

ARE THE TEN COMMANDMENTS RELEVANT FOR TODAY?

In a one word answer---yes. Christ states that He came to fulfill the law. But, He did not eradicate the Ten Commandments. In fact, He reminded us that we 'shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.' (See Mark 12:28-31)

While some people feel that because we are now under grace, and are not under the old dispensation, we are therefore immune to the commandments which God gave to Moses and the children of Israel. This, however, shows a misunderstanding.

So, before we begin a series of lessons for the Ten Commandments, please allow a short interlude to explain their role today.

Obviously, Christians today are not under the Old Testament ceremonial laws and rituals which concern food, washing, and observation of certain days. However, the MORAL laws which God revealed in the Ten Commandments revealed His will for the conduct of men in relation to Him and to one another. This law is permanent and is timeless---has God's attitude about idolatry, irreverence, murder, etc., changed and become lax, and thus we are now allowed to pick-and-choose which commandment we would like to obey today? According to Scripture, it would seem that the answer would be 'no'. Yet, many people believe in the philosophy of 'situation ethics', with each person doing what he/she feels is permissible at that time.

It seems amazing that God, in Ten Commandments, not only could, but did cover all the aspects of mankind's attitude toward God and others. Yet, according to a number which I found in some research, man has made 32,600,000 laws-----and has not yet improved on the Ten Commandments. Of course, this idea of making new rules, and laws is not new to 'modern man'; it would seem that the Pharisees began this process.

Jesus lets us know that it is not just 'good' to follow the letter of the law, but that love should motivate our relationship with God and others. In what we know as the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus places much emphasis on attitude. (See Matthew 5) While we might think that the Old Testament is stricter, actually the standards of the New Testament are much higher. These standards demand the RIGHT ATTITUDE AS WELL AS THE RIGHT ACTION. Which is easier---to keep a rule or to be pure minded? Observation of the rules of the church, or its traditions, is not enough to make a person a Christian. Only through accepting Christ is this accomplished.

At intervals, I will be posting lessons on each of the commandments. Please check frequently to see the new lessons. Thank you for allowing me to present Scripture, and may God speak to your heart, and bless you as we search for Him. Janie Corbitt 2011