

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth – Part 2

The Ten Commandments and the Church

***"Study to show thyself approved unto God,
a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of truth." II Timothy 2:15***

Confusion and wrong doctrine amongst believers comes from people who do not "rightly divide" the word of God. They do not read Scripture in its entire context, or take into account to whom the writer is speaking. Is the writer speaking to Believers, or about non-believers? Is he speaking about Israel, or about the church of Jesus Christ? Is he speaking to people under the Law of Moses, or to people under grace? God makes a distinction between people, and we must be careful to see to whom He is speaking in a particular passage of Scripture. Under this present dispensation of grace, God has divided people into three distinct categories: (1.) Jews (the nation of Israel), (2.) Gentiles (non-Jews), and (3.) the church of God, which is the body of Christ.

- **I Corinthians 10:32** "Give none offense, neither **to the Jews**, nor **to the Gentiles**, nor **to the CHURCH of God.**"
- **Ephesians 1:22-23** "And hath put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things **to the CHURCH, which is His BODY**, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all."

One result of this failure to "rightly divide" the word of God is that there are some groups that teach that we, as believers in Jesus Christ, must keep the Ten Commandments as proof of our salvation, and if we do not "keep the Ten Commandments" as they did in the Old Testament, we are disobeying Jesus when He said, "Keep My commandments." They falsely use the term "antinomian" to describe us if we say we are not required to keep the Ten Commandments. The definition of "antinomian" is "one who holds that under the gospel dispensation of grace the moral law is of no use or obligation because faith alone is necessary for salvation." While we do believe that **FAITH in Jesus Christ ALONE** is all that is necessary for salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:4-7), we do not believe that God's moral law is "of no use" to us, because it will always remain as the standard of behavior, and a point of reference by which we see how far we fall short of God's perfection (Romans 3:23), and how much we need the Savior. Because we are under grace and not under the law, it does not mean we believe we can live our lives any way we please, disregarding God's moral laws. The Apostle Paul dealt with the same question when he asked, "What shall we say then? Shall we **continue in sin** that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who **died to sin live any longer in it?**" (Romans 6:1-2) and, "What then? Shall we sin because **we are not under law, but under grace?** Certainly not!" (Romans 6:15).

There is also some confusion over Jesus' words when He said that He did not come to destroy the law, but to FULFILL it. In "Strong's Concordance and Greek Dictionary", **the word "fulfill or fulfilled"** in Matthew 5:17-18 is word #1096, "ginomai" in the Greek. The definition is "to cause to be, come into being, to come to pass, **be DONE, be ENDED, be PERFORMED, be FINISHED.**" Jesus did indeed cause the law to be fulfilled in that **He KEPT all of God's laws perfectly**; He DID it, He PERFORMED it, and died to pay the penalty for our failure to keep those laws. When you receive Jesus as your Savior, His righteousness is applied to your account, and you are considered righteous in God's sight, because of Christ's righteousness imputed to you (II Corinthians 5:21). Webster's dictionary defines fulfill as "to carry out (something promised, desired, expected, predicted); **to fill the requirements of, to satisfy**;

to bring to an end, complete, to convert into reality." For example, the prophecies of Christ's coming have "been fulfilled" in that He has come and performed what they said (except for the prophecies of His second coming, which are not yet fulfilled). Another example is when a couple is engaged to be married, the actual wedding ceremony and marriage is **the fulfillment or completion of what was promised**, desired, expected. **The engagement is brought to an end, because the marriage has now begun.** Beloved, the church is the Body and the Bride of Christ! (Revelation 19:7-8, II Corinthians 11:2)

- **Matthew 5:17-18** "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to FULFILL. 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.**"
- **Romans 8:4** "That **the righteous REQUIREMENT of the LAW** might be **FULFILLED in us** who do not walk according to the flesh but **according to the Spirit.**"
- **Romans 4:5-6** "But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, **his FAITH is ACCOUNTED for RIGHTEOUSNESS.** Just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom **God IMPUTES righteousness** apart from WORKS....."
- **Romans 7:4-5** "Therefore, my brethren, you also have become **DEAD to the LAW** through the BODY OF CHRIST, that you may be **MARRIED to another**, even to **Him who was raised from the dead**, that we should **bear FRUIT to God.**"

Jesus said that not "one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law, **till all be FULFILLED,**" and **now Jesus has FULFILLED the righteousness of the law by keeping God's commandments perfectly.** Now that it has been fulfilled, we have moved on to the New Covenant. When Jesus was speaking, as recorded in Matthew 5:17-18, it was still the Old Covenant, because Jesus had not yet gone to the cross, died, and been raised again from the dead (see John 7:39). The New Covenant is "in the blood of Jesus" (Luke 22:20), and Jesus had not yet shed His blood at that time, so the disciples were still under obligation to keep the commandments. Once the cross and resurrection were accomplished, Hebrews 7:18 and Hebrews 8:6-7 & 13 says the commandments are annulled, decaying, and waxing old and ready to vanish away. The New Covenant has replaced the Old Covenant.

- **Hebrews 7:18** "For on the one hand there is **an ANNULING of the former commandment** because of its weakness and unprofitableness, for the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is **the bringing in of a BETTER hope**, through which we draw near to God."
- **Hebrews 8:6-7 & 13** "But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as **He is also Mediator of a BETTER covenant**, which was established on BETTER promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second." "In that He says, 'A new covenant', **He has made the first OBSOLETE. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to VANISH AWAY.**"

So then, if Christians are not bound to keep the Ten Commandments, then what is our standard by which we know that we are pleasing God and being obedient to Him? We see that not only Jesus in His teachings while on earth (Matthew 5:21-48), but also the entire New Testament, holds us as followers of Christ to a much higher standard in many areas of conduct than any Old Testament laws, including the Ten Commandments. Not only is it a higher standard, but the method in which we "keep the commandments" is entirely different. **The New Testament tells us we are to "bear FRUIT" by the power of the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, and the most important "fruit" is LOVE.** The New Testament tells us that **if we WALK in LOVE** we will automatically obey all the commandments, because "love does no harm to another" and God's love in us is our motive and source of power (Romans 5:5). **Jesus said we are to "BEAR FRUIT to GOD."** In this context "fruit" means product,

RESULTS, outcome. The OUTCOME of our lives should be to DO God's will and live a life that is pleasing to Him.

- **John 15:8** "Herein is My Father glorified, that **ye BEAR much FRUIT**; so shall ye be My disciples."
- **Galatians 5:13-16 & 18** "For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty (your FREEDOM) as an opportunity for the flesh (to SIN), but **through LOVE serve one another. For all the LAW is FULFILLED in one word, even in this: 'You shall LOVE your neighbor as yourself.'** I say then: **Walk in the Spirit**, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." "But if you are **led by the Spirit**, you are NOT under the LAW."
- **Galatians 5:22-23** "But **the FRUIT of the SPIRIT** is LOVE, JOY, PEACE, longsuffering (patience), kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law."
- **Colossians 1:10** "That you may have **a walk (lifestyle) worthy of the Lord, fully PLEASING Him, being FRUITFUL** in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God."

Now, let us look at each commandment individually, and see what the New Testament has to say in the same area. The original commandments are found in Exodus 20:1-17.

1.) Thou shalt have no other gods before Me - An idol or false god is **anything or any person** who takes your time, energy, and devotion AWAY from the true God. It could be an addiction, or a loved one or family member, or money, or materialism (wanting to accumulate THINGS), FAME, POWER, excitement - all these can be idols or become "god" in your life.

- **I John 5:20-21** "And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, that we may know Him who is true; and we are in **Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the TRUE GOD** and eternal life. Little children, **keep yourselves from IDOLS**. Amen."
- **Colossians 3:5** "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and **COVETOUSNESS which is IDOLATRY**."
- **I Corinthians 8:4-6** "..... we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that **there is none other God but one**. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many), but **to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things**, and we by Him."
- **Philippians 3:18-19** "For many walk (live their lives), of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ; whose end is destruction, **whose GOD is their belly (bodily appetites)**, and whose glory is in their shame....."
- **I Thessalonians 1:9-10** "For they themselves declare concerning us what manner of entry we had to you, and how **you TURNED to God from IDOLS to serve the LIVING and TRUE God**, and to wait for **His Son** from HEAVEN, whom He RAISED from the DEAD, even **Jesus**....."

2.) Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image - This means worshiping, serving, bowing down to and praying to any statues or idols, even if they call the idols Jesus, Mary or one of the "saints." In Romans 1:21-25, we see that God gives us more insight into the REASON why idols are wrong, and that is because people are worshiping the created thing rather than the Creator. Also, in I Corinthians 10:14-21, we see that **DEMONS are behind every idol**, and that is another reason why we should stay away from any form of idolatry.

- **Romans 1:21-25** "Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts

- were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools, and **changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an IMAGE made like corruptible man - and birds and four-footed beasts and creeping things**. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, **who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator**, who is blessed forever. Amen."
- **I Corinthians 10:14-21** "Therefore, my beloved, **FLEE from IDOLATRY**.....What do I mean then? That a thing **sacrificed to idols** is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, but I say that the things which the Gentiles (non-believers) sacrifice, **they SACRIFICE to DEMONS, and NOT to GOD**; and I do not want you to become sharers in DEMONS."
 - **II Corinthians 6:14-18** "Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with DARKNESS? Or what harmony has Christ with BELIAL (SATAN), or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever? **Or what agreement has the temple of God with IDOLS?** For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, **'I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God and they shall be My people.** Therefore, **COME OUT FROM AMONG THEM and be SEPARATE,**' says the Lord."
 - **Revelation 9:20-21** "And the rest of mankind.....did not repent of the works of their hands, so as **NOT to WORSHIP DEMONS and the IDOLS of GOLD and of SILVER and of brass and of stone and of wood**, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders nor of their SORCERIES nor of their immorality nor of their thefts."

3.) Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain - As Christians, we are not only **not to use the Lord's name as a swear word**, but we are not supposed to swear or curse in any way, but to let our "yes" mean yes, and our "no" mean no. In other words, a person who needs to curse and swear is basically not honest enough for people to believe they mean what they say.

- **James 3:10** "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and CURSING. My brethren, these things ought not to be."
- **Colossians 3:8** "But now you must also put off all these: Anger, wrath, malice, **blasphemy (insulting God's name), filthy language** out of your mouth."
- **James 5:12** "But above all things, my brethren, **SWEAR NOT**, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation."

4.) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy - For the Christian, EVERY day is to be lived as holy unto the Lord. The "Sabbath rest" for Christians is symbolic of resting from our works (see Hebrews 3:7-19 and 4:1-10).

- **I Peter 1:15-16** "But as He which hath called you is HOLY, so **be ye HOLY in all manner of conversation (lifestyle)**; because it is written, 'Be ye HOLY; for I am HOLY.'"
- **I Peter 2:5 & 9** "But **you** are a **chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a HOLY nation, His own special people**, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." "You, also, as living stones, are being built up [*to be*] a spiritual house, a **HOLY priesthood**, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ."
- **II Corinthians 7:1** "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, **perfecting HOLINESS** in the fear of God."
- **I Corinthians 10:31** "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or **whatsoever ye do, do ALL to the glory of God.**"

a. The keeping of the Sabbath Day with its death penalty for failure to keep it was a "sign" between God and ISRAEL, just as circumcision was a sign for Israel only, and we as Christians are NOT Israel, we are the Body of Christ.

- **Exodus 31:15-17** "For six days work may be done, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of complete rest, holy (set apart) to the Lord; whoever does any work on the sabbath shall surely be put to death." **"It is a sign between Me and the SONS of ISRAEL** forever; for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, but on the seventh day He ceased from labor, and was refreshed."

b. In Colossians 2:16-17, it says "sabbath days" but the word "days" is in italics, which means it is not in the original Greek, but was added by the translators. It is referring to the Sabbath Day. The point of this verse is that ALL of these things: keeping the Sabbath, the Jewish holidays, the dietary laws, **are ALL a "shadow of things to come" and the fulfillment is in Christ. Now that we have Christ and are IN Jesus Christ, we no longer need to keep the Old Testament laws and commandments** that were given to the Jews. Hebrews 9:9-10 says these ordinances were **imposed on them UNTIL the TIME of REFORMATION**, which means until that certain time which God appointed, which was when Christ fulfilled the law and all the prophecies that foretold His coming, and the church age began on the Day of Pentecost.

- **Colossians 2:16-17** "Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or **of the Sabbath days**; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ."
- **Romans 14:5-6** "One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and **he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it.....**"
- **Hebrews 9:9-10** "Which was a figure **for the time then present**, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers (various) washings, and carnal ordinances, **imposed on them UNTIL the TIME of REFORMATION (the time of Christ).**"

c. We do not need to keep any particular day of the week holy, just as we no longer have a specific place to worship God, such as the temple, because WE are now the temple of the living God.

- **I Corinthians 3:16** "Do you not know that **YOU are the temple of God** and that **the Spirit of God dwells in YOU?**"
- **I Corinthians 6:19** "Or do you not know that **YOUR body is the temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in **YOU**, whom you have from God, and **you are not your own?**"

5.) Honor thy father and thy mother - The New Covenant gives us instructions for younger children to obey their parents, and older children to take care of their parents in their old age.

- **Ephesians 6:1-3** "Children, OBEY your parents **in the Lord**, for this is right. 'Honor your father and mother,' which is the first **commandment with promise**; 'That it may be well with you and you may **live long on the earth.**'"
- **Colossians 3:20** "Children, **obey your parents** in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord."
- **I Timothy 4:3-4** "Honor widows who are really widows. But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them first learn to show piety at home and **to repay their parents; for this is good and acceptable before God.**"

6.) Thou shalt not kill - If we are filled with the Holy Spirit and God's love (Romans 5:5), we will not murder or harm another person. Also, Jesus gave us the true intent behind the commandment, in that even the sin of anger, and calling someone names, is the same as committing murder.

- **Romans 13:8-10** "Owe no one anything except **to LOVE one another, for he who loves another has FULFILLED the LAW**. For the commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery,' '**You shall not MURDER,**' 'You shall not steal,' 'You shall not bear false witness,' 'You shall not covet,' and if there is any other commandment, are all summed up in this saying, '**You shall LOVE your neighbor as yourself.**' **Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore LOVE is the fulfillment of the law.**"
- **Matthew 21-22** "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, 'Thou shalt not kill'; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but **I say unto you, that whosoever is ANGRY with his brother without cause shall be in danger of the judgment;** and whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca', shall be in danger of the council; **but whosoever shall say, 'Thou fool' shall be in danger of hell fire.**"
- **Ephesians 4:30-31** "And do not **GRIEVE the Holy Spirit** of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all **BITTERNESS, wrath, ANGER,** clamor, and **all EVIL SPEAKING** be **put away from you,** with all malice."

7.) Thou shalt not commit adultery - Jesus said that even lustful thoughts towards another person are the same as committing the sin of adultery or fornication (Matthew 5:27-28). The New Testament calls having lustful thoughts the sin of "uncleanness" and talks as much about our thoughts being clean and God-honoring as our actions.

- **Ephesians 5:3-4** "But **FORNICATION and all UNCLEANNESS** or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for **SAINTS**; neither **FILTHINESS,** nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks."
- **I Thessalonians 4:3-7** "For this is the will of God, **your sanctification:** that you should **ABSTAIN from sexual immorality;** that each of you should know how to possess (keep) his own vessel (body) in **SANCTIFICATION** and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles **who do not know God;** that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter..... For God did not call us to uncleanness (impurity), but in holiness."
- **Hebrews 13:4** "Marriage is honorable among all, and the [*marriage*] bed undefiled; but **fornicators** and **adulterers** God will judge."
- **I Corinthians 6:18-20** "**Flee sexual immorality.** Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality (fornication) sins against his own body. Or do you not know that **your BODY is the TEMPLE of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore **glorify God in your BODY** and in your spirit, which are God's."

8.) Thou shalt not steal - In the New Testament, we are instructed to work for our living, and in order to have money and resources to give to others in need. Stealing is a characteristic of the "old man".

- **Ephesians 4:28** "Let him who stole **STEAL no longer,** but rather let him **labor, working with his hands** what is good, that he may have something to **GIVE** him who is **IN NEED.**"
- **II Thessalonians 3:10-12** "For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread."

- **I Peter 4:15** "But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a **THIEF**, an evildoer, or as a busybody in other people's matters."

9.) Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor - To bear false witness is to lie, and the New Testament has a lot to say about not lying to one another, because lying is a characteristic of the "old man".

- **Colossians 3:8-9** "..you also must put off all these: anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy language out of your mouth. **Do not LIE to one another**, since you have put off the old man with his deeds."
- **Ephesians 4:29-31** "Let no **CORRUPT communication** proceed out of your MOUTH, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not **GRIEVE the Holy Spirit** of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all **BITTERNESS, wrath, ANGER, clamor, and all EVIL SPEAKING** be **put away from you**, with all malice."
- **Ephesians 4:25** "Therefore, **putting away LYING**, [*let*] each one **speak truth** with his neighbor, for we are members of one another."
- **Colossians 3:9** "**Do not lie to one another**, since you have put off the old man with his deeds."

10.) Thou shalt not covet - To covet is to have an unhealthy desire for something that is not yours; either that belongs to someone else, or you are just not content with what you have.

- **I Timothy 6:6-11** "But godliness **with CONTENTMENT** is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, **with these we shall be CONTENT.**"
- **Colossians 3:5** "Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth; fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and **COVETOUSNESS which is idolatry.**"

Please also read "[Love - Fulfillment of the Commandments](#)", "[Rightly Dividing the Truth - Part 1](#)", "[Must Christians Keep the Sabbath?](#)" and "[Being Filled with the Spirit, Abiding in Christ & Bearing Spiritual Fruit](#)".