

Fundamentals of Belief #7B: The Eternal Law

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We are ready to continue in this lengthy series on the Fundamentals of Belief of Church of God, The Eternal. If you will remember, last week we left off addressing Fundamental of Belief number seven, which I have informally called the fundamental on "Sin and Law." We went through most of the concepts contained in that fundamental last week, but we saved one small paragraph which is going to take the entire sermon this afternoon. In fact, I have so many notes on this particular section that I am really going to have to rush in order to get through it all.

Let me start by re-reading fundamental number seven in its entirety.

We believe sin is the transgression of the Law; that the Law is spiritual, perfect, holy, just, and good, summed up in the word "LOVE;" that it involves the two great principles of love to God, and love to neighbor, and that the Ten Commandments compose the ten points of the Law, and that the breaking of only one point makes one guilty of sin. We believe this fundamental spiritual Law reveals to us the only right and true way of life—the only possible way of happiness, peace and joy; that it has existed from Adam, [Here is the part we are going to cover today.] is immutable and binding thru-out eternity; and that all unhappiness, misery, poverty, anguish, and woe has come from its transgression.

We went through most of that last week, showing support from the Bible—the Holy Scriptures—to substantiate exactly why we believe this, about the concept of sin and God's law. Fundamentally, what we did last week was go through to show that sin is the transgression of the law.

I showed you a mathematical formula: Sin is the transgression of the law from 1 John 3:4. Also, if you will remember, in 1 John 5:17 we saw that all unrighteousness is sin. So, if sin is the transgression of the law and if unrighteousness is sin, then unrighteousness is also the transgression of the law. If unrighteousness is the transgression of the law, what must righteousness be? By deductive reasoning, obviously, righteousness must be law-keeping. If unrighteousness is law-breaking, then righteousness is law-keeping.

We also found in Psalm 119:172 that ". . . all thy commandments are righteousness." If anyone has any doubts, whatsoever, about what is inferred and how God views His own law, it says those commandments are righteousness. Romans 7:12 says, "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Those are all the principles that we went through last week.

We also saw that the Ten Commandments do compose those ten points of the law. It is a law of love. Jesus Christ, Himself, brought out the points to define the law in two broad principles, two larger commandments—love toward God and love toward man. The ten points of the law—the Ten Commandments—are contained within those two great principles.

We also found that law has existed from the time of Adam. It was not initiated on Mt. Sinai. Those laws were in force from the very beginning—from the foundation of the world when man was created and first put on this earth. We—all human beings—have been subject to those laws and continue to be subject to those laws.

In Romans 7:14 we found that the law is spiritual. We are not talking about that which most of this world considers, when they think about the law of God as being done away. We are talking about a law that is spiritual; it is eternal.

We are going to delve more deeply into that this afternoon. We want to take this phrase from our fundamental which says, ". . . is immutable and binding thru-out eternity . . ." Basically, what I want to do is go through and look at the objections that most churches make about God's law. We want to look at the typical things that you hear from those who say that the law is done away. We want to analyze why they believe what they do and what scriptures they use to support, supposedly, their views. In doing so, we will find out how to understand and interpret those things properly.

First, let's start in Psalm 111:7–8:

The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.

Before we even get started, lest anyone should believe that God contradicts Himself and that the scriptures contradict themselves, let's start from the premise and understand what God said through His holy prophets—His servants. ". . . all His commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever . . ." Why do we believe the law of God is immutable and binding thru-out eternity? Because that is what God said.

What about these arguments against keeping the law? Human beings do not want to be subject to the law; they do not want to be under the jurisdiction of God and His commandments because law-keeping is hard. Respecting God's laws, loving God and proper love toward our fellow human beings is difficult indeed, because it goes against everything that is within us.

How much easier is it for us to find a way to feel that we are not subject to it? That is what human beings do. If something is too hard, if the way is too difficult, we find a way to not have to walk down that road. How often we have seen many people do it.

What is one of the first things you might hear from those that claim to be Christians from many of the other churches? Churches out from which even some of you may have come. You may have said some of these very same things in earlier years, like this, "We only need Jesus to be saved. He lived it perfectly in our stead." Have you ever heard that? They believe that Christ lived perfectly, according to God's law, so that we don't have to. Is that true? Let's start in Matthew 5:17–19.

Christ said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Now, we turn to this scripture very often to support the fact that Christ said, "I didn't come to do away with the law. I didn't come to live it in your stead. I came to fulfill that law—to show the fulfillment, the expansion of the law, the spiritual elements of the physical law, to add to it, in its spiritual intent."

Yet, this is the scripture that many in the world's churches actually turn to, to refute the law's dominance over them. They will say that Christ said, "I am not come

to destroy, but to fulfill." They say, "See, Christ fulfilled it. We are not saying the law is bad, but Christ fulfilled it; therefore, we don't have to live under the requirements—the obligations—of the law." What did He say further?

"For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." They very rarely read the continuation of the passage—all that Christ spoke. "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law." Is heaven still here? Is the earth still here? How can any human being who believes in any way that this is the inspired scripture spoken specifically by Jesus Christ Himself, believe that Christ's intent was to say that we are not subject to the commandments that God initiated?

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

That is what Christ said, brethren. He referred the people back again to the Commandments, the ten points of the law.

Romans 7:5–8:

Another scripture that you might often hear referred to, to try and show that we are not under the law. Let's read the whole thing in context.

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 [Oh, glory be! 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 . . .

Yes, we have been delivered from the old, horrible, oppressive law (so we would be led to believe); but keep reading. It appears that Paul knew, in trying to describe and make these statements to expand the knowledge of God in this epistle, that he would be misunderstood. Repeatedly, we will find in other scriptures that he had to stop and clarify, as if he knew that people were going to misconstrue what he was saying. So, how did he follow?

Verses 7–8:

"What shall we say then? Is the law sin . . ." As if he is saying, "Don't misconstrue what I am telling you." The fact that he said, "But now we are delivered from the law," is not saying that there is something wrong with the law. We're not saying that the law is sin. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law . . ."

Remember, what is sin? Sin is the transgression of the law. So if the law was not in force, if those commandments were not in force and binding upon us, how would we know what sin was? Everything we know is in relationship to other things. How would God be able to convince us that we were sinners, that there was something wrong with us, that we needed to change, if there wasn't something in force—a yardstick—with which to measure ourselves against? What is that yardstick? It is the law of God; it is the commandments, even the Ten Commandments.

What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.

What does that mean? If there had not been a law, if there had not been the Ten Commandments, then there would have been no sin. If sin is the transgression of the law and if the law was null and void and didn't exist, then how could there be sin? Sin only exists in relationship to the law. Sin is the transgression of the law. Therefore, if we believe that sin is possible in our lives, even today, then we must believe that a law is in force. We are going to see that a little bit later.

Romans 10:3–4, 9–17:

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness . . ." Remember what righteousness is? We already defined that. Unrighteousness is breaking the law; therefore, righteousness is keeping the law.

"For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness . . ." What are they—those that oppose God and His commandments—establishing, brethren? They establish, in essence, their own

commandments. They are not willing to live under the commandments of God to worship Him appropriately, including the keeping of His Sabbath and His Holy Days. Although they claim to believe in a moral law, an obligation of human beings to do good one to another, to not steal or murder, they do not believe that it is an obligation that comes with the authority of the living God upon us. They would prefer to willingly commit themselves to a moral way of life because they desire to be good, not because there is a commandment that compels them in order to be right with God.

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. [They have not submitted themselves unto the laws, the commandments of God.] For Christ [And here, they focus again on this.] is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

See, Christ is the end of the law. He did away with that law. He lived it in our stead. Thank goodness we are not under the obligation, they will tell you. What does it say further? Skip down to verse 9 and let's see it clarified.

Here is the other principle you will hear very often, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved." Here we go, verse number 9:

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

That is all we have to do, so they will tell you. Confess Jesus with your mouth. Believe in Jesus and you will be saved. What does it mean to believe in Christ? It is not enough to stop with a profession of Christ that is not honest and legitimate. How do we confess Christ? Read on in verse 10:

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

So, obviously, believing in Jesus Christ has everything to do with salvation, but what does it mean to believe?

For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

How easy it would be to believe that all we had to do was use the name of Jesus Christ, maybe put a couple of bumper stickers on the back of our cars that say, "I Honk For Jesus," or whatever else these people do. "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." How do we call on him? Calling upon Jesus Christ does lead to salvation, but how do we do so?

Verses 14–15:

How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

Somehow, there is a requirement for one to be able to believe on Jesus Christ in the fullness of what He intended. It starts with a commission of a chosen servant to preach through the gift of the Holy Spirit. How many people understand that? Only through the preaching of a chosen servant, can anyone hope to hear.

What they don't understand, which is not our subject for today, is that only those who are called to have their minds opened by a special miracle have the opportunity to hear the preaching of a chosen servant and respond. Then, only those who respond to that which they hear—the word of God preached that Christ gave to His apostles and which is continued even in these last days through a chosen servant—are those who prove that they actually believe. Only those then that believe can call upon Jesus Christ, legitimately; and only then, they who call upon Him have that opportunity for salvation.

That is the chain of events that is required. The chain cannot be broken. There is no salvation except that all of those elements are included from beginning to end. It is not enough for someone to pick up the Bible and say, "I believe in Jesus Christ," then go about their business and continue to live their lives as they always have—breaking every commandment of God—but professing falsely that they love Jesus Christ. It is not enough, brethren.

Verse 16:

"But they have not all obeyed the gospel . . ." What is it that Jesus Christ revealed to His chosen servants of the last days? He revealed that which is being continued and carried forward by those who are preaching the truth even now. It was the same gospel message that Jesus Christ brought. It is not enough to believe on the name of Christ. Believing on the name of Jesus Christ, legitimately, means we believe in the message that He taught. That is why Paul says, "But they have not all obeyed the gospel . . ." They claim the name of Christ, but they don't do what Christ said to do.

For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

What is the word of God? Christ was the Word, the Word made flesh. Christ was the fulfillment of the commandments. Christ was the personification in flesh and blood of the Word. That Word is truth and the commandments are truth. So, Jesus Christ was the personification of the very Ten Commandments. Rejecting the law, rejecting the Ten Commandments—that rule and jurisdiction over our lives—is rejecting Jesus Christ.

Matthew 7:21:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Those who stand up and claim that they love God, that they love Jesus Christ, who believe that they have been "saved" because they proclaim the name, should look at Matthew 7:21 and perhaps figure out what it is that we are really required to do. Christ said, ". . . he that doeth the will of my Father . . ." Those are the ones who will enter into the Kingdom.

Well, what is the will of God, the Father? Let's look at that briefly, because it helps us answer the question and fill in the pieces to the puzzle.

1 Thessalonians 4:1–9:

Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please

God, so ye would abound more and more. For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus.

Who is it that is saying this—that Jesus Christ did away with the commandments and the law, and that we are not subject to them? "For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus." This was a Gentile church in Thessalonica. If the Gentiles were not subject to the laws, then why was the apostle telling this Gentile church that they needed to remember the commandments that they had been given?

For ye know what commandments we gave you by the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God [Here is the answer.], even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence . . .

What are we beginning to talk about? Fulfilling the will of the Father. It's starting to sound like we are going to list some of the commandments here, doesn't it?

Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God: That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter . . .

Sounds like the commandments against stealing and covetousness.

. . . because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified. For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness.

He called us unto holiness. What did we find last week that was holy, good and just? The law of God; the commandments are holy.

He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit. But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you: for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.

He repeated the second great commandment that encompasses the last six of the Ten Commandments—those that even Jesus Christ talked about in His own ministry on this earth. It is a rehearsal, once again, of commandment-keeping.

How do we fulfill the will of the Father? We honor the commandments, the laws that He gave, the spiritual laws, and the holy laws. We don't say that they are done away; we believe they are immutable and eternal.

What other thing have you heard from those who profess Christianity? How about this one: We are under grace, not law. Well, let me ask you this, because this is the simplest explanation that makes the whole thing fall into place for me. Examine the laws of the land that we live under today. Now, we have laws that say don't steal and don't murder or you will go to jail, right? Well, at least you should, if our judicial system works the way it should, even though we know it is very suspect in its execution.

We have a great debate today over the death penalty. We have hundreds of individuals who are on death row, facing ultimately, after the process of appeals, that they will be put to death. Now, if the governor of a state decided to pardon a death row inmate and let him walk out free, not only to avoid death but to be free from incarceration and put back on the street a free man, does that give that individual license never to obey the laws of the land again?

If a governor were to pardon a death row inmate, would he be saying, "Not only am I not going to make you pay for your past sin or your law-breaking—which we could kill you for—but I am going to pardon you, put you back on the street, and from now on you are not going to be subject to any of the laws of the land. So go out and murder anyone you want to, steal as much as you like, do anything that you would like because you are not under the laws of this state any longer"? Is that what a governor's pardon would do?

What would the pardon of a governor do? It would take away the penalty for that trespass, that breaking of the law, which has already happened in the past. It would forgive that which is past; it would not apply to the breaking of any future laws. It certainly would not be a way to say that we are not subject to the laws—that we can go and kill anyone we want in the future without fear of being incarcerated again.

When Gerald Ford pardoned Richard Nixon, was he giving Richard Nixon license to break laws in the future? Or, was it strictly a pardon, a grace, which was providing an exemption from a penalty for something that he had already done in the past? If we understand our own judicial system, brethren, how can we not understand the very same principles that are applied in the laws of God? How can grace, the free

offering of God through the sacrifice of His Son which took away and washed us clean from the penalties of breaking His laws in the past, have anything to do, whatsoever, with the legitimate right of breaking laws in the future?

Are we still subject to the jurisdiction of laws even if we have been forgiven and even if we are under grace? You better believe we are still under the jurisdiction of that law. In future sermons in this Fundamentals series, we are going to talk more about grace; so I don't want to get too much into that. Let's look at Ephesians 2:8–9:

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

By grace you are saved—we don't deny that. We know absolutely that we cannot of our own, through hope of obeying the commandments perfectly, expect to be there. We are carnal, we fail, we trip and we stumble. If we were left as Ancient Israel, without the help, given only the law—the expectation—but not the Holy Spirit as a means to obey, there is no way that law-keeping or the pursuit of trying to keep those laws, in and of themselves, could give us salvation.

The only thing that gives us salvation is the sacrifice of Jesus Christ—believing in His sacrifice. He loved it, He lived it perfectly in His own life and He died for us.

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Romans 6:14:

"For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Does that trouble us? Not at all. Let's back up to Romans 5:20–21 and we will get this in perspective and be able to understand exactly what the apostle was saying. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound . . ." What does that mean? We don't know; we don't have a way to define what sin is except that the law is there to tell us what sin is. To know what the commandments require tells us then, in breaking those commandments, what defines sin.

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound . . ." You see, it was by the law that we understood what was required to have a close, personal relationship with God. By measuring ourselves against that yardstick, we came to find out how miserable we

were in sin, how guilty we were of separation from God through law-breaking. If the law had not been there, we would have not had any way to tell what horrendous, spiritual defilement we were guilty of.

That as sin hath reigned unto death [Meaning, the penalty of sin is death, as we saw.], even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

We had to have someone pardon us—grace. Someone came along and said, "You're guilty, you should be killed for your sins, you are not worthy to live because you have broken a perfect, holy and spiritual law." Yet, grace—being pardoned from our guilty past—is the means for our salvation. Continuing in Romans 6:1–3, 12–18:

"What shall we say then?" Paul, again, having to clarify lest someone misconstrue what he is trying to say. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" Oh! If grace is given that much more when sin, then do we actually glorify God by continuing to commit more sin so He can give us more grace? That is what Paul is asking. "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

When we are forgiven of our sins, it is because we have made a promise that we are going to turn around and walk the other way. We are going to respect God's law; we are going to walk according to God's law, as much as is within our power, through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We cannot have the pardoning of our sins—the grace of Jesus Christ—unless we repent. I don't want to get too much into that because we are going to talk about repentance and baptism and all of those things in future sermons.

How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

At baptism, we repented and we said we recognized that we are law-breakers, that we are guilty. As we were put under water, we admitted our sins and asked that we be cleaned by the very blood of Jesus Christ—forgiven of the death penalty that we had incurred by breaking laws. Skipping down to verses 12–18:

Let not sin [or law-breaking] therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as

instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Now, do you understand how to put it in context? "Not under the law," does not mean, "not under the jurisdiction of the law." We are always under the jurisdiction of the law; it is a spiritual law, immutable and eternal. What are we talking about here, when we say and when Paul said, "We are not under the law"? We are not under the penalty of the law—which is death—for our guilt. That is what Christ died for, to pay the penalty that we have incurred upon ourselves.

What then? shall we sin [Again, he is having to clarify.], because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey . . .

Whatever we seek, brethren, whatever we spend our time doing is how we prove what is most important to us, day by day. ". . . whether of sin unto death . . ." Do we pursue law-breaking as a way of life, or do we consider the laws of God daily? Do we love God's laws? Do we continue to analyze ourselves? Do we pray and ask God to give us understanding to show us our sins and our faults, even those things that we do not recognize? Our interest should be in overcoming, becoming more perfect in the way in which we uphold and respect His laws.

". . . whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Now, if Paul is the apostle who did away with the law or preached the doing away of the law, then why is he talking about obedience? What is obedience? Obedience to what? If the law is done away, what obedience is there? Obedience only exists as a concept in relationship to a standard of some authority. The law can't be done away if the concept of obedience is in play.

Either Paul had some serious mental defect—he doesn't understand whether he is coming or going, talking on one side about the law being done away and being under grace and then over here talking about obedience and saying God forbid that the law is done away. Either he has a very schizophrenic personality, or else there is a way to reconcile all of those things and recognize that he was speaking through the power of the Holy Spirit as a servant of God. Paul recognized the need for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the grace, the forgiveness of the penalty of sin—even as if we were sitting on death row waiting to be executed, which is exactly where we were.

That is exactly where we are every day, brethren, whenever we break one of these commandments. Just as much as if we are sitting on death row, waiting for the carrying out of that execution. It is through the blood of Jesus Christ and through His grace that we receive pardon and are set free from that penalty and then told to go out and sin no more. Obey the law; stop breaking the laws that put us in prison and under the penalty of death.

But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin [from the penalty of sin], ye became the servants of righteousness.

The servants of what? The servants of law-keeping. Law-keeping defines the righteousness of God and Jesus Christ. What about those who claim to believe that Christ forgives sins but deny the law that defines sins? Isn't that a paradox? Just about anyone who claims to be a Christian will tell you they believe that God forgives sins, won't they? God forgives sin. Remind them that sin is the transgression of the law and see how they react. Let's notice it in 1 John 1:8–10.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

What are we talking about here? What is sin? The transgression of the law. What is unrighteousness? Unrighteousness is also sin, which is law-breaking. So, transpose those terms and find out what the Apostle John is saying:

If we confess our [law-breaking,] he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins [our breaking of the law], and to cleanse us from all [those broken laws]. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

Tell me, brethren, how we can believe that Jesus Christ forgives sins if we don't believe that the law is in force and we are under its jurisdiction. If we don't believe that we are under the law, under the jurisdiction of the law, then we do not believe that we are sinners. Anyone who claims the law is done away is saying that sin is done away. It has to be; those two concepts are connected and they cannot be separated.

There is no sin except for the existence of the law. Sin is the transgression of the law; therefore, only if the law is done away, there is no sin. Anyone who claims the law is done away is claiming that he is not a sinner, there is no sin, he cannot sin and it says here, "If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

The only way we can believe in the real Jesus Christ, the only way we are truly His disciples and a part of His church, is if we believe absolutely in the immutable law that He gave.

What about the concept that the Ten Commandments were those carnal ordinances that were done away—the temporary law? Well, let's get into some of that.

Hebrews 9:8–14:

Were the Ten Commandments the carnal ordinances that are referenced here? Let's read.

The Holy [Spirit] this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing . . .

The apostle is making a comparison about the physical tabernacle to the Jews. The rituals, the sacrifices, the Levitical priesthood—all of those things that were set up and established for that time. Then, he compares it and shows to these Jews how Jesus Christ is the fulfillment which all of those sacrifices pointed to.

Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances [There's the term.], imposed on them until the time of reformation.

So they say, "See, there you go, the Ten Commandments were those carnal ordinances and they were only temporary. They were only there until Jesus Christ came. Jesus Christ died, He became the perfect sacrifice and did away with the carnal ordinances. We are not under the law."

Verses 11–14:

But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

What are we talking about in this entire section of scripture, brethren? We are talking about Christ becoming the perfect sacrifice. Replacing what? Replacing the blood on the altar, the sacrificing of bulls, goats and other animals. All of those things were considered in the temporary law, as we are going to see—that which Christ absolutely fulfilled. What need do we have to continue to do animal sacrifices when Christ came and, through His perfect sacrifice and the shedding of His blood, became the perfect sacrifice?

Yes, He absolutely fulfilled part of the law of Moses as we are going to see, but there are some interesting things about the law of Moses that some are not aware of.

1 Corinthians 11:1–2:

We are still trying to answer the question, "Was Paul speaking of the Ten Commandments when he was talking about the carnal ordinances? Was that included in that which was done away?" Well here, Paul is speaking to the Gentile church in Corinth and this is what he told them:

Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you.

Uh-oh. Paul is telling the Gentile church to keep ordinances. What does that tell us? It is not that simple, brethren, just to be able to say that because the apostle used the term "ordinance" and said there was a "carnal ordinance," you can lump all of God's law under that and say it was done away. The very same apostle, speaking to another church, is instructing them to keep something called an ordinance.

There were ordinances considered spiritual that were incumbent upon all Christians, both literal physical Jews as well as Gentiles, who were baptized into the body of Christ. These were ordinances that applied to all of them. However, there was also something that we saw in Hebrews that was considered a carnal ordinance. This carnal ordinance was there only for a temporary period of time and done away by the fulfilling of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. What is the distinction between these two types of ordinances? How can we know? To further lay out the question, let's turn to Ephesians 2:12–16:

That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise . . .

Those who were not born physically as Israelites of the twelve tribes, were strangers from the covenants of promise because God made His covenant—the first covenant—only with Israel.

. . . having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances . . .

Something is obviously considered a wall of enmity which Christ did away with.

. . . for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God [meaning, both Israelites and Gentiles] in one body by the [stake], having slain the enmity thereby . . .

There was a reconciliation that occurred. There was a wall of enmity. What was it? It was that which separated Gentiles from having a chance to be a part of the very body of Christ. Something that happened in the fulfilling that Christ did through His crucifixion, His death and His resurrection, provided a means to break down that wall. Then, those whom God would choose to call, whether Israelite or Gentile in physical descent, had an opportunity to be a part of spiritual Israel.

That is what we are talking about here. We are not talking about doing away with the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments were not the laws, the carnal

ordinances that Christ did away with. How can we prove that? Let's look at 1 John 5:3 that we quoted last week. The Bible cannot contradict itself, brethren. We can't read one passage in the Bible that might appear to be interpreted, by those that want to make it come out that way, that the Ten Commandments were done away; then, finding the apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit saying exactly the opposite. No, the Bible does not contradict itself.

1 John 5:3:

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." They are not something to be wished away or considered a burden. They are perfect, holy, just and good. It is the way of happiness, as we already saw, to obey those commandments, to love them. It is the way that we show love for God. Outside of commandment-keeping, pursuing a way life to try and keep the commandments of God, we cannot show love for God.

So, obviously, that is not what we can be talking about when we are talking about enmity and Christ breaking down the partition. What we are really talking about is the sacrificial law which was a temporary law. We are talking about the Levitical priesthood which was temporary and the sacrifices that went along with that Levitical priesthood.

Well, when did that sacrificial law begin? We have already talked about the origin of the Ten Commandments. We saw last week that they began from the very beginning. Adam and Eve were subject to the Ten Commandments as were all the patriarchs. They were in existence long before the codification of the law on Mt. Sinai and before the Levitical priesthood was established. Let's take a look at it.

When did the sacrificial law begin? That did begin for the very first time at Mt. Sinai. However, it was after the commandments, the statutes and the judgments were confirmed. Now, we don't have time this afternoon to go through all of this. I will just ask you to write down some references and you can study them yourselves.

Read Exodus chapters 20 and 24. Exodus 20–24 include the laws of God. That is where the law was spelled out, including the Ten Commandments, the statutes and the judgments. What do you find in those four chapters? Is that where all of the instructions are for the establishment of the Levitical priesthood, the animal sacrifices, the washings and all the rituals? No, they are not in those first four chapters. Those four chapters are a re-statement of the laws that were in existence

from the beginning. The only sacrifice that is listed in those four chapters is the Passover, Exodus 23:18.

The instructions for the building of the Tabernacle and the institution of the Levitical priesthood came afterward, in chapter 25. Then after that, the sacrifices are in chapter 28. Prior to the establishment of the Levitical priesthood, the sacrifices were voluntary. Exodus 24:5 tells us the sacrifices could be offered by the young men from Israel, not just the Levites. Until the Levitical priesthood was established in chapter 25, there was not a restriction against others from other tribes offering sacrifices. It was on a voluntary basis.

With the establishment of the Levitical priesthood the rules changed. All of the sudden it was against the law, that sacrificial law, for anyone other than a Levite to offer and make a sacrifice. The non-Levites had to bring their offerings and sacrifices to the Levites to offer before God because they began the institution of the Aaronic priesthood, that which shifted from the priesthood of Melchisedec. Who was Melchisedec, but the Great High Priest, even He that became Jesus Christ?

At that time, the priesthood changed from the spiritual, from Melchisedec—to whom Abraham offered sacrifices and tithes—to the Aaronic priesthood. Then, for that temporary period of time until Jesus Christ came in the flesh and died, that Aaronic priesthood was in force and all of the sacrificial system was enforced.

All of those things were instituted after the law, the statutes and the judgments which had been in existence from the beginning. Let's turn to Jeremiah 7:22—a key scripture that we learned years ago in the church, which made the distinction between the immutable spiritual laws of God—the Ten Commandments—and the temporary law.

Jeremiah 7:22–23:

For I spake not unto your fathers, nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning burnt offerings or sacrifices . . .

Those commandments for burnt offerings and sacrifices did not exist at that time, but there was another law that did exist as we are going to see.

But this thing commanded I them [It says, I didn't command them about burnt offerings and sacrifices, but I did command them something. What was it?], saying, Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people: and walk ye in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well unto you.

At the time the children of Israel walked out of Egypt, God said, "I did not command them concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, but I did command them to do something." He told them to walk in His commandments. What commandments? If they weren't instituted until Mt. Sinai, what was it that they were obligated to obey? We already saw examples of that last week, including the Sabbath. Israel knew that the Sabbath existed in the wilderness concerning the test of the manna. They knew that the Sabbath existed. It was a holy day prior to Mt. Sinai, prior to God carving with His finger the Ten Commandments on tables of stone. Those laws already existed before.

If burnt offerings and sacrifices were not part of God's original commands, why were they added? Those of other churches will try and tell you that the law was defective. It was a hard, cruel, burdensome law. No one could live under it. It was always something that was bad and evil and therefore it was replaced by Christ. Is that the truth?

Galatians 3:17–19:

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.

God gave Abraham the promise that his seed, Christ, and all of those who would become Christ's, would be the children of Abraham. See, that was long before the establishment of the temporary, sacrificial law. Here, we are talking about that temporary law. He is speaking concerning the fact that doing physical rituals is not that which gives salvation. Those rituals were put in place to point to what? To point to Christ. Those animal sacrifices were a reminder of sin. Let's notice it.

Wherefore then serveth the law? [Why were those things instituted?] It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made . . .

Why the sacrificial law? Carnal human beings, even the chosen people of God, the nation of Israel, without the Holy Spirit, had no opportunity to obey. They could not obey, as hard as they wanted to, as much as they would have liked to, because they were carnal.

So, they made a covenant with God. They said, "We will do all that you have said, God." They entered into the covenant, but they couldn't fulfill it. They violated the very pact, the marriage contract with God, with Jesus Christ.

What was the fault? Was it with God's spiritual, immutable, eternal laws? No, it was the fact that the people could not obey. They could not uphold their responsibility in the covenant.

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made . . .

Those carnal ordinances—the temporary sacrificial law, the animal sacrifices, the burnt offerings—were there to remind them of their sins. They couldn't hope to overcome themselves; they did not have the Holy Spirit. They could be reminded though, whenever they broke that perfect, immutable, eternal law. By going through the ritual of the burnt offerings and the sacrifices, they were reminded that they were outside—separated from God. It was His mercy and only His mercy that allowed them to continue to live.

God's law, brethren, as we have already seen, is spiritual. It was because of sin against that perfect, spiritual law that the carnal ordinances were added to remind Israel of their sins.

What about this concept of the law of Moses versus the law of God, and the law of Moses being done away? Let's hasten along. There is a lot of confusion concerning the law of Moses, even recently. I have seen in writing and heard some things that are not according to that which we were given from the beginning from the last-day servant. The law of Moses was originally the civil law based on the Ten Commandments. Those statutes and judgments and that which is commonly called the law of Moses were the amplification of the ten great points of the law, the Ten Commandments.

As in our civil governments today, you have congress that passes new laws. The problems that we run into, is that they pass a law which is very broad. Even

though it may be hundreds of pages long, it still, in its application day to day, can have a lot of detail that is not spelled out. So, you have the judicial branch of the government which is responsible for interpreting the law and applying it in the day to day. This branch of government makes rulings to determine what the intent of that law is, brings it down to its lowest common denominator, and applies it in real life situations, disputes and things that come up.

You have regulations and law interpretations, even in the tax code. You have the laws that are passed at one level and then interpretive guidelines that are put out which show how to apply it in the day to day. That is what the civil law did. The law that, legitimately, was called the law of Moses, was just an expansion upon the spiritual law of God. It took the Ten Commandments which were short, and it broke them down into principles and detailed guidelines that actually showed Israel how they were to be governed. It showed them how to live on a day to day basis, according to those ten principles.

The civil law was an expansion of the Ten Commandments. Those Ten Commandments were the perfect law. Psalm 19:7–8 tells us:

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.

The law of Moses amplified that, broke it down into the civil laws. Added to this law were other statutes and judgments regulating rituals, including the sacrifices, lighting of candles, burning incense and various washings. These added laws are those, you see, that were referenced in Hebrews 9 that we just read, not the Ten Commandments.

What many people don't understand is that both the immutable, spiritual laws and the temporary law fall under the law of Moses. Did you realize that? A good portion of the law of Moses is still in force today because the law of Moses did include the spiritual, immutable laws that God delivered.

Are we talking about a law that Moses made up? No, they are all the laws of God. That which is called the law of Moses is nothing more than the law of God under a different name. God was the lawgiver, not Moses. It was called the law of Moses because Moses is the one through whom it was delivered and taught—not only

the ten basic principles, but also the expansion of the civil law; but they are all God's laws.

Notice Luke 2:21–24. Here, we find the very same laws called simultaneously, within several verses, both the law of Moses and the law of the Lord. Notice it:

And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb. And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses . . .

This physical requirement, considered a washing, was called here the law of Moses.

And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord; (As it is written in the law of the Lord . . .

Wait a minute, we are talking about the same thing, but in the first verse it was called the law of Moses; now it is called the law of the Lord.

Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord;) And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the [law of Moses? No, the] law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.

Whose laws were these? Were these Moses' laws? They were appropriately called the law of Moses. They were also called the law of God. The terms refer to the same thing.

Part of that law of Moses is absolutely still in force today. What part of it? The spiritual, eternal law is also referred to as the law of Moses. They were all God's laws and it was all referred to as the law of Moses—that which was the immutable law which is still in force, as well as the temporary sacrificial law which Christ fulfilled. That is the confusing part, brethren.

The two great commandments that Jesus taught came from the book of the law from which Moses taught the people.

Leviticus 19:18 says:

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the Lord.

This was one of the principles that was part of the law of Moses. Moses was teaching out of the law. This is what he taught the people. What was it that he was teaching? "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." Have you heard that one before? Where did we hear that? Wasn't that what Jesus Christ said was the second great command when He was asked, "What is the great commandment of the law?" He said, "Love God," and He said, "The second is like unto it, love thy neighbor as thyself."

What was it that Moses was teaching the people out of the law of Moses? He was teaching the same thing; it was the immutable, eternal principles that were under the Ten Commandments. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

King Josiah was praised for keeping the commands of love toward God. We just saw the example of the second great command encompassing the last six commandments. Here is an example of King Josiah who was praised for keeping the first four. Turn with me to 2 Kings 23:25:

And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the [Eternal] with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses . . .

According to all the law of Moses, it says. Yet, what was the principle that he was praised for? He turned to the Eternal with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might. Isn't that what Christ said the first great commandment was? Perfect love and commitment toward God. So, Josiah was praised for keeping the first four commandments, but it is called here the law of Moses.

So, was the law of Moses done away, brethren? Was that which King Josiah was praised for—loving God with all of his heart, with all of his soul and all of his might—done away? It's called here the law of Moses. It is still in force today, as much as ever.

These are the two great commands proclaimed by John for Christians today. Notice 2 John 1:4–6, lest there be any doubt:

I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father.

Yes, the Christians in that day were keeping commandments.

And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another.

The same second great command is being carried forward by the Apostle John, even as Jesus Christ spoke it Himself—the last six commandments.

And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it.

How can the law of Moses be done away when it included these very commands of love? But how then is it that the Gentiles were not compelled to keep the law of Moses? See, the confusion comes when the term is used. Again, there were two parts to the law of Moses; the immutable laws of God as well as the temporary, sacrificial system. Notice it in Acts 15:5:

But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.

This leads certain people to believe that the law of Moses was strictly all of that which was ultimately done away. In this particular instance, we are talking about one portion—the temporary law—of the law of Moses. However, Paul was not teaching against the spiritual laws; he was only being accused falsely of teaching against the customs. Notice it with me in Acts 21:21:

And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.

What is being labeled under the law of Moses in this particular instance? Are we talking about the spiritual, immutable laws of God—the Ten Commandments?

No, not at all. Here, the law of Moses is referring specifically to the customs, the sacrificial system and all of those temporary laws, including circumcision.

Paul was saying that the Gentiles did not have to obey because Christ was the fulfillment of all of those things. They were no longer required. These Pharisees who had become Christians were not accusing Paul of preaching against the Ten Commandments; that wasn't the issue at all. They were only accusing him of teaching that they didn't have to be circumcised or follow the customs. That is the temporary portion of the law of Moses that was fulfilled—done away—because Christ fulfilled it perfectly.

More recently, I have heard the law of Moses used to say that tithing has been done away. I am talking about individuals who should know better who tithed for years and years in the church. Now they are saying that first tithe is not a requirement. We only have to give offerings, but we don't have to tithe. What is being used to justify this? They turn to Hebrews 7 and talk about the law of Moses and the fact that the change in the priesthood from Aaron back to Melchisedec did away with the law of Moses. What does Malachi 4:1–6 say?

For, behold, the day cometh, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble [What period of time are we talking about? The book of Malachi is a prophecy for the last days.]: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But unto you that fear my name shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall. And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the [Eternal] of hosts. Remember ye the law of Moses my servant . . .

This is a last-day prophecy, brethren, and what is it saying? "Remember ye the law of Moses . . ." The law of Moses encompassed the eternal laws of God.

. . . which I commanded unto him in Horeb for all Israel, with the statutes and judgments. Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

Was the law of Moses in its entirety done away, brethren? Why then, in a prophecy of the last days in Malachi, are we being told to remember the law of Moses? Was tithing done away? Chapter 3—part of that same prophecy for the last days—tells us of what the people of God were guilty.

Malachi 3:8–10:

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. [This is a last-day prophecy, brethren.] Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it.

There are blessings, brethren, for tithing, and there are curses for denying God what is His. Trying to say that tithing was under the law of Moses and the law of Moses was done away by the sacrifice of Christ sounds an awful lot like the Protestant claims about the law being done away entirely.

What was done away? Remember, Melchisedec, the Great High Priest of God who was Jesus Christ, to whom Abraham paid tithes, was temporarily changed to the Levitical priesthood—flesh and blood men of the tribe of Levi through whom those sacrifices were made and to whom those tithes were paid. When Jesus Christ died, was resurrected and accepted of the Father, He became our Great High Priest. Through the sacrifice of His blood, the High priesthood reverted back to Melchisedec.

Read Hebrews 7:8 and you will find that Paul is talking about a reversal. He is talking about a change in the priesthood, not about the doing away of God's immutable laws, including tithing. Tithing wasn't done away. The spiritual part of the law of Moses was not done away. It only reverted back again, not to the Aaronic priesthood but to Melchisedec. Christ was after the order of the high priesthood of Melchisedec. It returned to Him as it had been in the beginning and those tithes are still due Him because everything on this earth is His.

Finally, brethren, in closing, Romans 3:19–31:

Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world

may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight . . .

Trying to just keep the laws, technically, is not going to save us. Those laws do apply to us and breaking those laws brings penalties. However, we do not become righteous in our minds and we do not inherit the Kingdom of God by trying to be technical law-keepers; we cannot physically.

. . . for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 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: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God . . .

That is what makes us incapable of receiving eternal life on our own.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus [that pardon]: 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, I say, at this time 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. Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Brethren, as the called in the last-day Church, with our minds open to understand the mysteries and the revelation of Jesus Christ through His last-day servant, we were of the few who came to understand how to reconcile all of the epistles of the apostles, including Paul. We understand how to reconcile that the law was not done away. Yet, it is not technically trying to keep the law that justifies us, that gives us the hope of salvation; it is through the faith in Jesus Christ.

It is through His grace, requiring His sacrifice to give us His shed blood, that we are washed from the penalty of sin. We recognize it, brethren. If you understand

these things, if you can reconcile them when you read the scriptures, it is because there is a miracle that has happened in your mind that opens up your understanding. You understand, brethren, the Fundamental of Belief number seven of Church of God, The Eternal. We believe that the law is immutable and eternal. We also believe in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and we know that salvation comes only through faith in His blood.