

kept only through the One who alone is good--and that is God. If there is ever to be any good in us, it is because we have God working in us. And if God is working in us, then



every one of the commandments can be kept perfectly! "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Philippians 2:13.

"Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever Amen." Hebrews 13:20-21.

When we allow God to work in us through Jesus, there will be no sin that together we could not overcome! "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13.

When the shed blood of Christ covers us, our sins are forgiven, and Christ's righteousness is by faith imputed to us making us justified or righteous before God. Then, as we choose to allow Christ to live in and work through us, His righteousness is by faith imparted to us and we can work the works of Him "who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). So Christ's righteousness is imputed to us because we broke God's Law, and is imparted to us so that we can now keep it. Thus Jesus is "THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS" (Jeremiah 23:6) because "he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10).

It is by faith in God working in us, and our moment by moment choice to work in harmony with His will, or combining faith and works together, that we become doers of His Law and remain righteous. The Law is so holy that the standard it holds out to us is greater than anyone can attain to in his own strength. Perfect obedience can only be accomplished through God's divine power. But divine power alone, without our choice to act in harmony with it, will accomplish nothing. "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone....Seest thou how faith wrought with his (Abraham's) works, and by works was faith made perfect?...For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." James 2:17, 22, 26.

God will not overcome sin for us without our help! We can exercise all the faith in the world, but faith alone will not enable us to keep all of God's commandments. We

must act in harmony with our faith. Our faith must become active and alive, not remain inactive and dead. So as by faith we receive the Lord Jesus, He lives out His perfect Law in us. "But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward 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." Galatians 3:23-25.

In other words, we were under the curse of the Law for having broken it and sinned. The Law could not pardon us, but as a tutor plainly showed us that Christ is the only way to be freed from being under its curse by being cleansed and justified through faith in His shed blood. Thus, after faith is come, we no longer need this tutor to point us to Christ for cleansing--because we are already justified from sin.

Some have supposed that this text was teaching that there was a definite time for faith to come and that men needed to keep the Law until this certain time. It is then commonly believed that once faith came, they were from then on free from the Law. This coming of faith is generally considered to be synonymous with the manifestation of Christ on earth. But when does faith come? "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17.

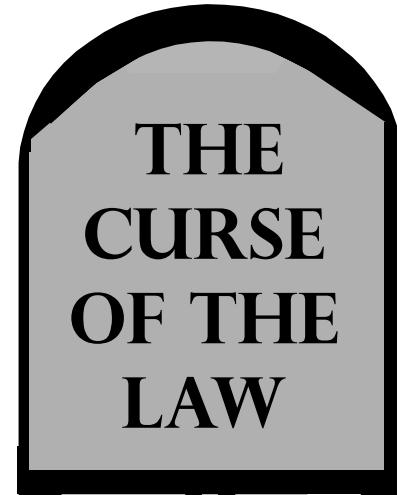
When we receive the Word of God--the word of promise into our hearts, it brings with it the fullness of God's Law, and when we no longer fight against this truth, but yield to it, then a faith that is alive comes to us and we are free indeed.

Christ did not come to save us in our sins but from our sins (see Matthew 1:21). The salvation He brings to us is not just release from the penalty of sin, but victory over sin itself. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law" (Galatians 3:13), from sin and death. This He has done by "being made a curse for us," and thus we are freed from all necessity of sinning--not from the necessity of keeping God's Law. Sin can have no more dominion over you if you will only accept Christ in truth as your Saviour, allowing Him to live in and through you, and then continue to choose to serve and obey Him instead of self each moment of each day.

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. ...For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.... (because) he (Christ) became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." Luke 9:23, 27; Hebrews 5:9.

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"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse..." Gal 3:10. Many people stop right here and do not want to read any further. If these words were the complete thought brought forth by the apostle Paul, one might be excused for believing that those who seek to render obedience to God's ten commandments are under a curse. But these would miss the real point that the apostle was seeking to make. Notice that the verse goes on to say: "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."

The fact of the matter is, the curse comes upon men, not because they keep the Law, but because they failed to do so. Closer observation reveals that the curse is actually the curse which comes because of disobedience.

Disobedience to God's Law is itself the curse, and the curse it brings is death. Sin has death wrapped up in it, for "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" Romans 5:12. Without sin, death would not exist, for "the sting of death is sin" 1 Corin 15:56. Why did the apostle then say that "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse"? Is it because the Law is a curse? No, the apostle himself acknowledges that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good" Romans 7:12.

If there was something wrong with the Law, we may know with confidence that Christ would not have fulfilled it in every respect (see John 15:10). Why, then, would as many who were of the works of the law under the curse? Because "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" Romans 3:23. All have failed to fulfill the works of the Law in their lives. Thus anyone who seeks by good works to remove the curse from themselves of having broken that Law will still remain under that curse.

We see this same principle in the application of human

laws. The laws which prohibit an individual from defrauding or committing violence against his neighbor are not a curse, or a type of bondage. In fact, we would have to agree that they are laws which insure liberty, and there are certain penalties given to those who would break them. Therefore, while these laws speak liberty to the law-abiding citizen, they speak bondage to the one convicted of having violated them. This principle is also seen in the area of the laws which govern traffic, and once convicted of breaking the speed law, one's future good driving will not remove from him the obligation of having to pay the penalty.

In this respect, God's Law of ten commandments is no different. James refers to it as the "perfect law of liberty" James 1:25. This Law can be divided into two great parts: the first four commandments addresses our relation to God, showing how we are to live in harmony with our Creator--the Source of our life. The second, or last six commandments, addresses our relation to other human beings, showing how we are to live in harmony with our neighbors. And for one to break any part of this Law would place them under its curse.

When God brought His chosen people out of the bondage of Egypt, He set before them two types of promises. One set were based upon a course of obedience, the other upon a

course of disobedience (see Deuteronomy 11:26-28). As long as they obeyed God, they received blessings, but when they chose to disobey, they received the curse. God did not speak these words for Israel alone. But these ten precepts apply equally to all mankind. It was not just the rights of the children of Israel which God sought to protect, but for all peoples. Neither were the people of Israel the only segment of society that God desired to have live in harmony with the principals of His government.

You will never find in any of Paul's writings any hint or suggestion that the Law was not to be obeyed, or that it had been abolished or changed. The question is not if the Law should be kept, but how it is to be kept.

Since "all have sinned and come short of the Glory of God" (Romans 3:23) having broken His Law, there would be no possibility that any could remove this debt of sin by the keeping of this Law in the future--no matter how good and perfect they would be. This is because the Law has no way of removing past guilt. There is no remedy in the Law to remove or pardon our past sins and make us innocent. The Law only condemns and brings the curse of death upon those who break it.

Then how can anyone have their past sins forgiven and

thereby be enabled to live? "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin....Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare...his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Romans 3:20, 24-28.

Thus it is through faith alone in the shed blood of Christ that we can have our past sins forgiven, our debt of guilt paid, the curse of death removed, and can be declared innocent and righteous through the grace and righteousness of Christ Jesus!

But this gift of justification through faith is only for "the remission of sins that are past" and does not include any future sins. So once we are justified by faith and are made righteous through Christ, do we continue to break and make void God's Law? Paul states: "But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid. For if I build again the things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor." Gal 2:17-18.

So once we are justified, and we should then choose to break God's Law and commit sin, we would no longer be justified because we made ourselves a transgressor once again. Christ has not redeemed us from the necessity of having to keep the ten commandments, but "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us..." Galatians 3:13.

Christ has made a way for all who accept Him as their Saviour to have their past sins, along with the curse of death, removed that they may become justified and holy in God's sight! But this only became possible because Christ became sin for us and suffered our penalty of death. What love is here manifested toward every human being by Jesus! Christ has taken away the curse of the Law from us by placing the curse upon Himself so that we can be justified or declared just.

When we read the statement that "No man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith" (Galatians 3:11), it is important that we have a clear idea of the meaning of the word "justified" and "just." "Justified" means "to render just or innocent" (see Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, Greek word #1344). While "just" means a person who is "holy" or "righteous" (Strong's, #1342). So the just, or those who are holy and righteous, "shall live by faith."

As "all unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17), and all "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4), therefore all unrighteousness is the transgression of the Law. It would naturally follow that all righteousness must be obedience to that Law. And thus for one to be declared righteous, they must

not be knowingly disregarding any precept of God's Law. Paul clearly declares: "For not the hearers of the law are just (or are righteous) before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified (or be righteous)." Romans 2:13.

So once we are justified, we must be more than hearers of God's Law, but doers of it. But how? How are we to live? "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20.

This process of allowing Christ to live in you is called being a "live unto God" (Galatians 2:19) and being "dead to sin" (Romans 6:2). It is also referred to as putting "on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" Romans 13:14. It also means that we would be choosing to follow God's will at all times and in all places. Thus we would be imitating the life of Christ, our great Example. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth" 1 Peter 2:21-22 (see also Ephesians 5:1-8; Colossians 3:5-17). And since Christ kept all of His Father's commandments, if we allow Him to live in us by faith, then we would also be keeping all of God's commandments.

This keeping of God's Law through faith that Christ is living in you is also called being sanctified through the Spirit, and is the hope and goal of every true Christian. "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he (Christ) reconciled In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel... Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." Colossians 1:21-23, 26-29.

This keeping of all ten of God's commandments cannot be accomplished in our own strength. This law can be

