

God's Law of Love - Basis of True Christianity

GOD'S LAW

A boulder balanced at the edge of a cliff will fall if given a push. We know it won't go floating off into space, because the physical law of gravity always operates the same way when an object is allowed to fall.

There are other laws *just as sure* as gravity that, if adhered to, will result in a happy, interesting and fulfilling life.

Jesus Christ came to earth to teach us how to apply God's law of love so we could live happy and abundant lives (John 10:10). He also revealed how we may become born-again members of God's universe-ruling Family!

It is vitally important that we understand the true intent and purpose of God's law. Let's allow the Bible to show us how it is the very basis of true Christianity.

1. How does the Bible define the nature and character of God? I John 4:16. How did Jesus Christ sum up the law of God? Matthew 22:35-40.

God's character can be summed up in the word *love*. God's love is outflowing concern for others. It is the way of giving, serving, helping, sharing.

God's law is the way of God's love. The law defines God's way of life. It is the way the two members of the God Family have always lived. Thus God the Father and God the Son live now in total harmony. The Father is the head of the divine Family of God, and Jesus Christ does exactly what the Father tells Him to do (John 8:29, 10:30).

These two divine beings lived the way of love even before they created angels and before they created matter. God's way of love has always resulted in joy, peace, happiness and great accomplishment.

God's law of love also regulated the conduct of all the angels toward one another and toward their Creator. That is, until Lucifer, the powerful and beautiful archangel God had placed over one third of the angels to guide their activities on earth, rebelled against God! For more information about this rebellion and the origin of Satan the devil, write for our free booklet *Did God Create a Devil?*

2. What is the Bible definition of sin? I John

3:4. Does the Bible clearly tell us that Lucifer and his angels sinned? Ezekiel 28:14-16, II Peter 2:4.

Sin is the violation of God's law of love. It is the opposite of peace, cooperation and harmony — the opposite of service and concern for others.

God reveals in His Word that Lucifer became the first sinner. Vanity, lust and greed welled up within him. He became dissatisfied with rulership over just this one planet — he reasoned that God had been unfair — he wanted to rule the whole universe. So he organized his angels into an army and ascended to heaven in an attempt to usurp all of God's authority.

Lucifer and his angels failed, and were cast back to earth (Isaiah 14:12-14, Luke 10:18, Jude 6). Lucifer, now God's adversary, was renamed Satan, and his angels called demons. Still actively attempting to thwart God's plan, Satan and his demons have deceived the world about the need to follow God's law of love (Revelation 12:9).

3. Are all 10 points of God's great law conveniently listed for us in the Bible? Exodus 20:1-17, Deuteronomy 5:6-21. How can we know that there are exactly 10? Exodus 34:28, Deuteronomy 4:13.

4. Did the patriarch Abraham — the father of the faithful (Romans 4:11, 16) — know of God's law and think it was important to keep it? Genesis 26:5. What attitude did King David — whom God called a man after His own heart (Acts 13:22) — have toward obeying God's law? Read all of Psalm 119 and especially notice verses 97-100 and 105.

Both Abraham and David were commandment keepers. They had great respect for God's law. That is one major reason why they will hold responsible positions in the future government of God on earth.

5. Did Jesus Christ come to do away with God's law? Matthew 5:17-19. Did He keep the Ten Commandments? John 15:10. Did He teach others to keep them? Matthew 19:16-19.

The verses in Matthew 19 clearly show that Jesus specifically referred to the Ten Com-

mandments, though He did not mention every one of them.

6. Does the Bible show that the Church Jesus built would be teaching obedience to and actually be keeping the Ten Commandments and other instructions of Jesus? Matthew 28:19-20, Revelation 12:17, 14:12. (Revelation 12 personifies God's Church as a woman.)

God's Church today echoes the words of David and follows God's law of love as the Christian standard to live by.

7. Is the law of God holy, just and good? Romans 7:12. Is peace of mind a result of keeping God's commandments? Psalm 119:165. Does God bless those who choose to obey Him? Deuteronomy 11:26-28, 30:9-10, Psalm 1:1-3.

The person who keeps God's law has a clear conscience. He is at peace with God, with himself and with his neighbor. He has "the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding" (Philippians 4:7).

God's law was given to make man happy and to lead him into the peaceful, full, abundant life — and, above all, to lead him into eternal life. But because of disobedience to our Creator's holy, righteous law, the world is filled with strife, poverty, ignorance and suffering today — results opposite of God's law of love.

8. How did Jesus summarize the law of God? Matthew 22:37-39.

Since the basis of God's character is love (I John 4:16), God's law expresses the character of God. Jesus showed that the Ten Commandments are in reality a guide to teach us how to love. The first four commandments show us how to love God, while the last six show us how to love our neighbors — all fellow human beings.

9. If we receive and exercise God's Spirit, will the love of God that it imparts enable us to "fulfill" — to obey — God's law? Romans 5:5, 13:8-10, especially verse 10.

Love is not left to interpretation by the individual Christian. The divine love of God, imparted by His Holy Spirit, is expressed within the bounds of God's law — the Ten Commandments. The commandments guide Spirit-begotten Christians in expressing God's love.

Therefore, the love of God is manifested first of all in adoration and worship of God and literal obedience to Him, and then in outgoing concern, compassion, kindness and service toward fellow humans.

10. Could there be any truth whatsoever in the widespread belief that having love makes void the need to literally obey God's law? I John 5:2-3, John 14:15, 15:9-10, II John 6.

The apostle John placed a great deal of emphasis on God's love. But not once did he or any other writer of Holy Scripture, including the apostle Paul — all of whom were inspired by

God (II Timothy 3:16) — say that God's love did away with, superseded or destroyed the law of God. John, who was a close friend, disciple and apostle of Jesus Christ, made it plain that one who truly has the love of God will be obeying the commandments of God.

11. Is it possible to earn one's salvation by obeying God? Romans 6:23, Ephesians 2:8-9. Yet can anyone enter God's glorious, universe-ruling Kingdom — the very Family of God — as a lawbreaker? Romans 6:23, I Corinthians 6:9-10, Revelation 21:8, Matthew 7:21, 19:16-17.

Eternal life is clearly a gift from God, not something you can earn by keeping the law of God. No one can earn immortality in 10,000 lifetimes of keeping the Ten Commandments.

But neither can anyone enter into eternal life as a sinner (I John 3:4, Romans 6:23). No rebel will ever be born into God's Family. God will not grant immortality to anyone who insists on living Satan's way!

Following God's law of love — His way of life — enables one to become more like God, until finally born into God's spirit Family at the resurrection, possessing the fullness of God's holy, righteous, loving character (I John 3:9). (More about spiritual character development in a future Ministudy.)

Our Savior plainly stated that Christians are to strive to keep the Ten Commandments with His help through the Holy Spirit, trusting in Him to apply His sacrifice in our behalf when we fall short and as we repent (I John 1:7-9).

The time is coming soon when the whole world will understand and appreciate what an incredible blessing the law of God really is. In the coming world tomorrow, people will learn to follow God's law of love (Isaiah 2:2-3). A glorious world of peace and harmony will be the result!

(If you do not already have our booklet *The Ten Commandments*, be sure to request your free copy today. See the inside front cover for the address of our office nearest you, or the toll-free numbers to call.) □



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