

# **ANSWERS TO OBJECTIONS CONCERNING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS**

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In every age Satan modifies his temptations to the prejudices or inclinations of those whom he is seeking to deceive. In the days of the Apostles Satan led the Jews to exalt the ceremonial law and reject Christ; in our day he compels many who are Christians in name only, who pretend to honour Christ, to cast contempt on the ten commandments and to teach that its precepts may be transgressed with impunity. It is the duty of every servant of God to withstand firmly and decidedly these perverters of the faith and by the word of truth fearlessly to expose their errors.

The word '*Law*' is used in the New Testament many times. The context indicates what the word is used for in each case. It can mean one of four things.

1. It can mean the writings of Moses; IE the first five books of the bible.
2. It can mean any part of the Old Testament.
3. It can mean the Ten Commandments.
4. It can mean a general principle relating to law.

In the majority of cases when the word law is used in the New Testament it does not mean the Ten Commandments. There are at least eight places in the New Testament where the word 'law' simply means the writings of the Old Testament. There are a number of places in the New Testament where the *impression* is given that the law has been abolished, in most cases the Ten Commandments are not being referred to. Each verse must be examined to find the meaning of the word 'law' in each case. For example:-

Luke 24:44 The writings of Moses.	Romans 3:21 The writings of Moses.
John 1:45 The writings of Moses.	Romans 7:7-12 The ten commandments.
John 10:34 The Psalms.	1 Corinthians 14:21 The book of Isaiah
John 15:25 The Psalms.	Galatians 3:10 The writings of Moses.
Galatians 4:21-22 The writings of Moses.	

There is not one verse in the Bible that says that the Ten Commandments have been abolished. But there are some verses in the New Testament that are used by antinomian (anti-law) Christians to teach that the Ten Commandments are abolished. When these verses are analyzed properly, and read in context, they do not teach that the ten commandments are abolished.

## **THESE MISAPPLIED VERSES ARE ANALYSED AS FOLLOWS**

(1) 2 Corinthians 3:7-13	(9) Romans 10:4	(17) Galatians 5:2-4
(2) Romans 2:28-29	(10) Galatians 2:21	(18) Luke 16:16-17
(3) Romans 7:1-6	(11) Galatians 5:22-23	(19) Hebrews 7:12
(4) Galatians 2:19	(12) Galatians 3:6-14	(20) Hebrews 7:19
(5) Romans 6:14 "Under the Law"	(13) The Dispensationalism Heresy	(21) Hebrews 10:1
(6) Colossians 2:14	(14) Galatians 3:19	(22) Hebrews 10:9
(7) Ephesians 2:11-22	(15) Romans 5:20	(23) Acts 18:13
(8) Romans 3:20,28; Galatians 2:16	(16) Galatians 3:21-25	(24) Titus 3:9-11

(1)

**2 Corinthians 3:7-13**  
**Ministry that produced death**

*2 Corinthians 3:7-13* “But if the ministry that produced death—carved in letters on stone tablets—came with glory, so that the Israelites could not keep their eyes fixed on the face of Moses because of the glory of his face (a glory which was made ineffective), 8 how much more glorious will the ministry of the Spirit be? 9 For if there was glory in the ministry that produced condemnation, how much more does the ministry that produces righteousness excel in glory! 10 For indeed, what had been glorious now has no glory because of the tremendously greater glory of what replaced it. 11 For if what was made ineffective came with glory, how much more has what remains come in glory! 12 Therefore, since we have such a hope, we behave with great boldness, 13 and not like Moses who used to put a veil over his face to keep the Israelites from staring at the result of the glory that was made ineffective.” NET

*2 Corinthians 3:2-3* “You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone, 3 revealing that you are a letter of Christ, delivered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on stone tablets but on tablets of human hearts.” NET

In this passage Paul discusses the superiority of the New Covenant over the Old Covenant. Paul's comparison of the value of the two covenants are compared with each other in the chart below:-

OLD COVENANT	NEW COVENANT
Ministry of death	Ministry of the Spirit
On stone tablets	<i>On tablets of human hearts</i>
Glory	Excel in glory
Ministry of condemnation	Ministry of Righteousness
Made ineffective	Remains

What was written on stone tablets under the old covenant is written on the heart in the new covenant. This is a clear reference to the ten commandments. Far from being abolished, they are written on the heart by the Spirit of God, under the new covenant to enable us to become commandment keepers. This is also taught in Hebrews 10:16.

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**Romans 2:28-29**

*By the Spirit and not by the letter*

*“For a person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision something that is outward in the flesh, 29 but someone is a Jew who is one inwardly, and circumcision is of the heart by the Spirit and not by the letter.”* NET

Paul here talks about circumcision of the heart, an expression that he got from the writings of Moses. This circumcision is necessary for salvation. Paul makes it plain that the Spirit of God not the letter of the law is does this. Interestingly according to Deuteronomy 30:6 the expression “circumcise your heart” means to be made a commandment keeper.

*Deuteronomy 30:6&8* “Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live...8 And you shall again obey the Lord, and observe all His commandments which I command you today” NASB

Circumcision of the heart means to have the flesh (ie the sinful nature) cut away from your heart or mind, so that your mind becomes controlled by the Holy Spirit instead of being controlled by your sinful nature (flesh). This is sometimes called “conversion” or being “born again”. In this passage Paul is writing to the Jewish converts

in the new Christian church of Rome. The controversy was not whether a person should obey God but how does a person obey God?. He says that a real Jew or child of God is someone who has a circumcised heart ie, who has been made a commandment keeper by the Spirit of God.

2 Corinthians 3:6 “...the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.” NET the letter kills because it condemns us as sinners. A knowledge of the law cannot save us it can only inform us of God's will. The Spirit gives life because it transforms God's people enabling us to do God's will.

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**(3)**

**Romans 7:1-6**

*“Or do you not know, brothers and sisters (for I am speaking to those who know the law), that the law is lord over a person as long as he lives? 2 For a married woman is bound by law to her husband as long as he lives, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of the marriage. 3 So then, if she is joined to another man while her husband is alive, she will be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she is joined to another man, she is not an adulteress. 4 So, my brothers and sisters, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you could be joined to another, to the one who was raised from the dead, to bear fruit to God. 5 For when we were in the flesh, the sinful desires, aroused by the law, were active in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. 6 But now we have been released from the law, because we have died to what controlled us, so that we may serve in the new life of the Spirit and not under the old written code.” NET*

This illustration involves three characters. Two husbands and one woman. By law the woman was allowed to be married to one husband only. If one husband died she was allowed to remarry. If she was married to both husbands at the same time she was called an adulteress. And the penalty for adultery was death. The Christian church is represented by the woman. The second husband, according to verse 4, is “Him who was raised from the dead”- Christ. He is also the new life of the Spirit. Christians who have taken upon themselves the name of Christ are symbolically married to Him. However if Christians are living with the first husband at the same time, they are symbolically committing adultery and are therefore lost people having the death penalty over them.

The First Husband. Who or what is the first husband that Christians must not associate with? Verse 4 and 6 indicate that the first husband is the law. Also referred to as the “old written code”.

Interestingly in the marriage analogy Paul says that the first husband must die. Yet in his explanation he says that we died, ie we have become dead to the law; we died the law didn't. Therefore the law must still be in force for us to have to die to it. The reason we have to die is because the law demands the death of the transgressor, and because all have sinned all must die [Rom 2:23].

The Gospel teaches that Christ has died in our place, so the law recognizes Christ's death as our death, the law sees the crucified Christ and regards that death as ours, therefore the law no longer wants us dead because it sees us as already dead. Romans 7:4 *“you also died to the law through the (dead) body of Christ”*. Romans 7:6 says we have *“now we have been released from the law”*. That is released from the condemnation of the law - the death penalty. Paul does not say that we have been released from obedience. We have been released from sin – disobedience.

***Romans 4:7-8** “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; 8 blessed is the one against whom the Lord will never count sin.” NET*

***Romans 8:1** “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the life-giving Spirit in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.” NET*

The new life of the Spirit that Paul mentioned that has replaced being under the Law “the old written code” is the new life of the Spirit of God. This does not mean that we can disregard the law. Because in Verse 4 he writes that the purpose of the new life in Christ is: Romans 8:4 “so that the righteous requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

So this new life makes us commandment keepers whereas the old life without the Spirit kept us as slaves to our sinful natures and led to what Paul calls “to bear fruit for death”. Paul is comparing the new life of being led by the Spirit Under Grace with the old life of being Under the Law (the old written code). This is further discussed in part 5 of this study on Roman 6:14-16

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**Galatians 2:19**

*“For through the law I died to the law so that I may live to God” NET*

Paul said he died the law didn't. If we are going to die to the law then obviously the law must still be in force. The law wants us dead because we are sinners. The law regards the children of God as dead because of the sacrifice of Christ. His death on our behalf satisfies the claim of the law. Provided we remain faithful to Christ the laws power to condemn is gone. This verse does not say that we don't have to obey the Ten Commandments.

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**Romans 6:14-16**

*We're not under the law, we're under Grace!*

*Galatians 5:18. “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.” NET*

This is a strong statement made by the Apostle Paul. We as Christians are led by the Spirit therefore we are not under law. But what does Paul mean by the expression 'under law'? Does he mean that Christians do not have to obey God's law, or does he mean that Christians are not under the laws condemnation? The answer lies in the next passage.

*Romans 6:14-16. “For sin will have no mastery over you, because you are not under law but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Absolutely not! 16 Do you not know that if you present yourselves as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one you obey, either of sin resulting in death, or obedience resulting in righteousness? NET*

Under Law	Led by the Spirit
Under Law	Under Grace
slaves	slaves
sin (the transgression of the law)	obedience
death	righteousness- (immortality)

Only those who are under the dominion of sin are under law. To be led by the Spirit under Grace is to be a slave of obedience that leads to righteousness. To be under the law is to be a slave of sin (the transgression of the law) that leads to death. Under law is the opposite of under Grace. Sin is the opposite of obedience. Death is the opposite of righteousness (immortality in this case). Only those christians who are led by the Spirit and obey God's law are under grace. Those of us who willfully disobey God (ie. sin) are under law. Therefore the expression 'under law' means to be under the condemnation of the law because of disobedience.

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**Colossians 2:12-14**

*Colossians 2:12-14“Having been buried with him in baptism, you also have been raised with him through your faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead. 13 And even though you were dead in your transgressions and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, he nevertheless made you alive with him, having forgiven all your transgressions. 14 He has destroyed what was against us, a certificate of indebtedness expressed in decrees opposed to us. He has taken it away by nailing it to the cross” NET*

**Certificate of indebtedness:** The Greek word that is translated “certificate of indebtedness” is word 5498 'Cheirographon'. Literally translated it means 'hand writing'. It was a legal term that applied to a document that contained the hand written record of our debts which we are obligated to pay. It is like an IOU. In our case the certificate of debt is the record of all the sins that we have ever committed. The decrees that are against us are the penalties for those sins prescribed by the law of God. This record and the punishment for sin are hostile to us

because they demand the death of the accused. The good news is that Jesus has taken this accuser, the record of our sins, out of the courtroom and nailed it to the cross. This means that the penalty for our sins was paid for by himself when he was crucified. This legal declaration of innocence given to us when Christ pays our debt is only given to those people who as Paul describes them as *having been buried with him in baptism*.

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**Ephesians 2:11-22**

*He nullified in his flesh the law of commandments in decrees*

**Ephesians 2:11-22** *“Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh—who are called “uncircumcision” by the so-called “circumcision” that is performed on the body by human hands— 12 that you were at that time without the Messiah, alienated from the citizenship of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who used to be far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

*14 For he is our peace, the one who made both groups into one and who destroyed the middle wall of partition, the hostility, 15 when he nullified in his flesh the law of commandments in decrees. He did this to create in himself one new man out of two, thus making peace, 16 and to reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by which the hostility has been killed. 17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, 18 so that through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.*

*19 So then you are no longer foreigners and noncitizens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God’s household, 20 because you have been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.” NET*

This entire passage refers to the abolition of the old covenant distinction of Jew and Gentile. Under the new covenant an amalgamation of both Jew and Gentile believers has taken place to create one new group out of the two. This new group are Christians.

Verse 14 “who made both groups into one and who destroyed the middle wall of partition” NET

**“middle wall”** literally means: ‘The partition wall which is the fence’ The sacred limits of the Jewish Temple were fenced off by a low balustrade of stone, with columns at intervals. On the columns were inscriptions written in Greek and Latin warning all Gentiles not to pass this boundary on pain of death. In 1871 an inscribed stone was discovered in Jerusalem and is now in the museum at Istanbul. This inscription reads:-

***“Let no foreigner enter within the barrier and enclosing wall about the Temple. But whoever may be caught shall be responsible for his own death that will follow.”***

The court of the Israelites was in the inner Temple where no Gentile or foreigner was allowed. Paul is saying that under the new covenant this wall of partition that separated Jew and Gentile has been broken down when it comes to worshipping God. The law of commandments contained in decrees refers to the laws regulating worship in the new covenant regarding the segregation of Jew and Gentile.

verse 15 “he nullified in his flesh the law of commandments in decrees.”NET

In the eyes of God the segregation of the two old men, Jew and Gentile, has been abolished. So the one new man that has been created from the two old ones is the Christian.

verse 19 “So then you are no longer foreigners and noncitizens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God’s household .” NET

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**Romans 3:20; 28 & Galatians 2:16**

**Romans 3:20;28** “For no one is declared righteous before him by the works of the law, for through the law comes the knowledge of sin...28 “For we consider that a person is declared righteous by faith apart from the works of the law.” NET

**Galatians 2:16** “yet we know that no one is justified by the works of the law but by the faithfulness of Jesus Christ.”NET

These verses tells us the purpose of the written law. The law was not designed to justify or declare us righteous. It was designed to educate us as to what sin is, and to condemn us as transgressors. It was also designed to point us to Christ to obtain justification ie, legal innocence in the sight of God. These verses do not say that we don’t have to obey the law.

**Romans 2:13** “For it is not those who hear the law who are righteous before God, but those who do the law will be declared righteous.” NET

A person who has been Justified by faith in Christ will obey the law. Not to be Justified but because he has been declared righteous by Christ.

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**Romans 10:4**

**“For Christ is the end of the law, with the result that there is righteousness for everyone who believes.” NET**

The word translated "**end**" is the greek word (Gk: telos). Paul is telling us that the Messiah is the telos of the Torah. This word 'telos' can mean either (1) 'cessation', 'termination.' Or (2) it can mean 'goal,' 'culmination.' 'fulfillment'. The NIV translates 'telos' as 'culmination'. Romans 10:4 “Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.” NIV

In the context of Pauls' writings is seems better to translate 'telos' as Christ being the 'goal' or the end result of what the law was about. This understanding marries up with the words of Jesus in Matt 5:17 “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish these things but to fulfill them.” NET. Jesus fulfilled all of the laws demands as well as fulfilling all of its types and prophecies. The law still has an important part to play in the life of the believer. Spirit filled Christians are no longer under the condemnation of the law but are required to obey its demands. Rom 8:4 “so that the righteous requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” NET

“But why does this matter? What are the implications involved when choosing between ‘end’ and ‘goal’? First, if we adopt “Messiah is the end of the Torah” as our reading, it can slip very quickly into the assumption that the law had in some way been abolished so that God could bring righteousness through a different means. It would be to say that God gave Israel an opportunity to become righteous through the Torah, but since they failed, He had to come up with another way. But in order to implement this second plan, He somehow had to do away with the first. This reading posits that before the Messiah came one could indeed earn righteousness through observance of the Torah. Second, it suggests anyone still observing the commandments given in Plan A has not only failed to understand the truth of the Gospel but is helplessly stuck trying to merit a right standing before God through their own works. Sadly, such a reading has found a comfortable home among Christian theologians for centuries.”

Rob Vanhoff . Article. “The End of the Law for Rabbi Lichtenstein: An Early Messianic Jewish Interpretation of Romans 10:4” P1. Feb 2011

“The popular Christian view that supports the ‘end’ or ‘abolition’ rendering of telos in our passage is dismantled by N. T. Wright in his 2009 book, Justification. Wright emphasizes that fact that God’s law is given in a context of grace. ...Paul’s entire understanding of the

Mosaic law is that it never was intended as a ladder of good works up which one might climb to earn the status of “righteousness.” It was given, yes, as the way of life (Romans 7:10), but it was the way of life for a people already redeemed. . . God did not say to Israel in Egypt, “Here is my Torah; if you keep it perfectly for a year or two, then I will liberate you from your slavery,” but “I am liberating you now because I promised Abraham I would do so; when, and only when, I have done so, I will give you the way of life that you will need for when you come into your promised land.” . . . the Torah, the Mosaic law, was never given or intended as a means whereby either an individual or the nation as a whole might, through obedience, earn liberation from slavery, redemption, rescue, salvation, “righteousness” or whatever else. The gift always preceded the obligation. This is how Israel’s covenant theology worked.”

Rob Vanhoff . Article. “The End of the Law for Rabbi Lichtenstein: An Early Messianic Jewish Interpretation of Romans 10:4” P2. Feb 2011

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**(10)**  
**Galatians 2:21**

*“I do not set aside God’s grace, because if righteousness could come through the law, then Christ died for nothing!” NET*

Righteousness is the Covenant promises of God. The law is the writings of Moses and the prophets (see Galatians 4:22-23). Paul is saying that if there could have been a law that could give us righteousness, that is fulfill God’s promises, then Christ need not have died. It was the death of Christ that bought the authority for the Holy Spirit to fulfill God’s promises for us. Our obedience to the law did not buy that authority. Because there is no law that can give us righteousness we need Christ. Being made a law keeper through the Holy Spirit is one of God’s Covenant promises. This verse does not say that the Ten Commandments have been abolished.

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**(11)**  
**Galatians 5:22-23**

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law” NET*

There is no law *against* the character traits developed in us by the Spirit of God. The Spirit develops within us the fruit of the Spirit. The key word here is 'against'. Paul is not saying that there is no law for a Christian rather that the law will not condemn people who have characters with the mentioned character traits.

In Romans 8:4 Paul says:- “...the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” NET

Spirit - fruit of the Spirit  
Spirit - Righteous requirements of the law.

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**(12)**  
**Galatians 3:6-14**

*6 “Just as Abraham **believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,** 7 so then, understand that those who believe are the sons of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, proclaimed the gospel to Abraham ahead of time, saying, “**All the nations will be blessed in you.**” 9 So then those who believe are blessed along with Abraham the believer.*

*10 For all who rely on doing the works of the law are under a curse, because it is written, “**Cursed is everyone who does not keep on doing everything written in the book of the law.**” 11 Now it is clear no one is justified before God by the law, because **the righteous one will live by faith.** 12 But the law is not based on faith, but **the one who does the works of the law will live by them.***

*13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us (because it is written,*

## *Answers to Objections*

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*“Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”) 14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles, so that we could receive the promise of the Spirit by faith.” NET*

All who rely on the law are under a curse says Paul. But observing the law and relying on it for salvation are two totally different things. What were the people relying on the law to do for them? They were relying on their observance of the law to fulfill God's covenant promises for them. The purpose of the law is to educate and condemn the sinner. It was never intended to be a means whereby God's covenant promises could be met. Paul explains that when God gave Abraham his covenant promises they were to be fulfilled by God himself on the condition that he had faith, meaning that he believed and acted on those promises.

There were four covenant promises given to the human race.

1. Justification, a declaration of innocence that declares a person righteous making us heirs of eternal life.
2. Transformation of character that makes a person a law keeper.
3. The promise of immortality at the resurrection given at the second advent of Christ .
4. God himself establishing his Kingdom here on earth after the return of Christ.

Paul like to stress the point that there is nothing that the law can do to fulfill the covenant promises that God has given to us. This is because we are powerless and because we are all under the curse of sin. So if we try to fulfill the promises of God through the works of the law we remain under the curse of the law. The curse of the law being the death penalty due to sin which is the transgression of the law. Paul stresses that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. Meaning that Christ paid the penalty for our sin by being crucified. Or as Paul puts it: *“Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”*. It was the crucifixion of Christ that bought the authority for the Spirit of God to fulfill the covenant promises of God for us. Therefore we who believe God's covenant promises are to rely on the spirit of God to fulfill them just as Abraham did.

*1 Peter 2:24 “He **himself bore our sins** in his body on the tree, that we may cease from sinning and live for righteousness.” NET*

According to the Apostle Peter the reason for Christ being crucified on the tree we so that we can cease to break God's law, ie sinning, and live for righteousness. The reason both Paul and Peter say “tree” instead of “Cross” is to emphasize the fact that Jesus was cursed by God.

*Deuteronomy 21:22-23 “If a man has committed a sin worthy of death and he is put to death, and you hang him on a tree, 23 his corpse shall not hang all night on the tree, but you shall surely bury him on the same day (for he who is hanged is accursed of God).” NASB*

Crucifixion had not been invented when the above verse was written. It probably meant that after a person had been stoned to death the body was impaled as a witness to his crime. In the days of Jesus a crucified person was considered to be accursed of God. So a crucified person was considered to be hung on a tree. The religious leaders in Judah wanted Christ crucified so he would be accursed of God. The use of the word 'tree' could also harken back to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden where sin entered the world. By paying the penalty for sin by being crucified on the tree Christ has made the way for mankind to be admitted back into the Garden of Eden.

*Galatians 3:10 “For all who rely on doing the works of the law are under a curse, because it is written, cursed is everyone who does not keep on doing everything written in the book of the law.”NET*

Why are those people who rely on the works of the law under a curse? because *“ cursed is everyone who does not keep on doing everything written in the book of the law.”NET* In other words the curse is on the transgressor of the law. A person who relies on the letter of the law instead of relying on the Spirit of God cannot obey the law whether he wants to. Therefore no-one is justified or declared righteous in the sight of God by the law. As proof Paul quotes Habakkuk 2:4 in the old testament *“the just shall live by faith”*. Meaning the just shall rely on the Spirit of God for salvation that is given to them through faith, ie believing in God's promises and acting on them.



There is nothing in Paul's writings that indicates that the law does not have to be obeyed. On the contrary the gospel is all about being saved from sin which is the transgression of the law. The controversy was how does a person have the covenant promises of God fulfilled for them? Was it through the law or through the Spirit of God? The answer is the Spirit of God. Being made a law keeper is one of those covenant promises. [Hebrews 10:16]

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**(13)**

**The Dispensationalism Heresy**

There is a heresy circulating the Christian church's claiming that God's people were saved by the works of the law in the Old Testament before the crucifixion of Christ. While God's people are now saved by Grace in the New Testament after the crucifixion of Christ. This theory teaches that the era before the crucifixion beginning with Moses and ending with Christ is called the Dispensation of Law, where the law of God had to be obeyed for a person to be saved. Whereas the era after the resurrection of Christ in the Christian era is called the Dispensation of Grace where the law does not have to be obeyed for a person to be saved. This unbiblical heresy is easily refuted by the following verses.

**2 Tim 1:9** *"He is the one who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not based on our works but on his own purpose and grace, granted to us in Christ Jesus before time began."* NET

In the days of Noah the world was so evil that God destroyed it by a flood but Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

**Genesis 6:7-8** *"So the Lord said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping things and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord."* NKJV.

**Jeremiah 31:2** *"Thus says the Lord,"The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness- Israel, when it went to find its rest."* NET

**Exodus 33:17** *"Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will also do this that you have spoken; for you have found grace in My sight, and I know you by name."* NKJV

Israel in the wilderness under the leadership of Moses were saved by Grace. Also God's people still had to live by Faith in the Old Testament.

**Habakkuk 2:4** *"Behold, as for the proud one, His soul is not right within him; But the righteous will live by his faith."* NASB

**Hebrews 3:16-19** *"For which ones heard and rebelled? Was it not all who came out of Egypt under Moses' leadership? 17 And against whom was God provoked for forty years? Was it not those who sinned, whose dead bodies fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did he swear they would never enter into his rest, except those who were disobedient? 19 So we see that they could not enter because of unbelief."* NET

**Hebrews 4:1-2** *Therefore we must be wary that, while the promise of entering his rest remains open, none of you may seem to have come short of it. 2 For we had good news proclaimed to us just as they did. But the message they heard did them no good, since they did not join in with those who heard it in faith."* NET

Those people whom Moses led out of Egypt into the wilderness for 40 years all died in the wilderness. They rebelled against God and he was angry with them. They did not enter the land of Canaan because of unbelief. They had the gospel (good news) proclaimed to them just as we have. But they did not have faith. If they did have faith they would have not been destroyed but would have entered Canaan. The whole point is these people under Moses were saved by grace and had the gospel preached to them. But because they did not have faith but unbelief instead so they died in the wilderness.

In the new Covenant era, under Jesus, we have had the gospel preached to us, and we are saved by Grace. We must have faith else we will suffer the same fate that Israel did. The question is are we required to obey God and his law as they were? Let Jesus himself give us that answer.

**Judgment of Pretenders**

**Matthew 7:21-23** “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter into the kingdom of heaven—only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. 22 On that day, many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many powerful deeds in your name?’ 23 Then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you. Go away from me, you lawbreakers!’ NET

**Matthew 13:40-42** “As the poisonous weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom everything that causes sin as well as all lawbreakers. 42 They will **throw them into the fiery furnace**, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” NET

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**(14)**

**Galatians 3:18-19**

“18 For if the inheritance is based on the law, it is no longer based on the promise, but God graciously gave it to Abraham through the promise. 19 Why then was the law given? It was added because of transgressions, until the arrival of the descendant to whom the promise had been made. It was administered through angels by an intermediary.” NET

God has given Abraham an inheritance, this inheritance consists of a city made by God and the remade earth to live in.

**Hebrews 11:8** “By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place he would later receive as an inheritance, and he went out without understanding where he was going. 9 By faith he lived as a foreigner in the promised land as though it were a foreign country, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, who were fellow heirs of the same promise. 10 For he was looking forward to the city with firm foundations, whose architect and builder is God.” NET

**Galatians 3:29** “And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to the promise.” NET

If salvation, ie the fulfillment of the covenant promises of God, comes by faith to the descendants of Abraham - Spirit filled Christians, then what was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgression, the law was added or written down and given to Israel 430 years after Abraham. Among other things it taught the Hebrews the difference between right and wrong, between righteousness and sin. The law must have already been in existence if there was transgression. Transgression implies that there was already a law to transgress. The law was written to educate mankind regarding his wickedness and to show him how far he had gotten away from God’s standard. The fulfillment of God's promises has always been by faith through the Spirit of God both before and after the giving of the law to Moses and Israel at Mt. Sinai.

How long was the law to be with us? “until the arrival of the descendant to whom the promise had been made.” According to verse 16 this descendant is Christ himself. When Jesus appeared the old order of things was swept away. When Jesus the Messiah appeared the Old Covenant was replaced with the New Covenant. The law Paul is referring too is the Old Covenant that began with Moses at Mt Sinai and finished with Jesus at Mt Calvary. This included the Hebrew priesthood, the sacrifice of animals in the temple, the annual feast days, and the ceremony of circumcision that was an entrance into the Old Covenant. The New Covenant has a heavenly priesthood, a heavenly temple, the sacrifice of Christ, and baptism as an entrance into the New Covenant. Both covenants contained the ten commandments. The old covenant temple had the ark of the covenant containing the ten commandments **Hebrews 9:3-4** “And after the second curtain there was a tent called the holy of holies. 4 It contained the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant covered entirely with gold. In this ark were the golden urn containing the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant.” The new covenant temple in heaven where Jesus Christ is our High Priest has an ark containing the ten commandments.

*Revelation 11:19* “Then the temple of God in heaven was opened and the ark of his covenant was visible within his temple.” The holy spirit transforms the characters of God’s people to observe the ten commandments.

*Romans 8:4* “so that the righteous requirement of the law may be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” NET

The gospel does not take away the obligation to observe the ten commandments.

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**(15)**

**Romans 5:20**

“Now the law came in so that the transgression may increase, but where sin increased, grace multiplied all the more,” NET

The transgression of the law was taking place on a large scale. When God made known His law the guilt of man increased with increase of knowledge. *Acts 17:30* “truly these times of ignorance God overlooked but now commands all men everywhere to repent.” Sin or transgression brings death. Grace brings eternal life. Where sin or transgression abounded grace abounded much more. Grace has been in existence for as long as sin has been in existence.

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**(16)**

**Galatians 3:21-25**

21 “Is the law therefore opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that was able to give life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. 22 But the scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise could be given—because of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ—to those who believe. 23 Now before faith came we were held in custody under the law, being kept as prisoners until the coming faith would be revealed. 24 Thus the law had become our guardian until Christ, so that we could be declared righteous by faith. 25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.” NET

Paul clearly states that the law is not apposed to [righteousness] the promises of God. There is no conflict between righteousness and the law of God. The law teaches us what righteousness is but the law cannot fulfill the promises of God. If there was a law that could impart life then God would have given us that law.

The whole world is the prisoner of sin [the transgression of the law]. Because of this fact righteousness [Gods covenant promises to deliver us from sin] can only come from God *because of the faithfulness of Jesus Christ—to those who believe*, not from any law.

To what law is Paul referring? It is the whole law, the sacrificial ceremonies and the moral law of the ten commandments. The holy spirit through the moral law reveals to us our sin and causes us to feel our need of a sin pardoning redeemer. The blood sacrifices of animals typified and pointed forward to the blood sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The law was our disciplinarian or guardian until we have faith. Once we have faith in Christ we are declared righteous and the law has fulfilled its purpose. We would be wise to study the bible and learn as much as we can about the plan of salvation and the law of God. Knowing that sin caused the death of Christ as a ransom for sinful man we should avoid stepping over the boundary from obedience to disobedience.

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**(17)**

**Galatians 5:2-4**

“Listen! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no benefit to you at all! 3 And I testify again to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. 4 You who are trying to be declared righteous by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace!” NET

The apostle Paul was himself a circumcised Jew. Yet he says that if you allow yourself to be circumcised Christ will be of no benefit to you at all. There is more than just religious ceremonies here. Circumcision originated with Abraham and it was a sign of righteousness by faith.

**Romans 4:11** *“And he [Abraham] received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised,” NET*

It was originally a symbol of faith that a person had accepted Gods covenant. Unfortunately the Jews changed it to a ceremony whereby God had to accept them. So what was once a sign of faith became a substitute for faith. The controversy regarding circumcision began when some Judaizers in the early christian church were saying that unless a person becomes a circumcised Jew before becoming a Christian they cannot be saved.

Circumcision was also a sign of entry into the old covenant. This problem was addressed in the Jerusalem council recorded in Acts 15:1&5. Paul says that if a person accepts the entrance ceremony into the old covenant then that person is obligated to obey all the old covenant laws. That would mean the feast days, the animal sacrifices, the Hebrew priesthood etc. According to Paul if Jesus as mankind's saviour is not enough and the observance of old covenant ceremonies was needed to supply the shortfall then this was teaching justification by the performance of religious ceremonies in order to make us acceptable to God. If you try to have yourself declared righteous by God in this way, earning salvation by the works of the law, you have become estranged from Christ, you have fallen from grace.

It is of vital importance they we obey God. If God commands that we must perform a certain religious ceremony then we risk losing our salvation if we refuse to do so because refusing to obey God is sinful rebellion. In the new covenant the gospel ceremonies are believers baptism and the Lord's supper. A serious problem is if you put circumcision or any other religious ceremony in the place of the holy spirit as was being done in the Galatian church, Paul says that you have fallen from grace and become alienated from Christ. Such a person remains under the curse of the law - the death penalty.

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**(18)**

**Luke 16:16-17**

*“The law and the prophets were in force until John; since then, the good news of the kingdom of God has been proclaimed, and everyone is urged to enter it. 17 But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one tiny stroke of a letter in the law to become void.” NET*

The law and the prophets are the writings of the old testament. They were preached until the arrival of John the Baptist. They were designed to lead people to the Messiah. When John appeared he pointed people to the Messiah, he boldly pointed to Jesus and said 'Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world' In 1:29. Now that the Messiah had arrived neither John the Baptist nor the old testament were needed to point Him out to us. This does not mean that the law of God has been abolished. Just in case any of the hearers of Jesus thought that He was doing away with the law He goes on to say that it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for the smallest stroke of the letter of the law to become nothing.

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**(19)**

**Hebrews 7:12**

*“For when the priesthood changes, a change in the law must come as well.” NET*

The change of the law spoken of here refers to regulations about the Hebrew priesthood. A Hebrew priest had to be a direct descendant of Aaron from the tribe of Levi, but Jesus came from the tribe of Judah. The Hebrew priests were of the order of Aaron but Jesus is of the order of Melchizedek. The Hebrew priests served in the First covenant earthly sanctuary but Jesus serves in the New covenant heavenly sanctuary. The change in the law regarding the ancestry of the priest and the tribe he belonged to did not change the ten commandments.

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**(20)**

**Hebrews 7:19**

*“for the law made nothing perfect. On the other hand a better hope is introduced, through which we draw near to God.” NET*

*“The law made nothing perfect.”* The law was never designed to rescue us from sin. If it could then the law could have been our saviour instead of Christ. The law being referred to here are the laws regarding the Hebrew sanctuary service; the ministration of the priesthood and the offering of animal sacrifices. This verse does not say that we do not have to obey the ten commandments.

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**(21)**

**Hebrews 10:1**

*“For the law possesses a shadow of the good things to come but not the reality itself, and is therefore completely unable, by the same sacrifices offered continually, year after year, to perfect those who come to worship.” NET*

The law that is a shadow of things to come is the law regarding animal sacrifices and the hebrew sanctuary service. The good things to come is the new covenant sacrifice of Christ and the heavenly sanctuary service. This verse does not say that we do not have to obey the ten commandments.

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**(22)**

**Hebrews 10:9**

*“then he says, “**Here I am: I have come to do your will.**” He does away with the first to establish the second.” NET*

Christ has done away with the first the old covenant and established the second the new covenant. A study of the covenants shows that the ten commandments are in both covenants. The change in the covenants did not change the ten commandments. (See Heb 10:16 and 2 Cor 3:3)

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**(23)**

**Acts 18:13**

*“This man is persuading people to worship God in a way contrary to the law!” NET*

The Apostle Paul is accused by the Jews of teaching men to worship God contrary to the law of Moses. This accusation took place in Corinth in the Roman province of Achaia, as recorded in *Acts 18:12*. *“Now while Gallio was proconsul of Achaia, the Jews attacked Paul together and brought him before the judgment seat, 13 saying, “This man is persuading people to worship God in a way contrary to the law!”* In what ways did Paul do this? We know that Paul taught that circumcision was abolished. Also under the new covenant the Hebrew feasts were abolished as well as the Hebrew priesthood and the temple sacrifices. This is a massive change in the Jewish system of worship. However there is no mention that Paul taught that the ten commandments were abolished.

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**(24)**

**Titus 3:9-11**

*“But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, quarrels, and fights about the law, because they are useless and empty. 10 Reject a divisive person after one or two warnings. 11 You know that such a person is twisted by sin and is conscious of it himself.” NET*

The law here is the Torah, the Old Testament. Some people use this verse to teach that the ten commandments are abolished. Using this faulty logic it's reasonable to say the next time someone who is a "Christian" wants to kill and steal and commit adultery just avoid "strivings about the law" for they are unprofitable and vain" and let them kill and steal to their hearts content. If Paul had meant that we should not talk about keeping the ten commandments law he would not have mentioned the 5th commandment to the Ephesians.

***Ephesians 6:1-3.** “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment accompanied by a promise, namely, 3 “that it will go well with you and that you will live a long time on the earth.” NET*

Paul put such high value on the law of God that he referred to it as oracles from God and claimed that the law was spiritual. *Romans 7:14* “For we know that the law is spiritual”. *Romans 3:2* “the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.” Speaking of Moses Stephen the deacon says in *Acts 7:38* “he received living oracles to give to you. So if the writings of the old testament are called “*spiritual living oracles*” then they must still be of great value. What Paul was warning about was Jewish deceivers who were joining in with the congregation spreading false doctrines and causing arguments regarding myths and genealogies.

***1 Timothy 1:3-7** “As I urged you when I was leaving for Macedonia, stay on in Ephesus to instruct certain people not to spread false teachings, 4 nor to occupy*

## *Answers to Objections*

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*themselves with myths and interminable genealogies. Such things promote useless speculations rather than God's redemptive plan that operates by faith. 5 But the aim of our instruction is love that comes from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith. 6 Some have strayed from these and turned away to empty discussion. 7 They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not understand what they are saying or the things they insist on so confidently." NET*

**Titus 1:10** *"For there are many rebellious people, idle talkers, and deceivers, especially those with Jewish connections," NET*

It is imperative that all christians know as much of the bible as they possibly can so that they are able to refute false doctrines when they appear.

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