

The Laws of thy God: Moral, Civil, and Ceremonial Laws

Ezra 7:11-26

The love of God is following His commandments. We are commanded to love God. In order to love God, we must follow His commandments. God gives us all of his commandments and all of his laws within the Bible.

Law books for Kentucky alone would fill a room. Law books for this country would fill a building. God's laws are perfect, and His laws are all within this small book called the Holy Bible.

""Psalm 19:7-9

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.""

Study God's Laws, Do Them, and Love God

We're going to begin studying all of God's laws so that we know them and love God. "And we know that all things work together for good to those that love God." Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

As we study the commandments of the Lord, remember that God's laws are perfect. There is no error in His laws. Many people will mock His laws. The Bible says the statutes of the Lord are right. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Without the Bible, we would be in darkness. We would live our life in darkness, stumble, fall, and not get back up.

So, we're going to place God's commandments into three different types of laws. This is going to make the Bible easier for you to understand.

1. Moral Law
2. Ceremonial Law
3. Civil Law

If you don't know the laws of God, how can you follow them? Our job, as a church of God, is to teach the laws of God. We are going to learn His commandments. When we follow His commandments, we obey the greatest commandment to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

When we follow the commandments, we also obey the second greatest commandment to love thy neighbor as thyself. Loving God and others is love. And God wants us to love others by following His commandments.

So, to start this very long series of the laws of God, let's look at how we're going to categorize the laws of God into three categories and some examples for each category.

Moral Law = Right and Wrong

Moral law defines for us what is right and wrong in living our life. We're going to find out what's right and what's wrong.

""Deuteronomy 17:19

And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them:""

We are commanded to read the Bible. This is a good thing. Not a bad thing. Jesus, in the Gospels, rebukes the people for not reading the Bible. He asks them, "Have ye not read?" A moral law that God gave to us is to read the Bible.

Another moral law, and again these are just a few examples. We're going to be going over these for a long time. We need to know these now and forever. We're going to need them.

""Matthew 22:21

They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.""

Jesus said to pay your taxes. We live in this country, this state, this city and we are to pay our taxes according to the laws here.

""Romans 13:7

Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.""

Pay taxes as this is the law. We are to follow the law unless it contradicts with God's law. For example, God tells us to go to church. If a law is made where church is illegal, I'm going to find a way to have church.

Another moral law is avoiding conflict.

""Proverbs 3:30

Strive not with a man without cause, if he have done thee no harm.""

Avoid strife. Avoid contentions. Avoid fighting. Some people go out of their homes every day looking for a fight. That's a sin. That's a breaking of God's commandments. You don't want to do that. You aren't loving God. You aren't loving others.

Here's another moral law example:

""**Proverbs 23:20-21**

Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: 21 For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags.""

Don't Be a Drunkard or a Glutton

God commands you to not be around drunkards and gluttons. A glutton is one that must have more than he needs. For example, if you regularly eat way more than you need, this would be gluttonous. The Bible says that drunkards and the glutton shall come to poverty. They will always want more and have nothing.

Don't drink alcohol. There are many Scriptures about this. Don't eat too much food. Don't strive for excess in anything but God's words.

God has laws in the Bible about what we should look like and the type of clothing we should wear. He tells us to not make any cuttings in our flesh.

""**Leviticus 19:28**

Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the LORD.""

Now, you may have not known that law. Since it's in Leviticus, you might think it's not valid for us today. It is valid. Now that you know this law, you should follow God's law. Remember, His law is perfect. Tattoos are cutting the flesh. Doing this, the Bible says, is related to worshipping false gods and being possessed by devils.

There are many examples of that in the Bible. This is a moral law. I love God's law, and I want to make sure I am following His laws. And I know you do as well. When we do, He helps us. All things work together for good to those that love Him. We love Him by not cutting our flesh.

Now, following these commandments of the Lord, we know 100% for sure, do not get us to heaven. Following the law doesn't save us because we've all broken the law. But following these laws is good and God wants us to follow them.

Now, those are some examples of moral laws. Remember, we're going to divide the laws of God into three categories: 1) Moral Laws, 2) Ceremonial Law, and 3) Civil Law.

The second category of the laws of thy God are ceremonial laws. What does this mean? Ceremonial laws are the laws that God set for ceremonies, sacrifices, and the structure of things.

You can think of them as the laws given for the sanctuary, temple, the services, and the feasts. These are the customs that God gave to the people to follow.

Let's look at some examples of ceremonial laws. We've been studying the feasts of the Lord during the Thursday night Bible study. The feasts of the Lord are an example of ceremonial laws.

""Ezekiel 45:21

In the first month, in the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall have the passover, a feast of seven days; unleavened bread shall be eaten.""

Now, do we have the actual Passover feast in this day and age? No, we do not actually kill a lamb and eat it on the 14th day of the first month Abib. But, we do keep the Passover.

""1 Corinthians 5:7

Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:""

Jesus Christ is our Passover. Since we have believed in Him alone for salvation, He is our Passover. He fulfilled the Passover for us so we keep the Passover feast by believing in Him. He paid for all our sins. He is the sinless and spotless Lamb of God that was slain for us.

The Ceremonial Laws Were Kept in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, before the first coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, they were to keep these feasts. But we know that God fulfills these feasts for us. So we don't actually keep them as written in the word of God. God fulfills them for us.

We know that these ceremonial laws are pictures of spiritual things and things to come.

""Genesis 17:10

This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.""

Circumcision is simply a picture of the cutting away of the flesh. The flesh leads us to sin. Cut it away and get rid of it. Follow the commandments of God.

""Romans 2:28-29

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.""

Circumcision is that of the heart. It's talking about removing the fleshy part of the heart, humble yourself, know you need a Savior, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

God told the children of Israel what they could eat in the Old Testament. Some animals were declared clean and some were declared unclean. This is showing that they were physically trying to be clean. But we know that we're all unclean no matter what we eat.

""Isaiah 64:6

But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.""

In the New Testament, God declares all animals to be clean.

""Matthew 15:10-11

And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand: 11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.""

What you eat doesn't defile you. Understand that. What comes out of your mouth defiles you. These ceremonial laws are using physical things to declare spiritual truths.

Ceremonial Laws Use Physical Things as Pictures of More Important Things

We see burnt offerings, meat offerings, drink offerings, peace offerings, tithes, sin offerings and much more in these ceremonial laws. We're going to study all of these laws in detail in this church. And yes, again, it's going to take a long time. But that's why we're here for a long time.

We've talked about moral laws and ceremonial laws so far. We have one more category left. This third category is civil law. Civil laws, by definition, are those laws that pertain to persons, things, and relationships that develop among them.

For example, you have civil laws that God gives us about specific crimes such as murder, kidnapping, bestiality, sodomy, rape, adultery, incest, witchcraft, serving other gods, and many others. God gives the penalty for each of these crimes. Our system, if it were a good system, would match God's penalties.

But they obviously don't. For example, murder would be punishable by death. If the evidence is there, the person who took someone's life would lose their life. This is God's law.

We also see civil laws about property such as theft, debt, or damage.

""Exodus 22:3

If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him; for he should make full restitution; if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.""

If a thief is caught in the day light, he should make full payment for this theft. If he can't pay the debt, then he shall be sold for his theft. He becomes a servant.

We see that the government should implement these laws. The government gives out the penalties for the crimes. Not you individually. Don't take the law into your own hands. God gives us procedures to handle violations of His civil law. I want you to see a perfect example.

""Deuteronomy 13:12-13

If thou shalt hear say in one of thy cities, which the LORD thy God hath given thee to dwell there, saying, 13 Certain men, the children of Belial, are gone out from among you, and have withdrawn the inhabitants of their city, saying, Let us go and serve other gods, which ye have not known;""

So, this is a city of God we're talking about. For example, the United States is supposedly a Christian nation. One nation under God. We have many people now in this country who are saying, "Let us go serve other gods." They'll say, "The United States was never a Christian nation." They are foolish. There's real proof of that everywhere.

So, if there are Satan worshippers such as Muslims, Buddhists, and Hindus, what would have happened to them in the Old Testament cities of God?

""Deuteronomy 13:14-15

Then shalt thou inquire, and make search, and ask diligently; and, behold, if it be truth, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought among you; 15 Thou shalt surely smite the inhabitants of that city with the edge of the sword, destroying it utterly, and all that is therein, and the cattle thereof, with the edge of the sword.""

God didn't want any false religion spreading in His cities. Those cities would be utterly destroyed. God shows us how serious he is about these things. Don't let false religion spread. But, that's exactly what our government allows to happen. Our government, if a Christian government, would stop the spread of false religion. It's not welcome here.

But, as you see, they don't care. False religion is spreading. And people get mad at God because things are getting so bad. It's not God's fault. He told us what to do. We didn't do it. And now if you tried to implement that law in this country, you would get blasted and told that you're insane.

But again, God is right. His laws are right. And we're going to learn His laws here. The Bible is a law book filled with the laws of God.

Remember, we're going to categorize them into three categories:

1. Moral law
2. Ceremonial law
3. Civil law

I'm going to greatly enjoy going over the laws of God here in this church. I don't know of many churches that go over God's laws in detail. We are going to be one of them.

""**Psalm 1:1-3**

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.""

We are going to delight in the law of the Lord.

""**Job 23:12**

Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.""

That's what we are going to strive to be like right there. Job was the most upright man on the face of the planet at the time he lived. Why? Job esteemed or raised God's words in his life. He knew God's words were more important than the physical food he ate.

Now, that's what we need to be like. Before we even eat our physical food, did we read the Bible? Is it that important to us? The law of God rejoices the heart!

Let's pray.