

*Study for the Month of April, 2009*

## **THE MAGNIFICATION AND SPIRITUALITY OF THE LAW OF GOD**

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**The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness' sake;  
He will magnify the law and make it honorable." Isaiah 42:21, K.J.V.**

The gospel prophet revealed that one of the most important aspects of the work that the Creator of heaven and earth was to accomplish in His incarnation as Jesus Christ the Messiah, the promised Seed of the woman (Gen.3:15 ; Gal. 4:4) was to "magnify the law and make it honorable" by His everlasting gospel.

The psalmist declared the same precious testing truth. See Ps. 119:96-100, 165. Moreover, he declares that "before his afflictions he went astray." Verse 67. But after he was afflicted he declared, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may *learn* Thy statutes, the law of Thy mouth is better to me than thousands of shekels of gold and silver." Verses 70, 71.

Thousands of sincere and honest Christians at this late, late hour of earth's history have not yet seen for themselves nor have been informed by their spiritual guardians and leaders of this astounding truth. Many of the latter, eminent Bible scholars and even authors of religious books and articles widely sought and referred to authoritative, are aware of this truth but do not declare it in its fullness as they should, because it involves bearing the heaviest cross that will ever be borne every one who seeks to inherit eternal life—*giving up the world and the things of the world and all fleshly desires*. This of course is quite inconvenient, to say the least, thus, immensely unpopular.

Thus every attempt, doctrinal wise, has been and will be made to downplay, obscure, or twist this truth to make it appear that it accommodates that which in fact, it condemns. It is far easier to merely confess Christ in lip service and high forms of ceremonial worship, go on pilgrimages, observe every religious feast and man-made holydays, pay tithes, and even endure self-flagellation than to seek purity of heart and obey God's law.

It is the solemn work of those entrusted with the three angels' messages of Revelation 14 to proclaim this message as part of earth's final warning in certain trumpet tones. And such has been entrusted to the members of the remnant church of prophecy—"the keepers of the commandments of God" and "have the testimony of Jesus Christ, which is the spirit of prophecy" in their midst. Rev. 19: 10; 12: 17; 14:6. Notice:

"In a special sense Seventh-day Adventists have been set in the world as watchmen and lights bearers. To them has been entrusted the last warning for a perishing world. On them is

shining wonderful light from the word of God. They have been given a work of the most solemn import---the proclamation of the first, second, and third angel's messages. There is no other work of so great importance. They are to allow nothing to absorb their attention.

The most solemn truths ever entrusted to mortals have been us to proclaim to the world. The proclamation of these truths is to be our work. The world is to be warned, and God's people are to be true to the trust committed to them. They are to not to engage in speculation, neither are they to enter into business enterprises with unbelievers; for this would hinder them in the God-given work." – E. G. White, *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 19.

This is the law that was questioned and challenged by Lucifer, asserting that it could not be kept by any of the created beings, which led to his rebellion and overthrow together with one third of the angels that joined him. Cast down on earth he became *the* serpent, Satan, the Devil, the murderer and liar from the beginning, the god of this earth and the prince of the air. Rev. 12: 3, 4, 7-9; Luke 10:18; Eph. 2:2. The fallen angels became the evil spirits that have deceived, vexed, and destroyed mankind and the earth itself since then.

In these last days of earth's history, under the judgment hour that commenced in 1844, we have been warned: "Woe to inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time." Rev. 12:12. Their ultimate eternal damnation and destruction, however, is assured. "And the angels who did not keep their proper domain [heaven], but left their own habitation, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day. . . suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Jude 6, 7.

**Magnify** in the original Hebrew means "to twist, that is, to cause to make large in various senses, as in body, mind, estate or honor, also in pride; to advance, boast, bring up, exceed, excellent, become, do, give, make greater, increase, lift up, nourish up, promote proudly; tower. *Honorable* in this verse means "to expand, i.e., be great, magnificent; become glorious."

In Psalms 119 this law is extolled in 176 verses, the longest in the Old Testament. This law is the Constitution of heaven. It governs the universe and all that God created for "order is heaven's first law." Its enforcement of obedience is invested in the "constraint of love" (2 Cor. 5:14), based on childlike faith on its Author and Giver for there is no compulsion in the obedience of Christ; all is motivated and empowered by the love of Christ "which neither life nor death nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor any other creature can separate us" from." (Rom. 8:38, 39).

Law is a revelation of the mind and character of its author. And since there is only One Lawgiver (James 4:12), and one Life giver, this law is the law of *life*. In answer to the lawyer's question "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" and then himself citing the law of God, Jesus answered, "This do (obey) and thou shalt *live*." Luke 10: 25-28; 11; 27-28; 8:19-21; Matt. 22: 35-40. It is quite plain then from Christ's own words that obedience to this law means life, not death. Conversely, disobedience means death.

This work of magnifying His law, then, is central to the plan of salvation for mankind. Jesus was called "the Son of David" and, when David was doing things in harmony with God's will, he was called "the man after God's own heart" (Acts 13:22; Ps. 89:20; 1 Sam. 13: 14.). David declared that "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimonies of the Lord are sure, making wise the simple" (Ps. 19:7). Thus the law is an agency in the conversion of the human heart and in obeying it from the heart, makes one

wise to the ways of God, it being a revelation of the mind and character of its author, God Himself. Summarizing what the law is, E. G. White wrote:

*“Ten precepts, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative,  
cover the duty of man to God and his fellow man;  
and all based upon the great fundamental principle of love.  
“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,  
and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind;  
and thy neighbor as thyself.” Luke 10:27; Deut. 6:4,5; Lev. 19:8.  
In the Ten Commandments these principles are carried out in detail, and made  
applicable to the condition and circumstances of man.”*

“The ten holy precepts spoken by Christ upon Sinai’s mount were the revelation of the character of God, and made know to the world the fact that He had jurisdiction over the whole human heritage. That law of ten precepts of the greatest love that can be presented to man is the voice of God from heaven speaking to the soul in promise, “This do, and you will not come under the dominion and control of Satan.” - *E. G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1105.

### **How Christ Magnified the Law**

“The law of God’s government was to be *magnified by the death* of God’s only begotten Son. Christ bore the guilt of the sins of the world. Our sufficiency is found only in the *incarnation and death* of the Son of God. He could suffer, because He was sustained by divinity. He could endure, because He was without one taint of disloyalty or sin. Christ triumphed in man’s behalf in thus bearing the justice of punishment. He secured eternal life to men, while He exalted the law, and made it honorable.

Every soul is *under obligation to follow in the footsteps of Christ*, the great example for the human family. He said, “I have kept My Father’s commandments” [John 15:10]. *The Pharisees thought that He was seeking to lessen the claims of the law of God*, but His voice rang out upon their ears saying, “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law, till all is fulfilled.” Matt. 5:17, 18, N.K.J.V.

Christ came to magnify the law and to make it honorable; He came to extol “the old commandment which ye had from the beginning.” (1 John 2:7). *Then we need the law and the prophets*. We need the Old Testament to bring us down along the line to the New Testament, which does *not* take the place of the Old Testament, but more *distinctly* reveals to us the plan of salvation, giving *significance* to the whole system of sacrifices and offerings, and to the word which we had from the beginning. *Perfect obedience is enjoined from every soul, and obedience to the expressed will of God will make you one with Christ*. Of Him it is written, “Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within My heart.” [Ps. 40:7, 8; Heb. 10:7].” - *Sons & Daughters*, p. 48.

### **The Ten Commandments are Ten Promises: the Terms of Salvation**

“The Ten Commandments, Thou shalt, and Thou shalt not, are ten promises assured to us *if* we render obedience to the law governing the universe. “If ye love Me, keep My commandments.” [John 14:15]. Here is the sum and substance of the law of God. The *terms of salvation* of every son and daughter of Adam are here outlined.-- MS 41, 1896.

“The Ten holy precepts spoken by Christ upon Sinai’s mount were the *revelation of the character of God*, and made known to the world the fact that He had *jurisdiction* over the whole human heritage. That law of ten precepts of *the greatest love* that can be presented to man, is the *voice of God* from heaven speaking to the soul in promise, “This *do* and you will not come under the dominion and control of Satan.” There is *not a negative* in that law, although it may appear thus. It is DO and live. (Letter 89, 1898) [Word in capitals in the original].” – *E.G. W. Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1105.

### **The Object of the Gospel**

Jer. 31: 33, 34; Heb. 8: 10; 10:16,17. “The work Christianity is designed to achieve in the world is not to depreciate the law of God, not to detract from its sacred dignity in the slightest degree, but it is to write that law in the mind and heart. When the law of God is thus implanted in the soul of the believer [or the one who exercises faith], he is *approaching eternal life through the merits of Jesus*. *The object of the gospel is met when this great end is achieved*. Its work, from age to age, is to unite the hearts of His followers in a spirit of universal brotherhood, through belief of the truth, and thus establish heaven’s system of order and harmony in the family of God on earth, that they may be accounted worthy to become members of the royal family above. God, in His wisdom and mercy, *tests* men and women here, to see *if* they will obey His voice and respect His law, or rebel as Satan did.” – *Sons & Daughters*, p. 50.

### **The Object of the Law**

“God’s object in giving the law to the fallen race was that man might, through Jesus, rise from his low estate *to be one with God*, that *the greatest moral changes* might be made in his nature and character. This moral transformation *must* take place, or man would *not be a safe subject* in the kingdom of God; for he would raise a revolt. Here in this life is the testing, trying time. The angels of God are watching the development of character, and weighing moral worth. *The whole question is settled in this, Is he obedient or disobedient to the commandments of God? has the sinner been transformed in this world, through the merits of Christ, to an obedient servant, so that he is fitted to join the heavenly society?* The law of God in our hearts will bring our own interests in subordination to high and eternal considerations.” – *Ibid*.

“By the pride of human wisdom, by contempt for the influence of the Holy Spirit, and by disrelish for the truths of God’s word, many who profess to be Christians, and who feel competent to teach others, will be led to turn away from the requirements of God. Paul declared to Timothy, ‘For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teacher; and they [these teachers] will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside fables.’ [2 Tim. 4:3, 4, NKJV].

The apostle Paul does not here refer to the openly irreligious, but to the professing Christians who make *inclination* their guide, and thus become *enslaved by self*. Such are willing to listen to those *doctrines only that do not rebuke their sins or condemn their pleasure-loving course*. They are *offended* by the plain words of the *faithful* servants of Christ, and choose teachers who praise and flatter them. And among professing ministers there are those who preach the opinions of men instead of the word of God. Unfaithful to their trust, they lead astray those who look upon them for spiritual guidance.

In the precepts of His holy law, God has given *a perfect rule of life*; and He has declared that until the close of time, this law, unchanged in a single jot or tittle, is to maintain its claims upon human beings. *Christ came to magnify the law and make it honorable. He showed that it is based on the broad foundation of love to God and love to man, and that obedience to its precepts comprises the whole duty of man.* [Eccl. 12: 13, 14]. In His own life He gave an example of obedience to the law of God. In the Sermon on the Mount [Matt. Chapters 5 through 7] He showed how its requirements *extend* beyond the outward acts, and take cognizance of the thoughts and intents of the heart. [Heb.4:12; Isa. 55:7, 8].

The law, obeyed, leads men to *deny* “ungodliness and worldly lusts [desires], and to “live soberly and righteously, and godly in the present world.” Titus 2:12. But the enemy of all righteousness has taken the world captive, and has led men and women to disobey the law. As Paul foresaw, multitudes have turned [away] from the plain, searching truths of God’s word, and have chosen teachers who present to them the *fables* they desire. Many among both ministers and people are trampling under their feet the commandments of God. Thus the Creator of the world is *insulted*, and Satan *laughs* in triumph at the success of his devices.” – *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 504.

“Since ‘the law of the Lord is perfect’ [Ps. 19: 7], every variation from it must be evil. Those who disobey the commandments of God, and teach others to do so, are condemned by Christ. The Savior’s life of obedience maintained the claims of the law; *it proved that the law could be kept in humanity, and showed the excellence of character that obedience would develop.* All who obey as He did are likewise declaring that the law is “holy, and just, and good.” Rom. 7:12.

On the other hand, *all who break God’s commandments are sustaining Satan’s claim that the law is unjust, and cannot be obeyed. Thus they second the deceptions of the great adversary, and cast dishonor upon God.* They are the children of the wicked one, who was the first rebel against God’s law. [Matt. 13:38]. To admit them to heaven would again bring in the elements of discord and rebellion, and imperil the well-being of the universe. No man who *willfully* disregards one principle of the law shall enter the kingdom of heaven.”- *Desire of Ages*, pp. 308-9

### **The Relationship of the Law to Grace**

Eph. 2: 4-7: “We would have never learned the meaning of this word ‘grace’ had we not fallen. God loves the sinless angels who do His service and are obedient to all His commands, but He does not give them grace. These heavenly beings know nothing of grace; they have never needed it, for they have never sinned. Grace is an attribute of God shown to undeserving beings. We did not seek after it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow this grace on everyone who *hungers* for it, not because we are

worthy, but because we are so *utterly* unworthy. *Our need is the qualification which gives us the assurance that we will receive this gift [of grace].*

“But God does not use this grace to make His law of none effect or to take the place of His law. [Isa. 42: 21 quoted]. His law is truth. . . . [Ps. 119: 142].

God’s grace and the law of His kingdom are in perfect harmony; they walk hand in hand. His grace makes it possible for us to draw near to Him by faith. *By receiving it and letting it work in our lives, we testify to the validity of the law; we exalt the law and make it honorable by carrying out its living principles. . . .*

How may we witness for God? . . . . by rendering pure, whole-hearted obedience to God’s law. If we will let Him, He will manifest Himself in us [through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit], and *we shall be witnesses* before the universe of heaven, and before and apostate world who are making void the law of God, *to the power of redemption.*

There is but one power that can bring us into conformity to the likeness of Christ; that can make us steadfast and keep us constant. It is the grace of God that comes to us through *obedience* to the law of God.” - *My Life Today*, p. 100.

### **Obedience is the Test of Discipleship**

“A mere profession of discipleship is of no value. *The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many.* “Believe, believe,” they say, “and you need not keep the law. “ But a belief [or faith] that does not lead to obedience is *presumption.* The apostle John says, ‘He who says I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’ 1 John 2:4, N.K.J.V. [See John 8: 44, 32; 14: 6; 1 John 2: 21; Rev. 21: 7, 8]. Let none cherish the idea that special providences or miraculous manifestations are to be the proof of the genuineness of their work or of the ideas they advocate. When persons will speak lightly of the word of God, and set their *impressions, feelings, and exercises* above the divine standard [the law of God], we may know that they have *no light* in them.

*Obedience is the test of discipleship.* It is the keeping of the commandments that prove the sincerity of our professions of love. When the doctrine we accept kills sin in the heart, purifies the soul from defilement, bears fruit unto holiness, we may know that it is the truth of God. When benevolence, kindness, tender-heartedness, sympathy are manifest in our lives; when the joy of right-doing [righteousness] is in our hearts; when we exalt Christ, and not self, we *may know that our faith is of the right order.* ‘Hereby we do know that we know Him, *if* we keep His commandments. 1 John 2:3.”--*Mount of Blessing*, p. 146.

### **No Short Route to Holiness**

“This is an age famous for surface work, for *easy methods*, for boasted holiness aside from the standard of character that God has erected. All short routes, all cut-off tracks, all teaching which fails to exalt the law of God as the standard of religious character is *spurious.* Perfection of character is a lifelong work, unattainable by those who are *not willing to strive* for it in God’s appointed way, by slow and toilsome steps. We cannot afford to make any mistake in this matter, but we want day by day to be growing up into Christ, our living Head. [Eph. 4:15].”- *Notebook Leaflets from the Elmshaven Library*, p. 65.

Jesus himself explained this truth: “Enter in by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” Matt. 7: 13, 14, NKJV.

### **Love is the Fulfilling of the Law**

See Matt. 22:37-40; Mark 12:28-31; Rom. 13:10.

“The law of God, which is perfect holiness, is the only true standard of character. *Love is expressed in obedience* [and so is faith], and perfect love casteth out fear. Those who love God, have *the seal of God in their foreheads*, and *work the works of God*. [Rev. 7:3; John 6:28,29]. Would that all who profess Christianity know what it means to love God *practically*. They would have some realization of the infinite holiness of God, knowing that He is high and lifted up, and the train of His glory fills the temple. [Isa. 6:1].

Love to God must be a living principle, underlying *every* act and word and thought. If in the strength of Christ we are *seeking* to maintain such a consecration, we shall be daily holding communion with God. . . .The principles of God’s law will dwell in the heart, and *control* the actions. It will be then as natural for us to seek purity and holiness, to shun the spirit and example of the world, and to seek to benefit all around us, as it is for the angels of glory to execute the mission of love assigned them.” -*Sons & Daughters*, p. 51.

### **Love and Respect for God is Shown by Obedience**

“The law of God is the *only* true standard of moral perfection. That law was practically exemplified in the life of Christ. He says of Himself, “I have kept my Father’s commandments” (John 15:10). Nothing short of this obedience will meet the requirements of God’s word. [1 John 2:6 quoted]. *We cannot plead that we are unable to do this*, for we have the assurance, “My *grace* is sufficient for thee” (2 Cor. 12:9). As we look into the divine mirror, the law of God, we see the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and our own lost condition as transgressors. But by *repentance and faith* we are justified before God, and though *divine grace*, enabled to render obedience to His commandments.

Those who have *genuine* love for God will manifest an earnest desire to know His will and to *do* it. Says the apostle John, whose epistles treat so fully upon love [1 John 5:3 quoted]. The child who loves his parents will show that love by willing obedience. But the selfish, ungrateful child seeks to do *as little as possible* for his parents, while he at the same time desires to enjoy all the privileges granted to the obedient and faithful .The *same difference* is seen among those who profess to be children of God.

Many who know that they are the object of His love and care, and who desire to receive His blessing, take no delight in doing His will. They regard God’s claims upon them as *unpleasant restraint*, His commandments as a *grievous yoke*. But he who is truly seeking for holiness of heart and life delights in the law of God, and mourns only that he falls so far short of meeting its requirements.” - *Sanctified Life*, p. 81.

### **Justification Retained Only Through Obedience**

See Rom. 2:13; James 2; 21-24.

“But while God can be just, and yet justify the sinner through the merits of Christ, no man can cover his soul with the garments of Christ’s righteousness while practicing known sins, or neglecting known duties. God requires the entire surrender of the heart, *before* justification can take place; and in order for man to *retain* justification, there must be *continual obedience*, through active, living faith that works by love and purifies the soul.” - *Selected Messages*, vol.1, p. 366.

### **The obedient are called just or justified, forgiven**

“Upon those who keep the commandments of God the benediction is pronounced: “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may the right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city”[Rev. 22:14]. They are “a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. *The obedient are called the just*; they are drawn to the holy magnet, Jesus Christ; *the holy attracts the holy.*” – *Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 235

“[At Calvary] Christ felt *as much* as sinners will feel when the vials of God’s wrath shall be poured out upon them. Black despair, like the pall of death, will gather about their guilty souls, and then they will realize to the fullest extent the sinfulness of sin. Salvation has been purchased for them by the suffering and death of the Son of God. It might be theirs, if they would accept of it willingly, gladly; but none are compelled to yield obedience to the *law of God*. If they refuse *the heavenly benefit* and choose the pleasures and deceitfulness of sin, they have their choice, and at the end receive their wages, which is the wrath of God and eternal death. They will forever be separated from the presence of Jesus, whose sacrifice they have despised. They will have lost a life of happiness and sacrificed eternal glory for the pleasures of sin for a season.” – *Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 210

## **The Magnification of the Spirituality of the Law**

### **I.**

#### ***Thou shalt have no other gods before Me. Exo. 20:2.***

See Mark 12: 28-34; Matt. 23; 45-40;

“Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, uncreated One, himself the source and sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship. Man is forbidden to give to any other object the *first place* in his affections or his service. *Whatever* we cherish that tends to *lessen* our love for God or to *interfere* with the service due Him, of that do we make a god.”—*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 305.

“Let men worship and serve the Lord God, and Him only. Let not *selfish pride* be lifted up and served as a god. Let not *money* be made a god. If *sensuality* is not kept under control of the highest powers of the mind, *base passion* will rule the being. *Anything* that is made the subject of *undue* thought and admiration, *absorbing* the mind, is a god chosen before the Lord. --*MS 126*, 1901.



“There is not a moral precept enjoined in any part of the Bible which is not engraved with the *finger* of God in His holy law on the two tables of stone. A copy was given to Moses on Mount Sinai. The first four enjoined upon man his duty to serve the Lord our God with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength. [See Mark 12: 28-34; Exo. 24:12; 3:18; 32:5,16; 34; Deut. 4:13; 5:22].

*This takes the whole man.* This requires a love so *fervent*, so *intense*, that man can cherish *nothing* in his mind or affections *in rivalry* with God; and his *works* will bear the signature of heaven. Everything is *secondary* to the glory of God. Our heavenly Father is to be ever cherished as the first, the joy and prosperity, the light and sufficiency of our life, and our portion forever. [Ps. 119:57; Lam. 3:24].”—*Sons & Daughters*, p. 56.

As to why and how God alone deserves the first, last, and best in everything that we are and can ever be, Alonzo Trevor Jones so ably wrote:

“Since God Has created man, in the nature of things the first of all relationships is that to God. Suppose a time when there was only one intelligent creature in the universe. He was created: and his relationship to his Creator, is the only one that could possibly be. That is the first of all relationships that can possibly be. Therefore it is written “The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all they heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength.” [Mark 12: 29, 30; cf. Deut. 6:4, 5].

“All there is of any soul is first due to God; because it all came from God. This, therefore, is the first of all commandments, not because it was the very first one that was ever given by spoken word, or that was ever written out; but because it is the first that could possibly be. And this is because it is the expression of the first principle of the existence of any intelligent creature. The principle was there, inherent in the existence of the first intelligent creature, in the first moment of his existence; and there the principle abides eternally, unmodified and unfading.

“Now, though this the first of all possible relationships, and the first of all duties; though that relationship and duty are inherent in the very existence of intelligent creatures; yet even in that inherent obligation, God has created every intelligent creature *free*—free to recognize that obligation or not, free to discharge that duty or not, just as he chooses.

“Accordingly as it is written: ‘Choose you this day whom you will serve’ [Josh.24:15]. ‘Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.’ [Rev. 22: 17]. Thus it is absolutely true that in religion—in the duty we owe our Creator and the manner of discharging it—God has created man entirely ‘exempt from the domination of others and from restricting circumstances;’ has made him free ‘to make choice, and decide his conduct for himself, spontaneously and voluntarily.’ Thus religious liberty is the gift of God, inherent in the gift of rational existence itself.

“Any service as to God that is not freely chosen by him who renders it is not service *to* God. There can be no virtue in it; there can be none of God in it. Any service rendered as to God as to God that is not freely chosen on the part of him who renders it cannot be of God; because ‘God is love’: and love and compulsion, love and force, love and oppression, never can go together. Therefore, any duty, any obligation, anything, offered or rendered as to God that is not of the individual’s won freely chosen choice, can neither be of God nor to God. Accordingly when Lord created whatever creature—angel or man—in order that that creature should be happy in the service of God, and in order that there

should be virtue in rendering service or worship to God, He created him free to do so. And this is individuality, and the divine right of it.” –*Individuality of Religion*,” pp. 7-9.

## II

***Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in the heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands [of generations] of them that love me and keep My commandments.”***

***Exo. 20: 4-6.***

Apostle Paul says:

“For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and *changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like into a corruptible man--and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things.*” Rom. 1: 18-23.

“The second commandment forbids the worship of the true God by [using] images or similitudes [likeness of *any* thing]. Many heathen nations claim that their images were mere figures or symbols by which the Deity was worshipped; but God has declared that such worship to be sin. The attempt to *represent* the Eternal One by material objects would lower man’s conception of God. The mind, turned away from the infinite perfection of Jehovah, would be attracted to the creature rather than to the Creator. And as his conceptions of God were lowered, so would man become degraded.

***“I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.”***-- The close and sacred relation of God to His people is represented under the figure of marriage [See Eph. 5: 23-27]. *Idolatry being spiritual adultery*, the displeasure of God against it is fitly called jealousy.

***“Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me.”***--- It is *inevitable* that children should *suffer* from the *consequences* of parental wrong-doing, but they are *not punished* for their parents’ guilt, *except as they participate in their sins*. It is usually the case, however, that children walk in the steps of their parents. By *inheritance and example* the sons become partakers of the father’s sin. Wrong tendencies, perverted appetites, and debased morals, as well as physical disease and degeneracy, are *transferred* as a legacy from father to son, to the third and fourth generation. This *fearful truth* should have a solemn power to *restrain* men from following a sinful course of sin.

***“Showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.”***- In prohibiting the worship of false gods, the second

commandment, by implication, *enjoins* the worship of the true God. And to those who are faithful in His service, mercy is promised, not merely to the third and fourth generation as is the wrath threatened against those who hate Him, but to *thousands* of generations.” – *Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 306.

“Our Creator demands our supreme devotion, our first allegiance. *Anything* which tends to *abate* our love for God, or *interfere* with the service due Him, becomes thereby an *idol*. With some their *lands*, their *houses*, their *merchandise*, are their idols. *Business enterprises* are prosecuted with zeal and energy, while the service of God is made a secondary consideration. *Family worship is neglected, secret prayer forgotten*. Many claim to deal justly with their fellowmen, and seem to feel that in so doing they discharge their whole duty. *But it is not enough to keep the last six commandments of the Decalogue*. We are to love the Lord our God with all our heart. Nothing short of obedience to every precept can satisfy the claims of the divine law.

“There are many whose hearts have been so *hardened by prosperity* that they forget God, and forget the wants of their fellowmen. Professed Christians *adorn themselves with jewelry, laces, and costly apparel*, while the Lord’s poor suffer for the necessities of life. Men and women who claim redemption through a Savior’s blood will *squander* the means entrusted to them for the saving of other souls, and then *grudgingly* dole out their offerings for religion, giving liberally *only* when it will bring honor to themselves. These are *idolaters*.” – *Signs of the Times*, Jan. 26, 1882.

“*Anything* that diverts the mind from God assumes the form of an idol, and that is why there *so little power in the church today*.” --*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 306.

Describing the gradual and progressive falling away of the early church through the introduction of paganism and its *idolatrous* practices where severe persecution, instead of decimating the church, increased its converts to Christianity, we read:

“Satan therefore laid his plans to war more successfully against the government of God by planting his banner in the Christian church. If the followers of Christ could be deceived and led to displease God, then their strength, fortitude, and firmness would fail, and they would fall an easy prey.

The great adversary now endeavored to *gain by artifice what he had failed to secure by force*. Persecution ceased, and in its stead was substituted the dangerous allurements of temporal prosperity and worldly honor. *Idolaters were led to accept a part of the Christian faith, while they rejected other essential truths*. They professed to accept Jesus as the Son of God and to believe in His death and resurrection, but they had no conviction of sin and felt not need of repentance or a change of heart. With some concessions on their part they proposed that Christians should make concessions [actually, compromise], that all might unite on the platform of belief in Christ.

Now the church was in peril. Prison, torture, fire, and sword were blessings in comparison with this. Some of the Christians stood firm, declaring that they could make no compromise. Others were in favor of *yielding or modifying* some feature of their faith, and uniting with those who had accepted *a part* of Christianity. Under a cloak of *pretended Christianity*, Satan was insinuating himself into the church, to corrupt their faith and turn their minds from the word of truth.

Most of the Christians at last *consented to lower their standard, and a union was formed between Christianity and paganism*. *Although the worshippers of idols professed to be converted, and united with the church, they still clung to their idolatry, only changing the objects of their worship to images of Jesus, and even Mary and the*

*saints. The foul leaven of idolatry, thus brought into the church, continued its baleful work. Unsound doctrines, superstitious rites, and idolatrous ceremonies were incorporated into her faith and worship. As the followers of Christ united with idolaters, the Christian religion became corrupted, and the church lost its purity and power. There were some, however, who were not misled by these delusions. They still maintained their fidelity to the Author of truth and worshipped God alone.”- Great Controversy, pp. 42, 43. (1911).*

### III

***Thou shalt not take the name of thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.” Exo. 20:7***

“This commandment not only prohibits *false oaths and common swearing*, but it forbids us to use the name of God in a *light or careless manner*, without regard to its awful significance. *By the thoughtless mention of ‘God’ in common conversation, by appeals to Him in trivial matters, and by the frequent and thoughtless repetition of His name, we dishonor Him.* “Holy and Reverend is His name.” (Ps. 111:9). All should meditate upon His majesty, His purity and holiness, and that the heart may be impressed with a sense of His exalted character; and His holy name should be uttered with reverence and solemnity.” --*Adventist Home*, p. 439.

“Jesus reproveth the *vanity* shown in coveting the *title of rabbi, or master*. Such a title, He declared, belonged not to men, but to Christ. Priests, scribes, and rulers, expounders and administrators of the law, were all brethren, children of one Father. Jesus impressed upon the people that they were to give to no man a title of honor indicating his control of their consciences or their faith. If Christ were on earth today, surrounded by those who bear the title “*Reverend*” or “*Right Reverend*,” would He not repeat His saying, “Neither be ye called masters; for One is your Master, even Christ?” The Scriptures declares of God, “Holy and Reverend is His name.” Ps. 111:9. *To what human being is such a title befitting?* How little does man reveal of the wisdom and righteousness it indicates! How many of those who assume this title are misrepresenting the name and character of God! Alas, how often worldly ambition, despotism, and the basest sins been hidden under the brodered garments of a high and holy office!” –*Desire of Ages*, p. 613.

“Burning words of passion should never be spoken [or written], for in the sight of God and holy angels they are *a species of swearing.*” – *Sons & Daughters*, p. 58.

### IV

***Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.” Exo. 20: 8-10.***

“The Sabbath is not introduced as a new institution but as having been founded at *creation*. It is to be remembered and observed as the *memorial* of the Creator’s work. Pointing to God as the Maker and of the heavens and the earth, it distinguishes the true God from all false gods. All who keep the seventh day, signify by this act that they are worshippers of Jehovah. Thus the Sabbath is the sign of man’s allegiance to God as long as there are any upon the earth to serve Him. The fourth commandment is the only one of all the ten in which are found both *the name and the title of the Lawgiver*. It is the only one that shows by whose authority the law is given. Thus it contains the seal of God, affixed to his law as evidence of its authenticity and binding force.”—*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 307.

**Note:** Any official seal contains three elements, namely, (1) the name of the person issuing the seal, (2) his title, and (3) his territory, area of authority, jurisdiction, and sphere of action. The fourth commandment alone contains all these three. **His name:** “The Lord thy God.” **His title:** “Maker or Creator.” **His area of authority and jurisdiction:** The three levels of known existence, namely “Heaven, earth, the sea and all that in them is.” Moreover, the fourth commandment is the only one of the Ten that contains the element of *time*. “For in *six days* the Lord made the heavens and the earth. . . and rested the *seventh day*.” Time is defined as “every moment there has ever been or ever will be; a system of measuring duration; a period during which something exists, happens.” God, the Lawgiver and Life-giver alone owns time. And only God has the authority to change “times and laws.” The antichrist attempts to change these.

“God has given men six days wherein to labor, and He requires that their own work be done in six working days. *Acts of necessity and mercy are permitted on the Sabbath, the sick and suffering are at all times to be cared for; but unnecessary labor is to be strictly avoided.* “Turn away your foot from the Sabbath from doing your pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the Lord, honorable; and . . . honor Him, not doing your own ways, nor finding your own pleasure.” Isa. 58:13 (NKJV). *Nor does the prohibition end here.* ‘Not speaking your own words,’ says the prophet. [See Isa. 58: 1, 2, 12-14].

“Those who discuss *business matters* or lay plans on the Sabbath, are regarded by God as though engaged in the actual transaction of business. *To keep the Sabbath holy, we should not even allow our minds to dwell upon things of a worldly character.* And the commandment includes all within our gates. The inmates of the house are to lay aside their worldly business during the sacred hours. All should unite to honor God by willing service on His holy day.

“We should jealously guard the *edges* of the Sabbath. Remember that *every moment* is consecrated holy time. *Before* the setting of the sun, let the members of the family assemble to read God’s Word, to sing, and pray.”- *Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 356.

“We should not provide for the Sabbath *a more liberal supply or a greater variety of food* than for other days. Instead of this the food should be more simple and less should be eaten, in order that the mind might be clear and vigorous to comprehend spiritual things. Overeating befogs the brain. The most precious words may be heard but not appreciated, because the mind is confused by an improper diet. By *overeating* on the Sabbath, many have done more than they think to *dishonor* God.” –*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 357.

Sabbath-keeping never results in starvation! Isa. 58: 11, 12, 14.

“Never need anyone fear that the observance of the true Sabbath will result in starvation. These promises are a sufficient answer to all the excuses that man may invent for refusing to keep the Sabbath. Even if after beginning to keep God’s law, it seems impossible to support one’s family, let every doubting soul realize that God has promised to care for those who obey His commandments.” –*Evangelism*, p. 240.

## V.

### ***Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee. Exo. 20:12.***

“Parents are entitled to a degree of love and respect which is due to no other person. God himself, who has placed upon them a responsibility for the souls committed to their charge, has ordained that during the *earlier years* of life, parents shall stand in the place of God to their children. And he, who rejects the rightful authority of his parents, is rejecting the authority of God. The fifth commandment requires children not only to yield respect, submission, and obedience to their parents, but also to give them love and tenderness, to lighten their cares, to guard their reputation, and to succor and comfort them in old age. It also enjoins respect for ministers and rulers, and for all others to whom God has delegated authority.

This, says the apostle Paul, “is the first commandment with promise.” (Eph. 6:2). To Israel, expecting soon to enter Canaan, it was a pledge to the obedient, of long life in that good land; but it has a *wider* meaning, including all the [spiritual] Israel of God, and promising eternal life upon the earth when it shall be freed from the curse of sin.—*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 308.

“Those who would truly follow Christ must let him abide in the heart, and enthrone Him there as supreme. They must represent His character and spirit in the *home life*, and show courtesy and kindness to those with whom they come in contact. There are many children who profess to know the truth, who do not render to their parents the honor and affection due them, who manifest but little love to father and mother, and fail to honor them in deferring to their wishes, or in seeking to relieve them of anxiety.

Many who profess to be Christians do not know what it means “to honor thy father and thy mother,” and *consequently* will know just as little what it means, “that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.’ The Heart-Searcher knows what your *attitude* is toward your parents; for He is weighing moral character in the golden scales of the heavenly sanctuary. O, *confess your indifference* towards them, and your contempt of God’s holy commandment. --*Youth’s Instructor*, June 22, 1893.

## VI

### ***Thou shalt not kill. Exo. 20: 13***

“All acts of injustice that *tend* to shorten life; the *spirit* of hatred and revenge, or the *indulgence* of any passion that leads to injurious acts toward others, or causes us to even *wish* them harm (for “whoso hateth his brother is a murderer.”<sup>1</sup> John 4:20); a selfish *neglect* for caring of the needy or suffering; all self-indulgence or *unnecessary deprivation* or *excessive labor* that tends to injure health,---all these are, to a greater or lesser degree, violations of the sixth commandment. [See Matt. 5: 21,22, 44; 15:19; Rom. 12: 14, 17-21]. --*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 61.

“The spirit of revenge and hatred originated with Satan; and it led him to put to death the Son of God. *Whoever cherishes malice or unkindness* is cherishing the same spirit; and its fruit will be unto [the second, or eternal-Rev. 20:6, 14; 21:8, 19] *death*. In the revengeful thought the evil deed lies *enfolded*, as the plant in the seed.” ---*Mount of Blessing*, p. 89.

“The law of God takes note of the *jealousy, envy, hatred, malignity, revenge, lust, and ambition* that surge through the soul, but have not found expression in *outward* action, because the opportunity, not the will, have been wanting. And these *sinful emotions* will be brought into the account in the day when “God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing.” [Eccl. 12:13, 14].—*Signs of the Times*, Jan. 10, 1911.

“*Untimely graves because of self-murder*.—Some sacrifice physical and moral obligations, thinking to find *happiness*, and they lose *both* soul and body. Others will seek their happiness in *indulgence of an unnatural appetite*, and consider the indulgence of taste more desirable than health or life. Many suffer themselves to be *enchained by sensual passions*, and will sacrifice physical strength, intellect, and moral powers, to the gratification of lust. They will bring themselves to *untimely graves*, and in the Judgment will be charged with *self-murder*.” – *Youth’s Instructor*, April, 1972.

## VII

### ***Thou shalt not commit adultery. Exo. 20:14***

“This commandment forbids not only acts of impurity, but *sensual thoughts and desires, or any practice that tends to excite them*. Purity is demanded not only in the outward life, but in the *secret intents and emotions of the heart*. Christ, who taught the far-reaching obligation of the law of God, declared the *evil thought or look* to be as truly sin as the unlawful deed. [See Heb. 4:12, 13; Matt. 5:28; 15:19].”—*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 308.

“*Heart impurity*.—When the *thought* of evil is loved and cherished, *however secretly*, said Jesus, it shows that *sin still reigns in the heart*. The soul is still in the gall of bitterness and in the *bond* of iniquity. He who finds pleasure in dwelling upon the scenes of impurity, who indulges the evil thought, the lustful look, may behold in the open sin, with its burden of shame and heartbreaking grief, the true nature of the evil which he has *hidden* in the chambers of the soul. The season of temptation, under which, it may be, one falls into grievous sin, *does not create the evil* that is revealed, but only *develops* or makes manifest that which was *hidden and latent in the heart*. ‘As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he;’ for out of the heart are “the issues of life.” [Prov. 23:7; 4:23].

“The heart in which Christ dwells, will be so filled, will be so satisfied, with His love that it will not be consumed with longing to *attract sympathy and attention to itself*. And though the surrender of the soul to God, His wisdom can accomplish what human wisdom fails to do.”—*Mount of Blessing* p. 94.

## VIII

### ***Thou shalt not steal. Exo. 20:15***

“Both public and private sins are included in this prohibition. The eighth commandment condemns *man-stealing* and *slave-dealing*, and forbids *wars of conquest*. It condemns theft and robbery. It demands strict integrity in the *minutest* details of the affairs of life. It prevents overreaching [outwit, cheat] in trade, and requires the payment of just debts and wages. It declares that *every attempt to advantage one’s self* by the ignorance, weakness, or misfortune of another, is registered as *fraud* in the books of heaven.” --*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 309.

“The eighth commandment is to barricade the soul, and hedge man in, so that he shall make no injurious encroachment---which his *self love* and desire for *gain* would make on his neighbor’s rights. It forbids every species of dishonesty, injustice, or fraud, however prevalent, however palliated by plausible pretenses.” – *Letter 15*, 1895.

*Stealing of Affections*. --“Thou shalt not steal” was written by the finger of God upon the tables of stone, yet how much underhand stealing of affections is practiced and excused. A deceptive courtship is maintained, private communications are kept up, until the affections of one who is inexperienced and knows not whereunto these things may grow, are in a measure withdrawn from her parents and placed upon him who shows by the very course he pursues that he is unworthy of her love. *The Bible condemns every species of dishonesty.*”

To trifle with hearts is a crime of no small magnitude in the sight of a holy God.—*Adventist Home*, p. 57.

“As we deal with our fellowmen in *petty* dishonesty or in a more daring fraud, *so will we deal with God*. Men who persist in a course of dishonesty will carry out their principles until they cheat their own souls, and lose heaven and eternal life.” – *Ibid*, p. 392.

## IX

### ***Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Exo. 20: 16***

See James 3:1-12. “The ninth commandment requires of us inviolable regard for *exact truth* in every declaration by which the character of our fellowmen may be affected. The *tongue*, which is kept so little under the control of the human agent, is to be bridled by strong conscientious principles, by the law of love toward God and man.” –*Letter 15*, 1895.

“False-speaking in any matter, every attempt or purpose to deceive our neighbor, is here included. *All intention to deceive is what constitutes falsehood*. By a glance of the eye, a motion of the hand, an expression of the countenance, a falsehood may be told as effectually as by words. All *intentional overstatement*, every *hint* or insinuation calculated to convey an erroneous or *exaggerated impression*, even the statement of facts in such a manner as to mislead, is falsehood. This precept forbids every effort to *injure* our neighbor’s reputation by misrepresentation or evil surmising, by slander or tale-bearing. Even the intentional *suppression of truth*, by which injury may result to others, is a violation of the ninth commandment.”—*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 309.

“Jesus teaches that the exact truth should be the law of speech. “Let your speech be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; and whatsoever is more than these is of the evil one.”[Matt. 5:37].



*These words condemn all those meaningless phrases and expletives that border on profanity. They condemn the deceptive compliments, the evasion of truth, the flattering phrases, the exaggerations, the misrepresentations in trade, that are current in society and in the business world. They teach that no one who tries to appear what he is not, or whose words do not convey the real sentiment of his heart, can be called truthful.*

“If these words of Christ were heeded, they would check the utterance of *evil surmising* and *unkind criticism*; for in *commenting* upon the actions and motives of another, who can be certain of speaking the exact truth? How often pride, passion, personal resentment, color the impression given! *A glance, a word, even an intonation of the voice, may be vital with falsehood.* Even *facts* may be so stated as to convey a false impression. And “whatsoever is more than” truth, “is of the evil one.” [Matt. 5:37].

“Everything that Christians do should be *transparent* as the sunlight. Truth is of God; deception, in every one of its myriad forms, is of Satan; and whoever in any way departs from the straight line of truth is betraying himself into the power of the wicked one. Yet it is not a light or easy thing to speak the exact truth. We cannot speak the truth *unless we know the truth*; and how often *preconceived opinions, mental bias, imperfect knowledge, errors of judgment*, prevent a right understanding of matters with which we have to do! We cannot speak the truth unless our minds are *continually* guided by Him who is truth. – *Mount of Blessing*, pp. 105-6.

## X

***Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's. Exo. 20: 17.***

“The last commandment condemns *covetousness*. Every selfish desire, every degree of discontent, every act of overreaching, every selfish gratification works to the strengthening and developing of a character which will *destroy* the Christlikeness of the human agent, and *close* the gates of the city of God against him.” – *Letter 15*, 1895.

“The tenth commandment strikes at *the very root of all sins*, prohibiting the selfish desire, from which springs the sinful act. He who in obedience to God's law refrains from indulging even a sinful desire for that which belongs to another, will not be guilty of an act of wrong toward his fellow-creatures.”—*Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 309.

The following is a vision that E.G. White had on the morning of October 23, 1879, about two o' clock, where she beheld scenes in the coming judgment, and the specific books and sins that are recorded. This is a must-read chapter (emphasis supplied):

“The great day of execution of God's judgment seemed to have come. The thousand times ten thousand were assembled before a large throne, upon which were seated a person of majestic appearance. *Several books* were before Him, and upon the covers of each was written in letters of gold, which seemed like a burning flame of fire; ‘Ledger of Heaven.’ One of these books, containing the names of those who claim to believe the truth, was then opened. Immediately I lost sight of the countless millions about the throne, and *only those who were professedly children of the light and of the truth engaged my attention.* As these persons were named, one by one, and their good deeds

mentioned, their countenances would light up with a holy joy that was reflected in every direction. But this did not seem to rest upon my mind with the greatest force.

“Another book was opened, wherein were recorded the sins of those who profess the truth. Under the general heading of **selfishness** came every other sin. There were also headings over every column, and underneath these, opposite each name, were recorded, in their respective columns, the *lesser* sins.

“Under **covetousness** came falsehood, theft, robbery, fraud, and avarice; under ambition came pride and extravagance; jealousy stood at the head of malice, envy, and hatred; and intemperance headed a long list of fearful crimes, such as lasciviousness, adultery, indulgence of animal passions, etc. As I beheld I was filled with inexpressible anguish and exclaimed: ‘Who can be saved? Who will stand justified before God? whose robes are spotless? Who are faultless in the sight of a pure and holy God? As the Holy One upon the throne slowly turned the leaves of the ledger, and His eyes rested for a moment upon *individuals*, His glance seemed to burn into their very souls, and at the same moment every word and action of their lives passed before their minds as clearly as though traced before their vision in letters of fire. Trembling seized them, and their faces turned pale.”— *Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 384; *Life Sketches*, p. 241.

I don’t know about you. But as one who professes, and shares the truth as I study and am convicted, impressed, and enlightened by it, I certainly am much concerned about this “other book” of record. We need to emphasize these to all our dear friends who profess to have the truth, i.e., the testing truths entrusted to the remnant church which includes “testimony of Jesus which is the spirit of prophecy.” Rev. 19:10; 12:17; 14:12. ! In this book the headings of the columns of the *greater* sins, and the *lesser* sins connected with each are recorded. Here, our unconfessed and unforgiven sins are listed correspondingly. Are we secretly covetous? Ambitious? Jealous? Intemperate? These are the greater sins. Look at the lesser ones! And the world with its standards as well as many in the churches would think and treat them as the greater ones! The greater sins are the ones in bold, the lesser in italics!

- **Covetousness:** *falsehood, theft, robbery, fraud, avarice.*
- **Ambition:** *pride and extravagance.*
- **Jealousy:** *malice, envy, hatred.*
- **Intemperance:** *a long list of crimes, such as lasciviousness, adultery, indulgence of animal passions, etc.*

Covetousness, ambition, jealousy, and intemperance! Who is not guilty of at least one of these major sins, as revealed in the *lesser* sins registered under each? No wonder that in the delineation of the seven seals (Rev. 6: 1-7; 8: 1-5), the sixth is interrupted with the searching question, “who shall be able to stand. . in the great day of His wrath?” (verse 17). John is shown who, which he describes in chapter 7: 1-17. They are those whose characters—robes, have been “washed and made white by the blood of the Lamb”—throughout the ages and up to the last moment of probation time. Read it dear friend, and know for a certainty what it takes to “make our calling and election sure”—how our sins will be washed away so that our characters—called garments or robes—may be “made white as snow and like wool,” “without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” See Isa. 1; 18, 16, 17, 19; cf. Eph. 5: 26, 27.

“When *angels* come to minister those who shall be heirs of salvation, and *witness* the exhibition of selfishness, of covetousness, of overreaching, and benefiting self at other’s

advantages, *they turn away in grief*. . . . In no way can the Lord be better glorified and the truth more highly honored, than for unbelievers to see that the truth has wrought a great and good work upon the lives of naturally covetous and penurious men.

“If it could be seen that the *faith* of such had an influence to mold their characters, to *change* them from close, selfish, overreaching, money-loving men, to men who love to do good, who seek opportunities to use their means to bless those who need to be blessed, who visit the widow and the fatherless in their affliction, and who keep themselves unspotted from the world, it would be an *evidence* that their religion was genuine. [See James 1:7].

“Those who profess to be waiting and watching for the appearing of their Lord should not disgrace their profession by bantering in deal and standing for the *last penny*. Such fruit does *not* grow upon the Christian tree. –Vol. 2, *Testimonies*, pp. 238-9.

**Q. But how can we obey all these commandments to God’s satisfaction, in our fallen human nature with all its natural propensities to disobedience and sin?**

Jesus said, “**If you love Me**, keep My commandments.” John 14:15. He magnified this further by saying and demonstrating in His adopted flesh and blood human nature that He himself kept the Ten Commandments *because* of His abiding love for the Father. Therefore the ultimate test of faith and whether the love of Christ through the Holy Spirit is abiding in the heart is found here: “If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love; even as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.” John 15:10.

The real question now is: Do we love Jesus *enough* to obey all His commandments of love? As Apostle Paul says: “Though I have all faith so that I can remove mountains, and have not charity (love), I am nothing.” 1 Cor. 13: 2. It is “the love of God that constraineth us.” 2 Cor. 5:14. It is love that “conquers all.” Rom 8:37. The greatest of the three greatest gifts is not hope, not faith, but agape love! 1 Cor. 13: 13. So much emphasis is made of faith, this faith more specifically referring to one’s religion, church, or religious beliefs but not on obedience to God’s law of Ten Commandments as the measure of *that* faith.

**Spiritualism Takes Control If We Do Not Obey The Law of God!**

Spiritualism asserts that men are unfallen demigods; that “each mind will judge itself;” “That true knowledge places men above all law;” that “all sins committed are innocent;” for “whatever is, is right;” and that “God does not condemn.” The basest of human beings it represents as in heaven, and highly exalted there. . . .Multitudes are thus led to believe that *desire* is the highest law, that license is liberty, and that man is accountable only to himself. With such teaching given at the very outset of life, when impulse is strongest, and the demand for self-restraint and purity is most urgent, where are the safeguards of virtue? What is to prevent the world from becoming a second Sodom? At the same time anarchy is seeking to sweep away all law, not only divine, but human.

In every generation and in every land the true foundation and pattern of character building have been the same. The Divine Law, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. . .and thy neighbor as thyself.” Here is the only safeguard for *individual* integrity, for the purity of the *home*, the well-being of *society*, or the stability of the *nation*. Amidst all life’s perplexities and dangers and conflicting claims, *the only safe*

*and sure rule* is to do what God says. “The statutes of the Lord are right,” and “he that doeth these things shall never be moved.” Ps. 19:8; 15:5.—*Education*, pp. 227-229.

## **GOD’S WRATH AGAINST WORKS OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS**

Works is the Greek *ergon*, meaning, toil, as an effort or occupation; by implication an act or deed; doing.” —Strong’s Greek Dictionary. Apostle Paul clearly spelled out what the works, acts, or deeds of unrighteousness and ungodliness are on account of transgression of God’s law, saying they are “manifest” or evident. He also declared what the eternal reward will be for those who knowingly pervert the truth and deceive others, as well as those who stubbornly resist God’s merciful invitation by the Holy Spirit in His Word, and through warnings by His chosen servants to repent and turn away from their sins before their hearts become fully hardened. He warned (emphasis provided):

### **Romans 1:18-32 (N.K.J.V.):**

“18 For the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

19 because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them.

20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, *so that they are without excuse*,

21 because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.

22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,

23 and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things.

24 Therefore God also gave them up to *uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts*, to dishonor their bodies among themselves,

25 who changed the truth of God for a lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

26 For this reason God gave them up to *vile* passions. For even their *women* exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.

27 Likewise also the *men*, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting;

29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers,

30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful;

32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who *practice* such things are *worthy of death*, not only do the same but *also approve* of those who practice them.”

All the Roman emperors and all the popes who succeeded them, who suppressed the truth with all unrighteousness---gross deceptions and abominations and bitter persecution and torture---of all who defended the truth with their lives, God’s divine

wrath, unmingled with mercy will fall in righteous judgment in the day of God. All these mighty mortals, or “kings of the earth” (Rev. 18: 3), were given adequate time and opportunity to know and obey God, but they hardened their hearts “for God has shown it to them.”

**Gal. 5: 19-21 (N.K.J.V):** 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, 20 licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies [false doctrines], 21 envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

John in vision was shown the same things and declared that at the end of the judgment, the eternal reward of those who practice such things is “the second death,” to which there is no resurrection.

**Rev. 21: 6- 8 (N.K.J.V):** 6 And He said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 7 He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the *second death*.”

Many politically-militant Christian groups who declare war on abortion and homosexuality (including stem cell research), and are attempting to have legislation passed outlawing these truly abominable practices, i.e., the first two in particular, strangely leave out the rest of the long list of equally abominable sins which God condemns as well. But the Scriptures we just read clearly says “those who do *these things* are worthy of death and will not inherit the kingdom of God. What hypocrisy and pharisaical righteousness on those who deliberately hide the whole truth from the credulous and what terrible blindness afflicts the spiritual vision of those deceived!

What are these *other* sins? The first one says, “changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to a corruptible man.” We will go through them one by one, and in more detail, in subsequent issues and see from the Word itself why they are as hateful in the sight of the pure and righteous God—but are not viewed as such by those who are guilty of them and yet appear righteous, that is, in their own sight and by their own estimation.

- **Changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to a corruptible man.”**

Image here is the Old Testament Hebrew *tselem*, meaning “resemblance, hence, representative figure.” See Gen. 1: 26, 27, etc. In the New Testament Greek, *eikon*, meaning, “a likeness, literally statue, profile, representation, resemblance.” See 2 Cor. 4: 4; Col. 1: 15. In Hebrews 1:3 however, Jesus is described as “the *express image* of God.” Image here is *charakter*, meaning, “the graver, (tool or the person), i.e, engraving, the figure stamped, i.e., an exact copy; express image.”

Only One who is one with God the Father in heaven can reveal Himself to sinners without the latter dying instantly. God’s glory is His character, which was revealed to the

world in the *life and teachings* of Jesus Christ, Creator of heaven and earth, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things. He magnified and the law and made it honorable in the flesh and blood nature He permanently incarnated into. The Ten Commandments is the written transcript of God's character which was designed to be read, understood, and obeyed by all rational minds regardless of creed, color, culture, or station in life through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit which is imparted to all who ask, seek, and knock for it. Luke 11:2-13. Christ is *the law in the flesh*.

Jesus Christ is called Immanuel, meaning, *God with us*. Matt. 1: 24. He himself said that the *Holy Spirit* is His appointed Representative and Vicar on earth upon His ascension to Heaven after His resurrection. John 14: 16-18, 28; 16: 7-14. Thus, for any mortal, whose flesh turns to corruption immediately at death yet who arrogates to himself the authority, prerogatives, names and titles that alone belong to any of the Persons of the Godhead (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), or to assert the claim that they take the place of Christ or God *on earth* as vicar, etc., is to presumptuously "change the glory of the *incorruptible* God into an image made like to a *corruptible* man."

Who claims the title, "Vicar of Christ on earth," and "verily God on earth?" **The papacy.**

Wycliffe, "the morning star of the reformation," recognized the popes as the antichrist: Writing on the *Great Schism of the Popes*, he said:

"God would no longer suffer the fiend [the devil] to reign in only one such priest, but. . . made division among two, so that men, in Christ's name, may more easily overcome them both."- *R. Vaughan, Life and Opinions of John de Wycliffe, vol. 2, p. 6; quoted in Great Controversy, p. 86:*

Note the testimony of a Catholic functionary:

"The Vicar of the Incarnate Son of God, Anointed High Priest and Supreme Temporal Ruler, (the Pope) sat in his tribunal impartially to judge between nation and nation, between people and prince, between sovereign and subject."- *p. 3 of 13, Amazing Discoveries website.*

Martin Luther recognized the Papacy to be the Antichrist. He wrote:

"In an appeal to the emperor and nobility in behalf of the reformation of Christianity, Luther wrote concerning the pope: 'It is a horrible thing to behold a man who styles himself Christ's vicegerent, displaying a magnificence that no emperor can equal. . . . He is, say they, the Lord of the World; but Christ Himself has said, 'May kingdom is not of this world.' How can the dominions of a vicar extend beyond that of his Superior?' - 'D' Aubigne, b. 6, ch. 3; *quoted in the Great Controversy, p. 140.*

"I am reading the decrees of the pontiffs. . . I do not know whether the pope is antichrist himself, or his apostle, so greatly is Christ misrepresented and crucified in them.' Yet at this time Luther was still a supporter of the Roman Church, and had no thought that he would ever separate from her communion."- *D' Aubigne, b. 5, ch. 1.* Yet at this time Luther was till a supporter of the Roman Church, and had not thought that he would ever separate from her communion." - *Ibid, p. 139.*

"When the papal bull [excommunicating him] reached Luther, he said: 'I despise and attack it, as impious, false. . . It is Christ himself who is condemned therein. . . . I rejoice in having to bear such ill for the best of causes. Already I feel greater liberty in my heart;

for at last I know that the pope is antichrist, and that his throne is that of Satan himself.” – D’ Aubigne, b.6., ch. 9; *Ibid*, pp. 141, 142.

“I said formerly that the pope was Christ’s vicar; now I assert that he is the Lord’s adversary, and the devil’s apostle.” – D’ Aubigne, b. 7, ch; *Ibid*, p. 151;

“In our time there is a wide departure from their [the Reformer’s] doctrines and precepts, and there is a need of a return to great Protestant principle---the Bible and the Bible only, as the rule of faith and duty. Satan is still working through every means which he can control to destroy religious liberty. The *antichristian power* which the protesters of Spire rejected is now with renewed vigor seeking to re-establish its lost supremacy. The same unswerving adherence to the word of God manifested at that crisis of the Reformation is the only hope of reform today.” – *Great Controversy*, pp. 204, 205, (Protest of the German princes in the Diet of Spire in 1529, Charles V, then emperor).

Apostle Paul wrote after the death and resurrection of Christ:

“Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy just and good. . . . *For we know that the law is spiritual.*” Rom. 7: 12, 14, N.K.J.V. “For to be *carnally-minded* is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is *not subject to the law of God*, nor indeed can be.” Rom. 8: 6, 7.

“But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him. But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God. These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. But the natural man [carnally-minded] does not receive *the things of the Spirit of God*, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they *are spiritually discerned.*” 1 Cor. 2: 9-14, NKJV.

The law of God, being spiritual, can be *discerned*, appreciated, understood, and obeyed by the spiritual mind but certainly not by the carnal, fleshly mind of the unconverted. The word **discern** here is the Greek *anakrino* meaning, “to scrutinize, investigate, interrogate, determine, ask, question, judge.” *Strong’s Greek Dictionary*. Therefore there is no genuine conversion unless the sinner is convicted of his sin and he repents and confesses these sins to God, asking forgiveness. 1 John 3: 4. The apostle says, “There is *one* Law-giver, who is able to Save and destroy.” James 4:12. This is but an echo of what the gospel prophet wrote centuries earlier: “For the Lord is our Judge, *the Lord is our Lawgiver*, the Lord is our King; He will *save* us.” Isa. 33: 22.

### **Abundant Grace for Obedience**

Many claim that God’s grace made its appearance only in the New Testament, replacing the law of Ten Commandments, having been influenced by teachings that misapply the purpose of grace in the gospel, and are grossly ignorant of the interdependent and interlocking nature of law and grace, faith and works, justification and sanctification.

But we read the first mention of grace in the Old Testament was made to Noah in fact. “So the Lord, said, ‘I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth,

both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them. But Noah found *grace* in the eyes of the Lord.” Gen. 6: 8. And onwards. See Gen. 19;19; 32:5; 33: 8, 10, 15; 34: 11; 39;4; 47: 25, 29; 50:4; Exo. 33;12, 13,16, 17; 34:9; Num. 32:5; Ps. 45;2; 84:11; Prov. 1: 9; 3: 22, 34; 4: 9; 22: 11; Jer. 31:2; Zech. 12:10.

“It is the sophistry of Satan that the death of Christ brought in grace to take the place of the law. The death of Jesus did not change or annul, or lessen in the slightest degree, the law of Ten Commandments. That precious grace offered to men through a Savior’s blood, establishes the law of God. Since the fall of man, God’s moral government and His grace are inseparable. They go hand in hand in all dispensations. ‘Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.’ Ps. 85:10.” (RH Mar. 8, 1881). “Each law of God is an enactment of mercy, love, and saving power. These laws obeyed, are our life, our salvation, our happiness, our peace.” (3BC 1153).

“Obedience to His statutes and laws is the life and prosperity of His people.”(1 BC 1120).- *The Faith I Live By*, p. 89.

### **The Ethics and Provisions of the Gospel**

“Man, who has defaced the image of God in his soul by a corrupt life, cannot, by mere human effort, effect a radical change in himself. He must accept the provisions of the gospel; he must be reconciled to God by obedience to His law and faith in Jesus Christ. His life from thenceforth must be governed by a new principle. Through repentance, faith, and good works he may perfect a righteous character, and claim, through the merits of Christ, the privileges of the sons of God. The principles of divine truth, received and cherished in the heart, will carry us to a height of moral excellence that we had not deemed possible for us to reach. ‘And it does not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that has this hope in Him purifies himself even as He is pure.’ (1 John 3: 3).

*“Here is a work for man to do. He must face the mirror, God’s law, discern the defects of His moral character, and put away his sins, washing his robe of character in the blood of the Lamb. Envy, pride, malice, deceit, strife, and crime will be cleansed from the heart that is a recipient of the love of Christ and that cherishes the hope of being made like Him when we shall see Him as He is.*

“The influence of a gospel hope will not lead the sinner to look upon the salvation of Christ, as matter of free grace, while he continues to live in transgression of the law of God. . . . He will reform his ways, become loyal to God through the strength obtained from his Savior, and lead a new and purer life.” - Vol. 4, *Testimonies*, pp. 294-5.

*“As the sacrifice in our behalf was complete, so our restoration from the defilement of sin is to be complete. No act of wickedness will the law of God excuse; no unrighteousness can escape its condemnation. The ethics of the gospel acknowledge no standard but the perfection of the divine character. The life of Christ was a perfect fulfillment of every precept of the law. He said, ‘I have kept My Father’s commandments.’ John 15:10. His life is our example of obedience and service. God alone can renew the heart. ‘It is God which works in you both to will and to do His good pleasure.’ But we are bidden, ‘Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.’ Phil. 2: 13, 12.” – Ministry of Healing, pp. 451, 452.*

***To the loving, obedient child of God, the commandments are a delight  
—not a burden.***