

## *One Command or Many in One?*

Mainstream new-covenant theologians hold that believers are under the law of Christ, and that the Scriptures are an integral part of that law. Recently, however, some have begun to argue that this is not so. Believers are not under the law of Christ, they say. There are no external commands in that law since it is entirely inward, the work of the Spirit forming Christ within believers. Although believers must and will obey Scripture, they do so as a kind of reflex action, using Scripture as an invaluable source to inform their way of life, but to talk of believers being under the rule, the law, the commanding governance of Scripture, as an integral part of the law of Christ, means a return to the killing bondage of the old covenant under ‘the letter’.

I have argued that this is wrong, depending as it does upon a faulty exegesis of certain key passages of Scripture. I have further argued that it ends up with something close to a mystical,<sup>1</sup> hyper-Calvinistic approach to progressive sanctification. Moreover, I am concerned that its long-term consequences will prove disastrous in other ways. While I do not accuse its advocates of it themselves, I do see the danger of antinomianism and perfectionism in those who, in years to come, adopt this new view without understanding *and applying* the complicated – I might say, tortuous – but necessary distinctions and qualifications it involves.<sup>2</sup>

Let me explain. As I have I read the numerous contributions to the discussion on this topic, I have been left with the very strong impression that a growing number are rejecting the very idea that believers should think and talk in terms of ‘law’, ‘rule’ or ‘commandment’ in connection with the Scriptures.<sup>3</sup> In my

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<sup>1</sup> That is, the absorption of the human into the divine.

<sup>2</sup> For my arguments, see my ‘Believers Under the Law of Christ’ and ‘The Obedience of Faith’. On ‘the law of Christ’ as the believer’s rule, see my *Christ is All: No Sanctification by the Law* pp211-278,481-527.

<sup>3</sup> It surely goes without saying that I am not arguing that the Scriptures are a mere list of rules. I will return to this.

view, they so emphasise the internal work of the Spirit that they are in danger of seriously weakening the role of the external Scriptures. I know they will be horrified by what I say, but I am afraid this is the distinct impression I have received. As such, I can only regard this new approach as a serious mistake.

With one important nuance, David White agrees with this new view, but not, I hasten to add, with my assessment of it. In his paper, 'The Law and the Mind of God',<sup>4</sup> he agrees that believers are indeed under the law of Christ, but only if we understand that law to consist of but one commandment; namely, Christ's 'new commandment' to love (John 13:34). There are no other commands in the law of Christ. Taking these words of Christ, 'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another' (John 13:34), and linking them with Moses and the old covenant, he asserts:

The 'new commandment' of Christ will stand in the same place in this new covenant as the ten commandments had in the old, Mosaic covenant.

He goes on to refer to John 13:34 -35; 14:15 -24; 15:9-17, saying: 'Here... is the sum of that which is termed 'the law of Christ'. In developing his case, White quotes Christ's words in Matthew 22:34-40, with our Lord's reference to Leviticus 19:18 and Deuteronomy 6:5. Having been asked to say which was the greatest commandment in the law, Jesus declared:

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets (Matt. 22:37-40).

White comments:

At the heart of the whole Mosaic law, at its very core... are these two great pillars, which hold up the whole structure, the second being the extension of the first. Jesus has highlighted this fact in the very week he is to inaugurate his new covenant.

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<sup>4</sup> I am engaging with the proof copy.

Now, he gives new meaning, new emphasis – fulfilment – to what the Mosaic law had always been about. He completes the picture to which that old law pointed. He provides substance, now, to the former shadows. At the heart of the new covenant will be this: love for God’s Son, seen in identical love for God’s people. And just as it was the adherence to the law of Moses which was to display to the nations around that Israel was the people of the living God, so it is here. ‘By this’, Jesus says, ‘all men will know that you are my disciples’. The hallmark of the new covenant is the love of believer for believer. This is the ‘covenant commandment’. And this, I strongly suggest, is what Paul refers to as ‘the law of the Christ’... ‘Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ’ (Gal. 6:2). Do you see how what Paul says restates what Jesus has instituted as the new commandment of the new covenant? Sacrificial love, which is prepared to shoulder the load for our brothers, our sisters, is precisely what brings to completion (fulfils, not ‘keeps’) the law of the Christ.

This ‘monologue’ is what is referred to also in other terms. It is ‘God’s law’ for the believer. It has been elevated by Jesus, the King of Kings, as the ‘prince of laws’ from the old covenant – thus it is the ‘royal law’. It is the ‘law which brings freedom’. At the end of his life on this earth, John will also reflect on this single covenant commandment in his letters.

I believe that all this plays into the current debate over the law of Christ. Since I feel that White’s paper might well be used by some to bolster them in the new concept of the law of Christ that I have spoken about, I want to respond, under three headings:

Christ and Moses compared

Christ’s new-covenant commandment

Christ’s use of Leviticus 19:18 and Deuteronomy 6:5

### ***Christ and Moses compared***

While there are similarities between the old and the new covenants, Scripture stresses the contrast between them.<sup>5</sup> Israel was overwhelmingly an unregenerate nation, held under the law of Moses, which served as a child custodian over them as a people, as a temporary covenant for them alone, lasting until the coming of the Seed, Christ (Gal. 3:23-25; 4:1-7). Now that Christ has fulfilled the old covenant, and established the new, believers have died to the law of Moses<sup>6</sup> and are under the law of Christ, which law gives them motives for obedience, and instructions on how to calibrate it, what to aim for, including principles by which to work out the inward grace of the Spirit as they have to face ever-changing circumstances (Rom. 6:17; Phil. 2:12-13). The old covenant was a ministry of condemnation,

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<sup>5</sup> I quote from my 'Covenant Theology Tested': 'The two Testaments are strictly continuous (apart from the 400 year gap), but the two covenants are radically different, and have to be contrasted by us because they are contrasted in Scripture. The one, the Mosaic covenant, the old covenant, was the covenant of the flesh, outward, a shadow, ineffective, condemning, killing, a covenant of death, a temporary covenant which was fulfilled by Christ and abolished because it was weak and useless. The other covenant, the new covenant, is superior in that it is spiritual, of the Spirit, inward, the reality, effective, saving and permanent. While the Reformed want to talk in terms of the continuity of the two Testaments, this, in fact, is virtually irrelevant. What really matters is the fundamental disjoint of the two covenants. See John 1:17; Rom. 8:3; 10:4; 2 Cor. 3:6-9; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 7:18,22; 8:13. This is precisely what the Reformed will not face up to'.

<sup>6</sup> Elsewhere I have looked at the problem of how Gentile believers who, never being under the law of Moses, could be said to have died to it: 'Paul was speaking either of his own personal experience as a Jew, or else he was speaking of the Jews and not Gentiles. And even when he was clearly addressing Gentiles, he was often rebuking them for seeking to go under the law, allowing themselves to be put under it by false teachers, Judaisers, or going back to the slavery of pagan principles – this last, having nothing to do with the law of Moses at all! Christ has redeemed his people from all bondage. Even so... there are some passages where such explanations still do not satisfy. Rom. 2:14-15 is the explanation of all such' (my *Christ* p37). I went on to tackle this important passage.

even death; the new covenant is a spiritual, glorious ministry (2 Cor. 3:3-11,17-18). So, as White put it: ‘The old covenant had said: “If you keep my commandments, you will live”. The new covenant declares: “If you love me, you will keep my commandments”.’ And: ‘The Christian is not “under” law at all in the same way that the old-covenant member was’. I agree. I also agree that while we should use the old covenant to illustrate the new, we should never forget the superiority of the latter.

This, of course, is precisely what the writer the Hebrews does throughout his letter. In particular, he compares and contrasts Christ and Moses, the heads of the two covenants:

Jesus the apostle and high priest of our confession... was faithful to him who appointed him, just as Moses also was faithful in all God’s house... Jesus has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses... Moses was faithful in all God’s house as a servant, to testify to the things that were to be spoken later, but Christ is faithful over God’s house as a son (Heb. 3:1-6).

We know that Moses, in the first covenant, received, and faithfully delivered, the whole law to Israel (Deut. 4:5). Likewise, Christ, in the new covenant, delivered his law to his people:

The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son (Heb. 1:1-2).<sup>7</sup>

Moses, of course, had foretold this:

The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your brothers – it is to him you shall listen... The Lord said to me... ‘I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him’ (Deut. 18:15-19).

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<sup>7</sup> As the prophets’ words were written down as authoritative revelation, so were Christ’ (and his apostles’).

Now, I admit, we are not told explicitly that whereas Moses gave Israel ‘his’ law, Jesus has given his law to his new Israel, ‘the Israel of God’ (Gal. 6:16). But note the context linking ‘the law of Christ’ (Gal. 6:2) and ‘the Israel of God’.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, when we are told that God has spoken to us by Christ, it does not mean that Christ was a mere channel of information. The truth is, like Moses, Christ was a lawgiver, issuing his law repeatedly throughout his ministry, principally in his Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5 – 7), his last great discourse (John 12:47-50; 13:1 – 16:33), and in his great commission before his ascension (Matt. 28:18-20). Even a cursory glance at the Gospels will confirm it.

John Reisinger, in his *In Defense of Jesus, the New Lawgiver*, answering Richard Barcellos’ book *In Defense of the Decalogue: A Critique of New Covenant Theology*, asked:

Whether Moses is the greatest lawgiver that ever lived, including the Lord Jesus Christ himself or whether Jesus replaced Moses as the new prophet and lawgiver in the very same sense as he replaced Aaron as the new high priest?

He went on:

These two contrary principles underlie the two positions. New-covenant theology defends [I would say, proclaims] Jesus as the new, greater, full and final lawgiver who replaces Moses. We insist that the laws of Christ, given to the children of the kingdom of grace, make higher demands than those given by God to Israel at Sinai... We insist that Christ is the new

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<sup>8</sup> By the context, I mean that these two verses come in the closing words of the letter to the Galatians, one of the major New Testament books dealing with the subject of law. The two topics, ‘the law of Christ’ and ‘the Israel of God’, therefore, cannot be mere throwaways. Indeed, it would be nearer the truth to call them the climax to the letter: ‘Do not go back to the law of Moses or pagan law. You are no longer old Israel or pagans (Gal. 3:26-29). You are the Israel of God (1 Pet. 2:9-10; see also Eph. 2:19; Phil. 3:20), and you have your own new law: the law of Christ’. Furthermore, do not forget that Galatians is the earliest New Testament book: the apostle put down this vital marker right at the start of the history of the church.

lawgiver... To view Christ as only an exegete, even as the greatest exegete, is to reduce the Sermon on the Mount to nothing more than a true and spiritual understanding of the law given to Moses... New covenant theology prefers to view the Sermon on the Mount as a vital part of the new law of the kingdom of grace given by the new prophet and king of the church.<sup>9</sup>

Christ, in his Sermon on the Mount, not only took some principles from the Mosaic law and made them more intense, he upheld others – in particular the love commandment (Lev. 19:18 – see Matt. 5:43-44) – and made others redundant. Clearly, Christ was not renewing the Mosaic covenant, but, right at the start of the new age, he was instituting his own law for the new covenant. He was setting out a new law, under a new covenant, in a new age, for new men.<sup>10</sup> And as Reisinger said: ‘The laws of the kingdom of grace established by our Lord Jesus Christ are higher and more demanding than any laws God ever gave to Israel through Moses’.<sup>11</sup>

This is the point I wish to establish, and White agrees with me: as Moses was Israel’s lawgiver, so Christ is the lawgiver for his people. Christ, of course, is far more than his people’s lawgiver, but since ‘the law of Christ’ is the issue under debate, I concentrate on this fact. Christ is the lawgiver in the new covenant. It must be right, therefore, to call his commands ‘the law of Christ’; they can be nothing else.

William Gadsby, writing on ‘the law of liberty’ (Jas. 1:25), having said ‘that the Holy Ghost has been pleased to set forth this law by a diversity of terms’, began by quoting Isaiah 2:3 and Micah 4:2: ‘Out of Zion shall go the law’ (see also Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:27). Stating that ‘this law is called “the law of Christ”... (Gal. 6:2)’, he went on:

The law of works was given by Moses, but this law, which is grace and truth, came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17); for, we are

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<sup>9</sup> John G.Reisinger: *In Defense of Jesus, the New Lawgiver* pp12-16.

<sup>10</sup> See my *Christ* especially pp236-241,493-500, and my ‘The Law the Believer’s Rule?’

<sup>11</sup> Reisinger p9. See my ‘The Penetrating Law of Christ’.

not without law to God, but under the law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:21), for so the passage should be rendered.<sup>12</sup>

Referring to Isaiah 42:1, Gadsby quoted John Gill:

The gospel, the product of divine wisdom [is] the gospel of God, whose judgment is according to truth, the rule of human judgment in things spiritual and saving, and by which Christ judges and rules in the hearts of his people. This he brought forth out of his Father's bosom, out of his own heart, and published it in person to the Jews, and, by his apostles, to the Gentiles, who, being converted by it, became subject to his rule and government.

Gadsby went on, referring to Isaiah 42:4, the isles waiting for the law of the Messiah: 'Now... what law can this be?' Gadsby asked. 'Surely not the killing letter [2 Cor. 3:6-9]! No. It is the precious gospel by which he judges and rules in the hearts of his people – a law quite distinct from the law of Moses'. On 'a law shall proceed from me' (Isa. 51:4), Gadsby declared:

[It came] from Christ the Head of his church. [It was] not the Sinai law, but the gospel, the law of Christ. It is the very same law mentioned in Isaiah 2:3... This is Zion's law... delivered by Zion's King to the children of Zion, the church of the living God. And this law, gospel, doctrine, or word is by way of eminence called 'the word of the kingdom' (Matt. 13:19), 'the word of salvation' (Acts 13:26), 'the word of the gospel' (Col. 1:5), 'the word of God's grace' (Acts 20:32), 'the word of faith' (Rom. 10:8), 'the word of reconciliation' (2 Cor. 5:19), 'the word of life' (Phil. 2:16; 1 John 1:1), 'the word of Christ' (Col. 3:16), 'the faithful word' (Tit. 1:9), 'the word of the oath' (Heb. 7:28), 'the word of Christ's patience' (Rev. 3:10), and 'the word of the saint's testimony' (Rev. 12:11). This is the word of the Lord that went from Jerusalem, the vision of peace; and a precious word it is. It is the word or law of Christ, the Prince of Peace, the sceptre of his kingdom, which is a right sceptre (Ps. 45:6; Heb. 1:8) and rod of his strength by which he rules his people... There is no law so strong and forcible, so attracting and engaging, or that is so cheerfully obeyed, as this precious gospel, which is the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus... This law is called 'the law of faith' (Rom. 3:27)... The

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<sup>12</sup> Gadsby went into details, stressing the 'of'.



gospel [is] the law of faith... It is the gospel that faith obeys and by which it walks... The... ‘obedience to the faith’ (Rom. 1:5)... By ‘faith’ here is not meant the grace of faith, but the doctrine of faith, which is the truth of the gospel of God... If the gospel be no rule of obedience... I am at a loss to know what the apostle meant when he tells us that ‘the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, [is] made known to all nations for the obedience of faith’ (Rom. 16:25-26)... How can this precious gospel be more clearly revealed, and made known by the commandment of God, for the obedience of faith, if it be no rule of obedience?... The gospel is called the truth in direct opposition to the law (John 1:17).<sup>13</sup>

White recognised the obvious, self-evident link between commands and law – indeed, their virtual interchangeability: “‘law’ conveys its instructions by ‘commands’ or ‘commandments’”, he said. I agree! So, when we read ‘law’ we read ‘commandment’, and when we read ‘commandment’ we read ‘law’. If we are talking about Moses, we are talking about the law of Moses; if we are talking about Christ, we are talking about the law of Christ. Whenever we read of Christ issuing a command, we are reading an element of his law. And it’s not just in the literal use of ‘commandment’ or ‘law’, is it? Consider Jesus’ final statement to his disciples:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age (Matt. 28:18-20).

New converts have to be taught to observe everything Christ ‘commanded’. Now what else can this be but Christ’s law? But notice the opening of this commission. While the word ‘command’ is not used, what else do all the imperatives amount

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<sup>13</sup> William Gadsby: ‘The Perfect Law of Liberty or the Glory of God revealed in the Gospel’ in *Freedom From The Law*, CBO Publications, Ossett, 2015, pp48-78. See my ‘The Obedience of Faith’.

to but Christ's command to his people for all time: 'Go... make... baptise... teach'? As White agreed, when we meet 'law' we meet 'commandment', and when we meet 'commandment' we are in the realm of 'law' – whether or not we are talking about Moses or Christ. 'The law of Christ', as a phrase, is rare in the New Testament, but as a concept it pervades it.

Nor must 'the law of Christ' be limited to Christ's own words. As we shall see, in the very discourse where he was most clearly issuing his 'new commandment' to his disciples, Christ explicitly told them that he would give the Spirit in order to give them the full revelation of his word – that is, his law: the Spirit would lead the apostles into all truth and so, through that revelation, grant them foundational authority over all believers for all time (1 Cor. 3:10-11; Eph. 2:20; Rev. 21:14). Therefore it is no surprise to read the apostles insisting on this right to issue commands in the name of Christ; that is, the law of Christ.

Just one example must suffice:

Paul, an apostle – not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead – and all the brothers who are with me: To the churches of Galatia... I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel – not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ. For I would have you know, brothers, that the gospel that was preached by me is not man's gospel. For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:1-11).

Notice that Paul thought it was essential to open his letter to the Galatians in this way, which letter, as I remarked before, is the earliest New Testament document. Combining this with the way he finished the letter, we can see how the apostle put down two

vital markers right at the start of the history of the church: under the direct authority of Christ, he, and the other apostles, would, by the Spirit, set out the full revelation of the glories of the new covenant (Eph. 3:1-12), and, of course, in so doing, they would flesh out Christ's one great commandment, and all, by writing Scripture (2 Tim. 3:14-17; 2 Pet. 3:14-18).

To summarise thus far: Christ issued his law to his people both in his own lifetime and through his apostles by his Spirit after Pentecost. And all this revelation, of course, is found objectively only in the written Scriptures. For obvious reasons, the Spirit's writing of Christ's law on the heart cannot fulfil that role. Hence, the Scriptures must be right at the heart of the law of Christ.

### ***Christ's new-covenant commandment***

Here are the words:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another (John 13:34).

How should we understand Christ's words? How did his immediate hearers understand them? As one literal command? Surely not. In giving his apostles this one command he was clearly giving them an envelope containing a whole body of commands and principles, exhortations and instructions in summary form. Or, putting it another way, he was giving them a covering umbrella, a synopsis, to encapsulate or embody his entire law. It was, as it were, Jesus' text for this vital sermon or discourse in which he issued his law. It was the overall précis, summary or digest of what he was going to say, delineating its overall end, purpose and scope. It is as Paul told the Romans when referring to the Mosaic law:

The commandments, 'You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet', and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself' (Rom. 13:9).

We may justly accommodate the apostle's words: 'The law of Christ is summed up in this word: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another (John 13:34)'"

M.R.Vincent on 'commandment':

The word [is used] for a single commandment or injunction, but [is] used also for the whole body of the moral precepts of Christianity... This new commandment embodies the essential principle of the whole law.

Clearly this is right. Notice how Christ both preceded and followed his statement with a whole continuous stream of commandments. Moreover, note how, within this series of commands, he indicated that this discourse was designedly incomplete. Do not miss the fact that it was in this very discourse that he issued his promise of the Spirit to lead the apostles into the full and complete revelation of what he had wanted to say, both here and throughout his ministry. And he was not content to leave it at saying it once! All this prepares us for post-Pentecost Scriptures: the apostles would flesh out the encapsulating principle of 'the one new-covenant commandment'. This is why I am sure that the answer to my chosen question in the title of this article is that Christ's one commandment encapsulates the apostolic Scriptures as the law of Christ. We are talking about many commands in one. The closing book of Scripture makes it clear enough when it speaks of 'the endurance of the saints', 'those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus', 'those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus' (Rev. 12:17; 14:12). We are indeed, speaking of many commandments.

Let me quote the relevant scriptures in John 13 – 16. First, the one overall commandment:

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another (John 13:34).

Now for the series of commandments within Christ's discourse:

You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you... If you love me, you will keep my commandments... Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me... Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me... Abide in me... If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you... These things I command you, so that you will love one another (John 13:13-15; 14:15,21,24; 15:4,10-14,17).

And now, within this last great discourse, replete as it is with Christ's commandments gathered under the umbrella of his one 'new commandment', we meet the far-reaching promise of the gift and ministry of the Spirit to enable the apostles to complete the task of setting out Christ's law for all his people for all time, to the end of the age:

These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you... When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me... I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away... I have said these things to you that... you may remember that I told them to you... I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you (John 14:25-26; 15:26;16:1,4,12-15).

In light of this, as I said under the first heading, it is no surprise to read the apostles insisting on the right to issue commands in the name of Christ. And what else can this be the ‘the law of Christ’?

If we imagine ourselves back in the very early days of the church, just after Pentecost, discussing Christ’s promise, what do you think might be going through our minds? Whether or not we would have foreseen, by the apostolic writings, issued in the name and authority of Christ, a mushrooming of myriad instructions, commandments and exhortations explaining, expanding, enlarging upon and enforcing his one great commandment, I cannot say. But, this is precisely what happened. Take Paul and John:

If anyone thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that the things I am writing to you are a command of the Lord (1 Cor. 14:37).

We have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command. May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ. Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us... [We gave you] an example to imitate. For even when we were with you, we would give you this command... We command and encourage [you] in the Lord Jesus Christ... Brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother (2 Thess. 3:4-15).

As I urged you when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons... The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith... I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example<sup>14</sup> to those who were to believe in him for eternal life... This charge I entrust to you, Timothy, my child, in accordance with the prophecies

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<sup>14</sup> ‘Example’, ‘pattern’, *hupotupōsis*.

previously made about you, that by them you may wage the good warfare... (1 Tim. 1:3,5,16,18).

Follow the pattern<sup>15</sup> of the sound words that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus (2 Tim. 1:13).<sup>16</sup>

Beloved, I am writing you no new commandment, but an old commandment that you had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word that you have heard. At the same time, it is a new commandment that I am writing to you, which is true in him and in you... This is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another... this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him... We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error (1 John 2:7-8; 3:11,23-24; 4:6).<sup>17</sup>

I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children walking in the truth, just as we were commanded by the Father. And now I ask you, dear lady—not as though I were writing you a new commandment, but the one we have had from the beginning—that we love one another. And this is love, that we walk according to his commandments; this is the commandment, just as you have heard from the beginning, so that you should walk in it (2 John 4-6).

And this is only the merest sample of the apostles issuing a stream of commands, rules and principles, accompanied

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<sup>15</sup> See previous note.

<sup>16</sup> Do not miss the role of the *commanding* army officer (2 Tim. 2:4, NIV) and, especially, the need to compete *lawfully*, *nomimōs*, according to the *rules* (2 Tim. 2:5), in the illustrations which Paul immediately set out in which he used the same word as in: ‘The law [of Moses] is good, if one uses it *lawfully*’ (1 Tim. 1:8). Clearly, we are in the realm of new-covenant law.

<sup>17</sup> Compare these words of Christ: ‘Whoever is of God hears the words of God’ (John 8:47). ‘Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice’ (John 18:37). Gill on John 18:37: ‘Hears [Christ’s] voice, the voice of his gospel, and that not only externally, but internally, so as to approve of it, rejoice at it, and distinguish it – and the voice of his commands, so as cheerfully to obey them from a principle of love to him’.

spiritual motives, all with the authority of Christ and in his name; in other words, giving believers the law of Christ. Not wishing to extend this article, I limit myself to just one comment, by Gill, on 1 Corinthians 14:37:

Let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord; if he is a true prophet, and really a spiritual man, he will clearly see, and therefore ought to own, that the rules here prescribed... are perfectly agreeable to the commands of Christ, and are to be esteemed as such, being delivered under the influence and direction of his Spirit; and which the prophet and spiritual man must discern and allow, if they have the Spirit of God; for whatever was commanded by the apostles under divine inspiration, was all one as if immediately commanded by Christ himself.

And here is an example of Paul, taking Christ's commandment (using the decalogue), and expanding it for believers, and in precise detail:

Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one 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 covet', and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself'. Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Besides this you know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armour of light. Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarrelling and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires (Rom. 13:8-14).

And so it goes on, right to the end of Romans.

From all this, we can see that Christ issued his law to his people both in his own lifetime and through his apostles by his Spirit after Pentecost. Was this just for the first disciples? Of course not! So where shall we, today, read the law of Christ, the apostolic pattern, rules and commandments, as issued directly



by Christ and then by his Spirit through his apostles? Only in the written Scriptures! Hence, the Scriptures must be right at the heart of the law of Christ.<sup>18</sup>

The first believers had the original manuscripts (not all at once, of course). Surely they regarded those precious documents as the word or law of Christ to them directly. This, surely, was one of the main reasons which moved later believers to gather all these scattered documents, Scriptures (2 Pet. 3:14-18) and preserve and publish them in one volume. They recognised their authority, their value and purpose. They knew that Paul's command to Timothy applied to them in their day, and they wanted succeeding generations of believers to have the same. This is our inheritance. Taking our Bible, reading it through its apostolic interpretation and application, we know we have Christ's law to us. In particular, we know that the apostolic command to Timothy applies to us, as it has to all the saints ever since the apostle issued it:

Continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed... the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Tim. 3:14-17).

### ***Christ's use of Leviticus 19:18 and Deuteronomy 6:5***

Let me re-state what I said at the start. White, taking 'A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another' (John 13:34), and linking this with Moses and the old covenant, he asserts:

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<sup>18</sup> '[Moses] at Mount Sinai... received living oracles to give to us' (Acts 7:38). 'The Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God' (Rom. 3:2). 'Though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of the oracles of God' (Heb. 5:12). 'Whoever speaks, [let him be] as one who speaks oracles of God' (1 Pet. 4:11).

The 'new commandment' of Christ will stand in the same place in this new covenant as the ten commandments had in the old, Mosaic covenant.

He goes on to refer to John 13:34 -35; 14:15 -24; 15:9-17, saying: 'Here... is the sum of that which is termed 'the law of Christ'.

This is highly significant. White here says that as the old-covenant law had its summary, so does the new. I agree. But I go on to maintain that just as the old-covenant summary did not do away with the full version of that law, with its detailed commandments, but, rather, complemented it, neither does the new-covenant equivalent of Christ's law do away with its full version. What is more, as with the old covenant, Israel had the law's summary written on stone tables, with the full version in the Book of the Law, so, in the new covenant, Christ's law is written on the heart of his people and in the external Scriptures.

We can go further. Deuteronomy 6:5 (the first table) with Leviticus 19:18 (the second table) is the biblical summary of the entire law. Jesus said so (Matt. 22:37-40). But just as this summary did not do away with the entire law of 613 commandments, neither does Christ's one commandment – which, as I have explained, represents a synopsis of his entire law – do away with the entire body of commandments and imperatives in the rest of the New Testament.<sup>19</sup> In other words, Jesus' use of Leviticus 19:18 and Deuteronomy 6:5 confirms the way we must regard the Scriptures as an integral part of the law of Christ.

This approach, in particular, to Leviticus 19:18 is important. It comes entirely and only from Christ. Before his use of the verse, followed by Paul writing his letters to the churches, there are no explicit references to the verse in Jewish writings.<sup>20</sup> In

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<sup>19</sup> For one thing, Christ's new-commandment has no reference to loving, serving and obeying God himself, but who can doubt that this belongs to Christ's law?

<sup>20</sup> 'Explicit references to Lev. 19:18 are lacking in Jewish literature before Paul... In contrast, Lev. 19:18 is the Pentateuchal passage most often cited in the New Testament... The stimulus to focus thus on Lev. 19:18 must therefore be peculiarly Christian and is best explained as

clear contrast, in the New Testament this verse is the most frequently quoted passage from the Pentateuch (Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14; Jas. 2:8). This can only mean that the apostolic emphasis on Leviticus 19:18 is particularly and especially a gospel emphasis, deriving from Christ himself, who first used it in this way (Matt. 5:43-44; 19:19; 22:39; Mark 12:31; Luke 10:27). Thus an undisputable link is established between Leviticus 19:18 and Christ's law. With the apostolic use of Leviticus 19:18, following on from Christ's use of it, we are firmly in the realm of Christ, not Moses, as lawgiver.

Using the fact that the ten commands and/or Leviticus 19:18 (with Deuteronomy 6:5) summarises the entire law, let me extend the thought a little. No Jew could work out for himself all the individual commandments by using the summary; he needed all the detailed commandments in addition.<sup>21</sup> What is more, God himself, having written the decalogue on the stone tablets, insisted that the full law had to be written in a book – and not only in the book of the law, but on the door posts, and elsewhere:

And Moses wrote down all the words of the Lord... Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it in the hearing of the people... 'Come up to me on the mountain and wait there, that I may give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction' (Ex. 24:4,7,12).

And the Lord said to Moses: 'Write these words, for in accordance with these words I have made a covenant with you and with Israel'... And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the ten commandments (Ex. 34:27-28).

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deut. 6:8-9; see also 11:18-20).

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deriving from Jesus himself'. (James D.G.Dunn: *The Epistle to the Galatians*, A & C Black, London, 1993, p291. Ben Witherington: *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on... Paul's Letter to the Galatians*, T.&T.Clark, Edinburgh, 1998, p383 agreed, but noted a Qumran reference.

<sup>21</sup> Take Deut. 14:1-21 for instance.

Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against you (Deut. 31:26).

Hence the stone tablets, the book of the law, and the household and personal writing of the words of the law, were integral to the covenant.

All this plays into the new covenant. The new covenant is undeniably superior to the old in many respects – not least that God’s law is now written on the heart. But this is no way mitigates against the written law of Christ in Scripture.

Let me take one example (as used by White also). James, having referred to what he called ‘the royal law according to the Scripture’ (Jas. 2:8), which is Leviticus 19:18 in the hands of Christ,<sup>22</sup> commanded his readers: ‘So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty’ (Jas. 2:12). Making a contrast with the law of Moses, he speaks of another law, the ‘royal law’, the fulfilment of Leviticus 19:18 (Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14), which can be none other than ‘the law of Christ’ (Gal. 6:2), ‘this rule’ by which the Israel of God must walk (Gal. 6:16; Phil. 3:16), ‘the law towards Christ’ or ‘Christ’s law’ (1 Cor. 9:21), ‘the law of faith’ (Rom. 3:27),<sup>23</sup> ‘the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus’ (Rom. 8:2), the gospel. *This* is the law by which believers must live and by which they will be judged. *This* is the easy yoke and light burden which Christ enables his people to delight in, that law which encompasses the entire word of God, as interpreted and applied by Christ and the apostles in the new covenant. This is the law by which believers will be judged. All this raises an important question: How can believers be judged by a law if that law is not objective? This, it seems to me, makes it inevitable that the law of Christ must

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<sup>22</sup> I see in the ‘royal’ a reference to the law of Christ the King. Moo thought ‘royal’ ‘is probably an allusion to Jesus’ own teaching’ (Moo: ‘The Law’ p217).

<sup>23</sup> The word is *kanōn* in Gal. 6:16 and Phil. 3:16, ‘any rule or standard, a principle or law’ (see Joseph Henry Thayer: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Ninth Printing 1991). ‘Law’ in Rom. 3:27 could aptly be translated ‘rule’. In other words, ‘the rule of faith’.

include the objective, written Scriptures. James had already said enough to make this point:

Put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing (Jas. 1:21-25).

Yes, ‘the word’ is ‘implanted’ in the believer, but, clearly, it is also external and objective. A believer has to ‘hear the word’, ‘look into the word’, ‘look into the perfect law’, not merely look into his heart, and listen to the inward voice. Above all he has to do it, and will be judged by it (Jas. 2:12). How is this possible unless that ‘word’, that ‘perfect law’ is objective? What else can it mean? James’ words make sense only if he is talking about the Scriptures as a vital part of the law of Christ, that law which is over believers, that law which forms the objective standard by which they will be judged. Of course, James is referring primarily to the Old Testament, but 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and 2 Peter 3:14-18 warrant the extension of his words to the New Testament. They more than warrant it; they ensure it.

Thomas R.Schreiner:

I have argued from both Galatians and 1 Corinthians that the law of Christ should be defined as the law of love. We see in 1 Corinthians 9 that Paul’s flexibility and sacrifice on behalf of his hearers represents the same kind of sacrificial love that Christ displayed in going to the cross. The life of Christ, then, exemplifies the law of love. It would be a mistake to conclude that there are no moral norms in the law of Christ, for Romans 13:8–10 makes it clear, as do many other texts in Paul, that the life of love cannot be separated from moral norms.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Thomas R.Schreiner: *40 Questions About Christians and Biblical Law*, Kregel, 2010, p103.

My question is: Where shall we find these ‘moral norms’ but in the Scriptures? Thus, accommodating Schreiner’s words, Christ’s commandment to love cannot be separated from the objective written Scriptures. Christ’s one commandment does not remove the Scriptures from the law of Christ. Rather, it guarantees that the Scriptures are at the heart of his law. In a sermon on Romans 13:8-10, Schreiner declared:

There are two mistakes that we may fall into when defining love. What is the first blunder in judgment? The first mistake is to say that since love fulfils the law we no longer have any need for commandments. Some understand these verses to say that the only moral guideline Christians need is love. After all, verse 8 says that the only thing we owe one another is love, and that the one who loves his neighbour has fulfilled the law. Furthermore, verse 9 says that the different commands of the [Mosaic] law are summed up in love. They argue, therefore, that we do not actually need commandments anymore. All we need to ask ourselves about any course of action is the question found in verse 10. Does our action actually hurt our neighbour? If it does not hurt our neighbour, if it does our neighbour good, then that action must be loving, and thus we fulfil the law, for Paul says in verse 10 that love is the fulfilment of the law. Those who believe this way bristle against imposing any commands upon believers. They think this is a form of legalism. They condemn as legalism any commands which say ‘you should do this’, or ‘you should not do this’. They insist that believers are not under any ‘commands’, except the command to love one another.

Schreiner went on:

I want to put the spotlight on the massive error that is found in this view. When Paul says that love is the fulfilment of the law, he does not intend to say that we have no need for commandments. To say that love is the fulfilment of the law does not imply that we can dispense with all commandments. Instead, specific commandments are mentioned in verse 9 so that we will see how love looks in action. One cannot commit adultery, murder, steal, and covet and claim to be loving. Specific commandments are given so that we will see in a concrete and practical way how love manifests itself in everyday life.

He concluded:

We must let God's word in the Scriptures define for us what is loving. Otherwise, we will fall prey to the deception of the world. To sum up [this] point, certainly love involves more than the keeping of commandments, but it never involves anything less than keeping them. Love goes beyond the keeping of God's law, but it never goes around the keeping of God's law. Commandments guard us from inadequate definitions of love and provide us with an objective standard by which we can test our lives. If we claim to be walking in love but fail to keep God's commandments, then our profession is contradicted by our practice.<sup>25</sup>

I ask again: Where will we find 'God's law, God's commandments'? Israel found the law of God for them – the Mosaic law – in the Scriptures as far as they had been completed in their day. Where can we, as believers, find the law of Christ? In all Scripture, of course. For a start, see 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and 2 Peter 3:14-18.

Stephen J. Wellum:

All Scripture is authoritative and thus provides the norm for Christian ethics. What is our standard for ethics? How do we establish moral norms? The simple answer: all of Scripture is our standard and it alone establishes moral norms. In this regard, 2 Timothy 3:15-17 is a crucial text. Paul describes Scripture, specifically the Old Testament, as God's breathed-out word and thus fully authoritative for Christians. In other words, the entire Old Testament, including the law-covenant, [along with, now, the New Testament] functions for us as the basis [better, authority] for our doctrine and ethics. Although Christians are not 'under the law' as a covenant, it still functions as Scripture and demands our complete obedience<sup>26</sup>... Christian ethics is not antinomian... Our triune God has not left us to ourselves; Scripture is our sufficient and authoritative moral standard... We determine what is morally binding upon

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<sup>25</sup> Sermon by Thomas R. Schreiner: 'Loving One Another Fulfills the Law: Romans 13:8-10'.

<sup>26</sup> Wellum noted that on this point we should see Brian S. Rosner: *Paul and the Law: Keeping the Commandments of God*, Downers Grove, InterVarsity Press, 2013, p31.

us today by appealing to the entirety of Scripture viewed through the lens of Christ and the new covenant. Although Christians are not ‘under the [Mosaic] law’ as a covenant, it still functions for us as [part of] Scripture. As with any biblical text, however, before we directly apply it to our lives, we must first place it in its covenantal location and then, second, we must think through how that text points forward, anticipates, and is fulfilled in Christ. It is only by doing this that we correctly apply any biblical text to our lives as Christians... In answering the question – what is the moral law for Christians today? – we... first gladly confess that the entirety of Scripture is our standard. But we must simultaneously add that all of Scripture’s moral teaching is only binding upon us in light of its fulfilment in Christ... Both the replacement and fulfilment of the old covenant by the new is taught in the New Testament.<sup>27</sup> On the one hand, in the new covenant, the old is replaced by the law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:20-21). Instead of reliance upon the law [of Moses], we rely upon Christ (Gal. 2:19-20; Phil. 3:4-14), and we discern God’s will in Christ and apostolic instruction (Gal. 6:2; 1 Cor. 7:19; 9:21). As Rosner contends: ‘Christians are not under the law of Moses, but under the law of Christ, the law of faith and the law of the Spirit. We have died to the [Mosaic] law, Christ lives in us and we live by faith in the Son of God... We do not keep the [Mosaic] law, but fulfil the law [of Moses] in Christ and through love. We do not seek to walk according to the [Mosaic] law, but according to the truth of the gospel, in Christ, in newness of resurrection life, by faith, in the light and in step with the Spirit’<sup>28</sup>... In order for Christians, then, to determine what God’s moral law is, we must apply all of Scripture in light of Christ.<sup>29</sup>

Fred G.Zaspel:

Even as redeemed men and women we struggle against remaining sin. God in grace though Christ has broken sin’s previously over-powering grip (Rom. 6), but we are men and women caught between two worlds. We have been redeemed out of this present world and are citizens of heaven, enthroned with Christ himself. Yet we live in this present evil world and

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<sup>27</sup> See Rosner pp111-134.

<sup>28</sup> Rosner p134.

<sup>29</sup> Stephen J.Wellum: ‘Progressive Covenantalism and the Doing of Ethics’.



feel the downward tug of it. We are properly living in two worlds and are torn in two very [*sic*] opposing directions. We are sanctified in Christ Jesus and feel the overwhelming force of his powerful grace at work in us drawing us to ever higher levels of glory. But in our struggle with sin we are a walking civil war (Gal. 5:17).<sup>30</sup>

This, in turn, is one of the great reasons why God has given us his law.<sup>31</sup> It provides for us an objective standard to correct the confused deceitfulness sin has brought to our hearts. The deceitfulness of sin is such that we seldom stop to consider sin's consequences. We do not adequately consider the evil of sin. There is a blind folly about sin, and we need God's law to inform our conscience to keep us from justifying what it condemns. What a depth of sin resides in our heart!

This is James' point [in James 1:13-18]. We are sinners. We sin because we want to. Our sin is our own fault. Our will is still tainted with a tendency to evil that has not yet been fully eradicated. And this is why our trials carry with them such occasions for sin.<sup>32</sup>

And it is also why we need an objective standard to be over us, to govern our aspirations, emotions, attitudes, wills and actions. And that objective standard is Scripture.

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<sup>30</sup> While I agree that we are in such a war, I disagree with Zaspel's view of this verse. See my *Christ* p150.

<sup>31</sup> The law of God for the believer is the law of Christ. I quote from my *Christ*: 'When, in Scripture, we meet "the law of God", we must ask ourselves which covenant we are talking about. If it is the old covenant, then "the law of God" is the "the law of Moses". If it is the new covenant, then "the law of God" is "the law of Christ"' (my *Christ* pp218-219,483-487). Zaspel would agree. In his review of *New Covenant Theology: Description, Definition, Defense*, by Tom Wells and Fred Zaspel, Thomas R.Schreiner wrote: 'Wells and Zaspel emphasise that the Mosaic covenant has come to an end with the coming of Jesus Christ... The Sinai covenant has been set aside now that Christ has come. Indeed, the Mosaic covenant points to Christ and is fulfilled in Christ. They do not conclude from this that believers are no longer under moral norms. Rather, believers are subject to the law of Christ, and the law of Christ is discerned from the New Testament'.

<sup>32</sup> Fred G.Zaspel: 'Thoughts from James on Sovereignty, Sin and Grace' in *Ministry of Grace: Essays in Honour of John G. Reisinger*, New Covenant Media, Frederick, 2007, p178.

By way of illustration, take the following passage:

Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your [progressive] sanctification [or holiness, footnote]: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honour, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one transgress and wrong his brother in this matter, because the Lord is an avenger in all these things, as we told you beforehand and solemnly warned you. For God has not called us for impurity, but in holiness. Therefore whoever disregards this, disregards not man but God, who gives his Holy Spirit to you. Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one (1 Thess. 4:1-10).

Notice how the apostle commands believers to be progressively sanctified, how he spells out his meaning in detail, and enforces the love commandment both by the inward work of the Spirit and his own commandment, and all within the compass of the external Scriptures. See also Matthew 5:43-44; Galatians 5:14; Ephesians 5:1-2; Hebrews 13:1; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 4:7-12, for instance. The inward teaching of the Spirit does not in the least way diminish the absolute need of the apostolic commands recorded in Scripture.

### ***Conclusion***

In light of this, I regard any weakening (however slight at first) of the sense of the binding authority of Scripture upon believers, and their response to it by determined obedience, in the power of the Spirit, to its rule and governance as the law of Christ, as a thoroughly retrograde step, and one to be resisted at all costs. I

am convinced that the right exegesis of the relevant scripture passages firmly secures both the inward work of the Spirit in the believer's heart, and the written Scriptures, right at the heart of the law of Christ. I say it is essential for believers to maintain both. Putting it negatively, I assert that believers should stoutly resist any move which might threaten either, or, in the least respect, upset the scriptural balance between the two.