

God'S Law Is Eternal

Perpetuity and Fulfillment

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God's law expresses the expectations for the moral and spiritual conduct of Israel and the church. It is the commands God has given to enable His people to live life as He created us to live. God's law is not a temporary law. It is in every way a permanent, perpetual, and eternal law.

Psalms 119 serves well as a good preface to the subject of the law. The first thing to note is the range of specific words by which the law is called: testimonies, precepts, statutes, commandments, ordinances, ways, and word. Psalm 119 is a collection of meditations on the excellency of the word and the law of God. Let me give you just a sampling of verses that show the glory and eternity of God's law. It is a very inspiring Psalm, but it is so long that I decided to pull out just a few verses that will help summarize and express the whole Psalm.

Psalm 119:97-101 Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day. You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts. I have restrained my feet from every evil way, that I may keep Your word.

Psalm 119:104 Through Your precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.

Psalm 119:111-113 Your testimonies I have taken as a heritage forever [this word "forever" is extremely important], for they are the rejoicing of my heart. I have inclined my heart to perform Your statutes forever, to the very end. I hate the double-minded, but I love Your law.

Psalm 119:115 Depart from me, you evildoers, for I will keep the commandments of my God!

Psalm 119:126 It is time for You to act, O Lord, for they have regarded Your law as void.

On this verse I cannot help but wonder if it is not a prophesy. Does anything more accurately express what is happening today in this world, especially in the United States?

Psalm 119:127-128 Therefore I love Your commandments more than gold, yes, than fine gold! therefore all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right; I hate every false way.

Psalm 119:138 Your testimonies, which You have commanded, are righteous and very faithful.

Psalm 119:142-143 Your righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and Your law is truth. Trouble and anguish have overtaken me, yet Your commandments are my delights.

Psalm 119:152 Concerning Your testimonies, I have known of old that You have founded them forever.

Psalm 119:160 The entirety of Your word is truth, and every one of Your righteous judgments endures forever.

Do God's laws, precepts, word, and truth sound temporary or changeable to you after reading those verses in Psalm 119? All of these terms have in common the assumption that God gives the law in such a form that people can order their lives by it. Around these central terms, the Psalm weaves a tapestry of specific images; especially that God's law is a delight to live by. It is joyous and something we should always enjoy following, and it is everlasting, forever, and eternal. Obeying God's law is like walking down a path that is something on which to fix one's eyes. It guards a person's life. The law is associated with delight, joy, and mediation. It is a counselor, a song, the object of love, and a lamp by which a person can see to walk.

Overall, the emphasis falls on four patterns: 1) the law comes from God; 2) it is intended for human benefit; 3) it is a reliable guide to living; and 4) it illuminates one's mind or understanding.

Some who have left God's church claim Christ did away with God's laws. It seems incredible that anyone could arrive at that conclusion after being in God's church. Maybe that is just the point, they never were. One scripture they cite is Luke 16:16:

Luke 16:16 The law and the prophets were until John. Since that time the kingdom of God has been preached, and everyone is pressing into it.

However, Jesus explains in the very next verse:

Luke 16:17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tittle of the law to fail.

This verse qualifies Luke 16:16 by stating that the law was not done away with after John's time. As Jesus said, it would be easier for heaven and earth to be destroyed than for God's law to perish. On another occasion in Matthew 19:17, Christ counsels a young man seeking the way to eternal life:

Matthew 19:17 So He said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments."

It is so clear that God's holy law is still in existence. What then did Jesus mean by the statement in Luke 16:16, "the law and prophets were until John?" When Jesus spoke of the law and the prophets He was referring to the Old Testament. The first five books of the Bible were written by Moses, and they are known as the law in specific terms. The books of Joshua through Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the 12 minor prophets comprise the prophets. The third major section of the Old Testament is known as the writings or the Psalms.

Luke 24:44-45 Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

The Old Testament scriptures alone were preached until the coming of John the Baptist

and that was all they had. The New Testament had not yet been written. When John came on the scene in Palestine, he was the forerunner of Jesus Christ, preparing the way before Him. He thundered to the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the people of his day to repent for the kingdom of heaven was at hand. John began to proclaim the gospel preparing the way for Christ Himself, but what gospel did Christ preach?

Mark 1:14 Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

Christ preached the same gospel as John, and this is why He said that from the time of John the Baptizer the gospel of God's coming kingdom was proclaimed. Though it is clear to God's church that the law of God is eternal, very grave mistakes have been made about God's law. Many professing Christians and mainstream Christian denominations are convinced that the law is utterly abolished. They openly teach that believers are not bound to make God's law the rule of their lives. What is sin in non-believers they count as no sin in themselves as Christians.

Some ministers who were a part of God's church have even said that the perfect law of God was too hard for imperfect beings and therefore God has given us a milder and easier rule. There are some professing Christians who have gone much further than this and have denounced the law altogether.

God's laws still have practical, spiritual application to this day and will forever. They are still necessary and useful for living the Christian life, being in the image of God, and knowing Him. In the very commencement of His ministry, Christ teaches the instability of all living things. The heaven which you see, and the earth you inhabit will pass away because the things which are seen as temporal are only for a time, but the things which are not seen are eternal and the Word of the Lord endures forever.

In Matthew 5:18, Jesus confirms the full authority of the Old Testament as Scripture for all times, even down to the smallest components of the written text. Not so much as the smallest loss of authority or vitality will ever affect the law.

Matthew 5:18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

Two things stand out here in Matthew 5:18; first is that the law of God is eternal, it is perpetual, "till heaven and earth pass away;" second, we recognize that the law must be fulfilled and "one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled." The first half of Matthew 5:18 tells us that the law of God must be eternal. There is no nullifying of it nor amending of it. It is not to be toned down or adjusted to our sinning condition. Every one of God's righteous judgments abide forever.

I will give you three reasons that establish this teaching. The first reason the law is eternal and perpetual is that Christ declares that He did not come to abolish it. His words are clear on this in Matthew 5:17.

Matthew 5:17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Paul tells us this with regard to the gospel in Romans 3:31.

Romans 3:31 Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

Through faith we establish the law in our hearts and minds by accepting that it is the only way to live. The gospel is the means of the firm establishment and vindication of the law of God and Jesus did not come to change the law but to explain it and to show us how to keep it. That very fact shows that it remains because there is no need to explain that which is abolished. If Christ had done away with that law, He would no longer discuss it, but He amplified and explained how it is to be kept.

One particular point is in regard to the keeping of the Sabbath where Christ elaborated and showed that the Jewish religious leaders' idea was not the true one. The Pharisees forbade even the doing of good works, of necessity in mercy, such as healing the sick. Christ showed that it was not at all against God's will to allow these things. In straining over the letter and carrying an outward observance to excess, they had missed the spirit of the Sabbath law, which suggested that acts of mercy glorified God in the day. He showed that the Sabbath rest was not mere inaction in John 5:17.

John 5:17 But Jesus answered them, "My Father has been working until now, and I have been working."

Christ pointed to the priests who labored hard at offering sacrifices and said to them in Matthew 12:5-8:

Matthew 12:5-8 Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless? Yet I say to you that in this place there is One greater than the temple. But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."

The priests were doing divine service and were within the law. To show the true purpose of the Sabbath day, Christ took care to do some of his grandest miracles on the Sabbath. Although this caused great anger against Him, as though He were a lawbreaker, He did it on purpose so that they might see that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath. He showed that it was a day for doing that which honors God and blesses people.

Christians must learn how to properly keep the Sabbath by a ceasing of all servile work and from all work done for self. Worshipping and serving God is the most acceptable activity of the day, and some of Christ's teaching was that works of necessity, mercy, and goodness are lawful on the Sabbath. He did explain the law in that point and in others, yet Christ's example and explanation did not alter the command, but only removed the rust of tradition that had deteriorated its proper application. By explaining the law in this way, Jesus actually confirmed the keeping of it. If He had meant to abolish it, He would not have needed to expound upon it at all. He would not have cared how they kept that day.

In addition to explaining it, Jesus went further by pointing out its spiritual character. The Jews so strongly emphasized the letter of the law that they failed to observe the spirit of the law. To keep God's law properly, we have to learn to recognize that spirit of the law. The spirit of the law means God's original intent and purpose behind each law. They thought for instance that the command "you shall not kill" simply forbade murder and manslaughter, but Christ showed that anger without cause violates the law. Harsh words and cursing and all other displays of enmity and malice are forbidden by the commandment. They knew they were forbidden to commit adultery, but it did not enter their minds that a lascivious desire would be an offense against the precept until Christ showed them.

Matthew 5:27-28 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall

not commit adultery.' But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

He showed that the thought of evil is sin, and that an unclean imagination pollutes the heart. A wrong desire is guilt in the eyes of God. Certainly this was not doing away with the law, it was a wonderful exhibition of its far-reaching sovereignty and of its penetrating character. He would not have bothered to say this to them had He done away with the law; it would have been a waste of time to Him. The Pharisees imagined that if they kept their hands, their feet, and their tongues that everything was fine, but Jesus showed that thought, imagination, desire, memory, everything must be brought into subjection to the will of God. If the law of God reaches to the inward parts, who among us can by nature stand up to its judgment? King David asked God to cleanse him from his secret faults. He knew that he had things he was doing wrong that he did not quite know of.

The Ten Commandments are full of meaning—meaning that many ignore. For instance, people will allow things in and around their house such as inattention to the rules of health and sanitary precaution, but it does not occur to them that they are trampling on the command that you should not kill by allowing themselves to live among disease and filth. This rule also forbids us from doing anything that would cause injury to our neighbors' health and in that way deprive him of life. Many a deadly manufactured article, ill-ventilated shop, and excessive work hours are violations of this law. It is the same with excessive drinking of alcohol, which leads very quickly to disease and slowly to death.

Also in reference to another precept, some people sing songs and repeat stories that encourage immorality. They act as if they do not know that an immoral word, a double meaning, or a sly hint of lust; all of these things come under the command: "You shall not commit adultery." The world does not understand the spirit of the law. God will judge people's actions in due time.

Malachi 3:2 "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like launderer's soap.

There are two interesting pieces of imagery used here in this verse. When Christ comes, He will perform two complementary works; He will purify some sinners and judge others. The images used for that purifying work, the refiner's fire and launderer's

soap, stress both its thoroughness and its severity. Both purifying works are based on God's righteous standard, which is expressed in His law. The heat of the refiner's fire was intense, in order to separate the dross from the molten, pure metal. Similarly, the launderer washed clothes using strong lye soap, after which the clothes would be placed on rocks and beaten with sticks. If sinners prefer Christ's cleansing work to his judgment, this is the price that must be paid.

Critics of God's law lie by saying God would not have given us the perfect law that poor human beings cannot keep, and so Christ has corrected His government and sent His Son to put us under a relaxed authority. Jesus Christ has shown, on the contrary, how intimately the law must be internalized so as to be clear about what we must do to properly keep it in the letter and the spirit. There is never a moment when it ceases to exist. It is eternal in its governance and forever demanding obedience. Everywhere God's law reveals our serious deviations from the way of righteousness and shows us how far short we come of God's glory.

Christ, in addition to explaining the law and pointing out its spiritual character, also unveiled its living essence.

Matthew 22:36-40 "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

These two great laws comprehend the Ten Commandments to their fullest extent. It cannot be regarded as an erasure or change to a jot or tittle of them. Whatever difficulty surrounds the Ten Commandments, the keeping of them is equally found in these two, which are their sum and substance. If you love God with all your heart, you must keep the first tablet; and if you love your neighbor as yourself, you must keep the second tablet.

If anyone supposes that the law of love is an adaption of the moral law to man's weak condition, they make a serious mistake. If—for the sake of argument—there is a difference in how difficult it is to keep either the ten or the two, it might be easier to keep the ten rather than the two because if we go no deeper than the letter of the law, the two are more demanding and testing since they deal with the heart, mind, body, and spirit of the law. The Ten Commandments mean all that the two express. If we forget this and only look at the wording of them, then it is harder for a man to love God with all his

heart, with all his mind, body and strength, and his neighbor as himself, because the ten would be merely to abstain from killing, stealing, lying or the other physical commands. Christ has not therefore nullified or at all moderated the law to meet our helplessness. He has left it in all its magnificent perfection as it always must be left. He has pointed out the depth of its foundations, the elevation of its heights, and the immeasurable nature of its length and breadth.

To show that He never meant to abolish the law, Jesus embodied all of its commandments in His own life, and in His own godly nature, which is perfectly conformed to the law of God. As was His godly nature, so also was His life. Jesus was not burdened with keeping God's laws because He was perfectly conformed to them. It was His way of life, the way He thought, and God's way of life became natural to Him. That is what our ultimate goal is; for God's law to become natural to us, to become second nature without having to give a thought because it is the way we live perfectly. He was so perfect and pure and so infinitely good and complete and perfect in His agreement and relationship with the Father that He always, in all things, carried out the Father's will. It is recorded in Matthew 17:5 that the Father said of Him: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

Can anyone, in any way, ever accuse Christ of violating the law or leaving it unfulfilled? There was never an unclean thought or rebellious desire in Him. He had nothing to regret or to retract. Three times He was tempted in the wilderness and the adversary had the impertinence to even suggest idolatry, but He instantly overthrew the enemy. The prince of this world came to Him but he found nothing wrong in Christ.

Psalms 40:8 I delight to do Your will, O my God, and Your law is within my heart.

That is our ultimate goal; for God's law to be so deeply imbedded in our heart that we automatically do His will. This is why Christ exhibits to us in His life a perfect obedience to the sacred commands and their undiminished grandeur.

It is obvious Jesus Christ did not come to alter the law because after having embodied it in His life, He willingly gave Himself up to bear its penalty, though He had never broken the law. He bore the penalty for us even as it is written in Galatians 3:13-14.

Galatians 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ

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Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

The law asks only what it should ask; namely, perfect obedience and exacts only of the transgressor what it should exact; namely death, as the penalty of sin. Death under divine wrath and therefore our Savior went to the tree and there bore our sins and purged them once for all. He was crushed beneath the load of our guilt.

Matthew 26:38 Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me." He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will."

This is what we are trying to arrive at; to internalize God's law and make it our way of life in order to do God's will and always ask for Him to help us to do His will.

Jesus did not abolish the Passover, He merely changed the symbols used. Instead of shedding the blood of the lamb and eating the roasted body, we are now to use wine and unleavened bread. The Passover is now to be kept as an annual memorial of Christ's death. It reaffirms year by year until He comes, the true Christian faith and the blood of Christ, our Passover, for the remission of sins as symbolized by drinking of the wine. Eating the broken bread symbolizes our faith in the body of Christ, broken for a physical healing. Jesus allowed His body to be literally ripped open in dozens of places by scourging until He was unrecognizable. He suffered this torture so we, through faith in His broken body for us, may have the forgiveness of our physical sins, the healing of our bodies when we are sick, as well as the forgiveness of our spiritual sins through Christ's shed blood. The bread is a reminder to us that it is by His stripes that we are healed. As Christ himself commanded, true Christians today should be observing the Passover on the eve of His death, on the 14th day of the first month of God's sacred calendar in the evening, after the beginning of the day.

Jesus Christ gave a great vindication to the law by dying because it had been broken and humanity could never pay its debt because of sin, but Christ bore all of the payment that was due from humanity's sins, therefore the law is not taken advantage of.

God can do all things, but He will not compromise His law and neither will Jesus ever compromise God's law. God's law is perfect. If kept, it produces and maintains a peaceful and happy society.

Psalm 119:165 Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble.

Tragically, no human has kept God's law perfectly; all have sinned. The Bible likens sin to leaven. If sin is not disposed of, it grows and spreads rapidly. The whole world is suffering under the curse of sin. Death is the penalty for sin, for breaking God's law, and God will not allow anyone into His family and kingdom who will compromise

I Corinthians 6:9-10 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

Obviously, this is speaking specifically of breaking God's law.

Revelations 22:14 Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

Here at the end of the Bible we are told that we better be keeping the law if we are going to be in the Kingdom of God, or else we will not have the right to the tree of life. God's law requires that blood be shed for the remission of sins as it says in Hebrews 9:22 and thus blood had to be shed in order for the sins of every human to be forgiven, upon genuine repentance. The only way God could redeem man from the death penalty without compromising His law was to have our penalty paid. If therefore, it is clearly proven that Jesus was obedient to the law, even to the extent of death, He certainly did not come to abolish or nullify it, and if He did not remove it, who can? Certainly not the Catholic Church, who has removed the Sabbath commandment, and certainly not anyone in this world. Certainly not anyone who calls himself a minister in mainstream Christianity.

The second reason the law is eternal is because the law of God must be perpetual from

its very nature because the moment you think of it, right must always be right and truth must always be true, and purity must always be pure. Think of it in relationship to this nation at this time. President Obama is doing away with laws, ignoring them, and look what is happening to the nation. It is deteriorating very quickly. Before the Ten Commandments were published at Sinai, there was still the same law of right and wrong and right was always right before a single command had been committed to words.

When Adam was in the garden, it was always right that he should love his Maker, and it would have always been wrong for him to have been at cross-purposes with God. It does not matter what happens in this world or what changes take place in the universe, it never can be right to lie, to commit adultery, to murder, steal, or to worship an idol. It is not that the principles of right and wrong are absolutely self-existent as God, but God Himself does not live apart from His being always holy and always true. Therefore, the very idea of right and wrong must exist eternally, not just while human beings are alive, and not just prior to the time of John the Baptizer.

One cannot bring right down to a lower level. It must be where it always is, right is right eternally and cannot be wrong. You cannot raise wrong and somehow make it right. Heaven and earth may pass away but not the smallest letter or accent of the law can possibly change. In spirit the law is eternal.

Suppose for a moment that it were possible to tamper and tone down the law. Where would it be? If it is perfectly holy, how can it be altered, except by being made imperfect? Could you worship the god of an imperfect law? Could you have any trust in him? Any confidence or assurance from him, or any guarantee? Could it ever be true that God, by way of favoring us, has put us under an imperfect law? Would that be a blessing or a curse?

It is said by some that we cannot keep a perfect law and that God does not demand that we should. He does demand that we make the best effort we can to try with His help through the Holy Spirit. That is the only way to keep His law perfectly, by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and being in Jesus Christ who is righteous. Has God issued an imperfect law? It is the first imperfect thing I have ever heard of Him making.

Does it come to this, that after all, the gospel is a proclamation that God is going to be satisfied with obedience to a mutilated law? As Paul says, "God forbid!" God's law lies at the foundation of the peace of the Universe and must be honored at all cost. Without the law, life functions in chaos. However, when the power of the Holy Spirit reveals sin to us, we feel in awe of the law of God. We admire and glorify the law and the law of the Lord must stand because it is perfect, and therefore it does not have an element of

decay or change.

How can there be any justification for the statement of the wicked and lazy servant in Luke 19:22, when he said "I feared you because you are an austere man." For God to alter His law would be an admission that He had made a mistake, that He had put poor imperfect man under too rigorous a regime, and therefore He is now prepared to halt His claims and make them more reasonable.

It has been said that a person's moral inability to keep the perfect law exempts him from the duty of doing so. This is utterly false. Man's inability does not remove his responsibility. It is moral, not physical, and we must never fall into the error of believing that moral inability will be an excuse for sin. One should never say, "I am too weak to keep that law or live God's way of life." God promises the strength and the help to be able to live it and internalize it to become second nature to us.

When a man becomes such a liar that he cannot speak the truth, is he thereby exempt from the duty of truthfulness? If your employee owes you a day's labor, is he free from the duty because he has made himself so drunk that he cannot do his job? Is a careless man freed from debt by the fact that he has squandered the money and therefore cannot pay? Is a lustful man free to indulge his passions because he cannot understand the beauty of sexual abstinence?

The law is just and people are bound by it, although their sin has rendered them incapable of keeping it. The law demands no more than is good for us. Every single command of God's law is meant to be a kind of danger signal, such as the signs that are put up at a beach when the rip tide is too strong and unsafe.

Each commandment acts as if it were to say to us "danger!" It is never for a person's good to do what God forbids him. It is never for a person's real and ultimate happiness to leave undone anything that God commands him. The wisest directions for spiritual health and for the avoidance of evil are those directions that are given to us concerning right and wrong in the law of God. Therefore, it is not possible for there to be any alteration of it because it would not be for our good. I am interchangeably using God's law for His word, His truth, and for all that He has instructed us to do.

Does God put us under an altered rule? If He has, which particular part of the law is it that God has relaxed? Which precept do we feel free to break? Are we delivered from the command that forbids stealing, adultery, or murder? Which law is it that God has exempted us from keeping? The law of worshipping Him only? Do we propose to have another god? Do we intend to make idols? How can mainstream Christianity teach that

a law has been done away with and still call themselves Christian? The fact is that when we come to detail, we cannot afford to lose a single link of this wonderful golden chain, which is perfect in every part as well as perfect as a whole. The law is absolutely complete and you can neither add to or take from it.

James 2:8-12 If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," also said, "Do not murder." Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty.

If then, no part of the law can be taken down, it must stand and stand forever. The third reason the law must be eternal is that to suppose that it was altered is extremely detrimental. To take away from the law's perpetuity is, first of all, to take away from its power to define sin for all time. Paul was very clear that the law defines sin and tells us what it is.

Romans 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

It is downright silly for anyone to think that because we are imperfect creatures, we are not expected to keep a perfect law. From this perverse reasoning it follows that we do not sin when we break the law; and if all that is required of us is to do according to the best of our knowledge and ability, then we have a very convenient rule indeed. Human nature will always tend toward adjusting it so as to give oneself as much latitude as possible. By removing the law, sin is done away. Because sin is a transgression or breaking of the law, where there is no law there is no transgression. When you have done away with sin you may as well have done away with the Savior and salvation.

When you reduce sin to a minimum, what need is there of Christ's sacrifice to pay the penalty for the sins of humanity. Lowering the law weakens its power in the hands of God as the definer of sin. It is the looking glass, which shows us our spots and our blemishes. It is only a pure and perfect law that God reveals through His Holy Spirit in order to show to us our corruptness and sinfulness. Lowering the law dims the light by which people perceive their guilt and this is a very serious loss to the sinner rather than

a gain because it lessens the likelihood of his conviction and conversion.

What is the purpose of the law of God? Is it for us to keep in order to be saved by it? Not at all. It is sent in order to show us that we cannot be saved by works and to shut us up to be saved by grace. But if we pretend that the law is altered so that a human being can keep it, we have diffused its purpose. God's perfect law shows that human life is hopeless apart from Jesus Christ and there is no escape except by faith in Him. Notice how Paul describes it to the Galatians.

Galatians 3:22-26 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

If the law was abolished, then the schoolmaster that brings people to Christ was taken away, but the law was not abolished or changed. To alter the law is to leave us without any law at all. A sliding scale of duty and responsibility is an immoral invention and fatal to the principles of law.

In this society, we see what happens when law is altered or ignored. There begins to be a breakdown of the whole law. This is happening today to our society in the U.S. The present political scene is ignoring the law of the land, the U.S. Constitution, and so there is chaos in the land. Nothing can be depended on. Judges are ruling off the top of their heads or from their own human reasoning. As a result, we are seeing an increased ignoring of the law by the criminal elite in this country whose influences openly condone law breaking. The political leaders are now flagrantly breaking the law because they believe they are above the law. It interferes with their illegal and immoral intentions.

If God's law was nullified and we take the words of the imperfect nature of human leaders as the standard for morality, decency, and integrity, even the prostitutes in the streets and the pedophiles in our neighborhoods are considered mostly righteous by their standards. In fact, many of the political leaders are that degenerate but they, many in mainstream Christianity, are not breaking the law, or guilty of the law, because they claim they are Christians.

This thinking is absurd, silly, and foolish. As I have mentioned before, in a radio

interview of a high school slut, alcohol, and drug addict, who was convinced that she was not a bad person, she said in her own words, "I think I'm a good person. I haven't killed anyone yet." That was her standard. She is totally ignoring God's law or even the laws of the land because the law is whatever she decides it is at the moment.

These adversaries of the great God have skewed and distorted the righteous standard of God, and everyone now does that which is right in his own eyes and claims to be doing their best. If you alter the standard weight and measure of business you will certainly never get true weight or measurement again. We are even seeing this in the polling and the statistics in our government where they give the unemployment rate or inflation rate. The statistics are all a farce and fabrication. There will be no standard to go by, and each person will do his best with his own weights and measures. If the standard is tampered with, the foundation upon which trade is conducted has been compromised. It is the same with spiritual matters. If you abolish the best rule that ever existed, even God's own law, there is no rule left worthy of the name.

Sanctification is a long process of repentance and overcoming what God's perfect law exposes as sin. But, mainstream Christianity talks of perfect sanctification because it has lowered or nullified the requirements of God's law making them at most optional guidelines. There is nothing at all remarkable in our achieving the standard if it is conveniently lowered for us. No one is perfectly clean and we must accept the fact that absolute purity is the standard by which we are judged. As long as there is in us any falling short of the perfect law, then we are not perfect. What a humbling truth this is. The law will not pass away and it must be fulfilled. To tamper with the law is to trample on God's Word.

We read earlier in Matthew 5:18, "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled." The second half of this verse tells us the law must be fulfilled. Christ ultimately fulfilled it as an example to us, and we cannot fulfill it on our own. Salvation is of grace through faith in Jesus Christ and not by our own works, doings or feelings. Salvation by the works of the law can never come to any human being, yet the law must be fulfilled, and the law is fulfilled in Christ, and by faith we receive the fruit of it and are able to fulfill it.

What does it mean, "till all is fulfilled"? Jesus said that He had not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it, to bring out the real meaning of the law and to show how it was to be kept in its spirit and intent. He expanded and explained the law and lived by it. Even behind the Scribes and oral law, there was one great principle which the Scribes and the Pharisees had imperfectly understood. The one great principle was that in all things a person must seek God's will and that when he knows it, he must dedicate his whole

life to obeying it. The Scribes and the Pharisees were right in seeking God's will and profoundly right in dedicating their lives to obeying it. However, they were wrong in finding that will in their own human reasoned collection of rules and regulations.

When we look at the Ten Commandments, which are the essence and the foundation of all law, we can see that their whole meaning can be summed up in two words: love and reverence. Love and reverence for God and His name, for parents, life, property, truth, for another person's good name, love and respect for oneself so that wrong desires may never control us. These are the fundamental principles behind the Ten Commandments, principles of love and reverence for God and respect for our fellow human beings. Without the Ten Commandments, there can be no such thing as law. On them all righteous law is based.

Jesus came to fulfill that love and reverence. He came to show people in actual life what love and reverence for God and love and respect for people was like. That love and reverence did not consist of obeying a multitude of petty, humanly reasoned rules and regulations as the Pharisees did. God's commandments do not consist of sacrifice, but of mercy. They are not comprised of man-made prohibitions which demand that people do not do certain things. God's commands comprise the instruction to mold their lives on the positive love and reverence which can never pass away. They are the permanent composition of a person's relationship with God and with his fellow human beings.

The law is fulfilled in the matchless sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The law is fulfilled for us by Christ in His life. As our Head and representative, Christ came into the world for the double purpose of bearing the penalty and at the same time keeping the law. One of His main designs in coming to earth was to bring in perfect righteousness. Faith is shown by living by God's Word and obeying His laws. Actively applying them in our lives produces good works, which shows our faith.

James 2:18-20 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?

Philippians 3:9 ...and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

God applies the righteousness of Jesus Christ to us. Paul gives us an explanation as to why the Jews rejected Christ. They had disregarded the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own by refusing to submit to God's righteousness. It is this spiritual orientation, not God's unfaithfulness, which led to the Jews' rejection of Christ.

Romans 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

This is another scripture which mainstream Christianity uses against the law. Those who attempt to do away with God's law often turn to this verse. In the previous verse, Paul explains how the Pharisees were going about trying to establish their own righteousness apart from God's righteousness, and they ignored the sacrifice of Christ and thought that mere commandment keeping would be enough for anyone. As Paul points out in verse 4, Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. What does "the end of the law" mean? It means the aim, the purpose, the fullness, or outcome of the law. Christ in us gives us the power to keep God's holy, perfect law for which we lack the spiritual strength ourselves. Paul gives this instruction back in Romans 8:3-4:

Romans 8:3-4 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

Apart from Christ, no one can manage to keep God's law in the spirit. By his very nature, a person falls short, but through Christ we can be obedient.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

The aim or the end of the law is to enable us to become like Christ. The word "end" used in Romans 10:4 is also found in James 5:11.

James 5:11 Indeed we count them blessed who endure. You have heard of the perseverance of Job and seen the end intended by the Lord—that the Lord is very compassionate and merciful.

Did James mean that Christ's end had come? Of course not. Rather, James explains it himself that they had seen the purpose, or aim, of the Lord—that He is very compassionate and merciful.

God sees us in Christ and counts us as righteous. Regeneration is a work by which the law is fulfilled. When a person is born from above, a new nature is placed in him, which loves the law of God and is perfectly conformed to it. The law in itself is good and in its own nature it tends to produce happiness. The sin and condemnation of the guilty is not the fault of the law. If obeyed, it would produce happiness everywhere. A very beautiful description of the law of God is contained in Psalm 19:7-8.

Psalm 19:7-8 The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes;

God's law is perfect, sure, right, and pure. The word "law" in this verse means instruction, precept, coming from a verb signifying "to teach." It is then used with reference to instruction or teaching in regard to conduct and therefore it is used in reference to all that God has communicated to guide mankind. It does not here, or commonly, refer exclusively to the commands of God, but it includes all that God has revealed to teach and guide us. It refers to revealed truth in a different way from the truth made known by the works of creation. The law of the Lord is perfect, sure, right, and pure.

Paul desired to obey God in all things and his impression of God's law was one of great love, reverence, and absolute commitment. When he describes his inward conflicts he showed that he himself, his real and best self, did keep the law.

Romans 7:12 Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

Romans 7:22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.

Romans 7:25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.

Although sin that dwelt in Paul's body led him into breaking the law sometimes, nevertheless, his new nature did not allow it, but hated, and loathed, and cried out against it as if in bondage. What began in regeneration continues and grows until it ultimately arrives at absolute perfection. It must grow and totally replace the corruption, the human nature that tends toward sin. The law will admit no one into God's Kingdom until he is perfectly conformed to it. Every believer will be in that perfect condition at his resurrection to eternal life. Our nature will be refined from all of its dross and be as pure gold. It will be our joy in the kingdom to be holy. There will be nothing about us then to kick against a single commandment.

In the Kingdom of God we will know in our own hearts the glory and excellence of the divine will. Our will is now being conformed to run in that same channel. God's precepts will be our own will as truly as they are God's will. Nothing that God has commanded, however much self-denial it requires now from a human standpoint, will require any self-denial from us then. Holiness will be our element and our joy. Our nature will be entirely conformed to the nature and mind of God as to holiness and goodness and then the law will be completely fulfilled in us, and we will stand before God, having washed our robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb. At the same time being ourselves without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

Perfect holiness will never be reached by the works of the law because works cannot change the nature, but by faith in Jesus Christ and God's work in us through His Spirit, our nature will be changed. The Word of God and the law of God will stand fast forever and forever. The law of the Lord is eternal.