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Dear Associates and Friends,

May 2020

Are you aware there are deficiencies in the Ten Commandments? Well, there are, even though the Law is exactly as the apostle Paul explains about the Law of God and then he focuses on the Commandment:

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment [1] holy, and [2] just, and [3] good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.”

• *Romans 7:12–13*

Dr. Martin points out the deficiencies of the Commandments in this month’s article, appropriately named [“The Ten Commandments.”](#) I reformatted and updated this article, last revised in 2008, to be a companion piece to last month’s (April 2020) article, [“The Laws of the Bible.”](#) Together they form a complete package for your study and understanding about the laws given to Moses. It is also a good complement to the opening chapters of Dr. Ernest Martin’s book [The Essentials of New Testament Doctrine.](#)¹ Here is what King David wrote about God’s laws, in brief:

**“The law of YHWH is perfect,
the testimony of YHWH is sure,**

**converting the soul:
making wise the simple.**

**The statutes of YHWH are right,
the commandment of YHWH is pure,**

**rejoicing the heart:
enlightening the eyes.”**

• *Psalms 19:7–8*

Go on to read Psalm 119 (all 179 verses) to learn how another author loved God’s commandments, laws, judgments, and instruction from YHWH.

The Ten Commandments and the Laws of God had a purpose. They were to bring sin to the forefront of our notice, convict us about our sins toward God our Father, and with His and Christ’s guidance, we are led to repentance, with the ultimate goal of our salvation. That process will be repeated for every human being to the end of the eons. Paul tells us,

“I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, ‘Thou shalt not covet.’ But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence [strong desire]. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.

... For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.”

• *Romans 7:7–9, 14*

So, in spite of his being immersed in the Commandments, the Laws of God, and the unbiblical oral law of the Jews all his life, Paul says, he **“had not known sin.”** With all his study of God’s Word (the books of the Old Testament were Paul’s only Scriptures), the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings were sufficient only to convict Paul of his sin, and temporarily atone for his sins through the sacrifices prescribed in the Law.

¹ It will interest you to read the January 1, 2008 Commentary [“Ten Commandments for Today](#) that introduced the 2008 edition of “The Ten Commandments.”

From these and other reasons you will read in the article, the Ten Commandments are deficient in many ways. Even when the Laws are expanded and specific to different situations, those additions had deficiencies also. What was needed, and what God supplies to every human being (when and how God sees fit to do so), is a change of heart. That change will come from God, it will be effective to counter and free all of us:

“For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.”

• *Romans 8:2–3*

God our Father has done for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We will receive **“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ.”** God will give us knowledge, understanding, and grace for salvation through faith. It came by Christ emptying Himself, coming to earth as the only begotten Son of God, living a righteous life for us, dying for us, being resurrected for us as the firstfruit, raising us all to glory in the future.

“But [Christ] made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross[-piece].”

• *Philippians 2:7–8*

God and Christ did (and are doing) this for us — for you and for me. It was their plan from before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4). As Christ said on the tree of crucifixion moments before He died,

“When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, ‘It is finished’: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost [spirit].”

• *John 19:30*

The worst and hardest part of their plan for Him was completed at His moment of death when He ceased to exist — dead in body, soul, and spirit. He was raised by His Father to greater glory (greater than before He emptied Himself in the form of God). He fulfilled the commandments, the Laws of God (that were based on the commandments and expanded them), and He fulfilled the law of love. That law breaks down into loving God and loving our fellow man. Details of that love are expressed in our actions toward each other.

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another” (1 John 4:11).

“This commandment have we from him, That he who loves God love his brother also” (1 John 4:21).

God will complete His salvation for all mankind to become sons and daughters of God. He will also complete His parallel goal of reconciling the universe to Himself (Colossians 1:17–20; Philippians 2:10–11). Everything that has gone on before, everything you and I have experienced and endured in life — the good, the bad, the ugly and the beautiful — all will be understood by us as being fully worth the birth pangs and fulfillment to become what God created us to be (Isaiah 64:4; John 16:21; 1 Corinthians 2:9).

Thank You

Dr. Ernest Martin’s unique and straightforward understanding and teaching of Scripture allowed him to deal with difficult biblical subjects without dependence on post-biblical writers and scholars who often relied on tradition rather than the Scripture they claimed to honor. It was a temptation Dr. Martin avoided.

For Dr. Martin the three doctrinal errors of traditional Christianity were the false and pagan teachings of an immortal soul, the trinity, and hell (eternal damnation). Traditional and orthodox Christianity actually have those erroneous teachings as foundational and necessary beliefs while avoiding biblical discussions of them. We are grateful to have support of people like you who, I believe, strive to learn the truths of God with minimal confusion, blather, and mystery. You are already saved by our loving Father.

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