

## SALVATION AND BIBLICAL LAW

Today, the world is filled with hatred, murder, violence, wars, lying, cheating, and sexual perversion and promiscuity, yet most professing Christians claim that they are not required to strictly practice God's laws that prohibit these destructive behaviors. Few people seem to realize that this world's problems are a direct result of not practicing God's laws.

Today, most Bible scholars, theologians, and other people who profess to follow the teaching of the Bible do not believe or teach that strict adherence to God's laws, precepts, and principles are necessary in order to please God or to obtain eternal and immortal life.

But is this true? Can one live one's life as one pleases and still be assured of entry into the Kingdom of God?

If you are one who is seriously concerned about your eternal destiny. The answers to these questions are important to you. Therefore, you might want to pay careful attention to the information contained in this broadcast about what the Bible actually says about the necessity to practice God's law in order to enter into the Kingdom of God as a eternal and immortal spirit-being.

Since the advent of the printing press, the Bible has remained the most published and most read book in the world. The Bible has been translated into almost every language and distributed to billions of people. There is virtually no populated place on this planet where one cannot find a copy of the Bible.

However, few people understand this book and practice the laws, precepts, and principles contained within its pages. If this were not true there would only be one church teaching one truth and the world's problems would be far less than they are today.

Numerous books and studies have been written in an attempt to explain, or explain away God's law. And the explanations are as diverse as the people doing the writing. Many people believe that none of

God's laws need to be practiced. Some people believe that all of God's laws are binding upon Christians today, while others believe that only some of these laws must be practiced.

Who is right in their belief about God's law? Or does it really matter who is right and who is wrong. Well, it only matters if there is a Sovereign God who has the powers of life and death over humans and requires that we practice his laws in order to gain eternal and immortal life.

Although professing Christians claim conservatorship of the biblical text and that the Creator God has guided and inspired their understanding. The over 20,000 competing Christian churches and organizations are divided into many factions, with each factions having widely different views, opinions, and interpretations of what the biblical text says, and which laws, if any, apply to Christians today.

Although all factions of Judaism believe that God's law is valid and should be practiced, many factions reject the belief that most of the Talmud dates back to Moses' time, and see the God's law as an evolving system in which successive generations of rabbis have the authority to alter the application of the written law as necessary to fit current circumstances. But, Orthodox Judaism feel less free to ignore, modify, or change the oral law.

On the other hand, the vast majority of professing Christians believe that neither the written law nor the oral law apply to them, so they are free to worship God as they please and live their lives without any biblical constraints or fear of punishment.

A quandary of gigantic proportions faces everyone who truly seeks to understand the Bible in this age, because there seems to be no trustworthy human authority from which to gain accurate biblical knowledge. Given the fact that there is much confusion and divergent opinion about the biblical text among the various biblically based religions, is it little wonder that there is so much confusion concerning biblical law and whether or not it is necessary to practice God's laws?

Clearly God put much thought into the laws he had recorded in the Bible and none were frivolous or unnecessary at the time that he gave them to the tribes of Israel. But which of these laws, if any, must be practiced by true Christians today? Why is there so much confusion about God's law and its application?

Today, most people who profess to follow the God of the Bible know virtually nothing about the hundreds of statutes, judgements, and commandments that are codified in the Old Testament or the oral law that explains them. This condition exists because most have been taught to dismiss these laws as ancient Jewish law that have no relevance to Christians today and even less to do with one's salvation because of the sacrifice of Christ.

Not only do most people who profess to follow Christ know little about the laws that he gave to Israel while he was the Creator God; they know virtually nothing about the laws that Jesus and the apostles codified in the New Testament for the elect to practice during the gospel age of salvation.

Just a short review of the first five books of the Bible will clearly reveal that the Creator God was a God of law. The agreement with the twelve tribes of national Israel contains 613 plus statutes, judgements, and commandments, depending on who is doing the counting. Plus the special agreement that the Sovereign Father has with his earthly family of ambassadors, kings, and priests contains laws and instructions that govern their relationship with him, their relationship with brothers and sisters in his holy family and with other people.

When the Creator God began to reveal the agreement he was ready to make with the tribes of Israel, the very first thing that he insisted on was an unconditional surrender to his will.

The Creator God said: "If you will obey my voice and keep my agreement, then you shall be a special treasure to me above all people, for all the earth is mine: And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation" (Ex.19:5-6 KJV)" (Ex.19:5).

This is also the first and most important of all the conditions contained in all of the agreements that God has made with people, concerning the granting of salvation. Without obedience the agreement is void, and none of the benefits contained in the agreement can be accessed or distributed.

### **Moses Speaks For God**

Upon hearing the voice of God from Mount Sinai, the people became so frightened that they asked Moses to speak to God and then tell them what he said. From that time on, God revealed to Moses everything that would be in the agreement with Israel between God and national Israel.

The only reason God spoke through Moses was that the people were afraid to listen to him directly (Ex.20:19). Also remember that God had already given the people the Ten Commandments before he began to speak through Moses. Therefore, the Ten Commandments are definitely a part of the agreement between the Creator God and national Israel.

Since the demise of the early church, the Sovereign Father's earthly children and many other people have wondered why the Creator God required the Israelites to practice many seemingly unnecessary and unimportant rituals and laws and what some of these physical laws have to do with one's salvation or the building of spiritual character. What benefit do these laws bestow on those who practice them? The answer is that these laws are the basis for being holy and practicing holiness. Moreover, these laws define the holy attitudes, behaviors, and characteristics that holy people must have in order to live and maintain a holy lifestyle.

In the Book of Leviticus chapter 11, God told Moses and Aaron to speak to the whole nation of Israel and tell them which animals they could and could not eat. In the middle of this instruction, God said the following about why they had to follow these rules:

God said:

"You shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creeps, neither shall you

make yourselves unclean with them, that you should be defiled thereby. For I am the Lord your God: you shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy: neither shall you defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that creeps on the earth. For I am the Lord that brought you out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: you shall therefore be holy, for I am holy" (Lev.11:43-45).

The Israelites were to be a holy people because God had separated them from among the peoples of earth in order for them to represent him and his way of life to all other people on earth:

When the Creator God said to the Israelites, "You shall be holy; for I am holy" he did not expect them to become holy as he is holy in his spirit realm of existence (that is, to become a spirit-being and live on earth as a spirit-being).

If the Israelites were to actually become as God, they would have to become totally spirit. Moreover, there were no instructions given to the Israelites concerning how to enter into the spirit realm of existence during their lifetime; therefore, becoming holy for the Israelites had to do with their physical existence and the way they were to conduct their lives in the physical world as a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

The word "holy" sounds very spiritual and for most people it is an undefinable concept. Most people probably believe that this word means "to be sacred", "good", or "godly". Although, these definitions may be true but they do not give a detailed explanation of what it means to be holy or what it means to practice a holy lifestyle.

Being holy and practicing holiness are not just abstract thoughts; they are something tangible that can be understood if one is willing to search the scriptures. Otherwise, the instruction "to be holy as God is holy" would not have been given. Being holy as God is holy not only requires one to clearly understand what the condition of being holy is, but also to understand and practice the laws that govern being holy.

## The Key

The Key to understanding how the Israelites were to be holy in a physical sense is understanding that the law God gave to the Israelites set forth the rules and standards for being holy.

The only concepts and principles in the entire Bible that explain the condition of being holy and the practice of holiness before and after the advent of the Messiah are contained in God's law. Therefore, being holy and being righteous are inexorably bound to God's law, because it is God's law that sets forth the rules and standards for being holy.

God has set the rules and standards by which all that is holy is to be measured. Any deviation from these rules and standards is in opposition to the nature of God who is a holy spirit-being. Therefore, a person who is not in harmony with God's law cannot have an intimate interaction with him.

The law explains what is holy and what is unholy. It explains the attitude, behavior, and character that a holy person must have in order to remain holy. The law gives detailed instructions about how to acquire the divine attributes and behaviors of holiness and how to practice them. The command to be holy as God is holy is always given in the context with a list of God's laws or in an instruction urging compliance with God's law. It is very important to carefully consider the context in which the instruction to be holy as God is holy is always found, because it tells us that it is God's law that instructs us in how to be holy and how to maintain the holy state of existence.

King David said in Psalm 19:

"The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving [i.e., restoring] the soul. The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy, making wise the simple. The precepts of the Lord are right, giving joy to the heart. The commands of the Lord are radiant, giving light to the eyes. The fear of the Lord is pure, enduring forever. The ordinances of the Lord are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb. By them is your

servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward" (Psa.19:7-11 NIV).

The Creator God's instructions to the Israelites concerning being holy shows us that being holy and being unholy are not compatible states of existence, and that the physical must be transformed into the holy in order to safely interact with God's sacred realm of existence. Moreover, there are tremendous benefits for those who maintain a holy state of existence.

## **Spiritual Israel**

Although those whom the Father calls to salvation during the gospel age have a different agreement than ancient Israel had with the Creator God, this agreement still requires the Sovereign Father's earthly children to be holy as he is holy:

The apostle Peter said concerning the state of being holy, Peter said:

"Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, being sober, perfectly hope in the grace being brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; As obedient children, not in ignorance fashioning yourselves after your former lusts, but according to the Holy One who has called you also become holy in all conduct. Because it has been written, Be holy; because I am holy" (1.Pet.1:13-16 KJV Para.).

The Sovereign Father's earthly children are his holy nation of kings who are waiting to rule in his kingdom; they are his holy nation of priests who offer him holy sacrifice through his holy temple in which the holy spirit resides; they are his ambassadors who are to represent him and his way of life to humanity.

Although the Father's children are intrinsically holy because they have his spirit dwelling within them, they are still required to perfect and maintain their holiness through practicing a holy lifestyle:

The apostle Paul said the following about practicing a holy lifestyle, Paul said:

"For God has not called us to uncleanness, but to

holiness" (1.Thes. 4:7 KJV).

And he also said

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2.Cor.7:1 KJV).

The writer to the Hebrews said:

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb.12:14 KJV).

Clearly, according to the Bible, if a person does not maintain a holy lifestyle they will not be granted eternal and immortal life in God's kingdom. But what are the rules for living a holy lifestyle?

In order to live a holy lifestyle and practice god-like attitudes and behaviors, a person must first know and understand God's law, because it is the law that defines and governs the sacred holy state of existence. It is impossible to imitate god-like behavior unless one knows what it is and how to practice it.

This is one of the reasons why the scriptures say to study the law and meditate on God's law. It is through the study of the law and meditation on it that one comes to understand God and why he is holy, righteous, and superior to all that he has caused to come into existence. Notice what King David said about the law and its importance in one's life. David said:

"O how love I your law! it is my meditation all the day. You through your commandments have made me wiser than my enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep your precepts" (Psa.119:97-100 KJV).

Is it important to practice God's law? I am here to tell you, it is important if you want to live forever as a spirit-being in the kingdom of God and not suffer the second death in the Lake of Fire.

On the first festival of Pentecost, after the death and resurrection of Christ, the apostle Peter preached the gospel message to a great assembly of people. After hearing what Peter had to say, these people said to the Peter and the apostles that were with him:

"Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said to them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the holy spirit" (Acts 2:37-38 KJV).

There can be little doubt that some of those whom Peter addressed understood that they had participated in the murder of their Messiah, Savior, and Redeemer just as the prophecies had foretold. In great fear and shame, they ask Peter, "What shall we do?" Notice that the first thing Peter said was that they needed to repent.

After healing a cripple man at the temple, Peter said to another group of people "Repent, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19 KJV).

The question is, Of what did these people need to repent?

What Peter was inspired to preach about repentance on the festival of Pentecost was nothing new, because God has always required repentance of sin in order for a person to establish a harmonious relationship with him.

What was new, was the process through which one could establish and maintain a harmonious relationship with the Father for all eternity.

Many today feel that to repent means to feel sorry for being a sinner and ask God to forgive one's sins. Others feel repentance is just a matter of going through the ritual of baptism. Still, others feel that it is a matter of the heart and they believe that all one must do is give one's heart to the Lord. Whatever that means?

However, to truly repent is far more than just being sorry about the fact that you have violated God's

law, feeling remorseful, saying a few words, and participating in a ritual.

True repentance is extremely important, because it is the first step in the process of receiving salvation. If a person is not truly repentant, they will not receive God's spirit and will not be saved.

True repentance requires a total change in one's life, a change that leads away from all aspects of evil, and leads toward that which is of God. True repentance also requires a total commitment and an unconditional surrender to the rule and authority of God.

It is easy to say that one must repent, but the question to be answered is, exactly of what must one repent?

If a person does not first know and understand exactly of what to repent, how can they accomplish repentance? Obviously they cannot. True repentance involves knowledge and understanding. A person must know of what to repent and understand why they should repent.

## **Repent of Sin**

God inspired the prophet Isaiah to encourage the people of Israel to repent of their sins so that he could bless them: God said through the prophet Isaiah:

"Wash yourselves, purify yourselves, put away the evil of your doings from my sight, stop doing evil. Learn to do good; seek justice; reprove the oppressor; judge the orphan; strive for the widow. Come and let us reason together, says the Lord: Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be as crimson, they shall be like wool. If you are willing to hear, you shall eat the good of the land. But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of the Lord has spoken" (Isa.1:16-20 Para.).

## **But What Is Sin?**

In past centuries there has been much debate and confusion as to what sin is and is not. The apostle

John defines sin this way:

He said, "Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1.Jn.3:4 KJV). John also said:

And, "All unrighteousness is sin" and that "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1.Jn.1:9 KJV). See also Isa.1:18; 1.Jn

### **So What Is the Biblical Definition of Sin?**

Sin is the violation of the physical and spiritual law of God; sin is lawlessness. Sin is any deviation from God's righteous laws, precepts, and principals, which define how a person should live their life and worship God. It is this deviation from the law of God for which a person must Repent and ask forgiveness before they will be given God's holy spirit.

A person cannot be a true child of God by the biblical definition unless they are in obedience to God's ten commandments and other laws, precepts, and principles. A person cannot pick and choose which of God's laws they will or will not obey; all must be obeyed:

The apostle Paul said the following concerning God's law:

"For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified" (Rom.2:13 KJV). See also Psa.119:172; 2.Jn.5-6.

### **The Ancient Israelites**

In the agreement that God made with the nation of Israel at Mount Sinai, he promised that if they would keep his law (Deut.5:29-33; 30:15-20), they would be righteous and sinless before him.

Maintaining a right-standing with the Creator God was a major part of the terms and conditions of the agreement that God made with national Israel. God told the Israelites that if they would obey him,

he would bless them, but disobedience would bring curses (Deut.28:1-68).

It is very important to understand how those who lived before Christ maintained a good relationship with their Creator because it is this good relationship or right-standing with God the Father that ensures a person salvation under the terms and conditions of their agreement with God the Father.

In the Book of Deuteronomy, Moses said this of righteousness and God's law:

"And the Lord showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: And he brought us out from there, that he might bring us in, to give us the land which he swore to our fathers. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that he might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as he has commanded us" (Deut.6:22-25 KJV).

Here, we see that the commandments are defined as righteousness. If a person could always keep the commandments perfectly without ever violating one of them, he or she would be a righteous individual in God's eyes and would escape the second death.

### **The Prophets and Writers**

The apostle Paul said that the wages of sin is death. The prophet Ezekiel records God's thoughts concerning a wicked person who remains wicked and the wicked person who repents of his wickedness:

God said:

"When a righteous one turns from his righteousness and does injustice, and dies in them; he shall die for his injustice which he has done. And when the wicked turns from his wickedness that he has done, and does justice and righteousness, he shall keep his soul alive. Because he considers and turns from all his

transgressions that he has done, surely he shall live; he shall not die" (Ezk.18:26-28). See also Ezk.3:18-21; Jer.4:14.

Are Gods laws, principles, and precepts evil? Were they designed to bring harm to individuals?

The answer is absolutely not! Obviously, Gods laws, principles, and precepts are very good! There is nothing bad, evil, or wrong about these laws. They do not cause pain or suffering. Instead, they were designed to benefit mankind.

God created his law for our benefit. It was designed to bring us happiness, joy, and prosperity during our lifetime and beyond. Ancient Israel was not willing to accept these laws as an expression of his love; instead, they rebelled in their hearts, minds, and attitudes and therefore they received curses instead of blessings:

God said in Deuteronomy chapter 5:

"Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, so that it might go well with them and their children forever!" (Deut.5:29 NIV).

For every effect there is a cause. All of the evil, pain, and suffering in this world is the effect of people breaking the Ten Commandments and other laws of God.

Paul said:

"When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

The apostle Paul leaves no leave no doubt as to what is sin! Sin is the violation of God's law. From the beginning of mankind, the penalty of sin has always been death from which there is no return.

But, through the sacrificial blood of Jesus Christ, forgiveness of sin is possible. However, just because the Sovereign Father has offered the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ, does not mean that his laws, principles, and precepts have been canceled and no longer need to be practiced.

## **BE HONEST**

An honest look at the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles leaves no doubt that, if we want to follow God's way of life, we must practice God's laws, precepts, and principles as codified in the Bible.

The reason most people, which includes most professing Christians, do not want to practice God's law, is not because these laws are harsh or bad, it is because of the hostility people hold in their minds toward God and his law:

The apostle Paul told the elect at Rome: "The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God" (Rom.8:7-8 NIV).

God intended for the Israelites to strictly practice the laws, precepts, and principles that he gave them as a part of the terms and conditions of the agreement that he made with them.

The prophets clearly show that when Christ establishes the Sovereign Father's kingdom on earth that all people will be required to practice God's law.

Jesus and the apostles said that if a person expects to live forever, that person must comply with God's law.

In the Book of Revelation, there are four texts that show beyond doubt that at the end of the age the practice of God's law is extremely important to a persons eternal destiny:

Chapter 12, verse17 says:

"And the dragon was angry with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed,

which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."

It should be obvious that the only reason that Satan would make war with God's people is because they are in opposition to his evil ways by living righteous lives through practicing God's law.

Chapter 14, verse 12:

"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

The obvious implication of this text, is that, people who do not keep the commandment are not saints and are not keeping the Faith of Jesus.

Chapter 22, verse 14:

"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Those who practice God's law will have everlasting life, all others will meet their fate in the Lake of Fire, which is the second death as noted in chapter 21:, which says,

"He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

Should a person who professes to follow the teachings of the Bible practice God's law? The answer from the Bible is that, a person cannot be in harmony with God the Father or his son the Savior of mankind, unless a person is practicing all of the commandments and other biblical law that define a person's relationship with them.

King Solomon summarized the answer to the question of whether or not to practice God's law, when he said:

"Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil. (Eccl.12:13-14 NIV)

I see that my time is up, if you want to know more about God's law and why it should be practiced during the gospel age of salvation or the more about other subjects that I have briefly touched on in this in this broadcast, Write to me at the address given in the following announcement. Until next time this is Bud Cocherell for Bible Research.

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