

Surprising Facts Series 1

06. God's Special Law for Happiness!

We are personally responsible for lawlessness unless we always uphold the law. If you violate any part of God's law or any other good law, you destroy confidence in law and actually encourage criminal behavior. Crime stalks the land today, and things will keep getting worse unless we do something about it. There is only one hope for this undisciplined generation: We will have to take seriously the formula for human happiness given by God; His Ten Commandments. Since such tremendous issues are involved, we will take a few minutes to solemnly consider our responsibility. You just might be surprised.

1. Did God Himself really write the Ten Commandments?

"And he gave unto Moses ... two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." "And the tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables." Exodus 31:18; 32:16.

Answer: Yes, the great God of heaven wrote the Ten Commandments on tables of stone with His own finger. The tables were the work of God.

2. What is God's definition of sin?

"Sin is the transgression of the law." I John 3:4.

Answer: Sin is breaking God's Ten Commandment law. And since the law of God is perfect, it covers every conceivable sin. **"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple." Psalm 19:7.** It is impossible to commit a sin that is not condemned by at least one of God's Ten Commandments. The commandments cover **"the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13.** Nothing is left out. God says that sin is breaking His law.

3. Why did God give us the Ten Commandments?

"He that keepeth the law, happy is he." Proverbs 29:18. "Keep my commandments: For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee." Proverbs 3:1, 2.

Answer A: As a guide for happy, abundant living. God created us to enjoy happiness, peace, long life, contentment, accomplishment, and all the other great blessings for which our hearts long. God's law is the road map that points out the right paths to follow in order to find this true, supreme happiness. God's law is His road map to happy, abundant living.

"By the law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:20. "I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Romans 7:7.

Answer B: To show me the difference between right and wrong. God's law is like a mirror (James 1:23-25). It points out wrongdoing in my life as a mirror points out dirt on my face. The only possible way for a person to know if he is sinning is for him to carefully check his life by the mirror of God's law. Hope for this mixed-up, sinking generation is found in God's Ten Commandment law. It tells where to draw the line!

"And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes [commandments] ... for our good always." Deuteronomy 6:24. "Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe: and I will have respect unto thy statutes continually. Thou hast trodden down all them that err from thy statutes." Psalm 119:117, 118.

Answer C: To protect me from danger and tragedy. God's law is like a strong cage, protecting us from fierce, destructive animals. It protects us from impurity, falsehood, murder, idolatry, theft, and many other evils that destroy life, peace, and happiness. All good laws protect, and God's law is no exception.

Special Note: These eternal principles of God's law are written deep in every person's nature by the God who created us. The writing may be dim and smudged, but it is still there. This means, of course, that you cannot find true peace unless you are willing to live in harmony with your inner nature, upon which God has written these principles. We were created to live in harmony with them. When we choose to ignore them, the result is always tension, unrest, and tragedy, just as ignoring the rules for safe driving leads to serious trouble. Happiness follows those who keep His commandments.

4. Why is God law exceedingly important to me personally?

"So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty." James 2:12.

Answer: Because the Ten Commandment law is the standard by which God examines men in the heavenly judgment. How are you measuring up? It is a life-or-death matter! The law protects us from the devil as a cage protects us from a lion.

5. Can God's law (the Ten Commandments) ever be changed or abolished?

"It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." Luke 16:17. "My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips." Psalm 89:34. "All his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever." Psalm 111:7, 8.

Answer: Absolutely not! The Bible is very clear on this point. If the law could have been changed, God would have immediately made that change when Adam and Eve sinned instead of sending His Son to die in the sinner's behalf to pay the penalty of the broken law. But this was impossible, because the commandments are not laws in the sense of rules or regulations that have been enacted. They are revealed principles of God's holy character that will always be true as long as God exists.

GOD IS:	THE LAW IS:
Good Luke 18:19	1 Timothy 1:8
Holy Isaiah 5:16	Romans 7:12
Perfect Matthew 5:48	Psalm 19:7
Pure 1 John 3:2, 3	Psalm 19:8
Just Deuteronomy 32:4.	Romans 7:12
True John 3:33	Psalm 19:9
Spiritual 1 Corinthians 10:4.	Romans 7:14
Righteousness Jeremiah 23:6.	Psalm 119:172.
Faithful 1 Corinthians 1:9	Psalm 119:86.

Love 1 John 4:8	Romans 13:10
Unchangeable James 1:17	Matthew 5:18
Eternal Genesis 21:33	Psalm 111:7, 8.

Notice on the above chart that God and His law have the same characteristics. Do you see what this means? The Ten Commandment law is God's character in written form, written so we can comprehend it. It is no more possible to change God's law than to pull God out of heaven and change Him. Jesus came to show us what the law (which is the pattern for holy living) looked like when made up in human form. God's character can never change. Neither can His law, for it is His character in human language.

6. Did Jesus abolish God's law while He was here on earth?

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law. ... I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.... Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matthew 5:17,18.

Answer: No, indeed! Jesus specifically asserted that He did not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill (or keep) it. Instead of doing away with the law, Jesus magnified it (Isaiah 42:21) as the perfect guide for right living. For example, Jesus pointed out that "thou shalt not kill" condemns anger "without a cause" (Matthew 5:21, 22) and hatred (1 John 3:15), and that lust is adultery (Matthew 5:27, 28). He says, **"If ye love me, keep my commandments." John 14:15.**

The cross is positive proof that the law is unchangeable. The law is like a length of chain. If only one link is broken, its entire purpose is undone. Jesus is the law in human form. When He is in the heart, keeping the law becomes a pleasure.

7. Will people who knowingly continue to break even one of God's commandments be saved?

"The wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. "He shall destroy the sinners." Isaiah 13:9. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." James 2:10.

Answer: No! They will be lost. The Ten Commandment law is the guide we must use in finding our way to God and holy living. If I ignore even one of the commandments, I am neglecting part of the divine pattern, or blueprint. If only one link of a chain is broken, its entire purpose is undone. The Bible says that when we knowingly break any command of God, we are sinning, because we have refused His will for us. **"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."** James 4:17. Only those who do His will can enter the kingdom of heaven. Sinners will be lost.

8. Can anyone be saved by keeping the law?

"By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight." Romans 3:20. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." Ephesians 2:8, 9.

Answer: No! The answer is too plain to miss. No one can be saved by keeping the law. Salvation comes only through grace, as a free gift from Jesus Christ, and we receive this gift by faith, not by works. The law serves only as a mirror to point out sin in our lives. Cleansing and forgiveness from that sin come only through Christ. Salvation from Jesus is just as real as a gift received on a special holiday or birthday. It's free, specially prepared for us from Jesus!

9. Why, then, is the law an absolute essential for perfecting Christian character?

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:20.

Answer: Because the full pattern, or "whole duty," for Christian living is contained in God's law. Like a 6-year-old boy who made his own ruler, measured himself, and told his mother that he was 12 feet tall, our own standards are never safe. I cannot know whether I am a sinner unless I look carefully into the perfect standard, God's law-mirror. Millions who have cast out devils, prophesied, and done many wonderful works in Jesus' name will be lost because they did not bother to check their lives with His great law-pattern. **"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Matthew 7:21-23.** Hence, they think they are righteous and saved when, instead, they are sinful and lost. **"Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." 1 John 2:3.** Our own standards are never safe. I cannot know whether I am a sinner unless I look carefully into the perfect standard; God's law-mirror.

10. What enables a truly converted Christian to follow the pattern of God's law?

"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Hebrews 8:10. "I can do all things through Christ." Philippians 4:13. "God sending his own Son ... That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us." Romans 8:3, 4.

Answer: Christ not only pardons repentant sinners, but He restores in them the image of God. He brings them into harmony with His law through the power of His indwelling presence. "Thou shalt not" then becomes a promise that the Christian will not steal, lie, murder, etc., because Jesus lives inside and is in control. God could not change His law, but He made a blessed provision through Jesus to change the sinner so he can measure up to that law.

With Jesus living in the heart, the dark, ugly past is replaced by His triumphant indwelling. The law serves as a mirror to point out sin in our lives. As repentant sinners come to Jesus, He restores in them the image of God, bringing them into harmony with His law through the power of His indwelling presence.

11. But isn't a Christian who has faith and is living under grace freed from keeping the law?

"For sin [breaking God's law, 1 John 3:4] shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin [break the law], because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." Romans 6:14, 15. "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31.

Answer: No! The Scriptures teach the very opposite. Grace is like the governor's pardon to a prisoner. It forgives him, but it does not give him freedom to break one single law on the statute books. The forgiven person, living under grace, is under double obligation to keep the law. A person who refuses to keep God's law, saying that he is living under grace, is mistaken. He is living under disgrace.

12. Are the Ten Commandments Reaffirmed in the New Testament?

Answer. Yes, and very clearly so. Look the following over very carefully.

THE LAW OF GOD IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. **"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Matthew 4:10.**
2. **"Little children, keep yourselves from idols." 1 John 5:2 1. "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device." Acts 17:29.**
3. **"That the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed." 1 Timothy 6:1.**
4. **"For he spoke in a certain place of the seventh day on this wise, And God did rest the seventh day from all his works." "There remaineth therefore a rest ["keeping of a sabbath," margin] to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Hebrews 4:4, 9, 10.**
5. **"Honour thy father and thy mother." Matthew 19:19.**
6. **"Thou shalt not kill." Romans 13:9.**
7. **"Thou shalt not commit adultery." Matthew 19:18.**
8. **"Thou shalt not steal." Romans 13:9.**
9. **"Thou shalt not bear false witness." Romans 13:9.**
10. **"Thou shalt not covet." Romans 7:7.**

THE LAW OF GOD IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. **"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:3.**
2. **"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments." Exodus 20:4-6.**
3. **"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." Exodus 20:7.**
4. **"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8-11.**
5. **"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Exodus 20:12.**
6. **"Thou shalt not kill." Exodus 20:13.**
7. **"Thou shalt not commit adultery." Exodus 20:14.** 8. **"Thou shalt not steal." Exodus 20:15.**

9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." Exodus 20:16.

10. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's." Exodus 20:17.

13. Are God's law and Moses' law the same?

Answer: No, they are not the same. Study the following notes and comparison carefully.

Note: Moses' law was the temporary, ceremonial law of the Old Testament. It regulated the priesthood, sacrifices, rituals, meat and drink offerings, etc., all of which foreshadowed the cross. This law was added "till the seed should come," and that seed was Christ (Galatians 3:16, 19). The ritual and ceremony of Moses' law pointed forward to Christ's sacrifice. When He died, this law came to an end, but the Ten Commandments (God's law) "**stand fast forever and ever.**" Psalm 111:8. That there are two laws is made crystal clear in Daniel 9:10, 11.

Special Note: Please note that God's law has existed at least as long as sin has existed. The Bible says, "**Where no law is, there is no transgression [or sin].**" Romans 4:15. So God's Ten Commandment law existed from the beginning. Men broke that law (sinned, 1 John 3:4). Because of sin (or breaking God's law), Moses' law Ceremonial sacrifices and rituals pointed forward to Jesus' sacrifice. was given (or "added " Galatians 3:16, 19) till Christ should come and die. Two separate laws are involved: God's law and Moses' law.

MOSES' LAW	GOD'S LAW
Called "the law of Moses" Luke 2:22	Called "the law of the Lord" Isaiah 5:24
Called "law.. contained in ordinances" Ephesians 2:15	Called "the royal law" James 2:8
Written by Moses in a book 2 Chronicles 35:12	Written by God on stone Exodus 31:18; 32:16
Placed at side of the ark Deuteronomy 31:26	Placed inside the ark Exodus 40:20
Ended at the cross Ephesians 2:15	Will stand forever Luke 16:17
Added because of sin Galatians 3:19	Points out sin Romans 7:7; 3:20
Contrary to us, against us Colossians 2:14	Not grievous I John 5:3
Judges no one Colossians 2:14-16	Judges all people James 2:10-12
Carnal Hebrews 7:16	Spiritual Romans 7:14
Made nothing perfect Hebrews 7:19	Is Perfect Psalm 19:7

14. How does the devil feel about the people who pattern their lives after God's Ten Commandments?

"And the dragon [the devil] was wroth with the woman [true church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God." Revelation 12:17. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God." Revelation 14:12.

Answer: The devil hates the people who uphold God's law because the law is the pattern of right living. And if you decide to follow the pattern outlined in God's law, you will feel the devil's wrath upon you at

once and with all fury. It is not surprising that the devil hates and bitterly opposes all who uphold God's law. But it is shocking and astounding to hear religious leaders denying the binding claims of the Ten Commandments while at the same time upholding the traditions of men. No wonder Jesus said, "**Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?**" "**In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**" **Matthew 15:3, 9.** And David said, "**It is time for thee, Lord, to work: for they have made void thy law.**" **Psalm 119:126.** Christians must wake up and restore God's law to its rightful, exalted position. It is folly for this undisciplined generation to presume that it can break the laws of the living God with impunity.

15. Do you believe it is essential for a Christian to obey the Ten Commandments?

Your Answer: _____

Your Thought Questions Answered:

1. Doesn't the Bible say the law was (or is) faulty?

ANSWER: No. The Bible says the people were faulty. God found "**fault with them.**" **Hebrews 8:8.** And in Romans 8:3 the Bible says that the law "**was weak through the flesh.**" It is always the same story. The law is perfect, but the people are faulty, or weak. So God would have His Son live within His people "**that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us**" (**Romans 8:4**) through the indwelling Christ.

2. Galatians 3:13 says we are redeemed from the curse of the law. Can you explain this?

ANSWER: The curse of the law is death (Romans 6:23). Christ tasted "death for every man." Hebrews 2:9. Thus He redeemed all from the curse of the law (death) and in its place provided eternal life.

3. Don't Colossians 2:14-17, and Ephesians 2:15 teach that God's law ended at the cross?

ANSWER: No, these passages both refer to the law containing "ordinances," or Moses' law, which was a ceremonial law governing the sacrificial system and the priesthood. All of this ceremony and ritual foreshadowed the cross and ended at Christ's death, as God had intended. Moses' law was added till the "seed should come," and that "seed ... is Christ." Galatians 3:19, 16. God's law could not be involved here, for Paul spoke of it as holy, just, and good many years after the cross (Romans 7:7, 12).

4. The Bible says, "love is . the fulfilling of the law." Romans 13:10. The Bible also, in Matthew 22:37-40, commands us to love God and to love our neighbors, and ends with the words, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." Do these commands replace the Ten Commandments?

ANSWER: No, the Ten Commandments hang from these two commands like our 10 fingers hang from our two hands. They are inseparable. Love to God makes keeping the first four commandments (which concern God) a pleasure, and love toward our neighbor makes keeping the last six (which concern our neighbor) a joy. Love fulfills the law by taking away the drudgery and by making lawkeeping a delight (Psalm 40:8). When we truly love a person, honoring his or her requests becomes a joy. Jesus said, "**If ye love me, keep my commandments.**" **John 14:15.** It is impossible to love the Lord and not keep His commandments, because the Bible says, "**This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.**" **1 John 5:3.** "**He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.**" **1 John 2:4.**

5. Doesn't 2 Corinthians 3:7 teach that the law written and engraved in stone "was to be done away"?

ANSWER: No. The passage says that the "glory" of Moses' ministration of the law was to be done away, but not the law. Read the whole passage of 2 Corinthians 3:3-9 again, carefully. The subject is not the doing away with the law or its establishment, but rather, the change of the location of the law from "tables of stone" to the "tables of the heart." Under Moses' ministration the law was on stones. Under the Holy Spirit's ministration, through Christ, the law is written upon the heart (Hebrews 8:10). A rule posted on a school bulletin board becomes effective only when it enters a student's heart. Christ's ministration of the law is effective because He transfers the law to the heart of the Christian. Then keeping the law becomes a delight and a joyful way of living because the Christian has true love for both God and man.

6. Romans 10:4 says that, "Christ is the end of the law." So it has ended, hasn't it?

ANSWER; "End" in this verse means purpose or object, as it does in James 5:11. The meaning is clear. To lead men to Christ, where they find righteousness, is the goal, purpose, or end of the law.

7. Why do so many people deny the binding claims of God's law?

ANSWER: **"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Romans 8:7-9.**

8. Were the righteous people of the Old Testament saved by the law?

ANSWER: No one has ever been saved by the law. All who have been saved in all ages have been saved by grace. This **"grace ... was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." 2 Timothy 1:9.**

The law only points out sin. Christ alone can save. Noah "found grace" (Genesis 6:8); Moses found grace (Exodus 33:17); the Israelites in the wilderness found grace (Jeremiah 31:2) and Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and many other Old Testament worthies were saved "by faith" according to Hebrews 11. They were saved by looking forward to the cross; we, by looking back to it. The law is necessary because, like a mirror, it reveals the "dirt" in our lives. Without it, men are sinners but are not aware of it. However, the law has no saving power. It can only point out sin. Jesus, and He alone, can save a person from sin. This has always been true, even in Old Testament times (Acts 4:10, 12; 2 Timothy 1:9).

9 Why worry about the law? Isn't conscience a safe guide?

ANSWER: No! A thousand times, no! The Bible speaks of an evil conscience, a defiled conscience, and a seared conscience, none of which is safe. **"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are thf ways of death." Proverbs 14:12.** God says, **"He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool." Proverbs 28:26.**

Summary: Place a check by the correct answers.

1. The Ten Commandments were written by:

God.

Moses.

An unknown person.

2. According to the Bible, sin is:

A personality deficiency.

Breaking God's law.

Whatever seems wrong.

3. Check the statements that tell the truth about God's law:

It is a perfect guide for happy living.

Like a mirror, it points out sin.

It is burdensome and oppressive.

It can protect me from evil.

It has the same characteristics as God.

It was canceled in the New Testament.

It is a curse.

4. God's Ten Commandment law:

Was for Old Testament times only.

Was abolished by Jesus at the cross.

Is absolutely unchangeable.

5. In the judgment day I will be saved if:

I maintain an excellent record of good works.

I love the Lord, regardless of whether or not I obey the Ten Commandments.

My personal love relationship with Jesus leads me to obey all His commandments.

6. People are saved by:

Keeping the law.

Breaking the law.

Jesus Christ alone.

7. Truly converted Christians:

Keep God's law through the power of Christ.

Ignore the law because it is done away.

Consider commandment-keeping unnecessary.

8. A person living under grace:

Can break the Ten Commandments without sinning.

Is freed from keeping the law.

Will gladly keep God's commandments.

9. Love fulfills the law because:

Love does away with the law.

True love toward God and man makes keeping the law a pleasure.

Love is more important than obedience.

10. Moses' law is:

The same thing as God's law.

The law of ceremonies and sacrifices, which pointed forward to Christ and ended at His cross.

Still binding today.

11. People who obey the Ten Commandments:

Are all legalists.

Will be bitterly opposed by the devil, who hates God and His law.

Are saved by keeping the law.

12. Check the statements that are true regarding Christ and the law:

Jesus broke the law.

Jesus is the perfect human example of keeping the law.

Jesus abolished the law.

Jesus said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."

Jesus magnified the law and showed that it covers all sin.

Jesus said that the law cannot be changed.

13. I believe a Christian must obey God's Ten Commandments, and I am asking Jesus to help me bring my life into harmony with them.

Yes. No.