

Service – The Difference between God’s & Jesus Christ’s Laws

All worship songs from SoF

425 - O LORD MY GOD! when I in awesome wonder

O LORD MY GOD! when I in awesome wonder
Consider all the works Thy hand hath made,
I see the stars, I hear the mighty thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed:

*Then sings my soul, my Saviour God to Thee,
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee,
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!*

When through the woods and forest glades I wander
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
And hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze;

And when I think that God His Son not sparing,
Sent Him to die-I scarce can take it in.
That on the cross my burden gladly bearing,
He bled and died to take away my sin:

When Christ shall come with shout of acclamation
And take me home-what joy shall fill my heart!
Then shall I bow in humble adoration
And there proclaim, my God, how great Thou art!

Prayer

1st Reading: Deuteronomy 5:1-22

5 Moses summoned all Israel and said:

Hear, Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. ² The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. ³ It was not with our ancestors that the LORD made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today. ⁴ The LORD spoke to you face to face out of the fire on the mountain. ⁵ (At that time I stood between the LORD and you to declare to you the word of the LORD, because you were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain.)

And he said:

⁶ "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

⁷ "You shall have no other gods before me.

⁸ "You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁹ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ¹⁰ but showing love to a

thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

11 "You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

12 "Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the LORD your God has commanded you. **13** Six days you shall labour and do all your work, **14** but the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest, as you do. **15** Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that the LORD your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore, the LORD your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

16 "Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

17 "You shall not murder.

18 "You shall not commit adultery.

19 "You shall not steal.

20 "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbour.

21 "You shall not covet your neighbour's wife. You shall not set your desire on your neighbour's house or land, his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbour."

22 These are the commandments the LORD proclaimed in a loud voice to your whole assembly there on the mountain from out of the fire, the cloud and the deep darkness; and he added nothing more. Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me.

79 – Dear Lord and Father of mankind,

DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND,
Forgive our foolish ways;
Reclothe us in our rightful mind;
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise,
In deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
Beside the Syrian sea,
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word
Rise up and follow Thee,
Rise up and follow Thee.

O sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
The silence of eternity,
Interpreted by love,
Interpreted by love.

With that deep hush subduing all

Our words and works that drown
The tender whisper of Thy call,
As noiseless let Thy blessing fall
As fell Thy manna down,
As fell Thy manna down.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace,
The beauty of Thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still small voice of calm,
O still small voice of calm!

2nd Reading: 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

¹⁹ Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ²⁰ To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings.

The Need for Self-Discipline

²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵ Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. ²⁶ Therefore I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. ²⁷ No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.

51 – Breathe on me breath of God,

BREATHE ON ME, BREATH OF
GOD,
Fill me with life anew;
That I may love what Thou dost
love
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure;
Until my will is one with Thine
To do and to endure.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Till I am wholly Thine;
Until this earthly part of me
Glow with Thy fire divine.

Breathe on me, Breath of God,
So shall I never die,
But live with Thee the perfect life
Of Thine eternity.

THE MESSAGE

I sometimes wonder how many of us could recite the Ten Commandments? I confess I think that I might have difficulty doing it! But then I was intrigued by our Reading from 1 Corinthians 9:21, which as you may remember is: **“To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law.”**

This sounds complicated stuff to me and I am grateful to a website called *Got Questions.org* for supplying the answer to the question:

Do Christians have to obey The Old Testament Law?

“The key to understanding the relationship between the Christian and the Law is **knowing that the Old Testament law was given to the nation of Israel, not to Christians.**”

Some of the laws were to reveal to the Israelites how to obey and please God (the Ten Commandments, for example).

Some of the laws were to show the Israelites how to worship God and atone for sin (the sacrificial system).

Some of the laws were intended to make the Israelites distinct from other nations (the food and clothing rules).

None of the Old Testament law is binding on Christians today. When Jesus died on the cross, He put an end to the Old Testament law.” _ REPEAT!

Paul tells us in Romans 10:4: “⁴ Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.”

Paul says in Galatians 3:23-29: “²³ Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. ²⁴ So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

²⁶ So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

Paul tells us in Ephesians 2:15-18: “¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.”

In place of the Old Testament law, Christians are under the [law of Christ \(Galatians 6:2\)](#), which is to “² Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

In Mathews Gospel 22:37-39 Jesus said, “**love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind...and to love your neighbour as yourself**”. If we obey those two commands, we will be fulfilling all that Jesus Christ requires of us: “**All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments**” ([Matthew 22:40](#)).

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Now, this does not mean the Old Testament law is irrelevant today. Many of the commands in the Old Testament law fall into the categories of “loving God” and “loving your neighbour.” The Old Testament law can be a good guidepost for knowing how to love God and knowing what goes into loving your neighbor. At the same time, to say that the Old Testament law applies to Christians today is incorrect. The

Old Testament law is a unit, **“¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of break-ing all of it.”** (*James 2:10*). This means that either all of it applies, or none of it applies. If Jesus Christ fulfilled some of it, such as the sacrificial system, He fulfilled all of it.

“In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴ for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵ Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. (*1John 5:3-5*).

The Ten Commandments were essentially a summary of the entire Old Testament law. Nine of the Ten Commandments are clearly repeated in the New Testament (all except the command to observe the Sabbath day). But as followers of Jesus surely we should copy what He did, and Jesus observed the Sabbath, in Lukes Gospel 4:16:

“ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom.”

Obviously, if we are loving God, we will not be worshiping false gods or bowing down before idols. If we are loving our neighbours, we will not be murdering them, lying to them, committing adultery against them, or coveting what belongs to them. **The purpose of the Old Testament law is to convict people of our inability to keep the law and point us to our need for Jesus Christ as Savior.**

Paul wrote in Romans 7:7-12: ⁷ What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting. For apart from the law, sin was dead. ⁹ Once I was alive apart from the law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰ I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹ For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. ¹² So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.”

Paul wrote in Galatians 3: 23-29: ²³ Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. ²⁴ So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

²⁶ So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷ for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸ There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ If you belong

to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The Old Testament law was never intended by God to be the universal law for all people for all of time.

Jesus said "we are to love God and love our neighbours. If we obey those two commands faithfully, we will be upholding all that God requires of us." Amen.

1448 – May the Mind of Christ my Saviour

MAY THE MIND OF CHRIST MY
SAVIOUR
Live in me from day to day,
By His love and power controlling
All I do and say.

May the word of God dwell richly
In my heart from hour to hour,
So that all may see I triumph
Only through His power.

May the peace of God my Father
Rule my life in everything,

That I may be calm to comfort
Sick and sorrowing.

May the love of Jesus fill me,
As the waters fill the sea;
Him exalting, self abasing,
This is victory.

May I run the race before me,
Strong and brave to face the foe,
Looking only unto Jesus,
As I onward go.

THE GRACE

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all. Amen

This Service has been prepared by: Christopher Stirling of Steeple Bumpstead Congregational Church, UK.
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