

## INTRODUCTION

Before studying The Ten Commandments themselves, I am introducing the study to you, looking in some passages of scripture that help us understand The Ten Commandments rightly.

Today we go to 1 John chapter 5 for part of this introduction to The Ten Commandments.

Our Lord's apostle John wrote that the spirit of antichrist was already at work in the world, in the person of many false teachers, who named Christ, but had departed from the apostles and the true apostolic congregations. 1 John is a letter written to help believers understand what true Christianity is, over against the pseudo-Christianity taught and practiced by antichrist.

That helps us with several things. If we can know what true Christianity is:

- as each of us asks, in his own conscience, "Am I saved? Am I going to heaven? Am I really a Christian?" he can evaluate his standing before God, not according to the tenets of antichrist, but according to the criteria that truly are from Christ by His apostles
- we all can evaluate preachers and teachers, to identify and avoid listening to those who are false, and to hear those who are truly preaching Jesus Christ
- we can distinguish between the false ethical notions that the antichrist preachers espouse, and the true law of God, so we can know how to live as truly is pleasing to the Lord

The apostle John taught us that this practice of evaluating our own religion, and various religious teachers and doctrines and rules, to see which truly are of Christ, and which are of antichrist, involves consideration of God's law, God's commandments.

Matters that are the heart of what authentic religion is, the things wherein true biblical Christianity consists, are wrapped up with God's law, and so can be discerned by examining them in light of The Ten Commandments.

I'm talking about such matters as love, the new birth, and faith in Jesus Christ---the very foundational things of true religion, real biblical Christianity.

Do you have these things in yourself? Should I consider the author of the new book to have these? Should I think of the preacher on the radio as having these things? Should I think of the popular conference speaker as having these things? Do your congregation's pastors have these things? Does the popular pastor of the megachurch have love and the new birth and faith? Does the obscure pastor of the tiny church? How do we know? As I try to walk day by day as is right in God's sight, as is pleasing to Him, how do I know what I should do? There seem to be different rules or guidelines for how to live, all supposedly from God. What truly is His way for me to live?

Hear the word of God through the apostle John about these things, and learn to understand and use The Ten Commandments.

## TEXT

1 John 5:1-5 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

## BODY

It is very good for theological truths to be stated plainly, as is done here in verse 1.

Faith in Jesus as the Christ comes from the new birth that God gives.  
Love for God extends also to the children of God.

But because the devil always is trying to deceive us, and because there are all kinds of phoney religions and false teachers in the world around us, we need even more help in knowing what is true biblical Christianity and what is not.

So, along with the propositional statements of the truth, our Lord Jesus shows us the practical use of God's commandments in identifying the true and the false in religion.

- verse 2 "By this we know..."
- verse 3 "For this is..."
- verse 5 "Who is..."

## Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of

### I. Love (2)

#### A. For one another

1. “love one another”
2. there are some things that we call “love” that are not what our Lord Jesus was talking about
  - a) fleshly enjoyment
  - b) loyalty in a group
3. there is a higher, nobler love described here
  - a) a person loves God, and also loves the children of God
  - b) he loves the children of God by loving God and keeping His commandments
  - c) e.g. Thou shalt not steal.
    - (1) 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 has need.
  - d) e.g. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
    - (1) Larger Catechism: “calling evil good, and good evil”

#### B. For God (3a)

1. A study of The Ten Commandments helps me ask this question of you: Do you have love for God
  - a) or only for yourself?
  - b) or for the world?
  - c) or for the pleasures of the flesh?

#### C. APPLICATION: Study of The Ten Commandments helps the Christian ask and answer a very important question:

1. Q: How can I, a sinner so loved by God in Jesus Christ, show my grateful love for Him?
2. A: I can keep His commandments.

#### D. What it is truly to love God and to love each other is a matter of such importance that

1. I don't want to learn it from whatever wet-behind-the ears popular speaker is the most tattooed, passionate, relevant, intentional, and impactful.
2. I want to learn it from the Reformers and the Puritans and the Baptists of past centuries, whose work has survived because it rang true to generations of disciples
3. And I want to learn it from the most faithful pastors that I know personally, whose lives I admire and whose preaching I find serious and sound

Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of love. And

Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of

II. The New Birth (3b-4a)

- A. We have learned from our Lord Jesus Christ that to see the kingdom of heaven, a person must be born again.
- B. In a study of The Ten Commandments, we learn about that new birth
  - 1. that for the one who is born again, the commandments of God are not burdensome; instead they are a delight
  - 2. Romans 7
    - a) Romans 7:12 Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.
    - b) Romans 7:22 For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.
- C. Why are they not burdensome? Why are they a delight? Because the Christian is born of God. (3b-4a)
  - 1. God rules this universe, being the Creator of it, essentially spiritual, and having life in Himself
  - 2. One born of God overcomes this world, including all the fleshly temptation to see the commandments of God as burdensome
  - 3. Part of the new birth is having God's commandments written on the heart  
*Jeremiah 31:31-33 "Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah-- (32) not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, though I was a husband to them, says the LORD. (33) But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*
    - a) think how in the time of Moses God imposed on Israel a law they did not want to obey; it was carved into stone tablets, but their hearts were hardened against it
    - b) think how different for the Christian; God has so changed the heart that it has the law freshly written in it, so that it loves God's law
- D. When you realize that inside yourself, there is a true love for God's law, for God's commandments
  - 1. it is a source of joy to you
  - 2. it is a cause to praise the Lord for His grace and power shown toward you

Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of love.

Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of the new birth. And

Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of

III. Faith in Jesus Christ (4b-5)

- A. The new birth produces in us faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God
- B. Victory over the world comes through this faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God
- C. Think of the victory the world has over everyone who does not believe in Christ
- D. Think of the victory the believer in Jesus Christ has through faith in Him
  - 1. Jesus has obeyed the commandments; through faith we are reckoned law-keepers in Him
  - 2. Jesus has died for our disobedience to the commandments; through faith we are reckoned to have died to sin
  - 3. God now sees our pitiful attempts at obedience as acceptable in His service because it is His work in us
  - 4. God works by His Spirit in us to help us overcome
  - 5. We do not despair of having good enough works, but have all our hope in the work of Christ, not in our own works
  - 6. Believing ourselves forgiven our sins in Christ, we fear the Lord and keep His commandments
  - 7. We persevere in this all the way until our death, or until the Lord Jesus comes back

CONCLUSION

Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of love.

Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of the new birth. And

Study of the Ten Commandments is a study of faith in Jesus Christ.

Call to Worship - Exodus 15:2

Scripture Reading - Psalm 119:9-16

Congregational Prayer

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 683 "Praise Him! Praise Him!" - Alex lead

Rita - Trinity 450 "O How Love I Thy Law" - Andrew lead

Rita - Trinity 195 "Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed?"

God's law as it relates to His gospel