

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

February 2010

“Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Titus 1:4). Very soon we will look up and see the Lord coming in the clouds of glory. May this blessed hope move us to purify ourselves through Christ.

**2010 West Virginia Camp Meeting:** It will be held at the Smyrna Chapel in Welch, West Virginia, June 15-19. Call 304-732-9204 for more information.

**2010 Florida Camp Meeting:** It will be held at the Florida Lions Camp in Lake Wales, Florida, February 23-28. For more information call Jerri Raymond at 407-291-9565. I hope to see you at these camp meetings.

## Has God Abolished His Law?

by Lynnford Beachy

This new year has barely begun and we have already witnessed one of the worst earthquakes in history. Haiti was hit with a 7.0 magnitude earthquake, which was not the worst according to the Richter scale, but the location made it one of the worst as far as the loss of life and infrastructure damage. When telling us how to watch for the signs of Christ's coming, Jesus said, “Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and *earthquakes, in divers places*. All these are the beginning of sorrows” (Matthew 24:7, 8). Earthquakes in divers places are one of the signs that Jesus will soon return.

When Christ returns He will “send his angels, and shall gather together his elect” from all around the world (Mark 13:27). For Christ to gather His people

at His return, His people must have already been judged worthy of eternal life. The final judgment for the wicked takes place a thousand years later, after the millennium (Revelation 20:5-15). For a thorough study on the millennium, please read our January 2010 issue of *Present Truth*.

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For God to judge the world, there must be a standard in that judgment. After describing the Ten Commandments, James wrote, “So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty” (James 2:12). We will be judged by God’s Ten Commandment Law. Yet, there is a popular teaching today that God’s law has been abolished. If that is the case, how can He use it to judge people? “For where no law is, there is no transgression” (Romans 4:15). If the authorities removed all the speed limits across the country, then how could anyone be charged with a speeding violation? God’s law must still be in force.

Few are willing to go so far as to say God’s law concerning murder, theft, adultery, the worship of false gods, etc. is no longer binding. Those who claim the law is abolished, when questioned, usually point out that the only part of the law they think has been abolished is the law concerning the Sabbath. This is really at the center of the debate over the validity of God’s law. Many people prefer to regard Sunday as a holy day rather than Saturday. This desire is so strong they wish to have the whole law abolished to do away with this one Commandment that troubles them.

Many Christians know that Saturday, the seventh day of the week, is the Sabbath of the Lord, rather than Sunday, the first day of the week, but they think this commandment has been abolished. So in reality, for many, the debate over the Sabbath is not a matter of whether Saturday is the Sabbath, but whether the Sabbath commandment is a requirement for Christians today.

Many like to call the Sabbath, “the Jewish Sabbath.” Yet, the Sabbath existed long before any Jew existed, and the Bible calls it, “the Sabbath of the LORD, thy God” (Exodus 20:10).

## **God’s Law is His Character**

For God to change His law, He would have to change His character, for the law is a transcript of His character. The whole law is summed up in one word, “love.” Paul wrote concerning the Ten Commandment Law, “Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (Romans 13:10). John wrote, “God is love” (1 John 4:8). When God gave His law He was expressing the way He is. God’s Law is as enduring as God Himself.

## **Giving the Ten Commandments**

Let’s consider the giving of the Ten Commandments at Sinai. It begins, “And God spake all these words” (Exodus 20:1). God did not entrust the giving of the Ten Commandments to any man, but spoke them Himself. “For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?” (Deuteronomy 5:26). It was an awesome thing for humans to hear the voice of the living God.

What does God say concerning those things that have come out of His mouth? “My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips” (Psalm 89:34). God says that He will not change anything that has gone out of His lips. More specifically God says that He will not alter the Ten Commandments. “The works of his hands

are verity and judgment; all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever, and are done in truth and uprightness” (Psalm 111:7, 8).

Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, wrote, “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth it, that men should fear before him” (Ecclesiastes 3:14). Whatever God does, it will last forever. Man is not permitted to add anything to it or take anything away from it.

John wrote, “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Revelation 22:18, 19). “What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto, nor diminish from it” (Deuteronomy 12:32). It is a very serious thing to attempt to alter those things which God Himself has spoken.

Did the Lord change His mind after He spoke the Ten Commandments at Sinai? He said, “For I am the LORD, I change not” (Malachi 3:6). God does not change. Man may go to great lengths to prove that God has changed His mind concerning the moral law which He spoke at Sinai, yet the Scriptures say that God does not change.

## **Did Christ Change the Law?**

As we have seen, God, the Father, did not change His law which He spoke

at Sinai, but did Christ change the law? Prophesying of Christ’s mission on earth, Isaiah wrote the following: “The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness’ sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable” (Isaiah 42:21). Christ’s mission did not include changing the law of God for it is written that He will “magnify the law and make it honourable.”

Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:17-19).

According to Jesus the law of God is to stand until “heaven and earth pass.” Obviously this has not yet occurred, so naturally the law has not been done away with. Jesus went on to say that it was a dangerous thing to teach men to “break one of these least commandments.” It is very plain that the law which Jesus was referring to is the Ten Commandment law for the rest of the chapter deals with Jesus expounding on certain points within this law.

The testimony of Jesus agrees with that of Solomon. He wrote, “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of

man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14).

Not only does God require us to keep His commandments, He also makes it clear that if we want to enter the kingdom of heaven we must "do his commandments." "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" (Revelation 22:14).

God will have a group of people in the last days who will keep His commandments. Concerning the final generation upon earth John wrote, "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Revelation 12:17). "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12).

The prophet Zephaniah expounded on this great truth when he wrote, "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid" (Zephaniah 3:13). Speaking of God's remnant people John wrote, "And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God" (Revelation 14:5).

As we can clearly see, God will have a group of people in the last days who will keep His law. What is the biblical term for those who break the

law? "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Consequently, one who transgresses the law of God is called a sinner.

What does the Bible say will happen at the time of the second coming, to those who transgress His law? "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it" (Isaiah 13:9). That is a very solemn warning. It is no wonder the Lord says, "prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12).

Certainly there are some who will quickly protest, claiming, "We cannot keep the law of God, we can never stop sinning." It is true that we cannot keep the law of God in our own strength. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Romans 8:7). Yet the Lord has told us that we must keep the commandments to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Surely there must be some remedy for sin.

Paul wrote, "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God" (Romans 3:24, 25). Praise God that He has made a way of escape! God, through His infinite wisdom, has designed a way in which we can be forgiven of our past sins. That is

wonderful! Notice that the verse said that we can have “remission of sins that are past.” Nowhere in the Bible is there any indication that we can be forgiven of sins that are yet future. In fact the Lord has made it clear that once we are forgiven we are expected not to continue in that sin. “What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Romans 6:1, 2).

Suppose a known thief comes to your church seeking membership, claiming that he wants to give his life to the Lord and asking for prayer that he might give up his habit of stealing. Suppose the pastor tells this man, “My friend, you have it all wrong; don’t you know that we can never stop sinning? Just accept Jesus as your Saviour and everything will be okay.” Certainly any conscientious individual would immediately see that the pastor’s reply is wrong. Yet many pastors make similar statements without raising the slightest suspicion in the listeners. If it is true that we cannot stop sinning, then where do we draw the line? Is it only that we cannot stop sinning when it comes to seemingly small sins such as lying and coveting, or would we say that we cannot stop sinning when it comes to such sins as adultery and murder? One may say that “small” sins cannot be avoided. Why stop there?

If it is true that the compulsive liar cannot give up lying, then it must also be true that the murderer cannot give up murdering and the thief cannot give up stealing. If this were the case then this world would be filled with nothing

but the vilest of criminals. It is very obvious that the assertion “we cannot stop sinning” is completely contrary to common sense, but is it contrary to the Bible?

Paul shared a wonderful promise when he wrote, “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). Praise God! He has promised us that there is no temptation that will ever come upon us from which we cannot escape. God always provides a way out of sin. Thank God that Satan cannot force us to sin.

## **What Shall I do When I am Tempted?**

God said, “And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me” (Psalm 50:15). If we will call upon the Lord when we are being tempted, He will give us the victory over every temptation. “For in that he [Christ] himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to *succour* [Greek: “to run to the cry of those in danger.” *Thayer’s Greek Lexicon*] them that are tempted” (Hebrews 2:18). If we do not call upon the Lord when we are tempted, He will not help us and we will be left to our own strength. When we call upon the Lord at the time of our temptation it does not have to be in an audible voice, but cry unto Him in your thoughts. Silent prayers are heard by Him who “searcheth the hearts” (Romans 8:27).

Some say that it is a grievous burden to keep God's commandments. It is true that to the unconverted heart, God's law is a burden. Yet, with Christ in the heart, keeping God's law becomes a delight, for Jesus said, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psalms 40:8). With God's law in our heart, His commandments become a delight rather than a burden. We are assured that His commandments are not grievous. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (1 John 5:3). John wrote, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:3, 4).

### **Answering Some Objections**

The main reason why most Christians believe that the Sabbath is no longer a requirement for Christians is that it is part of the Old Covenant and they think it has nothing to do with the New. They say, "We are under the New Covenant, not the Old, therefore the old Jewish Sabbath commandment does not apply to us."

This argument seems to be very persuasive, yet let us take a few moments to examine what the Bible says about the Sabbath and the Old and New Covenants.

The Bible nowhere refers to the Sabbath as the Jewish Sabbath, but always refers to it as the Sabbath of the Lord. The fourth commandment states, "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" (Exodus 20:10). When a stranger, a gentile, wished to give his life to the Lord, or if he was just visiting with the Jews he was commanded to keep the Sabbath. "Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the LORD, to serve him, and to love the name of the LORD, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer" (Isaiah 56:6, 7).

### **The Old and New Covenants**

Let us take a few moments to examine what the Bible says about the New Covenant.

We read the following in Hebrews 8:6-9. "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. [Notice that the Old Covenant was established on promises.] For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. [There were faults in the Old Covenant. What were those faults?] For finding fault with them, [The first covenant was based on promises that the Israelites made to God. God found fault with them because they did not keep their promises.] He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made



with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.”

It is plain that the Old Covenant was faulty, not because God’s promises were faulty, nor because His law was faulty, but because the Israelites failed to keep their promises. After God spoke His Ten Commandments the Israelites said, “All that the LORD hath spoken we will do” (Exodus 19:8). The law was what the Israelites covenanted to keep. The covenant was the promise that the Israelites made to God. The covenant made with Israel was established on faulty promises. The law played an intricate part of the Old Covenant, and, as is clear from the above verses, the law plays an intricate part of the New Covenant. The Old Covenant was based on promises that men made and failed to keep. The New Covenant is based on the promises of God, who promised to write the law within our hearts. Notice, it is the exact same law, just based on better promises.

The Old Covenant was based on the promises that the Israelites made and failed to keep. This covenant was done away with, not the law. According to Scripture, it is as much a sin to worship false gods and idols as to profane the Sabbath day.

The New Covenant is a placing of the Ten Commandments, including the Sabbath, in our minds and hearts. God said, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out

of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them” (Ezekiel 36:26, 27). God will cause us to walk in His ways.

Concerning the New Covenant Paul quoted Jeremiah 31 by saying, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: [Notice that the Old Covenant was based upon the promises of Israel to keep the Ten Commandments. The New Covenant is based on God’s promise to write those same Ten Commandments in our hearts, and to cause us to walk in His ways.] And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away” (Hebrews 8:10-13).

What was decaying and waxing old was not the Ten Commandments, for they stand fast forever. The covenant based on the Israelites’ promise to keep the law was what was ready to vanish. The New Covenant is now based on God’s promise to fulfill His law in our lives. This can only happen if we let Him have His way in our lives.

Concerning the ratification of the New Covenant Paul wrote, “For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament [or covenant] is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth” (Hebrews 9:16, 17). The New Covenant was ratified by the death of Christ, and was not in force until His death. “Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man’s covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto” (Galatians 3:15). After the death of Christ nothing could be added to the New Covenant. Some say that Sunday keeping is part of the New Covenant and point to the resurrection of Christ on that day as proof of this assertion, yet that Sunday came three days too late to be part of the New Covenant. Any assertion that Sunday is part of the New Covenant is proven untrue by the Scriptures.

The Old Covenant, which was based on the promises of the Jews to keep God’s law, is done away with. The New Covenant is now in force, which is the writing of God’s law in our hearts, and His promise to cause us to walk in His law.

## **Christ is the End of the Law**

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Romans 10:4). Many conclude that this means that Christ abolished the law, but Jesus said that He “came not to destroy the law.” The Greek word that was translated “end” means “the point aimed at as a limit, a goal” (*Strong’s Greek Dictionary*). Hence,

Christ is the ultimate goal, the likeness into which each of us are to be transformed. “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). The same author used the same Greek word in this way, “But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the *end* everlasting life” (Romans 6:22). Clearly, Paul was referring to everlasting life as the point being aimed at, or the goal of our Christian walk. Even so, coming to “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” is the end, or goal of the law.

A man cannot ever be justified by the works of the law. Being justified is to be forgiven of sins, and there is no way that by keeping the law we can make up for even one sin that we have committed. Only by faith in the death and resurrection of Christ can we be forgiven of sins. “I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain” (Galatians 2:21).

“Sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4). If the law has been done away with, there can be no law to transgress. If this were true, then there could be no sin, and hence, no sinner, and no need for justification. Doing the works of the law will not save you, but not doing them can cause you to be lost unless you repent.

Would you consider it a bondage to have a law telling you not to kill your neighbor? No! that law is for your benefit. Even so, the commandments are



for our benefit. “And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day *for thy good?*” (Deuteronomy 10:12, 13).

## **Blotting Out Ordinances**

Paul wrote concerning what happened at Christ’s death, “Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace” (Ephesians 2:15).

He also wrote, “Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Colossians 2:14). Some claim that the above verse proves that the law has been nailed to the cross. Is this really what Paul was saying? Paul also wrote concerning the law: “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12). This agrees with the testimony of David. “The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple” (Psalm 19:7).

Notice that Paul did not say that the law, or the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross. So what was Paul talking about when he said “the handwriting of ordinances” was nailed to the cross? We read in Exodus that the feast of Passover was an ordinance (Exodus 12:14). The Jewish Passover,

the sacrificial system, and the priesthood, which were “a shadow of things to come,” were called ordinances. This is what Paul was referring to which was done away with. God’s moral law, known as the Ten Commandments, was not “the handwriting of ordinances that was against us.”

Paul continued his thought concerning what took place at the cross by stating, “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (Colossians 2:16, 17).

Concerning these verses Adam Clarke wrote, “The apostle speaks here in reference to some particulars of the hand-writing of ordinances, which had been taken away,... There is no intimation here that the Sabbath was done away, or that its moral use was superseded, by the introduction of Christianity. I have shown elsewhere that, Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy, is a command of perpetual obligation, and can never be superseded but by the final termination of time. As it is a type of that rest which remains for the people of God, of an eternity of bliss, it must continue in full force till that eternity arrives; for no type ever ceases till the antitype be come” (*Clarke’s Commentary* on Colossians 2:16).

Another Bible Commentary states, “‘SABBATHS’ (not ‘the sabbaths’). of the day of atonement and feast of tabernacles have come to an end with the Jewish services to which they belonged (Leviticus 23:32, 37-39). The

weekly sabbath rests on a more permanent foundation, having been instituted in Paradise to commemorate the completion of creation in six days. Leviticus 23:38 expressly distinguished ‘the sabbath of the Lord’ from the other sabbaths” (*James, Fausset, Brown Commentary* on Colossians 1:16).

Here is another strong argument concerning this, “The days referred to are those required to be observed in the ceremonial law—days associated by God with meats, drinks, and new moons. The passage does not refer to the Sabbath of the moral law, associated with the commands forbidding theft, murder, and adultery. This weekly Sabbath was never against men or contrary to them, but was always for them, and promotive of their highest good” (*Family NT Bible Notes* on Colossians 1:16).

It is quite clear that Paul was not referring to the Ten Commandments when he stated that the handwriting of ordinances was nailed to the cross.

## **A Disannulling of the Commandment**

Paul wrote, “For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law” (Hebrews 7:12). Paul continued, “For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof” (Hebrews 7:18). Paul is referring to a law that is weak and unprofitable. He said that since the priesthood has changed there must also be a change of the law. It is obvious that the law Paul was referring to was not the Ten Commandments, for

they had nothing to do with laws concerning priests. Moreover, the Ten Commandment law is not weak and unprofitable, but “holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12). The law that was changed due to the changing of the priesthood is the ordinances concerning the sacrificial system, the priests, and the earthly sanctuary service, for they were unprofitable.

Paul wrote, “For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:1-4). Here we can plainly see that the law which was changed and done away with was the law or ordinances which dealt with the sacrificial system, the priesthood, and the earthly sanctuary service.

## **The Law as our Schoolmaster**


“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions,... Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster” (Galatians 3:19-25). The law of God speaks only to them who have broken that law. “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every

mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God” (Romans 3:19). Once we have come to Christ and have been justified (literally, made innocent), the law has nothing to say to us for we stand before God as if we had not sinned. Hence we are no longer in need of a schoolmaster. The moment we again break that law, the law is there to testify that we are sinners. Hence we again need that schoolmaster to bring us back to Christ. If there were no law to tell us that we have sinned, we would continue in a deplorable condition.

“What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, 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). Thank God for His law, for without it we would be liars, thieves, murderers, and such like.

John wrote, “My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye

sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1). God wants us to cease from sin, which is transgression of the law. If the law has been done away with, then it is not possible for anyone to sin, for how can one break a law that does not exist? If the law was done away with, it is perfectly just and right to murder, steal, commit adultery, etc. It is clear that God’s moral law is still in effect, and those who violate God’s law are sinners.


God wants us to live with Him forever, so He sent His Son to save us from our sins so that we can keep His commandments. Paul wrote, “Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God” (1 Corinthians 7:19). With God’s law in our hearts, it will be lived out in our lives. I pray that God’s law will be written in your heart. 

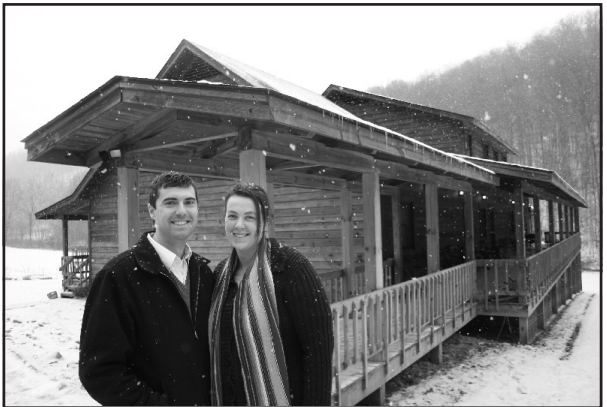
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## A New Lifestyle Center

Steve and Suzanne Day have opened a lifestyle center in Kentucky. It is a wonderful facility located on 300 beautiful acres. They are active missionaries and intend that this work will further the Gospel. In the past, the Days have worked with many people, especially those with cancer. They run a vigorous program and believe that regardless of anyone’s condition, that all will be benefitted by a stay.

They are also combining health with agriculture. They believe, nutrient

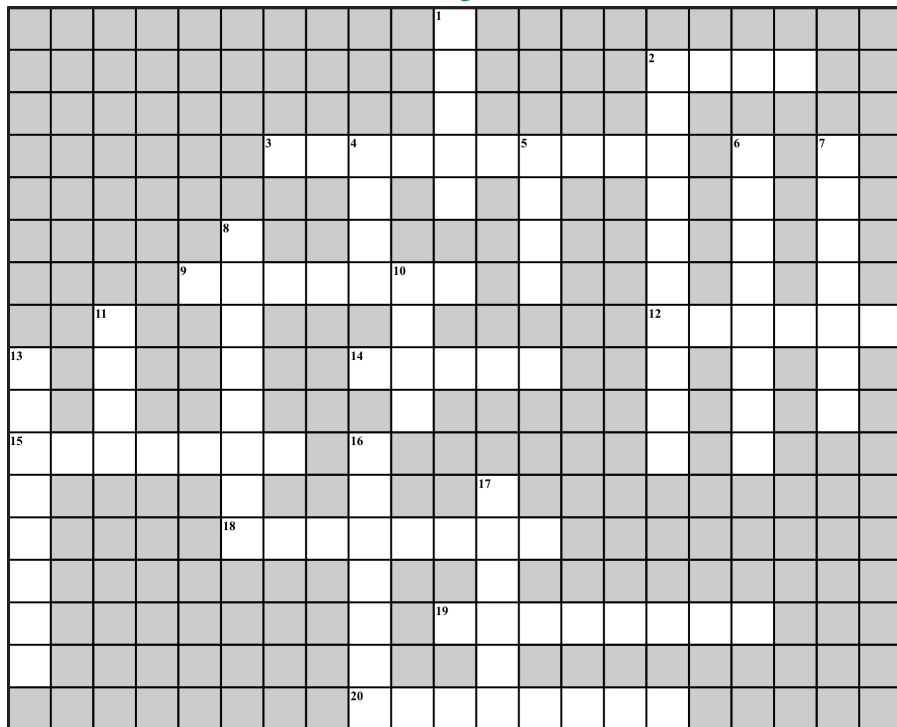
dense foods are the foundation of any health program. For more information check out their website [www.homeforhealth.net](http://www.homeforhealth.net) or call them at 606-663-6671. 



*Present Truth*  
**Something for the Young at Heart**

We would like to give you an interesting and easy way to study the Bible, so we are including a crossword puzzle for you. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line. (The KJV is required.)

*Give Glory to God*



Answers will be printed on the back page of next month's issue

- Fear God and give \_\_\_\_\_ to Him.  
Revelation 14:7—**14 Across**
- After Abraham's big test, when he was asked to offer his Son, God said to him, "Now I know that thou \_\_\_\_\_ God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son... from me. Genesis 22:12—**7 Down**
- God said about man, "I have \_\_\_\_\_ him for my glory." Isaiah 43:7—**15 Across**
- "Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his \_\_\_\_\_." Psalms 29:2—**4 Down**
- When ten lepers were cleansed only a \_\_\_\_\_ returned to give glory to God. Luke 17:18—**18 Across**
- Joshua told Achan, when he was caught stealing, to give God glory by making \_\_\_\_\_ unto him. Joshua 7:19—**3 Across**

**Note:** Interestingly, God did not say, "now I know that you love me." Instead God used a term that includes love and trust.

➤ The Bible says of the wicked who receive the seven last plagues that “they \_\_\_\_ not” to give God glory. Revelation 16:9—**19 Across**

➤ “Every tongue shall \_\_\_\_ to God.” Romans 14:11—**9 Across**

**Note:** Eventually everyone will bow and admit that God is right, thus bringing glory to God. Even the wicked who will never accept salvation will make this confession, but it will be too late. It is much better to admit you have sinned now, and accept the free gift of salvation.

➤ God said, “The tabernacle shall be \_\_\_\_ by my glory.” Exodus 29:43—**2 Down**

**Note:** The presence of God is the only thing that can make His people holy. We have no possibility of becoming holy apart from allowing God to abide in our hearts. Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

➤ Moses petitioned God, “I beseech thee, \_\_\_\_ me thy glory.” Exodus 33:18—**2 Across**

➤ God replied, “I will make all my \_\_\_\_ pass before thee.” Exodus 33:19—**8 Down**

➤ As we behold the glory of God we are \_\_\_\_ into the same image. 2 Corinthians 3:18—**16 Down**

➤ The glory of God is revealed in the \_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6—**11 Down**

➤ John wrote that he beheld “the glory as of the only \_\_\_\_ of the Father.” John 1:14—**6 Down**

➤ No man has seen God, but the only begotten Son hath \_\_\_\_ him. John 1:18—**13 Down**

➤ Philip requested Jesus, “Shew us the \_\_\_\_.” John 14:8—**12 Across**

➤ Jesus replied, “He that hath seen me hath \_\_\_\_ the Father.” John 14:9—**5 Down**

➤ Jesus explained, “The Father that \_\_\_\_ in me, he doeth the works.” John 14:10—**20 Across**

➤ The only people who can know the Father are those to whom “the Son will \_\_\_\_ him.” Matthew 11:27—**17 Down**

➤ Jesus prayed to His Father, “Glorify thou me with thine own \_\_\_\_ with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.” John 17:5—**10 Down**

➤ Jesus said to His Father, “The glory which thou gavest me I have \_\_\_\_ them.” John 17:22—**1 Down**

➤ **Note:** The glory Jesus received from His Father was His Father’s own self. This glory, Jesus said, He gives to us. This is what the disciples received on the Day of Pentecost. Peter said, “This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear” (Acts 2:32, 33). God gave Himself through Christ. The giving of the Holy Spirit is the giving of the Father’s own self. Christ, Himself is also given to us. “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6). Jesus said, “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23). Praise God that He has given us such a wonderful gift of Himself.



# **You May Freely Eat?**

by Jim Raymond

(Brother Jim Raymond has been a food scientist for many years, and has agreed to share some of his knowledge with us. *Editor*)

## **Supplements for All? – Part 2**

**Veganism and B12:** I was recently asked why I would recommend a supplement. The short answer is: “Whenever I believe that it could be a blessing; especially if the time for the need of that blessing seems short.”

I don’t actually recommend supplements very often. I am sleeplessly fascinated by the scientific research that allows me to behold the high and holy intelligences of our God; the way He designed the chemical processes to work within us so that “in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Each chemical reaction is simple and usually straightforward in its own right, but there are myriads of them going on at any given time in each and every cell in our bodies. Often supplements are born out of experimentation with these chemical processes at the cellular level. Sometimes the testing gives rise to a new product but it always betters our understanding. This is cause for praise.

**Veganism and B12:** I recommend vitamin B12 supplementation to any and all within earshot practicing or considering a truly vegan diet. B12 is a critical factor for making and maintaining a successful vegan diet—and doubly critical if pregnancy or if young children are involved. It usually takes a great

deal of study and trial and error experimentation to achieve “personal metabolic balance” when switching to a vegan dietary regimen. I believe that it is immoral to experiment on children. So I offer my help.

A balanced vegan diet is remarkably healthy in spite of marginal dietary sources for four nutrients: B12, D3, iodine, and Omega-3s. B12 and D3 are the two supplements I am most concerned about because they are exclusively of animal origin, and the consequences of deficiencies are so severe—medically and socially. B12 deficiency can result in permanent brain, nerve, and mental impairment usually calling into question both the fitness of the diet, and worse, the fitness of the parenting.

**Relevant Point:** My office is occasionally asked by the Family Court system to help parents learn to balance their diets and to find acceptable sources for both of these vitamins. Early in my career the courts were nowhere close to this conciliatory. This change has occurred initially, I believe, because of the respect of the food & nutrition science community. One of my professional associations is the Institute of Food Technologists (IFT). The IFT is the food industry’s science and technological society. I am a member of two IFT Divisions: the Nutrition Division, and the Religious & Ethnic Foods Division, and vegan nutritional and cultural concerns are often addressed respectfully within both of these Divisions.



**Relevant Point:** For a short time we thought the problem of vegan B12 sources was solved because several plant sources were found. Especially promising were the algae sources like spirulina and seaweed, but the B12 from these sources turned out to be inactive analogues of B12—some of which block absorption of real B12. So we still rely on traditional yeasts, like Red Star Nutritional Yeast, and a couple of new (easy to swallow) market entries that claim to supply vegan B12 ingredients, such as, Deva<sup>®</sup>, VeganLife<sup>®</sup>, and Garden of Life<sup>®</sup> to name a few of the few.

**Best B12 resource on the Web:** “Vitamin B12: Are You Getting It?” By Jack Norris, RD. is an excellent work on B12 in the vegan diet. This work covers every corner of the topic. You can read it on line at: [www.veganhealth.org/B12/](http://www.veganhealth.org/B12/). I have an early PDF copy of this document. If you want one and can't find where to download it on the internet; email me and request it by title and I will forward a copy to you. (Sorry, I can only do this by email). Thank you Jack! I now refer all vegan contacts to your web site. Now I can focus on D3 for all!

**Vegan Sources of Vitamin D:** It should be obvious that the best way to get the best type of vitamin D (D3) is frequent sun exposure. Unfortunately, this is not always possible, nor is it possible to eat enough mushrooms to meet the true need and then a supplement is the most cost efficient solution. Artificial sun light is an excellent substitute for sun exposure, but the home UVB light units or frequent trips to a tanning salon can be very costly. Historically, the best totally vegan supplement available has relied on the process of synthesizing

vitamin D2 (ergocalciferol). Though D2 has been shown to be much less effective than D3 in preventing many chronic diseases, it still has significant benefit in preventing the illnesses resulting from frank vitamin D deficiency. A balanced vegan diet has so many remarkable health benefits that the lowered effectiveness of D2 may never show itself. Mind you, not all vegan diets are balanced, nor are all vegan adherents competent in balancing them.

Many babies are born (even to non-vegans), with very low D3 levels, and human milk does not contain enough to readily remedy this. Most infants respond very well to frequent brief sun exposure, but the skin has to “see” the sun so it should be clean and free of lotion (I would think it prudent to protect the eyes by positioning the baby to avoid forced direct eye exposure). Why not consider nursing in the sun for a few minutes a couple of times a day so both mom and babe can collect some fresh vitamin D3?

**Relevant Point:** Non-stress (spontaneous) fractures are common in infants and young children with low vitamin D3 levels. Some governmental Family Protection Services and Court systems often assume child abuse (shaking or striking) as the cause, and the solution is foster care. This is especially problematic among dark skinned families, because high pigmentation inhibits maternal vitamin D3 production. It is wise for all soon-to-be parents to find physicians that understand this so both maternal and infant D3 status can be normalized early.

**Let the Buyer Beware:** Not all supplements containing D2 (ergocalciferol) qualify as vegan, even though the D2 is from a truly vegan source. This is

because some marketers do not make their own finished supplements. Instead they buy them, then package, label, and sell them to their customers. Some of these products may contain gelatin based encapsulates or stabilizers which are processing adjuvants. Legally, processing adjuvants do not have to be declared on the label. The packing marketer may not catch this by focusing on price and failing to investigate the supplement manufacturing process; the newly packaged products are now ready to sell with labels falsely boasting vegan compatibility.

**Relevant Point:** Consider buying from manufacturers only or from those who share their manufacturing sources for purchased ingredients which are often trademarked or brand named.

Another process claiming to produce a “Vegan” form of true D3 (25 hydroxycholecalciferol) involves feeding a D3, containing an animal product (lanolin), to a yeast culture. The yeast is then dried and used as the D3 ingredient in the

supplement. Apparently the manufacturer believes that yeast cells are Vegan no matter what they eat. The resultant supplement is usually labeled as being “Vegan” or “Vegan-friendly”. I do not know whether this process and the labeling claim are accepted as honoring vegan intent or practice; my purpose is to enable you to make an informed decision. The end product is an excellent source of vitamin D3, so if the process works for you, the product will give the full range of benefits of D3 including those realized only at the higher dosage rates.

In the next installment, we will look at the practical side of getting enough vitamin D3 by contrasting dietary and solar means.

To be continued...

Whether you have something to share, a question, comment, or suggestion, I am interested. You can interact with me by letter (see the return address) or by email: [jim@presenttruth.info](mailto:jim@presenttruth.info).

*Blessings! JR*

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## *The National Sunday Law (Part 15)*

by Alonzo T. Jones

(The following is a portion of an argument of Alonzo T. Jones before The United States Senate, December 13, 1888, opposing the Blair Bill that promoted a Sunday law. *Editor*)

**Senator Blair:** Then if they had a law like this, they were wrongly convicted under the law, just as innocent men are sometimes hung; but you cannot reason that there should be no law against murder because innocent men are sometimes executed. It is fault in the administration of the law. You cannot

reason from that that there should be no law.

**Mr. Jones:** If there had been arrests of other people for working on Sunday, in anything like the numbers that there were of seventh-day observers, and the law had been enforced upon all alike, then the iniquity would not have been so apparent; or if those who were not seventh-day observers, and who were arrested, had been convicted, even then the case would not have been so clearly one of persecution. But when in

all the record of the whole two years' existence of the law in this form, there was not a solitary saloon keeper arrested, there was not a person who did not observe the seventh day arrested, with the two exceptions named, then there could be no clearer demonstration that the law was used only as a means to vent religious spite against a class of citizens guiltless of any crime, but only of professing a religion different from that of the majority.

The fact of the matter is, — and the whole history of these proceedings proves it, — that from beginning to end these prosecutions were only the manifestation of that persecuting, intolerant spirit that will always make itself felt when any class of religionists can control the civil power. The information upon which the indictments were found, was treacherously given, and in the very spirit of the Inquisition. The indictment itself is a travesty of legal form, and a libel upon justice. The principle was more worthy of the Dark Ages than of any civilized nation of modern time; and the Supreme Court decision that confirmed the convictions, is one which is contrary to the first principles of Constitutional law or Constitutional compacts.

And if Congress should lend its sanction to religious legislation to the extent of passing this national Sunday bill, now under consideration, and its principles should be made of force in all the States, the history of Arkansas from 1885-86 would be repeated through the whole extent of the nation. This I can prove, at least so far as the intention goes of those who are actively in favor of it. Rev. D. Mc Allister is one of the principal men of the National Reform Association. That Association and the Woman's Christian Temperance Union held a joint convention at Lakeside,

Ohio, in July, 1887; and speaking on the subject of a national Sunday law, Dr. Mc Allister said:

"Let a man be what he may, — Jew, seventh-day observer of some other denomination, or those who do not believe in the Christian Sabbath, — let the law apply to every one, that there shall be no public desecration of the first day of the week, the Christian Sabbath, the day of rest for the nation. They may hold any other day of rest of the week as sacred, and observe it; but that day which is the one day in seven for the nation at large, let that not be publicly desecrated by any one, by officer in the Government, or by private citizen, high or low, rich or poor."

Then some one stated from the audience that

"There is a law in the State of Arkansas enforcing Sunday observance upon the people, and the result has been that many good persons have not only been imprisoned, but have lost their property, and even their lives."

To which Mr. Mc Allister coolly replied:

"It is better that a few should suffer, than that the whole nation should lose its Sabbath."

This argument is identical with that by which the Pharisees in Christ's day justified themselves in killing him. It was said:

"It is expedient for us that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not." John 11:50.

And then says the record:

"Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death." Verse 53.

It is because of these principles, unblushingly avowed by the very men who stand in the lead in the effort to secure the enactment of this national Sunday law; and because of the practical effect

of such a law in Arkansas and Tennessee, and to some extent in Pennsylvania, — it is because of these things that we say to you, gentlemen of the United States Senate, you cannot afford to give to these men the power which they seek in the enactment of this proposed Sunday law. The speech of Senator Crockett's, which I have read, was made in the legislature of Arkansas, when he was pleading for the restoration of that exemption clause, — when he was pleading for toleration, in fact.

**Senator Blair:** Do you know whether this young man had money or friends?

**Mr. Jones:** Dr. Lewis, can you certify whether he had money?

**Dr. Lewis:** The case was never reported to other churches for relief. I do not know as to his personal estate.

**Senator Blair:** Do you not think it was a peculiar man who would allow his child to be killed and his wife to starve?

**Dr. Lewis:** The case was not reported to our churches in the North.

**Mr. Jones:** About that peculiarity I will say that John Bunyan stayed twelve years in Bedford jail when he could have got out by simply saying the word "yes," and agreeing that he would not preach.

**Senator Blair:** It was a very different thing to be called on to say that he would abstain from the performance of a great duty in his church. He preached the gospel, and he would not agree not to preach the gospel. But here is a man who lets his wife and child die rather than pay twenty-five or fifty dollars and get out, and have an opportunity to go to work for them.

**Mr. Jones:** What kind of law is that which puts a man upon his conscience to choose between his wife and child and paying a fine of twenty-five or fifty dollars? But suppose he had paid the fine, and got out and gone to work

again, how long could he have worked? When the next Sunday came round, it was his duty to his wife and child to work for their support. Is he to go to work on Sunday, and go through the course of prosecution again, and again pay a fine of twenty-five or fifty dollars? How long could this be kept up? There are not many poor farmers who can clear from twenty-five to fifty dollars every week above all expenses, to be devoted to paying regular fines for the privilege of following their honest occupation on their own premises. But it will be said, "Let him not work on Sunday, then he would not have to pay a fine." Well, if he consents to do no work on Sunday, he consents to be robbed of one-sixth of his time, which he honestly owes to the support of his wife and child. For to rob him of one-sixth of his time is precisely what the State does in such a case; and it is either confiscation outright, or confiscation under the guise of a fine imposed as punishment for his refusing to allow himself to be robbed of one-sixth of his time. Either this, or else he must give up his right to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience and the word of God, and so surrender his rights of conscience altogether. It comes to this, therefore, that Sunday laws are a direct invasion of the rights of conscience.

More than this, Sunday laws are a direct invasion not only of the Constitutional right, but the inalienable right, of acquiring possessing, and protecting property. I here adopt the language of the Supreme Court of California, — language which can never be successfully controverted:

"The right to protect and possess property is not more clearly protected by the Constitution than the right to acquire. The right to acquire must include the right to use the proper means to

attain the end. The right itself would be impotent without the power to use the necessary incidents. If the legislature have the authority to appoint a time of compulsory rest,... it is without limit, and may extend to the prohibition of all occupations at all times... For the Constitution to declare a right inalienable and at the same time leave the legislature unlimited power over it, would be a contradiction in terms, an idle provision, proving that a Constitution was a mere parchment barrier, insufficient to protect the citizen, delusive and visionary, and the practical result of which would be to destroy, not conserve, the rights which they may assume to protect. The legislature, therefore, cannot prohibit the proper use of the means of acquiring property, except the peace and safety of the State require it." — *Ex parte Newman*, 9 Cal., pp. 517,510.

But does the peace and safety of the State require it in any such case as is here involved? Can it ever be against the peace and safety of the State for any man to follow his honest, legitimate, and even laudable occupations? It is against the peace and safety of the State to prohibit it. For, as I have before conclusively proved, for the State to do so is for it to put honest occupations in the catalogue of crimes; to put peaceable and industrious citizens upon a level with criminals; and to put a premium upon idleness and recklessness. It is certainly against the peace and safety of any State to do any such thing. Therefore it is demonstrated that Sunday laws are an invasion of the inalienable right of acquiring and possessing property, and for that man in Arkansas to have obeyed that law, would have been to surrender his inalienable right.

Once more: As the right to acquire property includes the right to use the

proper means to attain that end, and as such a law deprives a man of the use of such means during one-sixth of his time, it follows that it is a violation of that provision of the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, which declares that "no State shall deprive any citizen of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law."

All this, sir, is involved in the question as to whether that man shall recognize the law to such an extent as even to pay the fine. If he does, then it follows inevitably that all his property shall go to pay fines, or else he must choose between yielding his rights of conscience, and allowing one-sixth of his time to be confiscated, and in that a certain proportion of property; because to the industrious citizen, time is property. But if the State by a Sunday law or by any other means, may confiscate a part, it may confiscate all. Where, then, shall resistance to oppression begin? — I say, At the very first appearance of it. Under cover of the word "Loan" Charles I. undertook to confiscate a small sum of money from each of the property owners of England. John Hampden's share was about seven dollars and seventy-five cents. He was a rich man, but he refused to pay it; and his refusal to pay that paltry sum led to all England's being plunged into confusion and civil war: the king lost his head, Hampden himself lost his life, and all this rather than to pay the insignificant sum of seven dollars and seventy-five cents! — less than one-third of the fine imposed upon this man for refusing to assent to the confiscation of one-sixth of his property. But John Hampden's refusal to pay that money established the Constitutional principle that every man has the inalienable right to acquire, possess, and protect property — a right which was invaded in this case. Upon this principle alone that



man was entirely justified in refusing to pay the fine imposed by that Sunday law. But as there was also involved the inalienable right of conscience, he was doubly justified in refusing to obey the law or to recognize the principle.

**Senator Blair:** Suppose he was a guilty man. Suppose he did not believe it was an offense to steal, and that he conscientiously thought that he could take goods from another in a certain way. He had been convicted under the law, and was under the penalty of paying twenty-five dollars' fine. Is he to put his right of conscience against the demands of wife and child, and against the judgment of the community, and the State in which he lives, and to which he owes all the rights to the enjoyment of property, and everything else he has? In this case a man saw all this evil done rather than pay twenty-five or fifty dollars, and he says he did that by reason of his conscience.

**Mr. Jones:** The cases are not parallel at all, unless indeed you count it as much of a crime for a man to follow his honest occupation as it is for him to steal. This, however, we have demonstrated is the very thing that Sunday laws do. But we forever protest against honest industry's being put upon a level with thieving.

The man who steals takes the property of others without compensation and without regard to the question of right. If, then, the State takes from him property or time without compensation, he cannot complain of injustice. But in the case of the man who works on Sunday, he invades no man's right in any degree; he takes no man's property or his time in any way, much less does he take it without compensation. For the State to punish the thief, is just. For the State to punish the industrious citizen, is pre-eminently unjust.

But aside from all this, did you ever hear of a man whose conscience taught him that it was right to steal, that it was a conscientious conviction to steal?

**Senator Blair:** I have heard of great many instances where an individual confessed that he had conscientiously violated the law, yet he was punished.

**Mr. Jones:** Precisely; and the Christians were put to death under the Roman empire for violating the law.

**Senator Blair:** But that does not answer my question, and it is not necessary that it should be answered.

**Mr. Jones:** It is right for any man to violate any law that invades his Constitutional rights; and it is his right conscientiously to violate any law that invades the rights of conscience. God declares the man innocent who violates the law that interferes with man's relationship to God—the law that invades the rights of conscience. See cases “The King vs. Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego,” and “The State vs. Daniel,” reported in Daniel, chapters 3 and 6.

The end of the Arkansas case, as reported by Senator Crockett, was that the poor man lost both his wife and his child.

**Senator Blair:** What became of him?

**Mr. Jones:** He left the State.

**Senator Blair:** I should think he ought to leave it.

**Mr. Jones:** So do I, sir. But what can be said of freedom any more in this country, when such things can be? That is also true of six other men who followed the dictates of their own consciences, — as good, honest, virtuous citizens, as lived in Arkansas.

**To be Continued...**

(This article was taken from pages 138-146 of the book entitled, *The National Sunday Law*, by Alonzo T. Jones. Some editing was done for this publication.

*Editor)*



# The Gospel in Creation (Part 13)

by Ellet J. Waggoner

THE OATH OF GOD: There is more to this. "For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He sware by Himself." This was an oath for the confirmation of the promise, which was in itself immutable. Moreover, the promise was confirmed in Christ. Now read what is said of that oath: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the souls, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec" (Hebrews 6:13, 17-20).

Mark two things: First, this oath and promise were given for our sakes. Abraham did not need that God should confirm the promise with an oath, for he had demonstrated to the full that he believed the Lord's simple word. But God gave the oath so that we might have our faith in His word strengthened. Second, the oath and the promise relate to the forgiveness of sins, and all the blessings which Christ as our High Priest secures for us. They are for our consolation and encouragement when we flee for refuge to Christ. Therefore when we come to Christ for mercy and grace to help in time of need, we are assured

beforehand by the promise of God, backed up by His oath, that we shall have the things for which we ask. Now let us stop and think for a moment what this means.

The oath of God is really a pledging of His own existence. He swore by Himself. He has thereby declared that His life would be forfeited if His promise should fail. His promises are as enduring as Himself. As God is "from everlasting to everlasting," so "the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him" (Psalm 103:17). The Father and the Son are one. So in God's pledging Himself, Christ is pledged. But "in Him were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through Him, and unto Him: and He is before all things, and in Him all things consist" (Colossians 1:16, 17, R.V.). It is "by the word of His power" that all things are upheld. (Hebrews 1:3).

Upon the existence of God depends the existence of the heavens and the earth. But He has pledged His own existence to the fulfillment of His promises. Therefore the existence of the heavens, yea, of the entire universe, depends upon the fulfillment of the promises of God to the believing sinner. If a single sinner, no matter how unworthy or insignificant or obscure, should come to the Lord sincerely asking for pardon and holiness and should fail to receive

it, that instant the whole universe would become chaos and vanish out of existence. But the sun, moon and stars still hold their places in the heavens as proof that God has never failed a single soul that put his trust in Him, and as a pledge that His mercies fail not. His faithfulness, therefore, is in the heavens. If we would let the sun, moon and stars tell this story to us every time we see them, we should live better lives, and discouragement would be a thing unknown.

GOD IS A SUN: "For the Lord God is a sun and shield" (Psalm 84:11). As the sun gives light and heat to the earth, so the Lord is the Light of men, and warms them by His grace. All the heat and light that the earth receives, in whatever form, comes from the sun. The light by means of which we find our way at night through the crowded streets of the city, or by which we read in our study, comes from the sun. So with the cheerful wood blaze, or the glowing coals that warm our rooms in dreary winter; all the heat comes from the sun.

The sun gives light, and light is life. How the plants turn to the sun! Who has not noticed a plant growing in a dark cellar? Its life is very feeble. In the darkness it is almost dead. But let an opening be made, so that a ray of light can shine through, and at once it revives. It will begin to grow in the direction of the light. Without the light which the sun furnishes to the earth there could be no plant life, nor animal life either.

But life means growth. As the light of the sun is the life of plants, so it is the cause of their growth. As the plant grows, it is by storing up the light and heat of the sun. Those plants that grow

very quickly, that come to maturity from the seed in a few weeks or months, have in them but very little heat. They are worthless for fuel. But the sturdy oak, that is centuries in growing—which grows so slowly that in a year no difference can be detected in its size—stores up immense quantities of the sun's heat. Other trees are of even slower growth and store up more heat.

These woods become buried in the ground, and in the course of centuries are transformed into coal. Then it is used as fuel and gives to us the heat which it has stored up from the sun. The reason why we get so much more heat from the coal than from the direct rays of the sun is that in the coal we have the concentrated heat of the sun's rays for years.

What the sun is to the earth and to plant life, that God is to His people. "The Lord God is a sun." As the sun, by its light, gives physical life to the plants, so God gives spiritual life—the only real life—to His people. Christ's life is the light of the world. As the oak tree stores up the heat of the sun, so the one who lives in the light of God stores up that light, which is His life. That light and life that are the life and growth of the Christian are to be given out for the enlightenment and warmth of others.

Someone may say that in order to carry out the figure completely, it ought to be that the Christian of the slowest growth should have the most of the life of God to give out. But let it not be forgotten that the just live by faith. The Christian's life is not measured by years but by the faith manifested. The more faith, which means humility and trust, the more of the life of God is



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