

Semester 2 – Week 4 - Class 7

THE ISSUE THAT DIVIDES THE WORLD

Today our subject is a very important one in the links of Bible truth that we are establishing each time we meet. I invite you to think carefully and to pray to yourself for understanding as we go through this message. One of the greatest problems we're facing in our Christian world today is that many people are content to sit back and listen to preachers, and they swallow everything they say hook, line and sinker. You can't tell people how to eat, you can't tell them how to vote, you can't tell them how to spend their money, but, when it comes to the most important thing in life, which is eternal life, many people are just content to sit back and believe anything. Now the Bible challenges us today, in fact it commands us, in

1 Thessalonians 5:21 **“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”**

If there's ever a time that that counsel should be heeded and practiced it is today, in these last days when every conceivable wind of false doctrine is blowing in the world around us.

I want to encourage you as I did from the first class of the first semester, to test what is said by the Word of God. Test it by the Bible. If it's clearly scripturally based, then follow Jesus and the Word, and you'll always, always be safe.

Crime is exploding and in these tougher times it will dramatically increase.

U.S. News and World Report said in the United States

1 Murder every 23 minutes; 1 rape every 6 minutes; 1 robbery every 58 seconds; 1 car theft every 28 seconds; 1 burglary every 8 seconds.

Some of these headlines and magazine reports go back over 20 years, and nothing has improved.

Over 33 million violent crimes in North America every year.

- 60% of Americans today have been victims of a major crime.
- Each year 1 in 4 households in America has a member who is a crime victim.
- 1 in 7 Americans have been sexually abused as a child.
- 36,000 people, in this country commit suicide every single year and it is the 10th leading cause of death.
- A large percentage of Americans today believe in witchcraft.
- 90% of Americans are reported to admit to stealing regularly.
- 24% commit adultery on a regular basis.
- Every day, 1,000 unwed teen-age girls become mothers.

Daily the news media tells the ongoing sad story of a world Satan controls. This report says New Yorkers send their children to school wearing bulletproof vests.

According to FBI reports, here are some highlights from *Crime in the United States, 2010*:

- Total number of crimes reported: 10,329,135 (1,246,248 violent crimes and 9,082,887 property crimes);
- Most common violent crime: aggravated assault (62.5 percent of all violent crimes during 2010);
- Most common property crime: larceny-theft (68.2 percent of all property crimes during 2010);
- Top three crimes for which law enforcement reported arrests: drug abuse violations (1,638,846), driving while intoxicated (1,412,223), and larceny-theft (1,271,410);
- Total number of arrests, excluding traffic violations: 13,120,947, including 552,077 for violent crimes and 1,643,962 for property crimes (the number of arrests doesn't reflect the number of individuals arrested—some individuals may have been arrested more than once);
- Most common characteristics of arrestees: 74.5 percent of arrestees were male, and 69.4 percent of arrestees were white;
- How often firearms were used in crimes: in 67.5 percent of reported murders, 41.4 percent of reported robberies, and 20.6 percent of aggravated assaults; and
- Total losses for victims of property crimes, excluding arsons: an estimated \$15.7 billion.

A man's home used to be his castle, but now a fortress complete with guard dogs and special sophisticated alarms are quite common.

This country is falling apart morally! America has become the most wicked nation, and yet the amazing thing is, it is called the greatest Christian nation in the whole world.

Have we lost our moral compass? Yes we have!

Look what the problems used to be in the schools in 1940. Talking out of turn; chewing gum; making noise; running in the halls; cutting in line; dress code infractions and littering.

Look what they are today! Drug use; alcohol abuse; pregnancy; suicide; rape; robbery; mass murder.

We have witnessed a cultural decline with violent crime up 560%; illegitimate births up 400% and that doesn't include all the abortions; divorce up 400 %; single parent homes up 300%; teenage suicide up 200%.

In 1870 there was 1 divorce for every 34 marriages, less than 3%; today there is 1 divorce for every 2 marriages, 50%.

Pollster George M. Gallup, Jr. – “The United States is facing ‘a moral and ethical crisis of the first dimension’ and needs spiritual answers to deal with the situation. He said it was shocking to discover that church attendance makes little difference in a person's ethical views and behavior.”

Why so little regard for decency and morality; why so little respect for law and order?

Because the pastors stand in the pulpits and say that the law was nailed to the cross!

But God says in Malachi 2:7-9 **“For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the law.”**

Today we will look at what the Bible suggests as answers to the crisis:

2 Timothy 4:2-4 **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”**

Matthew 7:21-23 **“Not every one 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. Many will say to me in that day Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name have done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”**

What does it mean to **doeth the will of my Father?**

Psalms 40:8 **“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.”**

Romans 2:13 **“For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.”**

Ephesians 2:8-9 **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and not that of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”** Salvation is by the grace of God alone which we accept by faith in what Jesus did for us on the cross. This is the basis of salvation. Man cannot do a thing to earn his salvation. But there are conditions and one of those conditions are keeping the Ten Commandments, not to be saved, but because we love God and Jesus our Example showed us that we can keep them and heaven provides the power.

Did you know that Paul and James referred to the 5th through the 10th commandments?

Ephesians 6:1 The fifth: **“Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right.”**

James 2:11 The seventh and the sixth: **“For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also Do not kill.”**

Ephesians 4:28 The eighth: **“Let him who stole steal no more...”**

Ephesians 4:25 The ninth: **“Wherefore putting away lying...”**

Romans 7:7 The tenth: **“Thou shalt not covet.”**

Exodus 31:18 **“And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God.”**

Not written with man’s hand, but written with the finger of God in stone!

God’s Law is the basis of the heavenly government. The Decalogue.

The question is asked, wasn’t the Ten Commandments just for the Jews?

God always has had laws in place. Genesis 26:5 **“Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”** Abraham kept God’s commandments.

Lucifer rebelled in heaven because he coveted God’s throne and the worship of angels. He broke two commandments "Thou shalt not covet," "Thou shalt not bear false witness" as he spread false rumors about God and His law, Satan lost heaven because of disobedience and one third of the angels of heaven were kicked out of heaven.

Adam and Eve lost Eden because of disobedience. Breaking one of God’s commands, breaks all ten.

How many want to know the truth? Well Jesus is the Truth as He said in John John 14:6 **“I am the way, the truth and the Life.”**

Zechariah 8:19 **“Thus saith the LORD of hosts; ... to the house of Judah joy and gladness, and cheerful feasts; therefore love the truth and peace.**

Psalms 119:142 **“Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness, and thy law is the truth.”**

Psalms 119:151 **“Thou art near, O Lord; and all thy commandments are truth.”**

Romans 7:12 **“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.”**

Question: Does Grace do away with God’s Law?

Let’s see what Jesus Himself said:

Matthew 5:17-19 “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus was clearly talking about the Ten Commandments because when you read the context in Verse 21 He references the 6th commandment **“...thou shalt not kill”** and in verse 27 He references the 7th commandment **“...thou shalt not commit adultery.”**

Jesus is the pattern by which we should live our lives.

James 2:12 **“So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.”** What did James call the Ten Commandments? The **“law of liberty.”** When you keep the Ten Commandments you are liberated from the bondage of sin.

God’s law is the basis for morality and the standard of judgment.

Psalms 111:7, 8 **“The works of his hands are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for, Forever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness.”**

And verse 10 **“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever.”**

Dr. James Dobson, *“Christianity Today”*, March 1, 1999 “Without a moral consensus people become ungovernable. There are certain moral principles that have existed from antiquity that were accepted in the culture until the last 30 to 40 years. We’ve moved away from those moral principles. There has to be a common understanding of right and wrong... NO MORAL RIGHT OR WRONG!

Is there sin in the world today? Of course.

Then according to the Bible, what is sin?

1 John 3:4 **“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.”**

The Webster's Dictionary defines transgression as: "The breaking or violation of any law, civil or moral...."

From a civil standpoint according to Webster's, when we wilfully or ignorantly break a law designed to protect the citizens of a certain jurisdiction, be it a town, county, state or country, we have transgressed the established laws and must pay a penalty.

Sin then is law breaking..

Question: To what law does 1 John 3:4 refer?

Romans 4:15 **“Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.”** Understand the important point Paul is making as there are those who believe God's Ten Commandment law was nailed to the cross and came to an end. If that were so, then there is no longer such a thing as sin. No law, no transgression. If there is no law and no transgression, there is no need of a Savior. If there is no need of a Savior, then Jesus did not need to die.

When Adam first sinned, God was basically left with three choices:

1. He could have killed Adam instantly because the "wages (or penalty) of sin is death." Romans 6:23. But God said, "No, I love Adam too much. I don't want to kill him.
2. He could have done away with His law. But this wasn't really a choice at all because the law is a transcript of the very character of God. It's the very nature of God expressed into words and so God couldn't do away with the moral law without going against His own principles and character.
3. This left God with only one option. He said, "I can't do away with the law. And I won't kill Adam. Instead, I will come and pay the price for sin. The very One who wrote the law on tables of stone. The very One who created mankind which rebelled, God Himself would humble, humble, humble, Himself and come to this sin-cursed planet and die for the sins of the world. Adam's sin. Eve's sin. Your sin and mine. Can't you love a God like that? That's why it's amazing grace. (Rom. 3:25,26)

Now let's answer this Question: What is the role of God's law?

Romans 7:7 **“ ... I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.”** In context, we know that Paul is describing the moral law, the Ten Commandments because He quotes a commandment. **“ ... I had not known sin, but by the law**

And then in Romans 3:20 Paul makes the purpose of the Ten Commandments clear **“ ...by the law is the knowledge of sin.”**

Before we read the next scripture, I want you to imagine that I have a big black smudge on my face, which of course I can't see, but everyone who looks at me can see it. Some laugh, but no one tells me what's wrong. So now let's read:

James 1:22-25 **“But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass (mirror). For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.”**

So now someone says my face is dirty and I go look in the mirror. The mirror points out the problem. But can the mirror wash my face? NO! It did its job by telling me I was dirty. What do I need to get clean? Soap and water.

So God says, "My law is like a mirror. It gives the knowledge of sin." The Ten Commandments shows me that I am spiritually dirty. What do I need to get clean? I need the cleansing blood of Jesus.

Romans 3:20 Do you see? “ **...by the law is the knowledge of sin.**”

The law reveals our sin and points to Jesus Christ.

Our only hope is Jesus.

We are cleansed only by the blood.

Romans 8:1 **“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”**

Question: Didn't Jesus teach that all we need is love?

Matthew 22:36-40 **“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”** The first four commandments are our duty to God, while the last six our duty to man.

The entire law can be summarized in one word – LOVE. Love God and your fellow man.

Romans 13:10 **“Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”**

Let's look a little closer now at the Ten Commandments.

Exodus 20: 1, 2 **“And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”**

The first commandment: **"Thou shalt have no other God's before me."**

Second commandment in verse 4-6. **"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in 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 shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."**

Third commandment. Verse 7, **"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."**

Fourth commandment Verses 8-11, **"Remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, 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."**

Fifth commandment in verse 12, **"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."**

Sixth commandment, verse 13, **"Thou shalt not kill."**

Seventh commandment, verse 14, **"Thou shalt not commit adultery."**

Eighth commandment in verse 15, **"Thou shalt not steal."**

Ninth commandment, verse 16, **"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour."**

Tenth commandment, verse 17, **"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."**

The Ten-Commandment law reveals God's code of ethics.

But someone says, "Aren't those commandments negative?" They're not negative at all. Look at how positive they are.

1. We'll make God number One in our lives. He is first; 2. Our worship is reserved for God alone. We worship Him exclusively; 3. Respect and reverence for His holy name; 4. We're anxious to have an appointment with God each week, that we want to come and fellowship with Him.; 5. Honour our parents and authority; 6. Life is valuable. It is a gift from God; 7. Preserve morality; 8. Respect the property of others; 9. Be honest in your relationships; 10. If you covet what belongs to another it leads you to selfishness, and greed, and bitterness, and resentment and who needs that?

Proverbs 29:18 **"... he that keepeth the law, happy is he."**

Psalms 119:165 **"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."**

Psalms 19:7, 10, 11 **"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple."**

The famous D.L. Moody once said, "I've never met an honest man who had any problem with the 10 Commandments."

Question: What motivates a person to obey God's law?

1 John 5:3 **"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments."**

Love always leads to obedience.

John 14:15 Jesus said, **"If ye love me, keep my commandments."**

He doesn't say, "If you love me, give a big offering." He doesn't say, "If you love me, get up and shout." He doesn't say, "If you love me, get out and do ten hours of community service."

He simply says, **"If ye love me ..." show me, "keep my commandments."**

"If you love Me . . . you will not have other gods before Me."

"If you love Me . . . you will not take My name in vain."

Acts 5:32 **"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."** This is important to take note. God gives His Holy Spirit to who? **"... to them that obey him."**

Question: Can I be a true Christian without keeping His commandments?

1 John 2:3, 4 **"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."** That's strong language; but John wrote it under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Isn't a person who is keeping the commandments a Legalist?

1 John 2:6 **"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked."**

John 15:10 **"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."** Loyalty as a result of our love for Jesus Jesus always leads to obedience.

Will God's people be keeping His commandments before His second coming?

Revelation 14:12 **"Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."**

Revelation 12:17 **"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ."**

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."**

Matthew 19:17 **"...if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."**

End Semester 2 – Week 4 - Class 7
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Next Class Semester 2 – Week 4 - Class 8 **"When Grace Becomes Disgrace"**