

has called us to be!

God's Ten Commandments are really ten wonderful promises of what He will do in our lives. Christ came to destroy the work of the devil. He sends His Holy Spirit to give us power over sin.

Since we live in a world of sin, there has to be a law that defines sin. That law is God's Ten Commandments.

HE SENDS HIS HOLY SPIRIT TO GIVE US POWER OVER SIN.

James' counsel in the New Testament agrees with the wise counsel Solomon gave in the

Old Testament. Their agreement testifies that God's purpose for His Ten Commandment Law is as constant as God Himself:

"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 NKJV).

God cannot lie or contradict Himself. Sinners today still deserve the wages they have earned. *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 6:23 NKJV).*

The privilege we now enjoy is that when we recognize we have sinned, we can go directly to Jesus and ask Him for forgiveness. Christ understands! He lived in this sin-sick world. He understands our struggle with every temptation.

As the one true High Priest, He now intercedes with His Father on our behalf, and He is able to save us completely (*Hebrews 7:25*). Instead of eternal death, we receive the gift of eternal life when we submit to God's will and commit our lives to Him— walking in obedience to His Commandments.

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¹ Excerpt from The Antichrist Agenda Revealed by Danny Shelton and Shelley J. Quinn, pages 38-39. Used by permission. Emphases added.



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Farmington Seventh-day Adventist Church Newsletter

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Words of Encouragement...

2 Peter 1:2-11

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:

Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.

And beside this, giving all DILIGENCE, add to your FAITH VIRTUE; and to virtue KNOWLEDGE; and to knowledge TEMPERANCE; and to temperance PATIENCE; and to patience GODLINESS; and to godliness brotherly KINDNESS; and to brotherly kindness CHARITY.

For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:

FOR SO AN ENTRANCE SHALL BE MINISTERED UNTO YOU ABUNDANTLY INTO THE EVERLASTING KINGDOM OF OUR LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST."

UPLIFT

FARMINGTON SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER

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Whose Rules?

●●○ Avery Schroetlin

I recently read an article from a few years ago talking about how China had implemented a new education policy that banned cheating.¹ This may seem like common sense to us, but what happened next was shocking. After one high school installed metal detectors to catch students wearing transmitting devices into tests, a mob of 2,000 furious parents and students descended on it, smashing cars and windows, and even beating up one of the teachers. All the while they were chanting about how they wanted fairness and how "there is no fairness if you do not let us cheat." And indeed, cheating in China has become so prevalent it's actually considered standard practice, and few even give it a second thought.

This is just one of many shocking stories I've heard about the state of things in the world's largest communist country, and it got me wondering

as to how the morals of over a billion people could be degraded to the point that cheating on tests is not just viewed as normal, but to be expected.

The answer, of course, is that God's law has been discarded as the standard of righteousness, and in its place stands a secular idea of what's right and wrong. In the ten commandments God states "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour" (Exodus 20:16). Yet the world's sinful nature dictates that lying and cheating is fine if it allows you to get ahead. God says "Thou shalt not steal" (Ex. 20:15) while the vast majority of the world supports taking from the haves to give to the have-nots. God's law states "Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13) but now abortion is considered a human right by most of the world. And in the only commandment with a promise attached to it, God says "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the

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...Whose Rules? (continued from page 1)

LORD thy God giveth thee" (20:12). But even this is being undermined as parents are handing the authority of raising their kids over to schools and the state. The UK even encourages kids to spy on their parents and report them to the government if they are doing anything contrary to public interest.

All this shows a marked departure from God's original plan, and indeed is the death knell of the world. However, we should not be surprised by this as the Bible told us all this would happen. When speaking of the time of the end, Jesus said "For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened" (Matthew 24:21-22). Elsewhere, when talking about the persecution His followers would experience, He says "And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:21-22).

As humanity moves further and further from God and His Law, so too will God withdraw his hand of protection

from the world. In The Great Controversy Ellen White writes, "It is God that shields His creatures and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer. But the Christian world have shown contempt for the law of Jehovah; and the Lord will do just what He has declared that He would—He

will withdraw His blessings from the earth and remove His protecting care from those who are rebelling against His law and teaching and forcing others to do the same. Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. He will favor and prosper some in order to further his own designs, and he will bring trouble upon others and lead men to believe that it is God who is afflicting them" (The Great Controversy 589.2).

Although China serves as an explicit example of what happens when a nation turns its back on God, it is not communism that is the root cause of this rebellion. Rather, it's Satan and his earthly agents working for the total destruction of God's law, which is the very foundation of His kingdom. "From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator, and though he was cast out of heaven he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God's law, is the object which he has steadfastly

pursued. Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether, or by rejecting one of its precepts, the result will be ultimately the same. He that offends 'in one point,' manifests contempt for the whole law; his influence and example are on the side of transgression; he becomes 'guilty of all.' James 2:10" (The Great Controversy 582.1).

As the end of the world is fast approaching it becomes ever more important that we ensure we are standing under God's banner of

protection, even if the entire world is against us. The only way to prove we are on God's side is by living according to his will and, with God's help, keeping all ten of His commandments. As long as we remain in accordance with His law, we can have confidence that we will be surrounded by God's hedge of protection, and that is the safest place to be.

¹ Kuo, Lily. "Chinese students and their parents fight for the right to cheat." Quartz, Quartz Media Incorporated, 21 June 2013, <https://qz.com/96793/chinese-students-and-their-parents-fight-for-the-right-to-cheat/>.

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The Law of Love and Liberty

●●● Lyle Keeney

It was suggested for this issue that we write about God's love. Those of you with children will understand that, as much as love is caring, protecting and nourishing, it is also teaching, guiding and correcting. Those of you who've raised children through their adolescence into adulthood will also understand that the ones you love can rebel against you, and reject your guidance, and that when they've left your house they're no longer under your complete protection. Hopefully by that time the rules and standards of your household have, to some extent, become written, as it were, into their personalities. Hopefully, those rules and standards are for the rest of their lives guiding them to proper behavior, and therefore they become assets to their communities, and thereby prosper. Those of you who've raised children will also understand the anguish that a parent feels when a child does wrong, seeing that it harms the child and degrades the community.

Such is the love, and the law, of God, but on a much greater scale and height of perfection.

While pondering over this concept, I was handed a book by Danny Shelton and Shelley Quinn,¹ in which they've done a good job of explaining it. Therefore I called and obtained permission to excerpt it below:

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The Ten Commandments are the Law of Love — a transcript of God's character! "He who does not love does not know God, for God is love" (1 John 4:8 NKJV).

The Ten Commandments express God's perfect will of love for His people. Christ's character of love is revealed in the Law of God. Our Lord said all of His Ten Commandments are sustained by love:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.... You shall love your neighbor as yourself." On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets" (Matthew 22:37-40 NKJV).

The first four commandments (Exodus 20:2-11) define how we can develop an intimate love relationship with God — loving the Lord with all

our heart, soul, mind and strength. The final six commandments (Exodus 20:12-17) define how we can love our neighbor as we love ourselves.

Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments... If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love" (John 14:15, 15:10 NKJV).

Jesus obeyed the Father's commandments. He asks us to demonstrate our love for Him by doing the same.

Paul wrote that love is the fulfillment of the Ten Commandment Law of God (Romans 13:10). In the Greek, that means love fills God's Commandments to the fullest. How can we fulfill His Law of Love? It's impossible if we depend on human nature.

The action required of us is to open our hearts and allow God to pour out His love into us by the power of His Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5). God's perfect law is filled to its fullest only by His love flowing through us.

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12 NKJV).

Revelation, the last book of the Bible, identifies the saints of God as those who are *keeping the commandments of God* and have the faith of Jesus. Revelation also points out Satan's fury against the church who keeps God's Commandments:

"And the dragon [symbolic for Satan] was enraged with the woman

[symbolic for the church], and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17 NKJV).

What commandments are these true, end-time Christians keeping? We know these references are not to the law of Moses. If God abolished His Ten Commandments, why would the Bible

instruct us to "keep the commandments of God"?

The apostle James clearly defines God's standard of judgment as His Ten Commandment Law:

"If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you do well; but if you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, 'Do not commit adultery, also said, 'Do not murder.' Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty" (James 2:8-12 NKJV).

The "law of liberty" is this — Christ

sets us free from sin and empowers us to walk in obedience to God. He does for us what we cannot do for ourselves, causing us to be all that He

OBEDIENCE TO GOD
=
FREEDOM

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"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37).