MINISTÈRE DU PASTEUR CLÉMENT SALOMON · BIBLE STUDY #12

The Ten Commandments

God's law of love — the shape of love, not the price of rescue

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When Marc was twelve, his mother started working nights in Miami. Before she left each evening, she taped a yellow sheet of paper to the refrigerator. *Lock the door. Don't open it for anybody. Don't cook on the stove. Homework before TV. Call me when you wake up.*

Marc hated that paper. Every rule felt like a fence. He rolled his eyes at it for three years.

Twenty years later, helping his mother move, he found the same yellow sheet folded in a box of her things. His own son was twelve now. He read the list again — and for the first time he saw what was written at the very bottom, in small letters he had never bothered to read: *"Se paske m renmen w. — Manman."* It's because I love you.

The rules had never been a fence. They were love, written down by someone who could not be in the room.

That is the secret most people miss about the **Ten Commandments**. And it is right there at the top of the page.

Read the first line before the rules

Most people jump straight to "Thou shalt not." But God did not start there. Before one rule, He reminded His people who He was and what He had **already done** for them:

> *"I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage."*
>
> **Exodus 20:2 (KJV)**

Look at the order. God did not say, "Keep these ten rules, and then I will rescue you." He rescued them first — out of slavery, through the sea, with no help from them. *Then* He gave the law.

> The law is not the price of rescue. It is the shape of life for people who have **already** been rescued. You do not obey to become God's child. You obey because you already are.

Ten words, two directions

God spoke ten short commandments (Exodus 20:3-17). Read them slowly and you will see they point in two directions.

- **The first four face God:** no other gods before Him; no idols; do not take His name in vain; remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
- **The last six face people:** honor your father and mother; do not kill; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not lie about your neighbor; do not covet what belongs to someone else.

Centuries later a lawyer asked Jesus which commandment was the greatest. Jesus did not throw any of them away. He showed what they all are made of:

> *"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."*
>
> **Matthew 22:37-40 (KJV)**

Love for God. Love for neighbor. The Ten Commandments are simply love, spelled out so we cannot pretend we did not understand. It is hard to say "I love my neighbor" while stealing from him or lying about him.

Love that wants to obey

Here is where many of us got it backwards. We were taught to obey God out of fear — fear of punishment, fear of the pastor, fear of what people would say. But listen to how Jesus puts it:

> *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."*
>
> **John 14:15 (KJV)**

Not "If you are afraid of me." **If you love me.** Love comes first. Obedience is what love looks like when it gets up in the morning and goes to work.

That is why a psalm writer could say something that sounds strange to many people today:

> *"O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day."*
>
> **Psalm 119:97 (KJV)**

He *loved* it. Like Marc finally loved that yellow paper — because he finally saw the heart of the one who wrote it.

"But we are saved by grace — so the law doesn't matter anymore... right?"

This is the question that keeps thousands of people either afraid or careless. Some are afraid because they think they must keep the law perfectly to be saved. Others are careless because they think grace means the law is gone.

The Bible answers both. First: salvation is a gift. Nobody earns it.

> *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."*
>
> **Ephesians 2:8-9 (KJV)**

Second: that gift does not tear up God's law. Paul asked the question himself and answered it strongly:

> *"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law."*
>
> **Romans 3:31 (KJV)**

Think of it this way. A mirror shows you the dirt on your face. It cannot wash it off — only water does that. But you do not smash the mirror after you wash. The law shows us where we

need Jesus. Jesus washes us. And then the law becomes a picture of the life He is growing in us.

One law, not a menu

Some people treat the Ten Commandments like a restaurant menu: "I'll take 'do not kill' and 'do not steal,' but I'll skip that one." James warns us gently that the law is one piece:

> *"For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all... So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty."*
>
> **James 2:10, 12 (KJV)**

That can sound frightening — until you notice what James calls it: **"the law of liberty."** God's law is not a cage. A train is most free on its rails. A fish is most free in the water. We are most free when we live the way our Maker designed us to live — and that includes resting with Him on the day He blessed (see our study *"God's Gift of Rest"*).

And if you just realized you have broken more than one point? Good. That is the mirror doing its job. Now run to the water: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"* (1 John 1:9).

Love finishes the law

Paul sums it up in one line you could put on your refrigerator:

> *"Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."*
>
> **Romans 13:10 (KJV)**

Love does not look for loopholes. Love does not ask, "What's the least I can do?" Love asks, "How can I honor the One who saved me, and bless the person in front of me?"

The heart of it: Jesus writes it on your heart

Here is the best news of all. You cannot produce this kind of love by trying harder. On your own, the yellow paper stays on the refrigerator, and you keep rolling your eyes.

But Jesus Christ kept the law perfectly — for you. He died for every point you broke. He rose again. And through the Holy Spirit He makes a promise no rule could ever make:

> *"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."*
>
> **Hebrews 8:10 (KJV)**

The law moves from stone to heart. From "I have to" to "I want to." From a fence to a love letter — signed at the bottom by a Father who says, *"It's because I love you."*

Before you close this — one question

Have you been obeying God out of fear, or have you been ignoring His law because you thought grace erased it? Either way, Jesus is offering you something better tonight.

You do not have to sort this out alone. We would be honored to pray with you, study the Bible with you, or walk with you as you get to know the God behind the commandments.

Would you like to know more about Jesus, study the Bible, or go deeper on this topic? Reach us today:

📞 **903-748-9353** · ✉️ **jils19802012@gmail.com**
Or leave a comment, send us a direct message, and **subscribe + follow** on YouTube and Facebook.

Don't miss what's next. Most people picture heaven as floating on clouds forever — and the Bible describes something far more real, and far better. Our next study: *"Heaven and the New Earth: The Home God Is Building."* Subscribe now so it reaches you the moment it's out. If you wait, you'll have to come find it. 🔔

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Viewer Handout

God's Law of Love — pocket version

5 truths to remember

1. God rescued His people first, then gave the law — the law is the shape of love, not the price of rescue (Exodus 20:2).
2. All ten commandments hang on two: love God, love your neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40).
3. Obedience grows out of love for Jesus, not out of fear (John 14:15).
4. We are saved by grace through faith — and that faith establishes the law, it does not erase it (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:31).
5. Love is the fulfilling of the law, and Jesus writes it on our hearts (Romans 13:10; Hebrews 8:10).

Memory verse

> *"If ye love me, keep my commandments."*
>
> **John 14:15 (KJV)**

Think & pray about it

- Did I grow up seeing God's law as a fence or as a love letter? Why?
- Which commandment is hardest for me right now — and what would it look like to ask Jesus to write it on my heart?
- Who in my life needs to see love, not rules, when they look at how I live?

FOR TEACHERS & SMALL GROUPS

Presenter Bullet Sheet

- **Open with the story** (the yellow paper on the refrigerator) — ask: "What rule from your childhood did you only understand years later?"
- **Point 1 — Rescue first:** Exodus 20:2. God freed Israel before He gave one commandment. Grace comes before law.
- **Point 2 — Two directions:** Exodus 20:3-17; Matthew 22:37-40. Four commandments toward God, six toward people; all of them are love.
- **Point 3 — Love obeys:** John 14:15; Psalm 119:97. Obedience is love's response, not fear's payment.
- **Point 4 — Grace and law are not enemies:** Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:31. Saved by grace alone; faith establishes the law. Use the mirror-and-water picture.
- **Point 5 — One law of liberty:** James 2:10-12. Not a menu; freedom like a train on its rails. Mention the Sabbath gently and point to the Sabbath study. Close the point with 1 John 1:9.
- **Point 6 — Love fulfills:** Romans 13:10.
- **Christ-centered close:** Hebrews 8:10 — Jesus kept the law for us, died for our failures, and by the Holy Spirit writes His law on our hearts.
- **Appeal:** invite each person to thank God that they are already rescued, and to ask Him to write one commandment on their heart this week. Offer prayer and Bible study.
- **Close:** memory verse (John 14:15) + tease the next study ("Heaven and the New Earth: The Home God Is Building").

EVIDENCE-BASED · FACT-CHECKED

10 Myths vs. Facts

Myth	Fact (with Bible)
1. Keeping the Ten Commandments is how we earn salvation.	We are saved by grace through faith, "not of works" (Ephesians 2:8-9). God rescued Israel before giving the law (Exodus 20:2).
2. Grace cancels the law.	"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law" (Romans 3:31).
3. Jesus came to abolish the law.	Jesus said, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil" (Matthew 5:17).
4. God's law is cold and harsh.	All of it hangs on love for God and neighbor (Matthew 22:37-40); "love is the fulfilling of the law" (Romans 13:10).
5. We should obey God mainly out of fear of punishment.	"If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15); "his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3).
6. I can keep the commandments I like and skip the others.	The law is one whole; breaking one point breaks the law (James 2:10-11).
7. God's law takes away my freedom.	James calls it "the law of liberty" (James 2:12); "I will walk at liberty: for I seek thy precepts" (Psalm 119:45).
8. The Ten Commandments were just Moses' ideas.	God spoke them (Exodus 20:1) and wrote them on stone "with the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18).
9. With enough willpower, I can keep the law perfectly on my own.	"All have sinned" (Romans 3:23); God promises to write His law in our hearts (Hebrews 8:10; Ezekiel 36:26-27).
10. Once I have broken God's law, He is finished with me.	"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us" (1 John 1:9); "where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20).

Where this comes from (Sources)

This study is built on the Bible and reflects the published beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Verify everything for yourself:

- The Bible — passages on God's law: Exodus 20:1-17; Exodus 31:18; Psalm 119:45, 97; Matthew 5:17; Matthew 22:37-40; John 14:15; Romans 3:23, 31; Romans 5:20; Romans 13:10; Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 8:10; James 2:10-12; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 5:3; Ezekiel 36:26-27 (King James Version, public domain).
- Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Belief #19, "The Law of God" — official beliefs: https://adventist.org/beliefs
- 28 Fundamental Beliefs (2020 edition, PDF): https://adventist.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ADV-28Beliefs2020.pdf
- General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists: https://gc.adventist.org/
- Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets* (ch. 27, "The Law Given to Israel") and *Steps to Christ* (ch. "The Test of Discipleship"), public domain: https://whiteestate.org/ / https://m.egwwritings.org/
- Related studies in this library: *"God's Gift of Rest"* and *"Saved by Grace"* — https://pasteurclementsalomon.org/resources.html · Questions? https://pasteurclementsalomon.org/faq.html

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