



ARE WE UNDER THE TEN COMMANDMENTS?

Study 4 Keeping God's Law

At first sight the question seems unnecessary. Read Exodus 20:1-17 and fill in the missing commandments. As Christians, who would want to break these?



1. You shall have no ... _____
2. You shall not make idols.
3. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
5. Honor your father and your mother.
6. You shall not murder.
7. You shall not commit adultery.
8. You shall not steal.
9. You shall not bear ... _____
10. You shall not covet.

However, our previous study explains that the old covenant is now obsolete, and its practices no longer binding. Does this include the Ten Commandments? Surely not, some argue, so they divide Moses' law into sections, claiming that some parts are done away, but the Decalogue (the ten) is not. We argue otherwise. The New Testament treats the Law of Moses as a **single unit**, and we cannot pick and choose favourite parts! If we wish to keep the decalogue, we must also submit to circumcision. If we wish to keep the Sabbath day, we must also keep the Sabbath year! Galatians teaches that those who wish to keep some of the law are obligated to keep all of it. Write Galatians 3:10 here.

WHAT LAW ARE WE UNDER NOW?

The book of Hebrews teaches us that the contents of the Tabernacle were a 'shadow' of heavenly things. These not only referred to sacrificial items, but included the tablets of stone. (Hebrews 9:5) So, the law on stone was a 'shadow' - a written summary of a far greater law in heaven. This new commandment is called '**The Law of Christ**'. Therefore, (fill in the line) *"do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a ..."*

These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ." (Colossians 2:16-17)

The Law of Christ is the one we are under now, not the old Law of Moses. The Law of Christ is the one written on our hearts, not the Decalogue. Read what Jesus said about it in Matthew 22:34-40, and St. Paul in Romans 13:8-10, and discuss how the law of Christ is better than the Ten Commandments?

Write 1 John 3:11 in the far box and discover what he meant by keeping the commandments!

"Whoever says, I know him, but does not do what he commands is a liar ... Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This old command is the message you have heard." (1 John 2:4,7)



The law that we are discussing has been summarised into a single command, but it should not be used as an excuse for indulging the flesh. (Galatians 5:14) Jesus gave his command in John 13:34-35. Write it down and **learn it off by heart**.

SHOULD CHRISTIANS OBSERVE THE SABBATH?

The entire Sabbath system (day as well as year) was part of the Old Covenant given to Israel. It had a peculiar application to Israel as a 'sign' (Exodus 31:13-18, Ezekiel 20:12,20) and should not be seen as applicable to other nations. Therefore, when the old law was replaced by the New Covenant law of Christ, the Sabbath command was not demanded of Gentile believers. It is never repeated in the New Testament as a legal requirement. In fact, when the Galatian Christians tried to follow Jewish practices, Paul rebuked them, saying:

"How is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable forces? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? You are observing

I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you." (Galatians 4:9-11)

Having said that, the New Covenant is not against observing special days as a voluntary act of worship. What it is against is when we try to oblige other Christians to keep it too. Write Romans 14:5-6 here.

HOW DOES THE LAW APPLY TO UNBELIEVERS?

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because he has set us free from the law of sin and death. Not so for unbelievers however. If a person in their unregenerate state were given grace without faith, they would take the law of Christ and use it as an excuse to live according to the flesh - without law at all. Therefore, the unbelieving person remains under the obligation, and the condemnation, of the old law. The moral aspects of the old law remains in force for those who have not accepted God's grace that comes with faith. The present function of the old law is explained in the following statements: Read them with the verses opposite, and connect each statement with its corresponding verse.

The law is good for **defining sin**, in order that each sin may be recognised exactly for what it is.

Romans 3:19-22

The law **silences people** who might pretend that they 'didn't know,' when God holds them to account.

Romans 7:7,13

Gentiles without God's written law still have no excuse, because **their conscience** tells them what is right.

1 Timothy 1:8-10

The law is still **applicable to the ungodly** and rebels, but it no longer applies to the righteous.

Romans 2:12-15

More studies (and answers) here:
www.5loaves2fishes.net/free-resources