

Lesson 22 – Ten Commandments Reform [Proper placement of them in one's life.]

1. What two things do many Christians exaggerate? **Ephesians 2:8**

EGW: That so-called faith in Christ which professes to release men from the obligation of obedience to God, is not faith, but presumption. "By grace are ye saved through faith." But "faith, if it hath not works, is dead." Ephesians 2:8; James 2:17. Jesus said of Himself before He came to earth, "I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40:8. And just before He ascended again to heaven He declared, "I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." John 15:10. {SC 61.2}

2. What is a third exaggeration? **Acts 16:31**

EGW: The faith in Christ which saves the soul is not what it is represented to be by many. "Believe, believe," is their cry; "only believe in Christ, and you will be saved. It is all you have to do." While true faith trusts wholly in Christ for salvation, it will lead to perfect conformity to the law of God. Faith is manifested by works. {RH, October 5, 1886 par. 20}

3. What are the souls considered that try to cancel God's Ten Commandments with one or all of the exaggerated scriptures? **2 Peter 3:16, 1 John 2:4**

EGW: There are those who profess holiness, who declare that they are wholly the Lord's, who claim a right to the promises of God, while refusing to render obedience to His commandments. These transgressors of the law claim everything that is promised to the children of God; but this is presumption on their part, for John tells us that true love for God will be revealed in obedience to all His commandments. It is not enough to believe the theory of truth, to make a profession of faith in Christ, to believe that Jesus is no impostor, and that the religion of the Bible is no cunningly devised fable. "He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments," John wrote, "is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him." "He that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him, and He in him." 1 John 2:4, 5; 3:24. {AA 562.3}

4. How do we know that grace and faith do not cancel the Ten Commandments? **Romans 6:15, Romans 3:31**

EGW: The apostle Paul clearly presents the relation between faith and the law under the new covenant. He says: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh"--it could not justify man, because in his sinful nature he could not keep the law--"God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 5:1; 3:31; 8:3, 4. {PP 373.1}

It is the sophistry of Satan that the death of Christ brought in grace to take the place of the law. The death of Jesus did not change, or annul, or lessen in the slightest degree, the law of ten commandments. That precious grace offered to men through a Saviour's blood, establishes the law of God. Since the fall of man, God's moral government and his grace are inseparable. They go hand in hand through all dispensations. "Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." {RH, March 8, 1881 par. 5}

5. What does God call the act of turning God's grace into permission to continue sinning? **Jude 1:4**

EGW: It is our work to know our special failings and sins, which cause darkness and spiritual feebleness, and quenched our first love. Is it worldliness? Is it selfishness? Is it the love of self-esteem? Is it striving to be first? Is it the sin of sensuality that is intensely active? Is it the sin of the Nicolaitans, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness? Is it the misuse and abuse of great light and opportunities and privileges, making boasted claims to wisdom and religious knowledge, while the life and character are inconsistent and immoral? Whatever it is that has been petted and cultivated until it has become strong and overmastering, make determined efforts to overcome, else you will be lost. It is these cherished sins, abhorrent to God, that make enfeebled moral courage, and leave you to choose to walk apart from God, while you retain a miserable, heartless, outward form. {RH, June 7, 1887 par. 16}

6. What did Jesus say about getting rid of the commandments? **Matthew 5:17-19**

EGW: To those who claimed that He came to set aside the law, He said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." Matthew 5:17. {SJ 70.9}

To fulfill means to keep, or perform. (James 2:8.) So when He came to be baptized by John the Baptist, He said, "Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Matthew 3:15. To fulfill the law is to obey it perfectly. {SJ 71.1}

God's law can never be changed; for Christ said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matthew 5:18. {SJ 71.2}

7. When asked about salvation, what did Jesus reply with? **Matthew 19:16-19**

EGW: To every soul who is inquiring, "What shall I do that I may have eternal life?" the answer comes from the divine Son of God, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Does Christ tell us to do that which it is not possible for us to do?--No, never. The path of obedience is possible, and it leads to the tree of life. This is the path that leads to the paradise of God. The requirement of God to obey and live was given to Adam. The only way to life is found through obedience to the commandments. {RH, March 28, 1893 par. 10}

8. To those that say that we only have two commandments now, what did Jesus say the two commandments really were? **Matthew 22:37-40**

EGW: The lawyer approached Jesus with a direct question, "Which is the first commandment of all?" The answer of Christ is direct and forcible: "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment." The second is like the first, said Christ; for it flows out of it, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." {DA 607.1}

The first four of the Ten Commandments are summed up in the one great precept, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." The last six are included in the other, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Both these commandments are an expression of the principle of love. The first cannot be kept and the second broken, nor can the second be kept while the first is broken. When God has His rightful place on the throne of the heart, the right place will be given to our neighbor. We shall love him as ourselves. And only as we love God supremely is it possible to love our neighbor impartially. {DA 607.2}

And since all the commandments are summed up in love to God and man, it follows that not one precept can be broken without violating this principle. Thus Christ taught His hearers that the law of God is not so many separate precepts, some of which are of great importance, while others are of small importance and may with impunity be ignored. Our Lord presents the first four and the last six commandments as a divine whole, and teaches that love to God will be shown by obedience to all

His commandments. {DA 607.3}

9. Many preachers teach that the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross. What was really nailed to the cross? **Colossians 2:14, Deuteronomy 31:24-26**

EGW: What a contrast between the words of Christ, and the language of those who claim that he came to abrogate the law of God and to do away with the Old Testament. Our Saviour, who knew all things, understood the wiles of Satan, the snares by which he would seek to entrap the children of men, and so made this positive statement to meet the questioning doubts and the blind unbelief of all coming time. {ST, September 4, 1884 par. 2}

But there is a law which was abolished, which Christ "took out of the way, nailing it to his cross." Paul calls it "the law of commandments contained in ordinances." This ceremonial law, given by God through Moses, with its sacrifices and ordinances, was to be binding upon the Hebrews until type met antitype in the death of Christ as the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the world. Then all the sacrificial offerings and services were to be abolished. Paul and the other apostles labored to show this, and resolutely withstood those Judaizing teachers who declared that Christians should observe the ceremonial law. {ST, September 4, 1884 par. 3}

10. What two options did Jesus contrast regarding His commandments, in which ignoring them is not one of the options? **Mark 7:7-9**

EGW: Ministers of God have been guilty of the sin of disregarding a "Thus saith the Lord." They have led the members of their churches to observe rites which have no foundation in the word of God, but are in direct opposition to His law. By perversion and misrepresentation of the Word of God, they have caused the people to commit sin. God will reward them according to their works. Even as did the priests and rulers in the time of Christ, they have caused the people to err. Christ says of them as He said of the Jewish leaders, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (MS 28, 1900). {4BC 1149.1}

11. Who were able to keep the commandments blamelessly showing that humans indeed can keep the Ten Commandments? **Luke 1:5-6**

EGW: "Zacharias and Elizabeth were both righteous before God walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." They were far advanced in years. Zacharias ministered in the

holy office of the priesthood. {2SP 42.1}

12. What are we called to do? **1 Corinthians 1:8, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 1 Timothy 6:14, 2 Peter 3:14**

EGW: The doctrine of sanctification, or perfect holiness, which fills a prominent place in some of the religious movements of the day, is among the causes that have rendered modern revivals so ineffectual. True sanctification is a Bible doctrine. The apostle Paul declared to the Thessalonian church, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." [1 Thessalonians 4:3.] And again he prayed, "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." [1 Thessalonians 5:23.] But the sanctification now so widely advocated is not that brought to view in the Scriptures. It is false in theory, and dangerous in its practical results. {4SP 298.2}

13. What is the law not? **1 John 5:3**

EGW: Its advocates teach that the law of God is a grievous yoke. and that by faith in Christ, men are released from all obligation to keep his Father's commandments. Bible sanctification is a conformity to the will of God, attained by rendering obedience to his law, through faith in his Son. Our Saviour prayed for his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." [John 17:17.] There is no genuine sanctification except through obedience to the truth; and the psalmist declares, "Thy law is the truth." [Psalm 119:142.] The law of God is the only standard of moral perfection. That law was exemplified in the life of Christ. He says, "I have kept my Father's commandments." [John 15:10.] And the apostle John affirms, "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." And again, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." [1 John 2:6; 5:3.] Those who love God will love his commandments also. The truly sanctified heart is in harmony with the divine precepts; for they are "holy, and just, and good." {4SP 299.1}

14. If a person loves Jesus, what will they do? **John 14:15, 21; John 15:10**

EGW: There are conditions to the fulfillment of God's promises, and prayer can never take the place of duty. "If ye love Me," Christ says, "Keep My commandments." "He that hath My commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth Me; and he that loveth Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him." John 14:15, 21. Those who bring their petitions to God, claiming His promise while they do not comply with the conditions, insult Jehovah. They bring the name of Christ as their authority for the fulfillment of the promise, but they do not those things

that would show faith in Christ and love for Him. {COL 143.2}

15. Under the new covenant, where is God's law? **Hebrews 8:10, Hebrews 10:16**

EGW: The new-covenant promise is, "I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." Hebrews 10:16. While the system of types which pointed to Christ as the Lamb of God that should take away the sin of the world was to pass away at His death, the principles of righteousness embodied in the Decalogue are as immutable as the eternal throne. Not one command has been annulled, not a jot or tittle has been changed. Those principles that were made known to man in Paradise as the great law of life will exist unchanged in Paradise restored. When Eden shall bloom on earth again, God's law of love will be obeyed by all beneath the sun. {MB 50.2}

16. What are we not justified by? **Romans 3:28, Galatians 2:16, Galatians 3:11**

EGW: We have transgressed the law of God, and by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified. The best efforts that man in his own strength can make, are valueless to meet the holy and just law that he has transgressed; but through faith in Christ he may claim the righteousness of the Son of God as all-sufficient. Christ satisfied the demands of the law in His human nature. He bore the curse of the law for the sinner, made an atonement for him, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. Genuine faith appropriates the righteousness of Christ, and the sinner is made an overcomer with Christ; for he is made a partaker of the divine nature, and thus divinity and humanity are combined. {1SM 363.3}

17. But who gets justified? **Romans 2:13, James 1:25**

EGW: That men may be prepared to stand in the Judgment, the message commands them to "fear God, and give glory to him," "and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." The result of an acceptance of these messages is given in the words, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." In order to be prepared for the Judgment, it is necessary that men should keep the law of God. That law will be the standard of character in the Judgment. The apostle Paul declares, "As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; . . . in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ." And he says that "the doers of the law shall be justified." [Romans 2:12-16.] Faith is essential in order to the keeping of the law of God; for "without faith it is impossible to please him." And "whatsoever is not

of faith is sin." [Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23.] {GC88 435.2}

By the first angel, men are called upon to "fear God, and give glory to him," and to worship him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must obey his law. Says the wise man, "Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." [Ecclesiastes 12:13.] Without obedience to his commandments, no worship can be pleasing to God. "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination." [1 John 5:3; Proverbs 28:9.] {GC88 436.1}

18. What does God not do? **Exodus 34:7, James 2:10-11**

EGW: Men whom God favored, and to whom He entrusted great responsibilities, were sometimes overcome by temptation and committed sin, even as we at the present day strive, waver, and frequently fall into error. Their lives, with all their faults and follies, are open before us, both for our encouragement and warning. If they had been represented as without fault, we, with our sinful nature, might despair at our own mistakes and failures. But seeing where others struggled through discouragements like our own, where they fell under temptations as we have done, and yet took heart again and conquered through the grace of God, we are encouraged in our striving after righteousness. As they, though sometimes beaten back, recovered their ground, and were blessed of God, so we too may be overcomers in the strength of Jesus. On the other hand, the record of their lives may serve as a warning to us. It shows that God will by no means clear the guilty. He sees sin in His most favored ones, and He deals with it in them even more strictly than in those who have less light and responsibility. {PP 238.2}

19. What is the difference between those trying to just keep the commandments as opposed to those that have a born again experience? **Contrast Romans 8:7 against 1 John 3:9**

EGW: Jesus continued: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." By nature the heart is evil, and "who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Job 14:4. No human invention can find a remedy for the sinning soul. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Romans 8:7; Matthew 15:19. The fountain of the heart must be purified before the streams can become pure. He who is trying to reach heaven by his own works in keeping the law is attempting an impossibility. There is no safety for one who has merely a legal religion, a form of godliness. The Christian's life is not a modification or improvement of the old, but a transformation of nature. There is a death to self and sin, and a new life altogether. This change can be brought about only by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. {DA 172.1}

The Saviour took upon Himself the infirmities of humanity, and lived a sinless life, that men might have no fear that because of the weakness of human nature they could not overcome. Christ came to make us "partakers of the divine nature," and His life declares that humanity, combined with divinity, does not commit sin. {Te 107.1}

20. Why will so many Christians be lost though acting in the name of Christ? **Contrast Matthew 7:22-23 to 1 John 2:3**

EGW: I was shown that the following scripture is applicable to those who are under such a deception: "Not everyone 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 not we 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." {1T 416.2}

Here is the greatest deception that can affect the human mind; these persons believe that they are right when they are wrong. They think that they are doing a great work in their religious life, but Jesus finally tears off their self-righteous covering and vividly presents before them the true picture of themselves in all their wrongs and deformity of religious character. They are found wanting when it is forever too late to have their wants supplied. God has provided means to correct the erring: yet if those who err, choose to follow their own judgment, and despise the means which He has ordained to correct them and unite them upon the truth, they will be brought into the position described by the words of our Lord quoted above. {1T 417.1}

21. Since we know there is sin in the world, what is sin? **1 John 3:4**

EGW: What is to bring the sinner to the knowledge of his sins unless he knows what sin is? The only definition of sin in the Word of God is given us in 1 John 3:4: "Sin is the transgression of the law." The sinner must be made to feel that he is a transgressor. Christ dying upon the cross of Calvary is drawing his attention. Why did Christ die? Because it was the only means for man to be saved. He became our substitute and surety. He took upon Himself our sins that He might impute His own righteousness to all who believe in Him. The love of Jesus Christ displayed for man in the sufferings He endured on the cross of Calvary is a mystery even to the angelic host of heaven. Amazing love of the Father to give His Son to die to ransom the sinner! Oh, what love, what inexpressible love! {1888 780.2}

22. What do the last day group of people do to survive? **Revelation 12:17, Revelation 14:12**

EGW: Not all in this world have taken sides with the enemy against God. Not all have become disloyal. There are a faithful few who are true to God; for John writes: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. Soon the battle will be waged fiercely between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. Soon everything that can be shaken will be shaken, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain. {9T 15.5}

23. Who gets to have access to the tree of life? **Revelation 22:14**

EGW: Christ promised his disciples that he would send them the Holy Spirit, who would bring all these things to their remembrance. All those who render obedience to God's commands will be given free access to Eden restored and to the tree of life. He who is the fountain of all knowledge has stated the condition of our fitness to enter the heaven of bliss, in the words, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." {GCDB, March 6, 1899 par. 13}