



"Suppose a nation in some distant region should take the Bible for their only Law Book, and every member should regulate his conduct by the precepts there exhibited. ... What a paradise would this region be!"

—John Adams

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Law Enforcement

America has a major problem: too many laws. Granted, this is not her only problem, but it is one that resides at the foundation of a number of the nation's ills.

Who knows how many laws are on the books? When one throws in the laws of states and municipalities across the country, multiple millions of laws constrain the populace of the "land of the free." Besides this, federal, state, and local governments load both individuals and businesses with countless regulations that range from the mandatory installation of smoke detectors in homes to the number of handicap parking spaces at places of business.

Who is going to enforce all these laws? Ask any large-city policeman if he knows all the laws in force within his jurisdiction, and if he is honest, he will answer that it is an impossible task. Some laws—many of them forgotten and outdated—go back to the nineteenth century, yet they are still in effect. In

addition, lawmakers are busy fulfilling their title by passing new laws right and left. Many laws are so arcane and complex that interpreting them is a judicial nightmare.

Which brings us to President Bush's latest "amnesty but not amnesty" proposal regarding immigration. The fundamental question should be, "Do we really need a new immigration law?" Certainly, the whole system needs to be scrapped and a better one put in its place, but the most logical and swiftest place to start in solving our immigration woes resides in the enforcement of our existing immigration laws, of which there are many.

Those people who are here illegally—known by the PC-crowd as "undocumented workers"—would be sent back to their countries of origin and denied re-entry for an extended period. Every potential immigrant would have to jump through the many bureaucratic hoops and red tape to gain entry to this country, and we would not accept even one person more than our quota system allows. Our borders would be stiffened, and the government would rigorously prosecute anyone facilitating illegal entry—from the mules who guide them here to the business owners who employ them.

But these laws are not being enforced—at least not to any degree of effectiveness. What good is a law if it has no teeth? Perhaps this hints at the reason for the lack of enforcement: The powers that be do not want the laws enforced because they are little more than hot-button issues bandied about every so often for political gain. That a law is eventually passed gives a semblance of action being taken, but the problem is never solved because there is no real will among politicians, bureaucrats, and law-enforcement officials to follow through. So the problem lingers and worsens until it reaches a crisis point—and by then it is insolvable without drastic and unjust measures.

For Christians, [God](#) should be our model for proper government, properly modified according to biblical principle to suit our limited, human situation. For starters, God does not deluge us with innumerable, intricate laws; He gives us ten basic commands based on His loving character (Exodus 20; Deuteronomy 5; see [John 14:15](#); [1 John 5:3](#)). Throughout the Bible, these laws are used as the basis for the other statutes, judgments, and decrees given for more specific situations. From these, then, an astute Bible student can

formulate godly principles with wide application. In this way, law is not burdensome but liberating. As [Christ](#) Himself says, "If you abide in My word [which includes His law], you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" ([John 8:31-32](#)).

Moreover, God's law has teeth. What enforcement method is more effective than death? John defines the violation of God's law as [sin](#) ([I John 3:4](#)), and Paul writes, "For the wages of sin is death" ([Romans 6:23](#)). In the meantime, sinners suffer the inevitable consequences of broken laws: guilt, suspicion, division, violence, degradation, disease, corruption, and a host of other curses. Though most sinners do not make the connection between their sins and their subsequent adverse circumstances, there is certainly a cause-and-effect principle working in their lives. God will undoubtedly point it out to them in the judgment ([Romans 2:5-11](#); [Hebrews 9:27](#); [Revelation 20:12-13](#)), when they will be able to look back on their sinful lives and see the mess they made of things.

Is it not ironic that this nation, with its myriads of unenforced laws, is trying to strip all mention of God's handful of effectual laws from public view? Now, that is a problem!

- Richard T. Ritenbaugh

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[The Law's Purpose and Intent](#)

by Martin G. Collins

The effectiveness of a law is found in its purpose and intent rather than the letter. The blind spots to God's Law unfortunately are found in the spiritual application or principle rather than a specific motor behavior. Christ taught that the righteousness of the Pharisees was not enough to fulfill the law's requirements. Love and mercy constitute the essence of the spiritual fulfillment of the Law. God's Holy Spirit enables us to carry out the spiritual intent of the Law. By continually using God's Spirit, we gradually or incrementally take on God's nature in our innermost beings. As we judge

other people, we must realize that the things that offend us mirror our own (hidden from us but transparent to others) faults.

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by Earl L. Henn

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