

The Ten Commandments Explained!

This chapter taken from the book *When Faith Came* by Franklin Whittenburg © 1998-2006

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In this chapter, I would like to address the main struggle that many people in the church wrestle with. Are we under the Law, Grace, or both? I want to first share with you many verses dealing with Law and Grace so you can see what the Bible has to say. To understand the Gospel these verses that follow are vital, so please read them.

In this study on Law or Grace I mainly want to show the difference between using the law as a list of rules to be followed to become righteous verses the Christian becoming righteous only by gift for faith in Jesus Christ. But before we get deep into this study on Law or Grace, I want to first show how the Christian already fulfills the Ten Commandments by just being a Christian! Many look at the Ten Commandments as a list of rules to follow to become “holy” and try to achieve that end result through obedience to them, but actually the Ten Commandments are just a description of the Christian’s current state of being as born of the Spirit! A natural (in Adam) man cannot consistently keep a spiritual law and a natural man cannot bear spiritual fruit. Fulfilling the Ten Commandments is a state of being, not just doing.

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law (Romans 3:31).

Thou shalt have no other God’s before me.

As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him (1 Corinthians 8:4-6).

Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven images.

For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring. Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man’s device (Acts 17:28,29).

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Jesus Christ is our Sabbath and our eternal “holiness” comes from the indwelling Holy Spirit!

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light (Matthew 11:28-30).

For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest: although the works were finished from the foundation of the world. For he spake in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works (Hebrews 4:2-4).

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled. In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: (Colossians 1:21,22).

Honor thy father and mother.

For I was my father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother. He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth. Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding. Exalt her, and she shall promote thee: she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her (Proverbs 4:3-8).

Thou shalt not kill.

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)(2 Corinthians 10:3,4)

And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? But he turned, and rebuked

them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village (Luke 9:54-56).

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God (Romans 7:1-4).

Thou shalt not steal.

Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; (1 Timothy 6:17).

Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's (1 Corinthians 3:21-23).

But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ (Philippians 3:7).

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. The Christian bears true witness through the indwelling Holy Spirit (Spirit of Truth).

A true witness delivereth souls: but a deceitful witness speaketh lies (Proverbs 14:25).

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me; and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true (John 5:30-32).

And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith (Acts 15:8,9).

It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me (John 8,17,18).

And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one. If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son.

He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the

record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son (1 John 5:8-10).

Thou shalt not covet.

But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing (James 1:2-4).

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: (Colossians 2:9,10).

I think that what I just shared was what Moses may have saw also that made him cover his face for seeing hidden in the Ten Commandments the glory of what the Holy Spirit would do in the life of the believer in Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament Key to the Ten Commandments

Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; I do not this for your sakes, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, saith the Lord GOD, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God (Ezekiel 36:22-28).

Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (2 Corinthians 6:14-16).

The New Testament Key to the Ten Commandments

The Ten Commandments are the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Christian's heart

Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone (Ten Commandments), but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away: How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: And not as Moses, which put a vail over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:2-18).

The verses that I used in unlocking the Ten Commandments are just what came to memory while I was writing. There may be other New Testament scriptures that fit each commandment even better, but you can get the gist of the idea with these verses.

The rest of this chapter is a study of the difference of attaining righteousness through obedience to the law, or righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ because for many this is a stumbling stone. I let some pastors and other Christians review the information in this chapter and I am getting enough feedback to address something that they have brought up. Many people, when they hear me talk about the Christian walk and the Gospel say, "Franklin, you believe you can walk in "sinless perfection". I answer, "What I believe is you can walk in His righteousness"! It is a walk of FAITH! In the epistle of Romans, Paul explains this beautifully. In the book of Titus, Paul addresses the same thing from the opposite direction.

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin (Romans 14:19-23).

But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself (Titus 3:9-11).

I want to address this before you read any farther. I completely understand that my righteousness is as filthy rags and cannot be cleaned (1 John 1:8), so I just accepted the free gift of righteousness and put it on by faith. That is the righteousness that I walk in, and yes it is “sinless and perfect” because it came from God as a gift, not earned and kept by me through perpetual “good works”. I had no part in creating it. This is a stumbling stone for many and some will just never understand this. Let me try to explain it this way. See I was made a sinner because of what Adam done, before I was ever born as Paul taught in Romans.

Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon ALL men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon ALL men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Romans 5:18,19).

You can see also in this same verse that I was made righteous by what Jesus Christ did on the cross **BEFORE** I was born! The only problem is that I didn’t know Jesus Christ died for my sins until someone comes and tells me about the “good news” of the Gospel, which is salvation through Jesus Christ. Until I heard the “good news” of the Gospel, I was living a life on earth, like Adam who was hiding from God and I didn’t know I was forgiven.

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in YOUR MIND by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight: (Colossians 1:20-22).

As we read earlier in Romans 5:18,19, since my condemnation as a sinner came on me before I was born, and my redemption from that sin was accomplished on the cross of Calvary before I was born, then that only leaves me with the choice of “accepting or rejecting” that salvation. I can in no way “add to” or “take away” from my redemption that was accomplished on a cross **BEFORE I WAS BORN!** The doctrine of “WHY” we accept or reject (i.e. predestination or freewill) the salvation discussed here, is a topic for another study. Please read the rest of this chapter from the point of view of what I just explained. I don’t think I can explain the Gospel any simpler, but I will try.

Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had BY HIMSELF purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; (Hebrews 1:3).

But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake (2 Corinthians 4:3-5).

But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: (Romans 3:21,22).

For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. (Romans 10:2-5)

What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone; (Romans 9:30-32).

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: (Phil 3:9)

Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter (Romans 7:1-6).

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace (Romans 6:14).

But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law (Galatians 5:18).

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from

the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: (Galatians 3:10-14).

For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. (John 1:17)

But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts 13:37-39).

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is a gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. (Ephesians 2:8,9).

For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. (Romans 4: 3-8)

The Christian covenant is after the Abrahamic covenant of faith, NOT after the Mosaic covenant of the law received on tablets of stone (Ten Commandments) as even Moses agreed!

Mosaic Covenant

And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that ye may learn them, and keep, and do them. The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The LORD made NOT this covenant with our fathers (Abraham, Issac, and Jacob), but with us, even us, who are all of us here alive this day. The LORD talked with you face to face in the mount out of the midst of the fire, (I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;) saying, I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage (Deuteronomy 5:1-6).

Christian / Abrahamic Faith Covenant

For ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:) But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. (Hebrews 12:18-24).

For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: (Romans 4:13,14).

And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise (Galatians 3:17-18).

Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are two covenants; the one from mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar in mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice thou bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. NOW WE, brethren, as Issac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? CAST OUT the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are NOT children of the bondwoman, but of the free. (Galatians 4:21-31).

The Explanation

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under

the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise (Galatians 3:19-29).

Who is that seed to come?

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ (Galatians 3:16).