

# What is the Law of Christ?

## By Sandra Hooper

Paul said, "Bear one another's burden, and so fulfill the **law of Christ**. (Gal. 6:2)

What is the law of Christ? The law of Christ is the body of commands and teachings He taught to His disciples and they in turn were to teach every new disciple. (Matt. 28:20)

Paul equated Christ's law to God's law. (1 Cor. 9:21)

"To them that are without law, as without law, (being **not without law to God, but under the law to Christ**.) that I might gain them that are without law."

Paul told the Christians in Galatia to carry each other's burdens, and in doing so they would fulfill the **law of Christ**. (Gal. 6:2)

Paul also said such things as "Let the **word of Christ** dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." (Col. 3:16)

### **What is the word of Christ?**

It has to do with everything Jesus taught and commanded! I have heard people try to get away with what Jesus taught by claiming it belongs to another *dispensation* in the future; that what Christ taught cannot be applied *doctrinally* to the Christians in the *Church Age*.

The word "doctrine" simply means "teaching or instruction." It is not some mystical word that is hard to grasp. Whatever Jesus taught applied to the apostles, to those at that time, and to us! If one does not abide in the doctrine of Christ, he does not have God.

2 John 1:9 says,

**"Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son."**

As one author has well stated,

*"It seems strange that men should forbid Jesus the privilege of teaching, during His earthly ministry, and great principles governing man's relation to God - not only during the few remaining days of His brief earthly ministry, but throughout the age to follow, for which He was even then preparing His disciples. It seems even stranger that men who so easily reject much of our Lord's later teaching as 'not applicable to the present dispensation' do not hesitate to accept much of His earliest teaching (to Nicodemus, for example) as being fully applicable to the present age. (One friend, in conversation with the author, even denied that our Lord's words in John 15 have any bearing on the question of our relation to Christ today, since they were spoken 'before Calvary' - a few hours! What delicate, fragile hairs skilled 'rightly dividers' can sometimes neatly split with one swift, sure stroke of their hermeneutical broadaxe!)*

*It is true that Jesus made reference to certain legal and ceremonial aspects of the Mosaic economy which are not applicable today. But it is also true that He enunciated cardinal principles governing man's spiritual relation to God which are as valid today as the moment of utterance. One of these principles, according to His teaching in the Parable of the Law of Forgiveness, is that true repentance toward God is inseparably associated with our attitude toward our fellow men and cannot exist apart from a charitable, forgiving spirit toward others.*

*Such true repentance, like sincere faith and the faithful retention of the saving word of the Gospel, is necessary, not merely for a fleeting moment at the occasion of one's conversion, but continually and habitually, as an essential condition of forgiveness and salvation. 'So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you,' warned Jesus, 'if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.' It is possible, warned Jesus, that Peter and others who have known the forgiving grace of God might forfeit that forgiveness. The forgiving grace of God cannot dwell in bitter, unforgiving hearts. He who refuses to*

*forgive his brother has no real sense of need for the forgiveness of God and no just claim on His gracious forgiveness. 'Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.'"*

### **What does Jesus expect from us?**

Jesus expects us to obey Him. He was not suggesting it, nor did He say it was for another dispensation. Jesus said true believers are those who obey Him. Jesus said if you love Him, keep His commandments (John 14:15).

We are to abide in the doctrine of Christ. When we abide in the doctrine of Christ, we are fulfilling the law of Christ and it shows that we have both the Father and the Son. (2 John 1:9)

### **God's will is expressed in the Law of Christ.**

The law of Christ is anything Jesus taught in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and is considered the will of the Father. (Matt. 12:50)

Jesus said whoever **hears these sayings** (of Jesus), and **DOES THEM**, is likened to a wise man who built his house on the rock. (Matt. 7:24)

### **The teachings of Jesus come from the Father.**

Jesus said His teaching were not His own, but came from the Father. (John 7:16-17) Everything Jesus taught and commanded came from God. (John 8:28; John 12:49-50; John 14:10; John 14:24; John 14:31) Jesus obeyed the Father perfectly. Everything Jesus did was the will of God.

Jesus said to His disciples, "**Teach them to obey all that I commanded you**. By teaching others to obey all that Jesus commanded, is teaching the will of God.

### **The law of Christ is a law of the heart and mind.**

When one starts talking about how we should obey Jesus, immediately the cry is, "You are teaching a works salvation!" Nothing could be further from the truth. Throughout both Testaments God wants people to forsake wickedness. Jesus told

people to "**go and sin no more,**" and Paul said, "Awake to righteousness and **sin not!**" But on every side we are attacked by Satan's followers who say you can keep sinning and never die (the same lie from the Garden). Just listen to this clip "Today's Gospel"

of what is being taught out there, and hear how God's word refutes them!

The secret to living a holy life, free from the bondage of sin, is **LOVE**. The purity of your actions is not only from the mind, but from the heart. What is in your heart will fill your mind as well. Jesus called the teachers of the law and Pharisees hypocrites. They were beautiful on the outside, but inside were full of dead men's bones. People, from the outside, can appear as righteous but inside are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. ([Matt. 23:28](#)) It is from out of the heart that proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornication, thefts, false witness, blasphemies ([Matt. 15:19](#)). Jesus is not looking just for external actions to be pure, but his desire is for us to be pure in heart and mind as well.

**Will the holy spirit be given to those who do not obey Jesus - who claim to continually sin everyday in thought, word, and deed?**

Jesus said the holy spirit will only be given to those who obey Him.

**"If you love me, you would obey my commands.** And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another helper to be with you up to the age to come." ([John 14:15-16](#))

This is corroborated by Peter.

And we are witnesses of these events, and so is the holy spirit which God has given to those who practice obedience to Him." ([Acts 5:32](#))

John tells us,

"Whoever keeps his commands remains in intimate relationship with him, and he with him. And by this we know that he remains in intimate relationship with us, by the spirit that he gave us." ([1 John 3:24](#))

The holy spirit given abides in those who keep the commandments of Jesus! For those who claim to sin everyday in thought, word, and deed cannot have the holy spirit, for they do not obey Jesus. They even write off what Jesus said as for another *dispensation* and therefore it doesn't apply to them doctrinally! Why? Because

it will knock down the wall of a false teaching called Unconditional Eternal Security! When you listen to all these false teachers, and get rid of all the fluff in their sermons, it all boils down to one thing.....you can keep on sinning and you won't die! It's the same lie the Serpent told Eve in the Garden.

The Bible is clear that if you **don't obey** and abide in the doctrine of Christ, you do not belong to Christ, nor do you have the holy spirit. ([2 John 1:9](#); [Rom. 8:9](#))

Jesus said whoever obeys His commands, he is the one who loves Him. And He who loves Jesus loves the Father. Again, if anyone loves Jesus, he will obey His teachings. ([John 14:21](#); [John 14:23](#))

The reverse side is true just as well. Jesus said those who do not love him do not keep His words. ([John 14:24](#))

**Jesus' love is conditional as long as we continue to obey.**

Jesus' love is NOT unconditional. Note the condition in the words of Jesus,

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love;  
even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide  
in his love. ([John 15:10](#))

Being friends with Jesus is also conditioned upon our obedience.

"Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."  
([John 15:14](#))

**If we hold to the teachings of Christ, we are the real disciples of His.**

"Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."  
([John 8:31-32](#))

**We are assured by Jesus we will never see death if we keep His word.**

"Most assuredly, I say to you, if anyone keeps My word  
he shall never see death." ([John 8:51](#))

It is obedience to the teachings (keeping His word) that causes the blessings. Just as blessings were promised for obedience to the law of Moses, so are the blessings promised to us based on our obedience to Christ.

**One cannot have salvation without repentance followed with obedience.**

The Scripture says,

"And having been perfected, He (Jesus) became the author of eternal salvation **to all who obey Him,**" ([Heb. 5:9](#))

It doesn't say salvation is given to those who sin every day in thought, word, and deed. God does not want people to sin. He tells people to forsake their sins and follow Him. Jesus commanded that all men to repent, but modern man will tell you repentance is not part of the Gospel. It's a lie. God wants repentance preached ([Luke 5:32](#); [Luke 24:47](#); [Acts 20:21](#), etc. etc.).

There is a "godly sorrow." "For godly sorrow worketh repentance TO SALVATION not to be repented of;" ([2 Cor. 7:10](#))

Jesus said of the Holy Spirit,

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:" ([John 16:8](#))

And as we read above, God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him. ([Acts 5:32](#)) When a person feels the conviction of the Holy Spirit about his sinful condition, he can shrug it off, or he'll come to God to forgive him of such a sinful life style. He will want pardon through the mercy of God. He knows his only hope is through Jesus who provided a way for his salvation and freedom from sin. He will hate his sin because he can see what it has done to him and where it will send him. He will not have a desire to do it anymore. At that point of repentance, he wants to give up sin and not do it again. Some people may be bothered for weeks under the conviction of the Holy Spirit, some may be a few days, and for some it may be on the very day (process of repentance). He will not have rest until he comes to that crucial point of "godly sorrow" that leads to salvation. He has to believe (faith) that God is able to forgive him of all the sins he has committed up to that point in his life, and his heart must be dead set against sinning again, which it would be if he is truly under godly sorrow. Jesus came to set us free from sin, that it no longer has to have dominion over us. His repentance will be proven by his deeds ([Acts](#)

[20:26](#)). One's deeds (**obedience** - NOT disobedience) will **prove** his repentance! God will give that person strength if he will obey Him. He gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him. From there, as he reads the Scriptures (needs to grow in the faith), he will be warned not to go back to the way he once walked. He can quench the Holy Spirit ([1 Thess. 5:19](#)). The Scripture shows us certain sins will not let one inherit the kingdom of God, but instead lead one to eternal doom ([Gal.5:19-21](#); [1 Cor. 6:9-10](#); [Eph. 5:3-6](#); [Rev. 21:8](#), etc.). The Bible doesn't say we work FOR our salvation, but it does say to WORK OUT our own salvation and that with fear and trembling! ([Php. 2:12](#)).

Salvation is conditional upon the fact that we continue to abide in Jesus. One who abides in Jesus will not sin. Remember, Jesus said if you love Him you will obey Him and His teachings. The Scriptures tell us,

"For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome." ([1 John 5:3](#))

The Scriptures also say,

"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](#))

And you want to claim that you SIN everyday in thought, word and deed? This is simply being disobedient!

### **Which one is it - believing or obeying?**

Some Scripture passages say salvation is a result of obedience while other texts say salvation is through faith. Is this a contradiction? No. Paul said,

"By whom we have received grace and apostleship, **for obedience to the faith** among all nations, for his name: ([Rom. 1:5](#))

"**For by grace you have been saved through faith**, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God," ([Eph. 2:8](#))

Faith comes first and obedience is the evidence of the faith. The Gospel is to be obeyed for salvation sake.

"In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, **and that obey not the gospel** of our Lord Jesus Christ:" ([2 Thess. 1:8](#))

### **Disobedience is manifested in unbelief.**

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that **believeth not** the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." ([John 3:36](#))

"And to whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that **believed not**? So we see that they could not enter in **because of unbelief**. (Heb. 3:18-19)

So if you are disobedient, sinning everyday in thought, word, and deed, you are walking in **unbelief**. Among the sins that will send one into the Lake of Fire, the "unbelieving" is one of them.

But the fearful, and **unbelieving**, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death. ([Rev. 21:8](#))

The Bible is clear that a *past moment* of acceptance of Christ does not guarantee anyone eternal salvation regardless how they live afterward. If they don't continue in the faith they will suffer the consequences in Hell for all eternity.

Scriptures say that there will be Christians who will **depart from the faith** (departing from the faith doesn't happen to lost people!) (1 Tim. 4:1). The widows turned from Christ and started following Satan (1 Tim. 5:11-15). Demas is another example. He was a traveling companion of Paul (Col. 4:14; Phm. 1:24). They worked together and endured various troubles and persecutions preaching the kingdom of God. But what happened to Demas? Paul said, "**For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica;...**" (2 Tim. 4:10). Demas, a saved man, fell away and went back to loving this present world. He loved the world more than God. The god of this world is Satan! (2 Cor. 4:4). Demas got deceived and it affected his behavior. In his unrepentant state, he lost his salvation for he did not endure! (1 John 2:15; James 4:4)

Those who obey Jesus's commands live in him. Paul said to examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith ([2 Cor. 13:5](#)). John corroborates Paul by saying, "And he that **keepeth his commandments** dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." ([1 John 3:24](#))

Those who have a true saving faith in Christ will obey His teachings and commands. Obedience is natural evidence of saving faith. Those who are disobedient display their lack of saving faith. Jesus NEVER asks us to do

something we cannot do. If you love Jesus, you will obey Him, and to obey Him is fulfilling the law of Christ.

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