

Ruling to Result of God

Since our rebellion, all humanity is born with a rebellious nature which is inclined to reject what is good and wise and choose what is evil and foolish.

"There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; they have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no not one." (Romans 3:10-12)

From the time of Adam to Noah, the law of God was not given, although through conscience men had an intuitive knowledge of good and evil. (Romans 5:12-13). Yet, the rebel nature in man was so strong that "the Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great on the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And the Lord was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart." (Gen. 6:5,6)

Left without divine law, mankind grew not better, but worse. So God decided to give laws, first to Noah, and later, more especially, to Moses.

What is the law of God?

The law of God (or more simply, the law) may be understood in different ways. In one understanding, it is the whole O.T., including the law of Moses, the prophets and the writings (including the Psalms and Proverbs). (John 10:34,35). It may be divided into the moral law of God (which doesn't change) and the ceremonial law to do with various regulations which God applied to the people of Israel concerning lifestyle and especially sacrificial laws (which are now fulfilled in Christ). At a more basic level, the law of God is those instructions which He gives which carry a punishment for disobedience.

The Ten Commandments

The ten commandments were given to the people of Israel through Moses on Mt. Sinai. All of them are repeated to us in various forms in the New Testament. They form part of the moral law of God which we must respect. These commands, in short form, are as follows.

- 1. I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods before me. (Ex. 20:2,3)**
- 2. You shall not make a carved image or any likeness of anything to bow down to them or serve them. (Ex. 20:4,5)**
- 3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. (vs 7)**
- 4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the Seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. (vs 8,9)**

5. Honour your father and mother. (vs 12)
6. You shall not murder. (vs 13)
7. You shall not commit adultery. (vs 14)
8. You shall not steal. (vs 15)
9. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour. (vs 16)
10. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbour. (vs 17)

What do these commands mean for us?

1. God must be the centre of our affections and love, admiration, trust, worship and service. No other person, no other thing, no other philosophy must take that place in our hearts and minds.

2. We must not represent God through any work of art and bow down to it. We must not bow down to or serve any idols. We must not worship a god of our own imagination or human tradition, but only the Lord God who is revealed through Scripture.

3. We must honour the name of God and not say things of God that are not true, using his name as a swear-word or as a justification for our wrong actions.

4. Despite what members of the Seventh Day Adventist church and some other groups may say, all this means is that we should cease from our own works and rest in God (See Hebrews 4:1-10). Whatever your situation, if you say you have no time for Christian meetings and for worshiping God, you are clearly a violator of the spirit of this commandment and you must repent. The fact is, if you overwork because of greed or insecurity about finances, saying that you have no time to attend church, you are an idolater and can expect God's judgment and curse. We must make time for church meetings if we are God's people.

For further information on the controversy regarding Sabbath Keeping, see [Appendix A](#).

5. Respect your father and mother, don't talk against them. Help them financially if need be.

6. Murder, not capital punishment is condemned here. Murder, even in the heart, is a serious crime against humanity. Jesus taught us in the New Testament not even to be angry with our brothers, and certainly not to hate them. We should love our human enemies, but hate the devil and his evil enticements and works (Matt. 5:43-48; 1 John 3:15).

7. Do not have sexual involvement with anyone except your husband or wife, even in your imagination. It is a sin to divorce so you can marry someone else. Also, Jesus said, "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." (Matt. 5:27-28) One clear application of this is that we must keep our eyes away from pornography of any kind. You may not be able to avoid the first sight of it always, but you can avoid the second look.

8. Do not take anything that does not belong to you, or anything that belongs to another person legally. Furthermore, you should realise that all you have belongs to God, so don't take what is His and spend it on your selfish desires.

9. Don't lie or say what isn't true about someone else.

10. Don't love money or wish that you could take what belongs to someone else.

The Law of love

"But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does." (James 1:25)

"If you really fulfil the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself', you do well." (James 2:8)

This perfect royal law is in a word, "LOVE!" We must love God with all we have, and love everybody else as much as we love ourselves.

"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 neighbour as yourself.'" (Mt. 22:37-39)

Not that we are to love only God, but we are to love also our brethren as Christ loved us (Jn 13.34,35), our neighbour (anybody that needs mercy Lk 10.27-37) and even our enemies, those who curse us, hate us, spitefully use us and persecute us (Mt.5:43,44).

Love is the fulfilment of the law. (Rom. 13:9,10). You cannot love your neighbour and steal from him, commit adultery with his wife or envy him for what he has. If you love, you will fulfil the moral law of God.

Why the law?

As we have seen, without law mankind became worse and worse until it was necessary that they be destroyed. After the flood, God told Noah and his sons that they may eat the flesh of animals without the blood, and that they will be punished for murder. Later, God gave the Mosaic law. Jesus kept this law, fulfilling all legal righteousness. He taught that love is the fulfilment of the law. What God really wants is obedience from the heart that leads to love. (1 Tim 1:5; 1 Peter 1:22). The New Testament puts the emphasis on the law of love, for it is God's goal to conform us to the love that is in Him.

God's laws are given for a number of reasons.

- 1. To restrain wickedness, by threatening judgment on those who break the law. (1 Tim 1:8-11)**
- 2. To educate the conscience to have a true knowledge of right and wrong.**
- 3. To convict men of sin and judgment (and therefore the need for a saviour) (Gal. 3:23; Rom. 7:7)**
- 4. To protect mankind from the unrestrained**