesis 26:5
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“The law was preserved by Noah and his family, and Noah taught his descendants the Ten Commandments. As men again departed from God, the Lord chose Abraham, of whom He declared, “Abraham obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” Genesis 26:5. {PP 363.2}

8. **Note:** These above points prove that God's law existed before He gave the Ten Commandments to Israel at the base of Mount Sinai in Exodus 20:1-17.

9. What is the purpose of the law?

a) Romans 3:20; 7:7; James 1:23-25

b) Exodus 33:18, 19; 34:5-7 _____

c) Psalm 19:7; Psalm 119:142 _____

d) Proverbs 29:18; Psalm 40:8 _____

“When the law was proclaimed from Sinai, God made known to men the holiness of His character, that by contrast they might see the sinfulness of their own. The law was given to convict them of sin, and reveal their need of a Saviour. It would do this as its principles were applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit. This work it is still to do. In the life of Christ the principles of the law are made plain; and as the Holy Spirit of God touches the heart, as the light of Christ reveals to men their need of His cleansing blood and His justifying righteousness, the law is still an agent in bringing us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” Psalm 19:7.” {DA 308.2}

10. Can the mere keeping of the law save us? Romans 3:20; Romans 5:1; Ephesians 2:8, 9

11. **Note:** While we cannot be saved by our works, our works can condemn us. See Ecclesiastes 12:14; Romans 2:3, 6. Both faith and works are necessary for salvation. Let us now look at a passage of scripture that many use to suggest that God’s moral law, the Ten Commandments, no longer needs to be followed.

Rebuttals

12. Let’s read Colossians 2:14-17. It says that the “handwriting of ordinances” were blotted out. How did God write the Ten Commandments compared to how the ceremonial laws were written?

a) Ten Commandments: Exodus 31:18; Deuteronomy 9:10; 10:2

b) Ceremonial Laws: Deuteronomy 31:24-26

13. What are ordinances? Write down all the things connected with ordinances and ceremonies in the following scriptures. 2 Chronicles 2:4; Exodus 12:12, 14; Numbers 9:2, 3, 12; Hebrews 9:1-3, 8-10

14. **Note:** As we saw, the Bible defined ordinances as the ceremonies, feasts, and practices that were connected with the earthly sanctuary services. The fact that we no longer have to keep these ordinances is what Paul is referring to in Colossians 2:16 when he says “let no man therefore judge you” for not keeping them.

15. According to Colossians 2:17, why do we no longer have to keep these ordinances? Hebrews 9:9, 11, 13, 14; 1 Corinthians 5:7

16. Some argue that Colossians 2:16 is saying that keeping the weekly seventh-day Sabbath is no longer necessary after the crucifixion of Jesus. To what are “the sabbath days” in Colossians 2 referring? Leviticus 23:1-3, 4-6, 10, 16, 24, 27, 34
Answer: The annual ceremonial feasts which were also called sabbath days because no work was done on those days.

17. **Note:** Read Leviticus 23:1-3. Leviticus 23:3 shows us the weekly, seventh-day Sabbath. Notice that it is called a ‘holy convocation.’ The text also calls it “the sabbath of rest.” Here a definite article is used to demonstrate that this day is specifically set apart from the other days.

Then in verse 4, the Bible transitions to show us the “sabbath days,” that the Israelites were to keep, which were also called holy convocations or sabbaths (Leviticus 23:24). These sabbaths were seasonal or annual (not weekly) and they pointed to future events that would be fulfilled in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Prior to the law of Moses, these seasonal or annual sabbaths did not exist. Once Jesus came and fulfilled these ceremonies, there was no longer a need for them. In contrast, the weekly seventh-day Sabbath points backward to an event - the creation of the world by God (Genesis 2:2, 3). Therefore, it cannot be undone without undoing the original event it points back to - creation.

18. In closing, what did Jesus say about the law? Did He abolish it while He was on earth? Matthew 5:17, 18; Psalm 111:7, 8; 89:34; John 14:15

“While we are to be in harmony with God's law, we are not saved by the works of the law, yet we cannot be saved without obedience. The law is the standard by which character is measured. **But we cannot possibly keep the commandments of God without the regenerating grace of Christ. Jesus alone can cleanse us from all sin. He does not save us by law, neither will He save us in disobedience to law.**” {FW 95.3}

“Our love to Christ will be in proportion to the depth of our conviction of sin, and by the law is the knowledge of sin. But as we see ourselves, let us look away to Jesus, who gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity. By faith take hold of the merits of Christ, and the soul-cleansing blood will be applied. The more clearly we see the evils and perils to which we have been exposed, the more grateful shall we be for deliverance through Christ. The gospel of Christ does not give men license to break the law, for it was through transgression that the floodgates of woe were opened upon our world.” {FW 96.1}

“Today sin is the same malignant thing that it was in the time of Adam. The gospel does not promise the favor of God to anyone who in impenitence breaks His law. The depravity of the human heart, the guilt of transgression, the ruin of sin, are all made plain by the cross where Christ has made for us a way of escape.” {FW 96.2}