

LESSON 17
(1959, 1965, 1966)

AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE

War, Suffering, Fear -- Results of Broken Laws!

About Our Cover

South Vietnamese women cower in rice paddy during Vietnamese war. In any war, the whole population suffers. And wars have raged since mankind was created because man has refused to obey God and love his fellowman. Wars will never cease until the world begins to live by God's Ten Commandments!

AN OPEN LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

STATISTICS show, and businessmen admit, that it is virtually IMPOSSIBLE for HONEST men to SUCCEED in business. Especially in these increasingly foreboding days. But do YOU have to be dishonest, cheat and lie, to be able to adequately provide for YOUR family? -- YOU who are learning more and more about God and His ways each day?

Here is the PLAIN TRUTH about financial security for YOU, written in HUMAN EXPERIENCE.

It was late in 1933 -- the very depth of the great depression. Ed Smith was a well driller by profession, but nobody seemed able to afford to have wells drilled.

Ed and his wife, Emma, attended services I was then holding in a one-room country schoolhouse twelve miles west of Eugene, Oregon. Ed made no profession of Christianity until later. But he attended services, and went up and down the countryside discussing Bible doctrines with his professing Christian neighbors.

"You've got to pay tithes and obey God," he insisted. "The Bible says so. It's PLAIN!"

One of his neighbors became irritated.

"Look here, Ed," the neighbor exploded, "why do you come around here trying to talk me into these things, when you don't obey the Bible and pay tithes yourself?"

"Because," came Ed's quick and ready answer, "I don't profess to be a Christian, and you do. Besides," he added, "I can't afford to tithe, anyway."

There are thousands who, like Ed Smith, reason in their own minds that they can't afford to tithe, even though, like Ed Smith, they realize the Bible commands it.

I heard about the above conversation, and preached a sermon on the question of whether the unconverted should obey the Ten Commandments and pay tithes, or whether, as Ed had reasoned, these things were only for Christians. I pointed out that God's law was put in motion for man's good -- it is THE WAY of life that brings peace, happiness, prosperity, the full, abundant, interesting life; success, joy, HERE AND NOW, as well as eternal life through Christ for the saved.

I showed that it PAYS, and is the only sensible way of life, entirely apart from the matter of salvation. I pointed out God's promises to PROSPER the tithepayer, and that this is a definite LAW God has set in motion, which operates in exorably and

automatically on the just and the unjust alike.

Ed began to obey the Bible. At the very next service we were holding services at this little schoolhouse three times a week, and three other nights a week in a hall in downtown Eugene at the time Mrs. Smith smilingly handed me a one dollar bill.

"That's Ed's first tithe," she said triumphantly. "We are now down to \$10, and Ed decided to start tithing with what we have on hand."

The very next service she came to me with another happy smile.

"Here's a five dollar bill," she said. "The very next day after Ed gave God's Work a tenth of all he had, a customer who had owed him \$50 for a year came and paid up. So here's the tithe of that \$50. After paying the total \$6 tithe, we now have \$54 on hand instead of the \$10 we had the other day."

It was beginning to PAY! But only BEGINNING! By the next service, as I remember it, Ed had received his first order in one or two years to drill a new well, for which he received cash payment. Before he finished that job, another was contracted. Soon he had three or four jobs coming in at once, and was forced to begin employing men to work for him.

Ed Smith was only one of MANY I have known who learned by EXPERIENCE that one cannot afford NOT to pay God the tithe that BELONGS TO GOD! I remember Ed Smith did encounter some troubles of a different nature later, and his wife and son were sent to the state tuberculosis hospital, and he finally broke down in real repentance, accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour. He came to me, according to the command of James 5:14, and both his wife and son were completely healed and returned home.

This is a true story, and the name is not fictitious. Ed Smith died several years ago, but I'm happy to remember these incidents in his life in the hope they may start many others on the right and profitable, as well as the Christian way of life.

Why did God ordain tithing? Was it to place increased burden and taxation upon us? Let us not misunderstand God's love and wisdom!

It isn't that God really NEEDS your first tenth. He could have established some different system for carrying on His Work. But to have done so would have robbed us of the blessing that flows back to us if we are faithful in TITHES AND OFFERINGS!

The tither is invariably a prosperous man. I do not mean WEALTHY -- but one whose actual needs are always supplied. Tithers, if faithful and obedient to the Eternal, are not often found in want. "Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit THAT MAY ABOUND TO YOUR ACCOUNT" (Phil. 4:17).

God promises His children shall always have something to give (Deut. 16:16,17). It is only when they withhold and misappropriate the tithe and OFFERINGS that He fails to prosper them. For through John He tells us "I wish above all things that thou mayest PROSPER and be in health" (III John 2).

"Honor the Eternal with thy substance, and with the FIRSTFRUITS of all shine increase: SO SHALL THY BARNS BE FILLED WITH PLENTY, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Prov. 3:9-10). "PROVE ME now herewith," challenges the Eternal to us, in a prophecy for OUR day (Mal. 3:10), "if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it" -- financial blessings!

John D. Rockefeller, it is said, accepted at eight years of age God's challenge to prosper the individual who pays God His tenth. Did he prosper? He certainly did!

Mr. Colgate, the great soap manufacturer, left home when a very small boy. He soon met a prosperous old sea captain. He asked the boy what he could do, and the boy replied he knew only how to make soap and candles.

"Yield yourself to God," advised the old sea captain, "and pay Him a tenth of your income. Some day there is going to be a man at the head of the great soap industries in New York, and there is no reason why you should not be the man." The boy took the advice, got a job, earned a dollar and paid a dime.

Very soon he earned two dollars and paid twenty cents. Soon he got a job in a soap factory and he continued to pay a tenth and to prosper. He rose from the common laborer to foreman. Later to manager, and then to president of the company, and finally he owned the entire establishment. As he continued to prosper, Colgate paid two tenths. He prospered still more and paid three tenths. Still he prospered, and he paid four. His prosperity kept increasing and he decided to give HALF of all his income. AND STILL HE PROSPERED!

I know a man who started a small grocery business in a small city in the state of Oregon. This was during the great depression. He had practically no capital, had the poorest location in town, and refused to sell tobacco. Others said he could never succeed. Thus handicapped, starting in the beginning of the worst depression the world ever knew, not many would have dared pay a whole tenth.

This man decided he would be a faithful steward, take God into partnership, and trust the Lord with his business. He prospered from the start and was the only grocer in his town who weathered the storm of depression successfully.

When God receives His portion of all your income, God becomes your partner, sharing in your profits. He causes His partners to prosper, and if you are in debt, take God into partnership FIRST, and watch Him prosper you until finally you are out of debt! Remember the debt you owe God comes FIRST.

Yet so many say: "I don't think it would be right for me to tithe while I'm in debt." Yes, it is right, and not to tithe is WRONG. "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). God's Word tells us what is RIGHT, and God tells us to pay His Work the FIRSTfruits of all our income. Regarding our material and financial needs, even debts, God says "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all thesethings shall be added unto you" (Mat. 6:33).

THE TITHE IS THE DEBT THAT YOU OWE GOD. This debt is FIRST in time and principle. Pay your debts to God, make Him your PARTNER in your finances, and receive His blessing in temporal affairs. This will enable you to pay your debts, or to get a job, or to have your needs supplied more quickly than if you evade His debt.

Remember your ALL belongs to Him, not to you (Deut. 10:14). You are in the position of steward handling that which BELONGS TO ANOTHER. God is your silent partner, and the first tenth, in ADDITION TO OFFERINGS, is His share. The rest He gives freely to you. But if you appropriate for yourself His share, God says you are STEALING, and ROBBING GOD (Mal. 3:8). Would you pay your debts with money another man had left in your trust? If a man working in a bank does that, WE CALL IT EMBEZZLEMENT!

The only SURE WAY to know you have God as partner and that He is taking care of your interests is to obey Him in tithing. Think what happened in San Francisco in 1906. People who did not

have God as their Partner had no divine protection when terrible earthquakes struck.

God has graciously blessed you as you have YIELDED to Him according to the light He has revealed to you, from His Word! While you have the light, WALK in it, lest darkness come upon you! (John 12:35, 36.) "GROW in grace and in the KNOWLEDGE of our Lord ..." (II Pet. 3:18). See also Romans 11:22.

Seek ye FIRST the Kingdom, and your material needs shall be ADDED. Try it! Take God at His Word! PROVE HIM! (Mal. 3:10.) SEE HOW YOU BEGIN TO PROSPER! Be a faithful steward; make God your PARTNER and receive His BLESSING!

If every professing Christian would accept this plain instruction from God, honoring HIM instead of themselves with their substance, Christ's true gospel would go forth with such mighty power that the world would be SHAKEN TO ITS FOUNDATIONS!

IS OBEDIENCE TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS NECESSARY TODAY?

WOULD YOU like to be given eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God? -- and have ETERNAL LIFE so you could CLAIM this inheritance?

"Yes, but what must I DO," you might ask, "to receive eternal life?"

When the young rich man asked Jesus Christ: "Master, what good thing shall I DO, that I may have eternal life?" -- Jesus replied, "If thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS" (Mat. 19:16-17).

What?

KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS? That's what Jesus said!! Does that SURPRISE YOU?

False Concepts Today

You've probably heard that obedience to the Ten Commandments is NOT NECESSARY today. That God's law was ABOLISHED -- "NAILED to the cross" by Jesus Christ!

But is this assumption really true?

This is no mere irrelevant theological or religious question. This is the very ESSENCE of your life -- your home life, your social life, your business life.

It's the very CRUX QUESTION behind ALL world troubles today!

Strange as it may seem, the Ten Commandments did not begin at Sinai. They have been in full force and effect since human life FIRST EXISTED on this earth! DISOBEDIENCE to the Ten Commandments has produced all the wars, SUFFERING and DEATH the world has experienced SINCE Adam!

The common FALSE teaching of modern Christianity holds that the old covenant WAS the Ten Commandment law. That Jesus Christ came to establish a NEW covenant containing only grace and promises -- liberty to do WHATEVER YOU PLEASE, but certainly NO LAW! "Grace ALONE IS what saves you now," they say. "NO COMMANDMENT KEEPING IS necessary today."

This diabolical teaching would lead you to believe that the law of God is harsh, CRUEL, ENSLAVING -- that the fault of the old covenant was with the law, and since GOD gave the law, the fault must have been HIS!

Then there are those who believe the Ten Commandments are either the SAME as, or PART of, the RITUALISTIC LAW of Moses. That the Ten Commandments didn't exist until Moses and that they

lasted only UNTIL Christ.

What MISUNDERSTANDING! What DISTORTION of the plain truth about God's law!

DO YOU realize that those who believe and teach these false concepts are actually worshipping God IN VAIN -- worshipping Him WITHOUT any prospect of receiving eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God?

Listen to what Jesus Christ says to them: "Howbeit IN VAIN do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the COMMANDMENTS OF MEN. For laying aside the COMMANDMENT OF GOD, ye hold the tradition of men ... [and now note the following especially] ... Full well ye REJECT the Commandment of God, that ye may keep your OWN TRADITION" (Mark 7:7-9).

Jesus plainly taught OBEDIENCE to the Father's law: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that DOETH the WILL of my Father which is in heaven"! (Mat. 7:21.)

Back to the Faith Once Delivered

God warns us in the book of Jude: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the COMMON SALVATION, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was ONCE DELIVERED unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares ... ungodly men, turning the GRACE of our God into LASCIVIOUSNESS, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ" (Jude 3-4).

Even before the New Testament was completely written, ungodly men had crept into the Church in an attempt to corrupt it by turning GRACE into LASCIVIOUSNESS.

And what is "lasciviousness"? It means "license" -- unrestrained liberty -- abuse of privilege. In other words, license to do what seems RIGHT in your OWN eyes -- according to HUMAN CONSCIENCE -- though it disobeys God's law!

That is exactly what those ungodly men in the first century were beginning to do -- turning God's GRACE into unrestrained privilege to DISOBEY His law! Turning to HUMAN conscience as a guide! We find this very SAME ATTITUDE permeating modern professing Christianity today!

This present age is desperately lawless! Everywhere the spirit of disobedience is sweeping society. From the pulpits you hear that Jesus Christ abolished His Father's Law -- that it is not necessary to obey God today.

But your Bible says no one can be born into God's Kingdom unless that individual recognizes and SUBMITS to the authority and rule of God in his life! Arguing with God or using human reasoning to evade the plain commands of Scripture will get us nowhere!

God is Supreme Creator and Supreme Lawgiver. He knows what is BEST for us. He has perfect wisdom and understanding and has given us His perfect law. We can therefore place ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE in Him and rely on His judgment which He has committed to us in writing -- in the Holy Bible.

Yes, it's time we look into the Bible to see what it really says about God's law!

Why Bad News Today?

The natural tendency is to use human reasoning to sidestep that which seems of lesser importance to us. It's so easy for us

to say: "I don't see why God would want me to obey His law. It SEEMS SO IMPRACTICAL in this modern age. Now here is the way I see it."

The overwhelming truth is that God's laws are AS PRACTICAL today as they were in the beginning when He originally gave them! Have you noticed that the news today is nearly ALL BAD? There's a REASON why!

Not only do we have war, fear of war, and strife between NATIONS, but we also have strife and competition in BUSINESS. We have quarrels leading to divorce IN THE HOME. We have a nervous younger generation blowing off steam and getting into all sorts of troubles.

What's the matter with us anyway? Are we AFRAID to stop and look at things as they really are? Do we dare recognize the fact that we are bringing all this fear and worry, this heartache, suffering and frustrating emptiness on OURSELVES?

There is a reason for it all. But are you WILLING to hear it? Will you DENY the TRUE reason? Or will you ACCEPT the TRUTH OF GOD?

 PHOTO CAPTION: Left to right, Linus Pauling, Robert Hutchins and Paul Tillich attend a Global Peace Conference. Many world leaders realize we must have world government in order to achieve lasting peace. But they don't realize we can't have world peace until God's government is set up on earth and His Laws are enforced on all mankind!

 PHOTO CAPTION: "Violence and Rebellion -- Tragic Consequences of Broken Laws!" We live in a desperately lawless age! Crimes of violence and rebellion against authority are increasing at an alarming rate. And no wonder. Mankind refuses to live by the Ten Commandments which, if obeyed, would bring all the happiness and material blessings this frustrated world longs for. Today's chaotic world conditions are prophesied to get worse until Jesus Christ steps in and ENFORCES God's Ten Commandments!

The Basis of Life

If you were told that GOD ALMIGHTY, the Creator, set in motion invisible, SPIRITUAL LAWS FOR OUR HAPPINESS and FOR OUR GOOD, and that all our woes and our troubles are the DIRECT RESULT of our REJECTION and TRANSGRESSION of those laws, you'd probably say, "But I've been taught that those laws were abolished by Christ!" Or, "Why, that's a religious and theological question that I know nothing about. It has NOTHING to do with my practical, down-to-earth, everyday life anyway."

You're WRONG!

It has EVERYTHING to do with your everyday life. It has EVERYTHING to do with all the bad news you hear and read about every day. It has everything to do with the fact that most people today are restless, discontented and not as happy as they would like to be.

It has everything to do with today's chaotic world conditions, with social unrest and with the troubles most people are having in their own homes!

It is the TRANSGRESSION of God's law of LOVE that has caused all the mental anguish and suffering in the world today!

God's Law of LOVE

God has ordained a law -- the supreme eternal SPIRITUAL law which is LOVE. God and Love are inseparable, "for God IS love"! (I John 4:8.) Love is the BASIC CHARACTERISTIC of God's nature!

God lives completely in accordance with His law of love at all times! And God has ordained that we all must LEARN TO LIVE BY His law of love if we are to inherit the gift of eternal life. "For this is the love of God, that we KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

Love toward God and love toward fellow man -- that is the very ESSENCE of God's spiritual law (Mat. 22:36-40). The first four of the Ten Commandments teach us love toward God. And the last six teach us love toward our fellow man.

These ten SPIRITUAL laws are summed up in the one word "LOVE." They compose the Royal Law that James expounded -- the Royal Law of Love! (James 2:8, 10.)

But man is CARNAL -- UNspiritual by nature. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

We, of ourselves, do not have the SPIRITUAL LOVE necessary to keep God's SPIRITUAL law. This love comes from God "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts BY THE HOLY SPIRIT" (Rom. 5:5). With this love we CAN FULFILL the law, for "love is the FULFILLING of the law" (Rom. 13:10).

God will give us His Holy Spirit as a FREE gift -- IF we REPENT of our sins, are BAPTIZED and sincerely STRIVE to obey Him (Acts 2:38; 5:32). Notice the "fruits," or Godly characteristics, which will be manifested in our lives if we have the Holy Spirit. "LOVE, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22, 23).

These attributes of God's Holy Spirit are what enable us to OBEY the various points of His SPIRITUAL law of love. And these are the "fruits" we must show forth in our lives to be born of God at the resurrection!

So the Ten Commandments constitute a SPIRITUAL LAW that is inexorable and eternal. A law that is love and the FULFILLING of which is love -- a law that was set in motion for our happiness to produce everything good which we have foolishly denied ourselves.

The Ten Commandments are obviously entirely DIFFERENT and SEPARATE from the RITUALISTIC "Law of Moses" which was just a code of PHYSICAL laws -- NOT spiritual laws.

Jesus Kept the Law!

Jesus tells us that our OBEDIENCE to the Ten Commandments is an absolute PREREQUISITE to receiving God's gift of eternal life (Mat. 19:16-17).

But did Jesus really PRACTICE what He preached? Or does He expect us to perform the impossible?

Witness Christ's absolutely SINLESS life (Heb. 4:15). Had Jesus sinned in the SLIGHTEST POINT of God's spiritual law, He could NOT have become our Saviour!

Since Jesus was composed of human flesh with human nature, the same as we all have (Heb. 2:14), then HOW was He able to obey God? The answer is that He was BEGOTTEN by the Holy Spirit just as you can be -- if you repent, believe and are baptized! Jesus had the POWER of the Holy Spirit working within Him!

Jesus Christ admitted He wasn't able to keep God's law by

His own human power. Notice what He said:

"I can of mine OWN SELF do NOTHING" (John 5:30) . "The Father that DWELLETH IN ME, He doeth the works" (John 14:10). The Father dwelt in Jesus by the Holy Spirit. And this power enabled Jesus to keep God's commandments perfectly!

In this lesson we need to ask and answer the following questions:

Just what IS sin anyway? Does God DEFINE it in the Bible? And did Jesus Christ DO AWAY with the Father's spiritual law of love the Ten Commandments? Do we find the apostle Paul and the New Testament Church TEACHING OBEDIENCE to God's law?

Were the Ten Commandments FIRST GIVEN to Moses at Mount Sinai, and ONLY for the "Jews" to keep from that time forward? Are the Ten Commandments the same as, or part of, the RITUALISTIC LAW of Moses?

Did God withhold His spiritual law from the world during the time between Adam and Moses? Or did He FIRST REVEAL this way to supreme happiness to Adam and Eve in Eden?

Let's learn the truth about God's law from the Bible! But first, read these important instructions!

Before You Begin

This lesson is intended to direct you to the BIBLE -- to help you learn the truth of God's Word. Here is the method of study.

Is your Bible in front of you? If not, GET your Bible -- or Bibles, if you have more than one translation -- BEFORE YOU DO ANOTHER THING! Have a good dictionary, a concordance if you own one, and your notepaper all placed in front of you on a desk or table.

Remember -- you must open your Bible to EVERY PASSAGE. Never say to yourself, "Oh, I think I know what this scripture is referring to" -- and then pass over it. You need to "KEEP YOUR NOSE IN THE BIBLE," so to speak. You must read and re-read and think out each passage. MEDITATE on this new knowledge in your leisure time, especially during the following twenty-four hours, and in your time of prayer -- SO YOU WON'T FORGET it!

Make God's Word a PART OF you! Don't forget, this is a BIBLE STUDY Course not just a study of these words we send you.

Here is the method of taking effective notes: Write down neatly (or print) the title of this lesson. Underneath that write down the lesson number. As you come to each question section, write down its heading. Then, at the left-hand margin of your paper, number each question and write down the scriptural answer to each, together with any pertinent ideas that come to your mind.

Be SURE to WRITE OUT the scripture which answers each question. If you have not done so before, BEGIN TO DO IT NOW! Writing down every word of each Bible passage, and any comments you wish to make as you go along, will help you greatly in REVIEWING and REMEMBERING.

This lesson, like all others, is extremely important to you. Have you PRAYED to God for understanding? If not, then go to a private place, kneel down, and ask God for SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING and wisdom. Ask Him to HELP you grasp and apply in your own life the knowledge this lesson will reveal to you in the Bible.

And now for the lesson itself!

LESSON 17
What Sin IS

People have numerous ideas about what constitutes "sin." Many think that sin is something to be DESIRED. To illustrate, several years ago in Hollywood -- the movie capital of America -- there was sold in newsstands a book titled "How to Sin in Hollywood". Visitors from all over the world who came to Hollywood would buy that book.

Actually, the book was quite harmless, merely giving names of restaurants and similar places. Most of them were eating places WITHOUT any entertainment.

But the point is that sin always SEEMS to be the "forbidden fruit" that is most glamorous and that would be most desirable if some unfair God had NOT denied it to us. That seems to be what human beings think of sin.

But that ISN'T WHAT GOD THINKS about sin!

1. What is God's definition of SIN? Is it the TRANSGRESSION of the LAW? I John 3:4.

2. IS GOD'S law being spoken of in the previous scripture? -- didn't Paul state that the LAW says, "Thou shalt not covet"? Rom. 7:7.

COMMENT: The LAW that said, "Thou shalt not covet," TAUGHT the apostle Paul what constitutes sin. And one cardinal point of that law is the TENTH COMMANDMENT! (Ex. 20:17.)

So the law against coveting is ONE of God's TEN COMMANDMENTS! God reveals that the VIOLATION of His commandments and their principles constitutes SIN!

3. Does sin -- the VIOLATION of the Ten Commandments and their principles -- work AGAINST our own best interests? Rom. 6:23.

COMMENT: "The WAGES of sin" -- the "reward" YOU EARN by sinning against God's law -- the thing you BRING upon yourself -- is DEATH! A shorter and unhappier life here, and ETERNAL OBLIVION in the hereafter -- unless you REPENT of all your sins, have them WIPED AWAY by Christ's blood and begin OBEYING GOD'S COMMANDMENTS!

Way to Happiness Must Be REVEALED!

You want to be HAPPY above all things, don't you? Everyone does!

You would like to lead a life that is just full and abundant and INTERESTING -- as a matter of fact, a little bit exciting all the way along, wouldn't you? And you want a life where everything is pleasant, where there is no pain or suffering.

You don't want a life of boredom. You don't want a life of sorrow. You want a HAPPY life, and you would love to feel well, jolly and joyful -- happy all the time.

YOU COULD have a life like that. Everyone could. This ENTIRE WORLD could be like that -- if we only UNDERSTOOD THE WAY! That way has to be REVEALED!

GOD reveals that way in His Guidebook for mankind -- the Holy Bible! God Almighty in His great LOVE for humanity, reveals that He set a LAW in motion. That law was designed to PRODUCE just that kind of happy life in you!

God is Creator not only of matter -- solid matter, liquid matter and gaseous matter, as we know it -- but God is also Creator of FORCE, ENERGY and of EVERY POWER and LAW. The laws of physics, the laws of chemistry -- every law that is in motion and

is energized.

Do you realize that God Almighty also created a SPIRITUAL LAW? That spiritual law is what REGULATES YOUR HAPPINESS!

But most people are NOT living that way. They're breaking that law, and it has been breaking them for a long time, because that's precisely what happens when you BREAK GOD'S SPIRITUAL LAW!

That law is simply LOVE. It's the WAY of love. It's the way that love should be EXPRESSED -- love toward God and love toward neighbor.

1. Did Paul say he would not have known what sin is except the law had pointed it out to him? Rom. 7:7.

COMMENT: We don't know what is right and what is wrong unless God REVEALS it. Even the apostle Paul would not have known what sin is if God's law had not told him.

Human nature will not teach you because human nature is BASICALLY EVIL (Jer. 17:9). As Paul says, "I had not known lust." That is, he would not have known that lust was wrong or evil; HE DIDN'T HAVE SUCH INSTINCTIVE KNOWLEDGE -- "except the LAW HAD SAID, thou shalt not covet."

Do you realize that when you were born you DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING! YOU WEREN'T even born with instinct as animals are.

Animals don't have to be taught a law to know what to do or not to do; they don't have to learn about a law that will show them HOW to be happy, and how to AVOID suffering. Animals are just dumb brutes which God has equipped with INSTINCT. They respond AUTOMATICALLY to this instinct God built into their simple brains when He originally created them.

But you and I are vastly different. We are made AFTER GOD'S IMAGE. Our minds possess, to a very limited degree, divine characteristics. We were put here as free moral agents for the purpose of PRODUCING CHARACTER -- holy, righteous, spiritual character. If we submit to God and follow His law of love, He will be creating His spiritual character within us.

2. Did the apostle Paul say that the law -- the Ten Commandments and their principles -- is SPIRITUAL? Rom. 7:14.

COMMENT: But Paul said he was CARNAL. He was fleshly and material. So are we all.

The law is a SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLE, and it REGULATES YOUR HAPPINESS -- a SPIRITUAL matter. God's law directs and guides you as to what YOU SHOULD do so you can be happy.

3. Did Paul say God's law is sin? Rom. 7:7. Or did he say the law is HOLY, and the commandment is HOLY, just and good? Rom. 7:12.

COMMENT: That isn't what we are taught today, is it? Many people have been reared in the belief that the law is UNHOLY, harsh and cruel and ALTOGETHER WRONG! That it's bad for us, and therefore Christ had to DO AWAY with it!

WHAT A PARADOX!

People think God's law -- the very thing that points the WAY to true happiness -- is WRONG! God reveals it is the very thing which shows us HOW to AVOID unhappiness!

May God help you to SEE and ACT on this marvelous truth!

Commandments in Force From Adam

God FIRST REVEALED the Ten Commandments to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Why? So that they and their progeny could know what sin IS and AVOID it!

EVERY ONE of the Ten Commandments was then in full force and effect. And it was a SIN to break any one of them between the

time of Adam and Moses, just as it is TODAY! Let's understand the truth.

1. Didn't Paul plainly state that sin is NOT IMPUTED where there is NO law? Rom. 5:13.

COMMENT: God reveals that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). But where there IS NO law, there obviously could be NO lawbreaking and therefore NO penalty could be imposed!

2. But do we find death DID reign -- that the death penalty was IMPUTED because of sin -- beginning with the very time of Adam? Rom. 5:12, 14. Then didn't there obviously have to be a LAW in existence from the time of Adam?

COMMENT: Adam SINNED! But he could not have sinned had there been no law. How plain that God's law existed then and that it STILL is in existence to this day; for God says: "all have sinned"! (Verse 12.)

The law of God existed FROM THE BEGINNING. God instructed Adam and Eve in His law and revealed that living BY His laws would net them true happiness and material abundance. He revealed all this to them on the very NEXT DAY after their creation -- on the SABBATH -- the SEVENTH day of the week!

3. Doesn't all this plainly show that God's law was first given far EARLIER than is generally assumed -- much earlier than the time of Moses? Rom. 5:14. Note the words "Adam TO Moses." Didn't Adam PRECEDE Moses? Same verse.

COMMENT: Obviously those who believe that God's spiritual law was not given UNTIL the time of Moses are absolutely WRONG!

EVERY ONE of the Ten Commandments was in existence during the time of Adam. It was SIN to break any one of them BEFORE they were RESTATED to Moses and the people at Mount Sinai!

Man Must Choose

God ordained from the beginning that He would NOT FORCE His way to supreme happiness -- His spiritual law -- upon mankind. He determined man would have to CHOOSE whether or not he would obey.

1. After creating Adam, did God place him in the Garden of Eden? Gen. 2:8. Then what did God give him PERMISSION to do? Verse 16.

 PHOTO CAPTION: "Animals Live by Instinct ..." ... but man was created with mind. Man must CHOOSE the way he will live. Choosing the way of disobedience to God's Law brings suffering and death. But the way of OBEDIENCE to God's Law brings true happiness and contentment.

2. Now notice God's WARNING immediately afterward. Gen. 2:17. Is it indulging in a MIXTURE of good and evil actions that God warns us against? Same verse.

COMMENT: Here we see that God is Supreme Ruler. God is giving the orders and is teaching. The man DIDN'T KNOW he shouldn't partake of the tree of good and evil. He had to be told. He had to be TAUGHT and INSTRUCTED.

3. What is the PENALTY -- what can be expected when one "eats," or partakes of a MIXTURE of good and evil? Gen. 2:17.

COMMENT: God warned man that disobedience -- SIN -- to His command would end in DEATH, for "the wages of sin is death"! (Rom. 6:23.)

But notice that the very fact God said "In the day that THOU

eatest thereof ..." shows that man was ALLOWED to do it, that the man was a FREE MORAL AGENT -- that the man himself had to MAKE THE CHOICE!

God designed that you and I must CHOOSE whether we will obey His law or not.

Animals don't make a choice. Animals have instinct. And animals are usually contented. We have our "contented cows." But we don't have many contented people. Do you know WHY?

Cows don't make any choice. God simply ordained from their creation that they would AUTOMATICALLY live contented lives. But God ORDAINED that you and I MUST MAKE A CHOICE. And if we CHOOSE the RIGHT WAY to live according to that law which God set in motion to produce happiness and contentment and a full, thrilling, enjoyable life -- WE CAN HAVE IT! (Deut. 30:15-19.)

But if we CHOOSE to live the OTHER WAY, we're going to have suffering, SORROWS and CURSES -- that's what the world has elected to do!

The First Sins

1. God, the Creator, lovingly warned man that if he committed sin, he would SURELY DIE (Gen. 2:17). But what did the Devil say? Gen. 3:1-4. Note especially verse 4.

COMMENT: "YOU shall NOT surely die" is the FIRST LIE of which we have any historical record. It was not told by a man, but by the DEVIL.

"YOU WILL NOT SURELY DIE. You're an IMMORTAL SOUL." Or "You have an immortal soul that won't die." That's what the devil was REALLY saying.

2. What else did the devil say? Gen. 3:5.

Note especially the words, "For God DOTH KNOW."

COMMENT: In other words, the devil said "God knows better; God's been LYING to you!" That's what he wanted the woman to believe.

3. And then what did Eve do? Gen. 3:6. Did her husband also partake of the fruit? Same verse. Here was the FIRST human sin!

COMMENT: Analyze exactly what happened. God is the One we are to OBEY. Do you realize that's one of the definitions of God? Whoever or whatever you obey is your god. It might be your slavishness to your automobile. Maybe it's an actual idol. Whatever it is, THAT'S your god.

Adam and Eve had another god IN PLACE of the true God -- they broke the first commandment, "Thou shalt have NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME" (Ex. 20:3). They also broke the FIFTH by dishonoring their only Parent. How? The genealogy of Christ goes back to Adam who was the "SON of God," because God CREATED him. Adam was the son of God by a DIRECT CREATION, not by begettal or birth.

Adam not only dishonored his Parent, but he also broke the TENTH commandment. There was LUST when the woman saw that the fruit was good for food and to make one wise -- vanity, egotism and pride entered into her heart.

Lust is what causes a person's inordinate desire to have something that is not legal. Lust causes one to STEAL and Adam and Eve broke the EIGHTH commandment by STEALING what was not theirs.

FOUR OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS WERE BROKEN IN THE ORIGINAL SIN. And in other ways, ALL of the Ten Commandments were actually broken in the very first sin!

4. What were the names of Adam and Eve's first two children? Gen. 4:1-2. What did Cain do? Verse 3. And what did Abel do?

Verse 4. Was Cain's offering -- Cain's act -- ACCEPTABLE to God? Verse 5 and I John 3:12.

5. If one does well -- does the things God wishes -- aren't his deeds acceptable to God? Gen. 4:7, first nine words. But if one does that which is NOT ACCEPTABLE to God, what "lies" at his door -- SIN? Same verse.

6. Did Cain MURDER Abel out of jealousy? Verse 8. Did God therefore punish Cain? Verses 9-12.

COMMENT: Murder was a sin FROM THE VERY BEGINNING! And when God asked Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" Cain replied, "I know not" (Verse 9). But Cain DID KNOW. He knew his brother was dead. Therefore he LIED and broke another commandment. That, too, was SIN!

Cain broke the SIXTH and NINTH commandments. EVERY ONE OF these commandments was known from creation because God had REVEALED THEM TO ADAM. He thus revealed them to mankind at that time. But humanity as a whole has REJECTED them ever since!

7. Was literal idolatry committed BEFORE the time of Abraham? Josh. 24:2.

COMMENT: Here were people before Abraham's time -- LONG BEFORE MOSES' TIME -- worshiping idols, committing a SIN -- a transgression of God's LAW. No wonder we are told in the Bible that "death" -- the PENALTY OF SIN -- "REIGNED FROM ADAM TO MOSES" (Rom 5:14), for the law was in existence ALL DURING THAT TIME!

8. Was the sin of IDOLATRY also committed in the generations AFTER Abraham? Gen. 35:2.

COMMENT: Jacob was Abraham's GRANDSON.

9. Did Jacob command those of his household who worshipped idols, to PUT AWAY their strange gods? Same verse. What was DONE with these idols? Verse 4.

COMMENT: Even back then, long BEFORE Moses, it was a SIN to WORSHIP these idols they possessed!

The Third and Fourth Commandments Broken

1. What is the THIRD commandment? Ex. 20:7. COMMENT: To take God's name IN VAIN IS profanity. It is PROFANING the name of God.

2. Did God tell Moses and the rest of the Israelites that the heathen who possessed the promised land in generations PREVIOUS to Moses' time had been doing MANY ABOMINATIONS? Lev. 18:1, 27. What was one of these abominations? Verse 21, last half. Did God say these heathen nations had DEFILED themselves and the land because of such abominations? Verses 24 and 27. Then taking the name of God in vain was a sin at that time, wasn't it?

COMMENT: The third commandment of the law was being violated here. Therefore, profanity -- taking the name of God in vain -- was a SIN BEFORE MOSES' TIME!

3. What is the FOURTH commandment? Ex. 20:8-11. Is it the day on which everyone should REST from all his labors? Verse 10. Did God REST on that day after He had finished creating the earth and all life upon it? Gen. 2:2.

4. Did God tell Moses to have all the people KEEP -- rest on -- the Sabbath? Ex. 16:23. Did God command Israel to keep the Sabbath to PROVE whether they would walk in -- OBEY -- His LAW or not? Ex. 16:4. Note the word "law."

COMMENT: Here is God's law ALREADY IN EFFECT at that very time! God wanted to see whether the people would obey its fourth cardinal point -- WEEKS BEFORE THEY CAME TO Mount Sinai where the Ten Commandments were RESTATED (Ex. 20) and, months later the

PHYSICAL RITUALISTIC "law of Moses" was FIRST GIVEN!

 PHOTO CAPTION: Idol discovered in Palestine. It dates back to time of the Judges. Idolatry was also prevalent before the time of Moses -- and was labeled as SIN by God in the Bible. Positive proof that God's Ten Commandments were in force before Moses!

5. Did some disregard God's command to pick up a double portion of manna on the sixth day -- did they decide in advance to go out and WORK at gathering manna on this seventh day -- the SABBATH day -- on which God had commanded them to REST? Verse 27.

6. What did God say about this act of disobedience? Ex. 16:28. Notice this in particular -- did God just confine his rebuke to those refusing to keep this one command, or did He call attention to ALL HIS COMMANDMENTS and LAWS they had been breaking? Same verse.

COMMENT: This conversation was going on weeks BEFORE God RESTATED His spiritual laws to Moses and the people at Sinai. And it was MONTHS BEFORE God gave the SEPARATE RITUALISTIC LAW of sacrifices and ablutions which was to be in force ONLY UNTIL Christ's death!

So the Sabbath was ALREADY the law of God at that time, as well as the other commands and laws God referred to in verse 28!

The Fifth, Seventh and Eighth Commandments

1. What is the FIFTH commandment? Ex. 20:12. Do we find a retribution -- a curse falling on one who broke this law LONG BEFORE the time of Sinai? Let's examine.

2. Did Noah become drunk? Gen 9:20-23. Did he realize a sin had been committed against him? Verse 24. What CURSE fell upon Canaan as a result of this sin against Noah, his GRANDPARENT? Verse 25.

3. What is the SEVENTH commandment? Ex. 20:14. Was it also in effect and known LONG BEFORE God reiterated His spiritual law to Moses and the people at Mount Sinai? Let's consider.

4. When Joseph was in Egypt serving the Egyptians (Gen. 39:1-2), what IMPROPER advances did Potiphar's wife make toward him? Gen. 39:7. Did Joseph refuse? Verse 8. Why? Did Joseph say it would have been a SIN to follow her wishes? Verse 9.

COMMENT: Remember, where there is no law, sin is NOT IMPUTED. But here we see that Joseph KNEW God's law and he knew that sin WOULD be imputed if he broke that law! ADULTERY was a sin hundreds of years BEFORE Moses!

5. What is the EIGHTH commandment? Ex. 20:15. Did Jacob, who lived LONG BEFORE the Ten Commandments were repeated at Sinai, use the word "stolen"? Gen. 30:33.

COMMENT: Jacob knew and understood the meaning of the word "steal." Stealing was a SIN in those days the SAME AS IT IS TODAY!

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

1. Does God forbid the bearing of false witness -- LYING -- in His NINTH commandment? Ex. 20:16. But even RIGHTEOUS Abraham, who lived LONG BEFORE Mount Sinai, was not always able to keep this command perfectly. WHO did Abraham say his wife was when they passed through King Abimelech's country? Gen. 20:2.

COMMENT: Abraham WAS LYING! Of course; Sarah, his wife, was his HALF-SISTER; nevertheless, the intent was all wrong! It was a lie. Abraham BROKE the ninth commandment!

2. Did God prevent King Abimelech from marrying Abraham's wife, thus preventing him from UNKNOWINGLY committing adultery with her? Gen. 20:3, and first part of verse 4. Did God say that had Abimelech committed adultery, it would have been a SIN? Verse 6.

COMMENT: How plain it is that God's law was in existence from Adam.

3. What about COVETING -- is it the last of the Ten Commandments? Ex. 20:17. Were the people BEFORE the flood breaking this commandment? Gen. 6:1-3, 5. Does God say, through the inspired Psalms, that the WICKED are those who FORSAKE HIS LAW? Psa. 119:53. Then weren't these people forsaking God's LAW? Gen. 6:5. Note the word "wickedness."

COMMENT: The "SONS of God" -- in the sense that God is the Creator-Father of human beings because He formed man of the dust of the ground -- were lusting after, COVETING, and taking wives that were not good for them.

They were in this way striving AGAINST God. God classified them among the wicked of those days -- among those who were breaking the law He had revealed to Adam and Eve at the very beginning. They were breaking the TENTH COMMANDMENT against covetousness. And it was this sin that He was denouncing.

4. Now here comes the CLINCHER! Did Abraham, who lived BETWEEN the time of Adam and Moses, have a THOROUGH KNOWLEDGE of God's COMMANDMENTS? Gen. 26:5. And God's STATUTES? Same verse. And God's LAWS? Same verse. How did Abraham LEARN all these things? Note the word "voice."

COMMENT: The people before the time of Moses were MUCH BETTER INFORMED about the law of God than is generally admitted today!

Obedience Necessary Today!

The Ten Commandments constitute a SPIRITUAL LAW that is eternal and inexorable. It is a law showing the way of LOVE and the FULFILLING of which is love. It is a law that God set in motion for man's HAPPINESS to produce EVERYTHING GOOD which man foolishly denies himself.

Obedience to God's law was JUST AS NECESSARY for the well-being and happiness of the world BEFORE the time of Moses and AFTERWARD, AS IT IS TODAY! That is why we have just seen that every one of the Ten Commandments EXISTED FROM CREATION. It has been a SIN to break any one of them from the beginning!

God created man a creature of CHOICE. And so God decreed that man MUST CHOOSE WHETHER or not he will obey God's law. The world as a whole has CHOSEN NOT to obey and you see the RESULTS of sin all around you!

Yes, the CHOICE IS YOURS. But the actual fulfilling of God's royal law of love does not lie within YOUR OWN power. It is only possible through the POWER of God's Spirit!

But there are PRIOR CONDITIONS to receiving God's Holy Spirit. First you must REPENT of your past sins -- come to recognize and UTTERLY ABHOR your past disobedience to God's laws and QUIT SINNING! Then you must acknowledge Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour Who shed His blood to blot out your sins and reconcile you to the Father. Finally, God commands WATER BAPTISM as a symbol of your sincere repentance.

Once you have fulfilled these requirements, God promises to give you His Holy Spirit as a FREE GIFT! (Acts 2:38.) Only then will you be able to keep His SPIRITUAL law in its true spiritual intent.

Do you begin to realize how DESPERATELY YOU need to have God's spiritual law of love -- the Ten Commandments -- being FULFILLED in you? It is the ONLY WAY to achieve the true happiness and material and SPIRITUAL blessings you really desire! What are you going to DO about it?

(BE SURE TO WRITE FOR THE ASTOUNDING FREE BOOKLET "THE TEN COMMANDMENTS." IT COVERS IN DETAIL, FROM THE BIBLE, EACH OF THE TEN CARDINAL POINTS OF GOD'S SPIRITUAL LAW AND THEIR PRINCIPLES.)