

PATHWAY TO PEACE: BIBLE STUDY GUIDE – LESSON 14

Lesson 14: God’s Law and Grace Part 3: “A Perfect Reflection of God

This lesson is a continuation of our investigation of the God’s Law because according to ***Psalm 119:142*** it says that God’s “law is the truth”. Did you get that? God’s Word is truth and God’s Law is Truth. We are going to investigate some more truths about God’s Ten Commandment Law. We are going to learn more about the main character of God’s Ten Commandment law. We will also see that God’s Ten Commandment Law is a perfect reflection of the character of God.

1. What is the foundation or main character of God’s Law of the Ten Commandments found in Exodus 20:1-17?

Read ALL the following Bible texts: Matthew 22:36 – 40; Deuteronomy 6:5; Leviticus 19:18; James 2:10-11; Psalm 19:7; Romans 13:9

Write Bible Answer:

What law is the lawyer referring to in his question to Jesus? Answer: God’s Ten Commandment Law in found in Exodus 20:1-17. It is evident from this question that this Pharisee knows God’s Ten Commandments, but he wanted to know which commandment out of the Ten Commandments is the greatest commandment or the most important commandment of the ten. Notice in Matthew 22:37-40 that Jesus is not giving new commandments here. Matter of fact, in verse 37, Jesus is quoting directly from ***Deuteronomy 6:5*** which says, “⁵And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.” And in verse 39 Jesus is quoting directly from the last part of ***Leviticus 19:18*** which says “thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.” So it is very evident here that Jesus knew the scriptures very well. Now going back to Matthew 22:37-40, remember that the Pharisee lawyer was looking for Jesus to tell him which commandment of the Ten Commandments was the greatest commandment. The lawyer probably wanted to know for example if the 4th commandment concerning God’s Sabbath day is the greatest commandment or if the third commandment of not taking the Lord name in vain is the greatest commandment.

It appears in the Pharisee lawyer’s question that he wanted a ranking system of God’s Law from the greatest to the least. But we see in Matthew 22:37-39 that Jesus did not satisfy the Pharisee lawyer desires of ranking God’s Law from the greatest to the least. Why? Let’s go to ***James 2:10-11***. It says, “¹⁰For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all. ¹¹For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law” So in other words, the Bible reveals here that all ten of God’s commandments are equally important and they can not be ranked from the greatest to the least. So it does not matter which law of the ten we break, we are still guilty of all. Remember that God’s law defines sin and that the wages of sin is death. So it does not matter which commandment of the Ten Commandments you or I break; they ALL have the same wage or penalty of eternal death. Nothing else. So in answering the lawyer’s question of what is the greatest commandment of the Law, Jesus responded to the lawyer’s question as an opportunity to teach a deeper meaning of God’s Ten Commandments. So let’s go back and

examine Jesus' response in Matthew 22:37-39. Again in verse 37 Jesus says "That we should love God with all our hearts, soul, and mind and that this is the first commandment." So in other words, our love toward God applies to the first commandment that Jesus gives here. In verse 39 Jesus says that the second greatest commandment is our love toward our neighbor or fellowman. So here our love towards others applies to the second commandment here. Now Jesus is not giving us a new commandments set of commandments here to be added to the Ten Commandments to make 12 commandments. How do we know that? First all in ***Psalm 19:7*** says that God's Law is perfect. So why would God need to add to something that already perfect. To add to that law would imply that God made a mistake, but we know that God does not make mistakes.

Now, let's examine ***Matthew 22:40***. Jesus says, "40 On these two commandments [which is loving God and loving your neighbor or others] hang all the law **all the law** and the prophets." Remember that the law that Jesus is referring to is God's Ten Commandment Law. So in other words, God's Ten commandment law and the inspired words the prophets in the Old Testaments **HANG** on these two commandments expressed by Jesus in Matthew 22:37-39: to love God with all your heart, mind, and soul, and to love your neighbor as yourself. So these two commands that Jesus gives us here do not void the Ten Commandments, but rather magnifies them or give us a clearer understanding of God's Ten Commandments. To understand this clearly, let's turn our Bibles to the Ten Commandments found in Exodus 20:1-17 and briefly review them.

In summary the first four commandments of God starting with verse 3 are the following: The first commandment is Thou shalt have no other gods before me. The second is commandment "Thou shalt not make any graven images." The third commandment is "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain. And the fourth commandment is "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.

Notice that the first four commandments have to do with our love toward God our Creator. So, the first great commandment expressed in Matthew 22:37, to love God with all your heart, mind, and soul, apply directly to the first four commandments of God's Law. The first great commandment expressed in Matthew 22:37, to love God with all your heart, mind, and soul, apply directly to the first four commandments of God's Law.

In summary the last six commandments starting with Exodus 20:12 are the following: The fifth commandment is honor thy father and thy mother. The sixth is thou shall not kill (meaning murder). The seventh is thou shalt not commit adultery. The eighth is thou not shalt steal. The ninth commandment is thou shalt not bear false witness (lie) against thy neighbor. And the tenth is thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

Remember that the first four commandments have to do with our love toward God our Creator. It is clear that the last six commandments have to do with our love towards our neighbor or others. So, the second great commandment in Matthew 22:38, to love thy neighbor as thyself, apply directly to the last six commandments of God's Law. Romans 13:9 is a great summation to this.

So in summary, Jesus in Matthew 22:37-40 magnifies and makes it clear that God's Law of the Ten Commandments is a Law that hangs on the principle of love towards God and others. In other words the foundation of God's Ten Commandment Law is love – our love towards God and others.

2. **How should you practically express your love toward God?**

Read ALL the following Bible texts: John 14:15; 1 John 5:1-3

Write Bible Answer:

Jesus says in John 14:15, “¹⁵If ye love me, keep my commandments.” We must remember that our obedience to God’s Ten Commandments is our expression of our love toward God and others. ***First John 5:1-3*** explains this principle in greater detail. It says, “¹Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him (God) that begat loveth him (Jesus) also that is begotten (or born) of him (God). ²By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. ³For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.” This is truly LOVING GOD. So in other words if we claim to truly love God, our love toward God and others will always lead to obedience to God’s law. Never forget that true love defined by God never leads to disobedience. It only leads to obedience.

Now let’s focus our attention on the character of God’s Ten Commandment Law.

3. How does God’s Ten Commandment Law directly reflects His character?

Let’s look at some examples of the character of the Ten Commandments and God and see how identical their characters are. For the sake of time let’s explore just four of many characteristics of God and the Ten Commandments. We will see that God and His law have the same characteristics.

Read ALL the following Bible texts: 1) Matthew 5:48 and Psalm 19:7; 2) 1 John 4:8 and Romans 13:10; 3) Malachi 3:6 and Matthew 5:18; 4) Romans 7:12 and Psalm 99:9

Write Bible Answer:

Matthew 5:48 reveals that God is perfect and Psalm 19:7 says that God's law is perfect. 1 John 4:8 says that God is love. Romans 13:10 says that law is love. We see here that love, as in the first part of our study today, is the foundation of God’s law. Love is the motivation behind God’s Law.

Malachi 3:6 say that God does not change. Matthew 5:18 reveals that God's law does not change. Again as we mentioned earlier, if God’s Law is perfect. Why would it need to be changed if it is already perfect. Also, God is a perfect. He would not make something imperfect to be changed. God does not make mistakes.

Romans 7:12 says that God's commandments are holy, just and good. Psalm 99:9 say that God is holy.

It’s clear that when you see God’s Law, you see a direct reflection of God. So if we attack God’s law as being unjust or against us it is as if we are attacking God Himself because God’s law is a reflection of His character. God’s Law is a perfect reflection of God.

The following is a table that shows other Bible scriptures that reveal that God and His Law reflect each other perfectly.

| <u>Characteristic</u> | <u>God Is...</u> | <u>God's Law Is....</u> |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| GOOD | Luke 18:19 | 1 Timothy 1:8 |
| HOLY | Isaiah 5:16 | Romans 7:12 |
| PERFECT | Matthew 5:48 | Psalms 19:7 |
| PURE | 1 John 3:2, 3 | Psalms 19:8 |
| JUST | Deuteronomy 32:4 | Romans 7:12 |
| TRUE | John 3:33 | Psalms 19:9; Psalms 119:142 |
| SPIRITUAL | 1 Corinthians 10:4 | Romans 7:14 |
| RIGHTEOUSNESS | Jeremiah 23:6 | Psalms 119:172 |
| FAITHFUL | 1 Corinthians 1:9 | Psalms 119:86 |
| LOVE | 1 John 4:8 | Romans 13:10 |
| UNCHANGABLE | James 1:17 | Matthew 5:18 |
| ETERNAL | Genesis 21:33, Deut 33:27 | Psalms 111:7, 8 |

4. Is God's Ten Commandment reaffirmed in the New Testament? (See below)

| The Ten Commandment In the New Testament | Ten Commandment In The Old Testament |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1) Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. Matthew 4:10 | 1) Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:3 |
| 2) 1Jn 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. (1 John 5:21) Act 17:29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device. (Act 17:29) | 2) Exo 20:4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of <i>any thing</i> that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Exo 20:5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God <i>am</i> a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth <i>generation</i> of them that hate me; Exo 20:6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:4 – 6) |
| 3) ...that the name of God and <i>his</i> doctrine be not blasphemed. (1 Timothy 6:1) | 3) Exo 20:7 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 |
| 4) Heb 4:4 For he spake in a certain place of the seventh <i>day</i> on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works. | 4) Exo 20:8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Exo 20:9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy |

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| <p>Heb 4:8 For if Jesus had given them rest, then would he not afterward have spoken of another day.</p> <p>Heb 4:9 There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God.</p> <p>Heb 4:10 For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God <i>did</i> from his. (Hebrews 4:4, 8 - 10)</p> | <p>work:</p> <p>Exo 20:10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: <i>in it</i> 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:</p> <p>Exo 20:11 For <i>in</i> 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. (Exodus 20:8 - 11)</p> |
| <p>5) Mat 19:19 Honour thy father and <i>thy</i> mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (Matthew 19:19)</p> | <p>5) Exo 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. (Exodus 20:12)</p> |
| <p>6) Thou shalt not kill. (Romans 13:9)</p> | <p>6) Exo 20:13 Thou shalt not kill. (Exodus 20:13)</p> |
| <p>7) Thou shalt not commit adultery (Matthew 19:18)</p> | <p>7) Exo 20:14 Thou shalt not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)</p> |
| <p>8) Thou shalt not steal. (Romans 13:9)</p> | <p>8) Exo 20:15 Thou shalt not steal. (Exodus 20:15)</p> |
| <p>9) Thou shalt not bear false witness (Romans 13:9)</p> | <p>9) Exo 20:16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. (Exodus 20:16)</p> |
| <p>10) Thou shalt not covet (Romans 7:7)</p> | <p>10) Exo 20:17 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. (Exodus 20:17)</p> |

In summary, remember that the foundation of God's Ten Commandment Law is love. The first four commandments demonstrate our love toward God and the last six commandments demonstrate our love towards others. God is love. God's law is love. God is perfect. God's law is perfect. God is unchangeable. God's law is unchangeable. God is holy. God's law is holy. Again God and His Law reflect each other perfectly. And if we truly and sincerely love God we will express our love toward Him by keeping His commandments, not in our own strength, but in the strength of God living within us. Next Bible study we will begin a through examination of God's Ten Commandment Law in Exodus 20:1-17.