

The Two Commandments of the New Covenant

The Ten Commandments of the Old Covenant are a primary part of our spiritual foundation. Bible believers often display them in an effort to influence others toward righteousness.

God Himself proclaimed them from Mount Sinai in a fiery display, and engraved them on tablets of stone. However, they are part of “the Law”: a system of religious, moral and lifestyle demands Paul later labeled “the ministry of condemnation” and “the ministry of death” (2 Cor. 3:7-9).

Have you ever noticed that eight of those 10 commands are negative (80 percent)—telling us *what NOT to do*? The Messiah, however, introduced a new approach that is 100 percent positive—promoting, not a sin-conscious mindset, but a God-conscious celebration of life.

The New Covenant transitions from religion to relationship, from rules to rebirth—that spiritual awakening that happens when the Son of God dwells within the hearts of His people (John 3:1-7; Eph. 3:17). From that point forward, the *Two Commandments of the New Covenant* should light up our lives like the glorious dawning of a new day.

The Nature of the New Covenant

An expert in the Law of Moses asked Jesus, “Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?” (Matt. 22:36). The Son of man immediately replied:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. ‘This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” (Matt. 22:37-40).

This last sentence means that all other commandments are supported by these two. If we sincerely love God and love others, we will automatically refrain from lying, stealing, indulging in immoral behavior, dishonoring God or harming any human being. No wonder the Scripture maintains “love is the fulfillment of the Law” and “the more excellent way” (Rom. 13:10; 1 Cor. 12:31).

Jesus Simplified the Law

Jesus was God “manifested in the flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16). You would think Deity visiting humanity would make the practice of religion more detailed, more complicated, more demanding. Instead, through Jesus, it was greatly simplified. In a sense, He took the Ten Commandments, inscribed on two tablets of stone, and reduced them to Two Commandments inscribed on one tablet of stone—the “tablet” of the human heart (Prov. 3:3, 7:3; 2 Cor. 3:3).

Instead of the external demand of religious regulations, Jesus introduced the awesome blessing of internal transformation, a “new and living way” that would impart to His own forgiveness and an infilling of “the divine nature” (Heb. 10:20; 2 Pet. 1:4). Once this happens, we are called to “walk in love,” manifesting the character of the firstborn Son, loving one another and forgiving one another “even as God in Christ has forgiven” us (Eph. 4:32; 5:1-2). This is “the royal law” and “the simplicity that is in Christ” (James 2:8; Cor. 11:3).

Jesus Exalted the Law

Isaiah foretold the Messiah would “exalt the law and make it honorable” (Is. 42:21). To exalt means to elevate and to increase in quality or power. Jesus accomplished this—He elevated the law to a higher, more honorable, more powerful place, by shifting the emphasis from outer actions to inner attitudes. Instead of the subduing of the carnal nature being our chief focus, the manifestation of a spiritual nature

should emerge as the governing principle of our walk with God (Matt. 5:21-28; 1 John 3:14-15, 4:7-21). Other prophets spoke of this glorious era:

Moses: “The Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live” (Deut. 30:6).

Jeremiah: “Surely, 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 ... But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law within them and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jer. 31:31, 33).

Ezekiel: “Also, I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh” (Ezek. 36:26).

Certainly, under the Old Will, many loved and served God, but now, this capacity has dramatically increased, for “the love of God has been poured” into us as a gift from above—something Jesus prayed in advance that we would receive (Rom. 5:5; John 17:25-26).

God’s Personality Permeates His Kingdom

In the Gospel of Mark, a scribe agreed with Jesus concerning this insight, commenting, “Well said, Teacher. You have spoken the truth, that there is one God and there is no other but Him. To love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love one’s neighbor as oneself, is more than all burnt offerings and sacrifices” (Mark 12:32-33). When the Messiah heard him express such wisdom, He appreciatively declared:

“You are not far from the kingdom of God” (Mark 12:34).

God’s kingdom is that invisible, spiritual domain in which the Creator dwells, a realm saturated with the love of God, overflowing with the character of the Creator. It was not accessible to people until Jesus rose from the dead. However, this unnamed scribe was enlightened to its reality in advance, sensitive in advance to that “better thing” soon to come (Heb. 11:40). Now, those who are washed in the blood of Jesus and born of the Spirit are “translated” into this wonderful, spiritual kingdom in which love—toward God and toward others—is the dual dominating influence (Col. 1:13). No wonder Jesus boldly claimed:

“There is no other commandment greater than these” (Mark 12:31).

We have been very passionate about displaying **The Ten Commandments** of the Old Will. Should we be even more passionate about displaying **The Two Commandments** of God’s current mode of operating in the Earth? Especially since the New Covenant changes people supernaturally, and will ultimately carry God’s people from time to eternity.

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