

Bible Study Lectures

“Jesus said: ‘For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.’ Matthew 5:18. Heaven and earth are still here, hence the law of God remains unaltered. Luke 16:17 states: ‘And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.’ And then John, the apostle of love, uses the strong language of 1 John 2:3, 4: ‘And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that said, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.’

“In my previous address, I spoke of the New Jerusalem; notice this text from the closing chapter of the New Testament, Revelation 22:14: ‘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.’ Thus we have traced the commandments from the very beginning even to the entrance of the pearly gates of the New Jerusalem.”

27. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Their relationship to the Christian era.

SPEAKING on the subject of the “Ten Commandments in the New Testament and in the Christian Era,” in the Naval Hall on Sunday night, Pastor Mitchell said:

“In my association with the various schools of thought during the years of time spent in evangelistic mission work, I have found some who were under the impression that the Ten Commandments, while taught in the Old Testament, were not endorsed by the New Testament. Others I have met contended that all but the Sabbath was re-endorsed in the New Testament. The simple truth, however, is that the whole of the Ten Commandments in their entirety are recognized and endorsed in the New Testament as binding upon Christians.

THE WHOLE LAW

“I have already in previous lectures referred to the teaching of Christ on this matter, that ‘till heaven and earth pass,’ not one jot or tittle would pass from the law. Now I want you to notice what James says: ‘For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. For if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you art become a transgressor of the law. So speak you, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.’ James 2:10-12.

“This Book of James was written in AD 60, about thirty years after Christ was crucified, or thirty years within the Christian dispensation. And at that time James is drawing attention to the necessity of standardizing our lives by ‘the whole law.’ Now what constitutes ‘the whole law’? Two of the Ten Commandments are mentioned, the sixth and the seventh, so there is no doubt as to what law James is referring. He had in mind the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20. Now he refers to the ‘whole’ of this law as being intact, and still operative. What constitutes the ‘whole’ of this law? In Deuteronomy 4:13 we find that God ‘commanded Ten Commandments,’ and that completed His law; ‘Ten,’ no more, but no less. Deuteronomy 5:22 we find very specifically stating, ‘And He added no more.’ This law of Ten Commandments, was distinct from all other laws. It was made up of ‘ten’ commandments with nothing else added. Ten Commandments then comprise ‘the whole law.’ And James recognizes the ‘whole law,’ as binding, and draws attention to it as the standard in the day of judgment. This forever settles the fact that the New Testament re-endorses the whole of the Ten Commandments.

“Now he who has been under the impression that the commandment which says, ‘The seventh day is the Sabbath,’ has been deleted, must never forget that it is the fourth of the ‘Ten’ Commandments, the ‘whole’ of which continues to operate in the Christian dispensation, and will continue, according to the verse, even to the judgment.

PAUL AND THE COMMANDMENTS

“A knowledge of the New Testament doctrine of sin teaches the same truth.

1 John 3:4 says: ‘Sin is the transgression of the law.’ And Paul in Romans 7:7 said, ‘I had not known sin, but by the law.’ Paul, the inspired apostle of God, had no other way of knowing what constituted sin except by the law of the Ten Commandments in the New Testament era. Paul made no reference to a modified law with certain of the Ten Commandments deleted, for Christ had said that not one

Bible Study Lectures

not or tittle would pass from that sacred law, that was written 'with the finger of God.' Contrasting that which had passed a way with the law of Moses with that which remained, 1 Corinthians 7:19, states: 'Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.'

'We may deceive ourselves into saying that if we accept Christ 'as our Savior, the law has no claims upon us; that we are 'free from the law, O happy condition!' Paul accepted Christ as his Savior, but he never said anything like that. He had faith in Christ, and in the whole plan of salvation; but listen to him: 'Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yes, we establish the law.' Romans 3:31.

GOD'S NEW-COVENANT PLAN

"By accepting Christ, if we really do accept Him, it is, 'That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.' Romans 8:4. Then by accepting Christ, we are brought into perfect harmony with the Ten Commandments. His Holy Spirit if allowed will write the law on our hearts. If He is not allowed to write the commandments on our hearts in their entirety, it is evidence that we are not converted. Listen to the new-covenant relationship as recorded in Hebrews 10:16: 'This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, said the Lord, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.' So instead of getting further away from the commandments, God's new-covenant plan is to make them part of us, by writing them in our minds and hearts.

"To claim to worship God while rejecting any- part of His law is recognized in the New Testament as 'vain worship.'

"If we say we expect to have a part in the New Jerusalem, but we will not keep the commandments in their entirety, we are confronted with this scripture: '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.' Revelation 22:14.

"Now remembering the New Testament doctrine of sin, that 'sin is the transgression of the law,' read the words of Hebrews 10:26, 27: 'For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.' Hence the New Testament teaches just as forcibly the importance of recognizing the Ten Commandments as does the Old Testament. Only by the indwelling Christ is the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us. But this righteousness of the law can never be fulfilled in the life of the man or woman whose mind is in rebellion against any part of it."

28. THE TEMPORARY LAW OF ORDINANCES

Distinct from the law of God.

"It is impossible for anyone to understand the great truths of the Bible without a clear knowledge of the distinct difference between the ceremonial temporary law of Moses, and the eternal law of God, or Ten Commandments," said Pastor Mitchell, when introducing the subject of the law of Moses in the Naval Hall on Wednesday night. He further said:

"In addition to my public lectures, I have spent hours studying this subject with various individuals. I have found even keen Bible students who had never recognized the difference between these two laws, but after careful study clearly saw that the law of God and the law of Moses are two laws, separate and distinct.

"2 Kings 21:8, and Nehemiah 9:13, 14, clearly show that while God delivered a law direct to His people by word of mouth, and from His own hand, yet He also, in addition to that, refers to 'the law that My servant Moses commanded them.' The law of God, or Ten Commandments, is as we saw in our previous lecture, the eternal, everlasting moral law of God, for all time and for all men. It is God's standard of righteousness now, for ever, and in the judgment. Even Paul said, 'I had not known sin, but by the law.' It is the sin detector.

God governs His universe by it. 'All His commandments are sure, they stand fast for ever and ever.' Psalm 3:7, 8. That statement, together with the many similar New Testament statements, forever settles the matter of the perpetuity of the law of God. It was never to be altered or abolished.

Bible Study Lectures

THE TWO LAWS

“But now listen to the words of Ephesians 2:15: ‘Having abolished in His flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances.’ And Hebrews 7:12 says: ‘For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change of the law.’ How do we account for this change of thought? Does Paul here contradict his statement in Romans 3:31, where he says, ‘Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yes, we establish the law.’ No, my friends, there is no contradiction, but there are two laws. Faith in Christ establishes the law of Ten Commandments, for, if it could have been abolished, Christ’s atoning sacrifice for its violation would have been unnecessary.

“But on the other hand the death of Christ automatically brought an end to the law of Moses. The law of Moses contained the ceremonies and ordinances governing the animal sacrifices of the ancient priesthood services, which were emblems or types of the greater sacrifice of the ‘Lamb of God which takes away the sin of the world.’ Notice carefully that Paul speaks of ‘the law of commandments contained in ordinances.’ Not moral precepts, but church ceremonies or ordinances. And the citation in Hebrews giving the reason for the change of the law, says, ‘For the priesthood being changed.’ It was the law that had to do with the priesthood then, that was changed. This was the law of ordinances given by Moses containing directions concerning the sacrificing of animals under the direction of the priesthood.

DISTINCTION BETWEEN LAWS

“Were I to take the time, I could show from various church catechisms and authoritative writings that the orthodox church teaching clearly recognizes the distinction between these two laws. Mrs. Booth, the wife of the founder of the Salvation Army, saw the importance of a clear understanding of this subject of the two laws. In her book, ‘Aggressive Christianity,’ she writes: ‘I find frequently a total misapprehension as to the meaning of the apostle, and a total confounding of the moral with the ceremonial law. Now, always mind, when you read anything about the law, to examine and find out which law is meant, whether it is the great moral law, which never has been, and never can be abrogated, or the ceremonial law, which in Christ certainly was done away. Mind which, because your salvation may depend upon that point. If you make a mistake there you may be lost through it; therefore, be very careful.’

“Here are just a few of the many contrasting views of the two laws: The law of God, or Ten Commandments, was spoken by God direct to the people. God wrote them. He ‘added no more.’ He wrote them the second time and each time on tables of stone. They were placed inside the ark of the covenant. Exodus 20:1-22; Deuteronomy 4:12, 13; 5:22; 10:1-5. Whereas the law of Moses was spoken by Moses, written by Moses in a book, and placed in the side of the ark of the sanctuary. Leviticus 1:1-3; Deuteronomy 31:24-26.

“Then, again, the unchangeable law of God gave directions with regard to the observance of the weekly seventh-day Sabbath. The law of Moses gave directions with regard to duties on the seven yearly Sabbaths of Leviticus 23. These annual sacred days such as the Passover were typical of events to be fulfilled by Christ. Christ was crucified on the fourteenth day of the first month, the day of the year on which the Passover lamb had been slain for centuries. But when Christ was crucified, this and the other annual Sabbath days automatically lapsed. They were shadows, or types, of something more important. These annual Sabbaths are what Colossians 2:16, 17 refers to as ‘the Sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come.’

WHEN CHRIST CAME

“This was the law which was added because the moral law was broken, and sin came in to the world. Galatians 3:10 refers to it as the ‘book of the law.’ And in the nineteenth verse, Paul speaks of it as the law that was ‘added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made,’ or, in other words, as verse 16 points out, till Christ should come, He being the ‘seed’ referred to. When the ‘veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom’ at the death of Jesus, it signified the end of the typical sacrificial system whereby the blood of animals was carried into the temple. The law of the priesthood had fulfilled its purpose. Christ, the antitypical Lamb, had died to become our great ‘High Priest’ of the heavenly sanctuary.

“The purpose of the law of Moses, or the ‘law contained in ordinances’ then, according to Hebrews 9, was to govern a typical system for all believers till the time of Christ. And the purpose of the law of God is to reveal God’s standard of righteousness, now, for ever, and in the judgment.

Bible Study Lectures

“God’s law of Ten Commandments is spoken of in James 2:10-12 as a ‘law of liberty.’ The law of Moses dealing with circumcision and other ordinances before mentioned is referred to as a ‘yoke of bondage’ in Galatians 5:1-3. God’s law remains forever. Matthew 5:17-19. The law of ordinances was ‘nailed to the cross.’ Colossians 2:14-17. The transgression of God’s law is sin. 1 John 3:4. But the ceremonial law was ‘added because of sin.’ These are only some of the many distinct differences between these two laws. Mind how you study them.”

29. DIFFICULT LAW TEXTS

But no contradictions.

“IN order that this series of lectures on the law of God be as instructive and helpful as possible, I plan now to discuss a few texts which to the average reader present difficulties,” said Pastor Mitchell in the Naval Hall on Wednesday night. “You know Peter speaks of Paul as writing things ‘hard to be understood.’ 2 Peter 3:15, 16. The only way to be clear that we have the truth on such texts is to allow the great number of plain texts to illuminate and explain the comparatively few difficult texts.

CHRIST AND THE LAW

“The first text upon which I wish to comment tonight is Romans 10:4. This text was cited recently by a correspondent in our local city newspaper. It reads thus: ‘For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.’ Now, before we find out just what this text means, let us first notice what it does not mean. Paul does not teach by this text that faith in Christ separates the believer from the law in any sense whatsoever, for notice his plain statement in Romans 3:31: ‘Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yes, we establish the law.’ Now note that faith in Christ establishes the law. No law could be ended and established at the same time.

“Further, Paul could not teach that ‘Christ was the end of the law,’ in the sense of finality, or of its being destroyed by Christ, for Matthew 5:17-19 teaches that Christ does not even want us to think along that line. ‘Think not that I am come to destroy the law,’ said Christ. So we must think along another line. And right here we find the meaning of our text. The word ‘end’ is often used in the sense of ‘purpose,’ or ‘object.’

“The verses before and after the text in question show that Paul is discussing Israel’s failure to attain to the righteousness which the law demanded because of their failure to accept Christ. Israel failed to understand that it was the purpose, object, or end of the law to lead the sinner to Christ, ‘that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us.’ It is not the end, object, or purpose of the law to impart righteousness, for to use the words of Paul, ‘Christ is the end of the law for righteousness.’ It is not the end of the law to forgive the sinner, it cannot atone for sin, hence it cannot impart righteousness. The law reveals sin. It tells the sinner he is guilty. The sinner is thus made conscious of his need of a Savior from his sin. Christ is the only Savior from sin, hence Christ is the end or object to which the law directs. The purpose or end of the law is thus to direct us to Christ for righteousness.

CONTINUITY OF LAW

“Let us get another verse or two to show that the word ‘end’ is often used in the sense of purpose or object. In the fifth chapter of James, we read: ‘Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord.’ Now, all Christians know that the Lord’s existence has not ended. Likewise with the dozens of plain New Testament texts teaching the continuity of the law of God we know that, with its Maker, it continues.

“When Pilate asked Jesus, ‘Art You a king then?’ Jesus’ reply was, ‘To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world.’ John 18:37. The word ‘end’ here means purpose. So the purpose or end of the law is Christ. The same form of speech is seen in 1 Timothy 1:5: ‘Now the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned.’

“Another text of Scripture upon which questions are asked, is John 13:34: ‘A new commandment I give unto you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.’ First of all, let me ask: What is new in this new commandment? It is not the general principle of love one for another, for away back in Leviticus 19:18, we read, ‘You shall love thy neighbor as thyself.’ And in Deuteronomy

Bible Study Lectures

6:5 we read: 'And you shall love the Lord thy God with all yo ur heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.' And then these two great basic principles of love to God, and love to our fellow-men, are again brought before us in Matthew 22:37-40, as the foundation upon which 'all the law' is built. So then love as a necessary principle was not a new thing.

STANDARD OF LOVE

"Now what is new in the new command given by Christ? Why, it is the standard of love, 'as I have loved you.' Before the standard was to 'love thy neighbor as thyself.' Now the standard is higher. Christ loved us better than He loved Himself. He died not only for His friends, but 'while we were yet sinners' and 'when we were yet enemies,' 'Christ died for us.' The standard of love to which we are now directed is to love one another as Christ has loved us. It is indeed a high standard, and will be reached by us only when the 'love of God is sh ed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Gho st which is g iven unto us,' which is the teachings of Romans, chapter 5.

1 John 2:7, 8, states: 'Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which you had from the beginning. A gain a new com mandment I wri te unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you.' It is t he old commandment in a new setting. The same principles of love, but the higher standard in Christ. It is only new in as m uch as C hrist has gi ven us t he higher example of l oving others better than ourselves.

FOLLOWING CHRIST'S EXAMPLE

"My clo sing remarks concern th e word 'fu lfill' of Matth ew 5:17, I wish t o co mpare it with Matthew, chapter 3. Here we find Jesus coming to be baptized by John. John feels unworthy. Then Jesus speaks: 'Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becomes us to fulfill all righteousness.' Christ's being baptized, though it enabled Him to 'fulfill all rig hteousness,' did not release us from following His ex ample in that particular ordinance. To the contrary, by accepting Christ in our hearts we will follow His example.

"Likewise Christ fu lfilled the law, n ot that we may thereby be free to transgress it, but th at we following His example will do likewise. If He is allowed to live out His life within our hearts, His living in us will enable us to fulfill, fully accomplish, or ca rry out, the same law that He fulfilled in His own life while on earth. Thus the teaching of Romans 8:4 will be our experience: 'That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.'"

30. HIGHWAY TRAFFIC RULES

False road signs lead to "ways of death."

"IN my t ravel s on public hi ghways i n different co untries, I have noticed som e st riking si gn-boards. On the beautiful, yet precipitous roads of New Zealand are to be found such signs as 'safety first, change down,' and 'change to low gear.' In another country there are signs, such as: 'Go slow, you may meet a fool.' 'Go slow, see our city; go fast, see our jail,' and 'This road is no t foolproof, don 't speed.'" With th is in troduction, Past or Mitch ell spo ke on Sun day n ight in th e Naval Hall, on th e subj ect, "Can Christians Keep the Ten Commandments?"

Continuing, he said public highways are not "foolproof," neither is the highway of this life from the cradle to the kingdom "foolproof." Proverbs 14:12 was read: "There is a way that seems right unto a man, but the end the reof are the ways of de ath!" There is such a thing as speeding through this life toward the celestial city, and on t he highway meeting a "fool" and being ditched by his false doctrine, and as a result lose eternal life. Everyone will surely do this if he is like the "fool" of the highway who leaves his destiny to fate or to what some man says, and does not take what the Almighty has said for a standard of living. There is a way that is right-it may not seem right to most people, but it is right-that is the way of "the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus!" Revelation 14:12.

If the man who travels the public highway will not covet his neighbour's side of the road or steal his place on the street, keep away fr om the "roa d hog," and follow t he traffic signs, he will have no collisions. So it is with the Christian traveler. If he follows Go d's Word, keeping al ways to the course marked out by t he Ten C ommandments, and at t he dangerous c urves of t emptation sl ows d own for meditation and prayer, ever keeping in mind the virtues of Ch rist, and His noble life, he will h ave a safe

Bible Study Lectures

journey. The devil will not be able to wreck him, for in his obedience to God's commandments he is wiser than the adversary.

“THE WAYS OF DEATH”

Continuing, the speaker said: “In my travels on the spiritual highway, I have met many who have signaled me to stop, then they have advised me to travel in a popular alley, leading from the true course. I have noted that it is the course taken by a large majority, but from a study of the chart and compass, I have seen clearly that it leads into the ‘ways of death,’ for it leads to willing disobedience to the commandments of God, and finally to utter ignoring and scorning of them. I am grateful that I have had grace to keep to the correct course, marked out in Psalm 119:32, ‘I will run the way of Thy commandments, when You shall enlarge my heart.’ It takes a large heart, and much of the grace of God, but it is the only safe course.

“I have met fellow travelers who not only willfully violate God's traffic rules, contend that it is not necessary to keep the Ten Commandments. They say they were for ancient travelers only, excellent for them, but that now the highway restrictions are few; we may drive where we please, it is just a matter of love. As much as to say, ‘I love God so much, and God loves me so much, that He doesn't care what I do: neither do I.’”

He contended that no greater delusion could come to any man than this. For when one takes such a course of disobedience, he takes a course of sin with a free conscience. To such a one, Christ is not a Savior from sin, but a giver of license to commit sin. It was pointed out that the only person who can keep the commandments, is the one who is saved by grace, saved from sin. If Christ is in the heart, the enemy cannot defeat you; but if Christ is not in the heart, you cannot defeat the enemy. There was power in Christ to give victory over every sin, and sin, it was shown from I John 3:4, “is the transgression of the law!” Matthew 1:21 was cited: “You shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.” To deny that it was possible to keep the Ten Commandments, said Mr. Mitchell, was to deny the power of the living Savior.

OBEDIENCE TO LAW OF GOD

It was shown that some of the strongest language in Scripture points to the necessity of obedience to the law of God. The following was read from the New Testament: “For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified” (Romans 2:13), and “circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.” 1 Corinthians 7:19. 1 John 2:3, 4 was also cited as saying: “And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that said, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” From the second chapter of James was read: “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if you commit no adultery, yet if you kill, you art become a transgressor of the law. So speak you, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”

From the Book of Revelation, further scriptures were read to show that at the coming of Christ those who would be prepared to meet their Savior would be commandment-keepers. “Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,” was read from Revelation 14:12

This, said the evangelist, is God's description of the reception committee that will be waiting for the coming of Christ. From the last chapter of the Bible was read God's benediction upon commandment-keepers, and their sure reward: ‘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.’ Revelation 22:14.

Obedience to God's commandments may mean self-sacrifice, and sometimes the jeers of a certain class in this world, but what is that, compared to the blessing of God, the speaker asked. Mr. Mitchell appealed to the audience to follow God's standards, and never to be switched off the platform of “the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

31. THE DIFFERENCE

The Bible and other Classics