

## **This I Believe**

George Burnside  
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## Preface

BIBLE LECTURER, writer, broadcaster, and theologian, George Burnside is all of these and more. Unlike many theologians, however, he has the gentle facility of the common touch. With simple logic and clear direction, Mr. Burnside presents the Scriptures in vibrant tones but with none of the garishness that marks the work of some popular preachers.

Mr. Burnside attracts large audiences wherever he goes. In the year in which this book is published, he has proclaimed the good news of salvation in the New Hebrides, in mainland Australia, in the island state of Tasmania, in Tahiti and in New Zealand. In all of these locations, preaching as frequently as every night for three consecutive weeks, Mr. Burnside has had the experience of watching his audiences grow as he reached the climax of the series.

In response to many requests, some time ago Mr. Burnside put a series of twelve Bible lectures onto six L.P. records and these have proved immensely popular. Now, bowing to popular demand, the recording artist has turned to his pen again and has adapted these recorded lectures to manuscript which we have been privileged to put into this permanent book form.

We believe that the reader who approaches this small book-with-a-big-message with an open mind and a prayerful attitude will gain much blessing from it. We also believe that such a thoughtful reader will be impressed with the fact that here is a presentation of Bible teaching that is clear, concise and thoughtful.

That this small book shall be a help and a guide to all who read it is the hope and prayer of THE PUBLISHERS.

## About the Author

GEORGE BURNSIDE is a New Zealander by birth but is a citizen of the world. In the course of his work, which is the preaching of the everlasting gospel—a task which he enters into with unbounded enthusiasm—Mr. Burnside has visited every continent and most of the major countries in the world.

From the South Island of New Zealand where he was born, he has moved to make his home in Australia, though his preaching itineraries take him far afield and his family sometimes sees little of him for weeks or months on end. This is the sacrifice both he and his family make for the gospel's sake.

Mr. Burnside has preached to New Hebrideans, and to Tahitians, thus knowing the problems of preaching through an interpreter. Nevertheless the Spirit of God has blessed his work in those places. He has preached to crowded audiences in the United States and in all states of Australia; he has fossicked among the ruins of ancient civilizations, and his book on his experiences, "Buried Evidence," became an instant best-seller; he has traveled extensively behind the Iron Curtain and has visited the mountain fastness where once the Waldensian Christians held out against their persecutors.

In all his travels, Mr. Burnside has found his faith in the Word of God deepening and strengthening. He believes absolutely in the "Old Book" as he fondly calls it—as the reader of this clear exposition of Bible teaching will quickly appreciate.

## 1. Heaven

I BELIEVE exactly what Jesus said in John 14:3, I go to prepare a place for you."

Yet about all the majority of people seem to know concerning heaven is that it is up somewhere, and that good people go there when they die. They have very vague and uncertain ideas about the place. They talk about a spiritual body, something like vapor, certainly nothing real. Perhaps it is located on the beautiful Isle of Somewhere, no one knows where. There they have pictured disembodied spirits sitting on silver-tinted clouds, tinkling away at invisible harps or listening to inaudible music.

Such a hazy, shadowy, dreamy ghost land of floating, feathery fiction has little appeal to the logical mind, and the desire to go to this shadowy, spooky country is fading, and people, I notice, put off going there just as long as the doctor's skill can keep them out of it. But I would like to brush aside these vain vaporizings of the imagination and show you that the home Jesus is preparing for you is a very real, sure and certain place.

Well, what does the Bible say about heaven? What is it? Where is it? The Bible speaks about three heavens. That may sound strange. However, I shall now prove that from the Scriptures. In 2 Corinthians 12:2 it reads, "I knew a man in Christ. . . such an one caught up to the third heaven." Now it is clear that if there is a third heaven there must be a first and a second. Note also, that according to verse 4 the 1<sup>st</sup> heaven" and "paradise" are one and the same place. Now the first heaven is the atmospheric heaven; the second, the

starry heaven; and the third, “the heaven of heavens,” the dwelling place of God. Now these three heavens are mentioned many times in the Book of God. In Revelation 19:17 we read of “the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven.” This, of course, refers to the atmospheric heaven, or the first heaven. This is the heaven that will pass away at the great day of God. In 2 Peter 3:10 we read: “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.

Sir Walter Scott wrote:

“When flaming like a parched scroll, The crackling heavens together roll, Who then will be the sinner’s stay? How will he meet that dreadful day?”

Revelation 6:14 says: “The heavens departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.” This occurs at the second coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. God will create new heavens. In Revelation 21:1 it says: I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.” So, you see, the first heaven is the atmospheric heaven.

The second heaven is the starry heaven. In Psalm 19:1 we read: “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork.” The third heaven, or the Paradise of God, is where God dwells. You will recall Jesus taught His disciples to pray: “Our Father which art in heaven.” Matthew 6:9. In 2 Chronicles 6:21 we read: “Hear Thou from Thy dwelling place, even from heaven.” It was into the third heaven, or Paradise, that Jesus went when He ascended from the earth.

Recall, too, the words of Jesus in John 14:2,3: “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you until I myself; that where I am, there you may be also.” Note! Jesus is preparing a place in heaven for His people. It is not a mere condition, but a real place.

In Hebrews 11:16 we are told just what kind of place Jesus is preparing. “But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for He hath prepared for them a city.” So, the place Jesus is preparing for His people is a city, the city of God, the New Jerusalem. Verse 10 reads: “For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” Mark that thought! It is a city which hath foundations.”

Oh, yes, it is a real place. For a description of that wonderful city we turn to Revelation 21 and we find that the whole chapter is describing the wonders of this city fashioned by the hands of Jesus. Verse 16 gives its size: “And the city lies foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs.” So, the New Jerusalem is 12,000 furlongs, or 1,500 miles in circumference, or 375 miles on each side. It contains over 140,000 square miles. Why! The great cities of this world just pale away into insignificance when compared with the city of God.

This city will become the capital of the new earth, for in Revelation 21:2,3 we read: “And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.”

The New Jerusalem is now in the third heaven, and the saints will go up to that city when Jesus comes, to reign with Him there for 1,000 years. At the end of that 1,000 years, the earth will be made over into a new earth, free from sin and sinners, and the New Jerusalem will rest on this renewed earth as its grand capital. With Christ, the saints will reign there forever.

When Jesus brings this golden city to earth, this earth will become the eternal home of God’s people. Yes, heaven on earth! It is always heaven where Jesus is. Our Lord promised in Matthew 5:5: “The meek. . . shall inherit the earth.”

Jesus did not promise His people a silver-tinted cloud, not an airy, shadowy nowhere, not a spiritual ghost land. Oh, no! but He did say that “the meek,” those like Jesus, shall inherit the earth.” That is the reason why the Bible opens with a new heaven and a new earth and the Bible closes with a new heaven and a new earth. The Bible opens with perfect people in a perfect earth, and the Bible closes with man restored to this perfect condition. As our Lord said in Luke 19:10: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Through the work of Christ and His wonderful atonement, this world and the redeemed will be restored to Edenic perfection. Then will be fulfilled the promise, “Unto Thee shall it come, even the first dominion.” Micah 4:8.

The renewing of this earth to its Edenic condition is described in 2 Peter 3:10,13: “The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” “Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwells righteousness.”

You may ask where we will be while the fire renews the earth? Notice how clear and simple is the statement in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17: “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”

Now, what will we be like in heaven? In Philippians 3:21 we read: “Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body.” Therefore we will have a body like Christ’s when He rose from the dead.

You will recall that Jesus said He was not a mere spirit, for He said, “A spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see Me have.” Luke 24:39. And He further demonstrated this reality by showing them His hands and His feet and eating food with them. Jesus assured His followers that they, too, would “eat and drink in My Father’s kingdom.” Yes, Jesus rose from the dead literally, actually, and we, too, will be real people in heaven.

Not only will we have real bodies, but we will have perfect bodies-bodies that never know an ache or a pain for in Isaiah 40:31 we are told "they shall run, and not be weary." And in Isaiah 33:24, "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick." There are no such words as "tired," "sick," "sorrow," "crying," or "death" in the vocabulary of the Better Land. But it is more wonderful still! In Revelation 21:3,4 we read: "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." I am speaking of a real place, where we will be real people, and there will be no more death.

Mark carefully this fact! In the next verse God guarantees that "these words are true and faithful" or trustworthy. Truly, "What shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Mark 8:36.

What will we do in the glory land? In that new earth the redeemed "shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them." Isaiah 65:21. And in verse 23, "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them." Note that! "Their offspring with them."

The little babes who have been torn from their mothers' arms by the cruel hand of death will be restored to their mothers' arms again. Yes, on the glad resurrection morn they will be restored by angel hands. But! The best part of the whole story is this: Jesus wants you and me there! Listen to the prayer of our Lord. John 17:24: "Father, I will that they also, whom Thou has given Me, be with Me where I am." Yes, friends, Jesus wants you in heaven.

You may feel discouraged, but remember this, God is not discouraged with you, so why should you despair? He is not only preparing a place for you, but He has provided at tremendous cost the power to get you there. He can save to the uttermost all that come to Him through Christ-and remember-Jesus is a greater Savior than you are a sinner. You do the coming and Jesus will do the saving. He has also promised, "He that comes to Me I shall in no wise cast out."

## 2. The Way to Heaven

I BELIEVE exactly what Jesus said, as recorded in John 14:6, I am the way." Jesus is the way, the only way to heaven!

I have often been asked by those who have become interested in the Bible, "Why did Christ have to die in order to save us? Was not His death just like that of any other martyr-merely dying for a good cause?" No! The death of Jesus is the very heart of the gospel message.

The Apostle Paul sets forth in a very definite way the fact and the reason for the death of the Son of God. 1 Corinthians 15:1-3: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also you have received, and wherein you stand; by which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures."

Jesus' death was not the death of a martyr. It was a sacrificial death, a victorious death, a death for others. Christ died for our sins. (1 Corinthians 15:3.) Christ died for the ungodly. (Romans 5:6.) Christ died for us. (Romans 5:8.) He died for all. (2 Corinthians 5:15.)

No mere man ever laid down his life for others in the sense that Christ gave His life for the world. Every man must die at some time. "There is no discharge in this war." When a man sacrifices his life he but sacrifices a few days or years, he lays it down earlier instead of later; but Christ did not choose between dying at one time or at another, He chose between dying and not dying. Concerning His life, Jesus said in John 10:18: "No man takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself." In His great love, Jesus willingly chose to leave His home in heaven and to come down here to suffer and die for us. Man had transgressed the holy law of God, and must perish unless some means for his redemption could be found. Christ alone could rescue him. But the question was, would He do it?

The destiny of the whole world trembled in the balance. Christ in heaven was equal with the Father (Philippians 2:6-8), sharing equally all the glory of heaven. He could have remained in that happy condition, but in that event man must have perished. Should He retain His position with the Father and leave man to be lost, or should He give up the riches of heaven and go to the rescue of a lost world? Oh, how thankful we should be that in His great love for us He chose to come for our redemption. Thank God, the only One who could save us, was willing to save us (2 Corinthians 8:9): "You know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might be rich." He left His happy and exalted position in heaven, emptied Himself of His glory and honor, and came to this world, took upon Himself the form of a servant among men and obeyed in our behalf the requirements of the divine law, even suffering death on the cross, that all who believe in Him "should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. The voluntary suffering and sacrifice of Christ surpasses our powers of thought and imagination, and reaches is infinitely beyond what one man might do for another. "Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift." 2 Corinthians 9:15.

Yes, the cross was absolutely necessary. Notice particularly one word in John's Gospel, chapter 3, verses 14 and 15: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Note the word "must". Even so must the Son of man be lifted up." He must be crucified. Why? What is the necessity or the atoning sacrifice of Christ upon the cross? The reason is fourfold. First, in the nature of God Himself. Second, in the nature of man. Third, in the nature of sin. Fourth, in the nature of law.

Firstly, sin must be atoned for, because God is God. The Holy Scriptures reveal three things about God: that He is holy; that He is righteous; that He is just. His holiness has to do with His character! What He is. His righteousness has to do with His actions, that is, what He does. While His justice has to do with His relation to His created beings, angels and men.

Some of the false gods worshipped by millions of heathen are but man-made shadows of the worshippers, with all their hates, loves, weaknesses, and sins. This is all too apparent to anyone who has traveled in heathen lands or studied the background of these heathen religions. But the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is “of purer eyes than to behold evil.” Habakkuk 1:13. Atonement must be made because sin is what it is. Sin is the transgression of God’s law. It produces guilt. As we read in Romans 3:19: “Now we know that what things so ever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”

AS guilt, sin must be taken away so we can enjoy heaven. As danger, it must be overcome in order for us to get to heaven. But sin is not abstract; it exists in man. It is here because men are sinners. Men can and do sin, as the Scriptures declare in Romans 3:23: “All have sinned.” Sin presses guilt down on man and it threatens to destroy man, and so, in the very nature of man, we find the necessity for atonement. Christ saw us shepherdless, helpless, hopeless and ruined. He died that we might live. He took our place that we might have His place. He took the death that was ours that we might have the life that was His, “with His stripes we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5.

Yes, “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.” He paid the full penalty for us there on the cross.

“Christ has for sin atonement made, What a wonderful Savior!  
We are redeemed! the price is paid! What a wonderful Savior!”

His death is not only absolutely necessary, but it is absolutely sufficient. As we read in Hebrews 2:9: “That He by the grace of God should taste death for every man.” Yes, it includes everybody. Christ’s cross is for all sinners, and that means you and me. The death of Christ is sufficient for all. “Whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Some words are higher and deeper, but there is no word broader than “whosoever.” Some try to disparage the vicarious death of Christ by saying that it is not right for an innocent person to suffer for the guilty. This would be true if the innocent person were compelled to suffer for the guilty, but when it is voluntary, and prompted by love, it is an entirely different matter.

One illustrates it thus: I saw the other day a mother with a pale, sickly baby in her arms, walking along the river bank, trying to give the little one some fresh air. I looked into the baby’s face, so pinched by suffering. Then I looked into the mother’s face, and it seemed to me that she had suffered more than her child. Shall I go to that mother, and say, ‘You are doing wrong in suffering for that child; just let it die’? I should shock her mother heart, as I shock yours by the mention of it. Is it right for a mother to suffer for her child? It is right for a friend to suffer for a friend? Is it right for a soldier to suffer for his country? Is it right for those who love us to put themselves to inconvenience, and even to bear burdens, that we may be relieved? Take away that right, and you have turned people into leeches, and hyenas, and tigers, with tooth and claw, and little else.

“Go with me into the cemetery of a village in Europe, and you will find on a cold, snowy morning a fresh wreath of flowers upon a little slab of marble. Every morning, three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, a little bunch of flowers is laid on that marble slab; and why? The village blacksmith had about him one day in the post office, the children of the neighborhood, and there came through the door a rabid dog with glaring eye and protruding tongue. The blacksmith grappled with the dog and saved the neighbors’ children, but not until he himself was bitten. He went out to his smithy, and, chaining himself to the anvil, told his neighbors to bring him food till the scene was over. When the blacksmith died, there was the largest funeral that that village ever saw. Shall I go there and say to those children, now grown to men and women: ‘Do not place the wreath on the grave any more. He had no right to suffer for you; that was a wrong transaction’? No one had the right to compel the blacksmith to risk his life for those children, but who will say that he had no right to do it if prompted by his own self sacrificing spirit of love?”

What is our attitude towards Christ in view of all these things? Jesus gave the law and He lived the law while on earth. He paid the penalty for those who disobeyed that law, and today He will live that law in your heart if you will let Him. He whispers, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.” Revelation 3:20. But!

“You must open the door;  
When Jesus comes in,  
He will save you from sin.  
But you must open the door.”

This is the way to heaven. Jesus said, I am the way.” Jesus is the way to heaven, and remember-He is the only way!

### 3. Our Lord’s Return

SOME TIME AGO a large Protestant denomination held a world conference. Missionaries and church leaders from all over the world were present. A brilliant young liberal preacher was chosen to present the opening message. He spoke on “The Second Coming of Christ.”



I don't believe," he said, "in the literal, personal return of Christ. I believe His coming will be seen in better politics, peace agreements, church union, and the spirit of understanding. Don't you think so, Dr. Brown?" he asked, turning to an old minister of the gospel.

Dr. Brown arose, walked to, the front of the rostrum, and said in a voice quivering with emotion: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts 1: 11), and he sat down. Yes, Christ's coming will be literal and personal. "Every eye shall see Him." Revelation 1:7.

Great events have taken place in the past, and other great events will take place in the future. But the greatest of all events is yet future; it is the second coming of Christ. This event outshines all others as the sun outshines the glow-worm.

The return of Christ is mentioned 2,700 times in the Bible, and over 300 times in the New Testament. More is spoken of it than any other theme. Surely the emphasis and prominence which God's Word gives to this truth should lead us to give it special attention! Too often the coming of Christ is looked on as merely a doctrine. It is far more, it is an event, an impending event, the most stupendous event since Christ came to die on Calvary for you and for me.

At His first advent, His presence was little noticed. Men refused to believe Him. They rejected His claims and crucified Him as a criminal. They thought they had disposed of Him for ever. But He rose from the dead and returned to heaven. Since then His importance has grown. Today millions acknowledge Him as their Lord and Master. Even skeptics stand amazed at this matchless personality. His pierced hands can still pull human monsters out of a hell of iniquity and overnight transform them into glorious Christians. This is the twentieth century. From what are these centuries counted? From the birth of One whom the world crucified. The centuries carry His signature, and the years, even of our modern world, are labeled years of our Lord. Truly Christ stands out as the greatest in all history.

The news, the greatest news for this time, the most stupendous announcement of history, is that Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, is about to appear the second time. Some 85 per cent of Bible prophecies have been fulfilled. Practically all of the remaining 15 per cent relate to the second appearing of Jesus Christ. This event, sneered at by man, is the next great event to take place. There is no question of this. Listen again to the promise of Christ, spoken just before His death. You will find these words in John 14:2, 3: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also,"

Here are the words of the greatest authority, in a clear cut promise and pledge, concerning the meaning of which there can be no possibility of mistake. Jesus Himself said, I will come again."

Ah, the best of all promises, the sweetest of all assurances, are those four precious words, I will come again." This is Heaven's cure for troubled hearts. It is the 'Blessed hope' for all the weary of earth. It is divine comfort for all our sorrows. It is healing balm for every grief. We do not face a trackless waste of an uncertain future, but we face our living God, our judge and Savior, He who died and is alive for evermore. He has come and is coming again.

Here is a promise that is positive. Jesus did not say, I may come again," or I intend to come again," but I will come again." This language is so plain and simple that a child can understand it. This promise is still absolutely sure. Jesus' word cannot fail. Right in connection with the prophecy of His return, He said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matthew 24: 35. His words stand good for ever. We can rely on the promise of our Lord to return in person. With certainty we can look for the day of His appearing. Remember! He said, I will come again."

The coming of the Lord has been in all ages the hope of His true followers. It filled their hearts with joy and hope that sorrow could not quench nor trials dim. Amid suffering and persecution, "the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ was the "Blessed hope." Titus 2:13. When the Thessalonian Christians were filled with grief as they buried their loved ones who had hoped to live to witness the coming of the Lord, Paul pointed them to the resurrection to take place at the Savior's advent. Then the dead in Christ should rise, and together with the living be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. "And so, ' he said, 11 shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." 1 Thessalonians 4:17, 18.

On rocky Patmos the beloved disciple hears the promise, "Surely I come quickly," and his longing response voices the prayer of the church in all her pilgrimage, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Revelation 22:20.

He is "coming. . . with power and great glory." Luke 21:27. For He "shall come in the glory of His Father." Matthew 16:27. "He shall come in His own glory." Luke 9:26. The ungodly shall "see the Son of man ... coming." Matthew 26:64. And when "He shall appear . . . we [the saints] shall see Him," declared the Apostle John in 1 John 3:2,3. For as the lightning comes out of the east, and shines even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:27.

"Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence." Psalm 50:1 "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise." 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Yes! "The trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised." 1 Corinthians 15:52. Millions of the angels of glory accompany our Lord, for He shall come and "all the holy angels with Him." Matthew 26:31. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels." 2 Thessalonians 1: 7. "And then shall He send His angels, and shall gather together His elect." Mark 13:27.

Some have thought that the coming of Christ is at the death of each individual. If Christ came at the death of each saint, He would have to come thousands of times. The Scriptures make it plain that He will come again but once-the second time without sin unto salvation." Hebrews 9:28. The coming of Christ is not at death. In fact it is the opposite to death. It means the end of death. He comes to destroy death, to tear up graveyards, and break up funerals.

Once when called upon to conduct a funeral, I looked through the Bible to see if I could find some good Scriptures to use. There was one thing, however, I could not find, and that was a funeral sermon preached by Jesus. You see Christ upset every funeral He attended. He raised the dead to life again. Death fled before the Prince of Life. When He appears again there will be no more death.

The paramount mission of Christ to this world was to bring eternal life and immortality to light through the gospel. "Every one which sees the Son, and believes on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day," declared Jesus in John 6:40. Of that day I read in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18: "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God. And the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds' to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

Many today need the comfort of these words. Many can visualize a little mound in the graveyard where lies the dearest on earth. Oh, thank God, the wonderful day of the return of Jesus hastens on apace; the glad day when He shall descend from heaven and issue that mighty call, "Awake and sing, you that dwell in dust." Isaiah 26:19. Then the mossy old graves where the pilgrims sleep shall be opened as wide as before."

What an hour! The saints who come out of the prison house of death, with the bloom of perpetual youth upon their foreheads, in the full realization of the eternal conquest, will almost tauntingly ask of their defeated enemy, "O grave, where is thy victory?" 1 Corinthians 15:55. They will sing their joy in the sentence, "Thanks be to God, which gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15: 57. What a glorious song.

The second coming of Christ enables us to see beyond death to the sure hope of immortality. This 'Blessed hope' dispels death's dark gloom and gilds the Christian's tomb with the light of the resurrection morn. It was "this blessed hope" that sustained the Apostle Paul as he approached the "dark valley" at the time of his execution. 2 Timothy 4:6-8.

The coming of the Lord is the herald of our hour of triumph over death, and our introduction to a glorious life of immortality in the mansions above. The joys of endless bliss are all bound up in that precious promise, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

"O Prince of Peace, who once did rise In splendid triumph to the skies, Before the rapt disciples' eyes,

O come, Lord Jesus, quickly come.  
"For Thy appearance all things pray,  
All nature sighs at Thy delay,  
Thy people cry, 'No longer stay'  
O come, Lord Jesus, quickly come."

## 4. When Will Our Lord Return?

I BELIEVE EXACTLY what Jesus said in Matthew 24. 36: "Of that day and hour knows no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only." So, my friend, whenever you hear people stating the exact time for our Lord's return, you can know with assurance that they are wrong. However, while it is impossible for anyone to know the exact time for the coming of Christ, remember it is our business to know when His coming is near.

Note carefully the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:32: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and puts forth leaves, you know that summer is nigh: so likewise you, when you shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

This picture of the fig tree is clear and simple. When the buds on the trees begin to swell, we know that spring is here. So Jesus tells us that when we see the signs that He has given, we may know that His coming is near, "even at the doors." He has given us signs that are just like the swelling buds.

Some will say: "People have been expecting Christ to come for hundreds of years; time and time again they have preached that His coming is near at hand, but He did not come. How do we know that it is any nearer now?"

Is our day like other times? Certainly not. There never was a time like this. Our day is different in its financial, industrial, scientific, mechanical, national, international, physical, moral, religious, and social aspects.

Our day is a day of rapid transit. People are travelling many times faster than ever before. What does this mean? Nahum 23, 4 says: "The chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of His preparation. . . . The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways; they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightning." Do we see this? Certainly, for this is the great age of speed. There never was such a time. There was little change in the speed with which men could travel until about one hundred years ago. A century and a half ago, men were travelling at the same speed as they were travelling four thousand years ago---on land, as fast as the horse could carry them; on sea, as fast as the wind would drive the ship. About one and a half centuries ago, something happened. Men suddenly began to move faster. In 1809, the first steam-boat made its way down the Hudson River. The first passenger train ran down the tracks in 1825. In 1890, the first motorcar made its appearance. In 1903, the first airplane made a successful flight. Thus was ushered in this tremendous age of speed.

Today thousands of people are travelling through the air at six hundred miles an hour. Millions of motor-cars are dashing along the highways at a mile a minute. Trains are clicking along the shiny rails faster than the wind. Liners are ploughing through the briny deep at high speeds. What does it all mean? Every train, every liner, every airplane, every motor-car, is a sign, a travelling sign, of the end of time. Every airplane roaring overhead, every motorcar that dashes by, every train rushing across the country, every liner ploughing through the waves, is saying to you and to me, It is the day of God's preparation; get ready for Him who is coming."

Our day is one of greatly increased knowledge. There are endless inventions and discoveries. What does it all mean? Words written twenty-five hundred years ago give a clear answer. Read Daniel 12:4. Note carefully the prediction! "Thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." "The time of the end is a little space of time before the end of time. What is going to happen just before the end? "Many shall run - to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." Do we see it? There has been a greater increase of knowledge in the last century than in all previous history.

Life has been revolutionized. The tallow candle has become the electric light; the quill has become the typewriter; the broom has become the electric cleaner; the horse and trap, the motor-car; the needle, the electric sewing machine. What does it all mean? In the time of the end, "knowledge shall be increased." It means just this. We are in "the time of the end." The end of time is drawing near.

Note also: The last days were to be marked by an accumulation of wealth on the one hand and bitter labor troubles on the other. In James 5:3, we read: "You have heaped treasure together for the last days." The Revised Version makes it even clearer. "You have laid up your treasure in the last days."

Since 1900, there has been a heaping up of wealth, a piling up of fortunes, a making of millionaires and multimillionaires as never before. One of the most striking features of our day is the struggle between capital and labor. What does this mean? James 5:8, "Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh." There can be no mistake about it. God says that when you see these great fortunes being piled up, and this rising tide of labor trouble, the coming of the Lord is drawing nigh. This is a double sign in the financial world.

Now look at the political world. The last days are to be marked by the greatest war preparation ever known. Joel 3:2-14: I will . . . gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat [or judgment]. . . . Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: beat your plough shares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong." That is what they are doing now. The whole world is in arms. But as the nations prepare for war, God's message is, "Prepare to meet thy God." God's people prepare for the coming Prince of Peace as the nations prepare for war.

The last days are to be marked by the greatest unrest! "There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring." Luke 21:25.

Are we in the time of the "distress of nations"? Everybody knows that we are. It is unparalleled distress of nations. Look at Europe. Look at the United States. Look at the Middle East. Look at the Far East. Distress everywhere! Distress among all classes! Read right on: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." Luke 21:26, 27. We see on earth exactly what Jesus Christ said we should see in the very last days; and the next event in God's program is the coming of Jesus.

Luke 21:11 says: "Great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilence; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven." Do we see these things? Your newspaper proves the truthfulness of these amazing predictions. It is crash upon crash, getting ready for the final crash.

In the eighteenth century there were eight terrible earthquakes. In the nineteenth century there were twelve. Since 1900 there has been, on the average, one destructive quake every year. As an old man tottering to his grave, it looks as though this world is tottering to its doom. Every earthquake tells its story. Think of it. In the last fifty years we have had the greatest war, the greatest earthquake, the greatest famine, and the greatest pestilence the world has ever known.

In Matthew 24:14, we have another sign—a wonderful sign—the most encouraging sign of all: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Then shall "the end come." It means the end of war and its cause. It means the end of sorrow, the end of death, the end of evil, and the end of evil's author. It means the end of sighing, the end of suspense, the end of struggle for those who have fought the good fight. It will be the beginning of endless life with never ending and ever-deepening joys. Yes, when this gospel of the kingdom (or the good news of the coming King) shall have been preached to all the world for a witness unto all nations, "then shall the end come." This preaching of the gospel, which is Christ's commission to His followers, is carrying the message of His soon coming, to every nation, in over 1,000 tongues. It is a supreme sign that He is near, and that brings you and me face to face with a tremendous question: Are we ready to meet Jesus? That is what all this means to us. There will be no chance of getting ready when He Comes.

The message of this hour is not to get ready, but to be ready. Be ready in the morning, at noon, and at night. Be sure that every sin is confessed. We cannot avoid meeting Jesus at His coming. It is just good sense, when you cannot avoid a certain thing, to get ready for it, isn't it? Solomon says: "A prudent man foresees the evil, and hides himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished." Proverbs 22:3.

We cannot stop Christ from coming. Even if everybody in the world doubts it, He will come just the same. It is a great oncoming fact that nobody in the world can stop or stay for a moment. "Be ye also ready: for in such an hour as you think not the Son of man comes." Matthew 24:44.

When the Flood in Noah's day was about to come, the people said: "How can it ever happen?" Noah warned them for one hundred and twenty years, but only eight people went into the ark of safety. The rest could have been saved, but they did not believe, and they were lost. The only people in the world who were saved were the people who prepared to be saved. The call of this hour is to get ready. Prepare to meet thy God." There will be only two classes of people when Jesus comes. One class will pray for the rocks to fall on them (Revelation 6:14-17) and the other class will be saying, "Lo, this is our God." Isaiah 25:9.



The only way to be ready is to have Christ in our hearts by His Holy Spirit. Jesus wants to come into our hearts He says: "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.

Let us invite Jesus into our hearts. Let us do it now.

"Open the door, my brother,  
And let the Lord come in;  
His presence is sweeter, my brother,  
Than all the delights of sin.

"The way that seems broad and flowery, Is the way that will end in gloom; The way that is strait and narrow, Is the path toward love and home."

## **5. The Christian and the Ten Commandments**

JESUS SAID in John 14:15, If you love Me, keep My commandments." To the young man who approached Him with the question, "What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" Jesus answered, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19:17. When asked which commandments these were, Jesus immediately quoted from the Ten Commandments. Thus, in effect Jesus said, If thou wilt enter into life, eternal life, keep the commandments, the Ten Commandments." The Ten Commandments deal with eternal principles and have been referred to as "God's Eternal Ten."

It is interesting to note that the commandments are the only words of the Bible God Himself wrote. While all Scripture is inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16), holy men were used to write these inspired words, but the Ten Commandments were so important that God Himself came down and wrote them with His own finger on tables of stone. See Exodus 31:18; Exodus 32:15, 16.

These Ten Commandments were given in awful grandeur, grandeur in keeping with their exalted character. Just how tremendous was the giving of "God's Eternal Ten" can be seen by reading Deuteronomy 4:32. Moffatt has translated this verse: "Ask the days of old, ere ever you were born, ask if anything as great has ever happened or been heard of, from one end of the world to another, ever since the day that God made man upon the earth." The Ten Commandments is of such importance that it was given in awful majesty, eclipsing anything that has ever happened upon earth.

In 1 Kings 8:9 we read, "There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone." Yes, in the sacred ark, under the mercy seat in the most holy place of the holy temple, the tables of God's holy law were kept. There was no more sacred place on earth. Angels guarded them. God Himself overshadowed them with His own sacred presence.

There is also an ark in heaven. (Revelation 11:19.) When John the revelator saw it, "There were lightning, and voices, and thundering," just as when God spoke the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. (Hebrews 12:18,19.) Then the earth shook, the mountains trembled, and so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake." Hebrews 12:21. It was God, "whose voice then shook the earth: but now He hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." Verse 26. Note these significant words, "Yet once more." God will speak again. He has not finished with this world. God will "once more" reveal Himself. When He speaks again, not only will the earth be shaken but also heaven.

Nothing can be more holy than God's Ten Commandment law. It is a revelation of God's character. How Holy, then it must be! In Psalm 40: 7, 8, Christ makes the statement: "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: Yea, Thy law is within My heart." Mark the statement: "Thy law is within My heart." Therefore, it is no innocent thing to touch God's law. It is in the heart of Christ. What shall we say then of those who speak lightly of God's law, the law which Jesus loves and treasures in His heart? What shall we say of those who speak against it and call it "Jewish," who tread it underfoot, and would gladly abolish it, Remember, whosoever hates God's law, hates what Jesus loves. Whosoever would abolish it must first blot it from the heart of Jesus. Whosoever breaks the law and delights in doing so, wounds the heart of our Lord. It is "God's Eternal Ten." God wrote them with His own finger on stone. In ancient times, to inscribe something on stone was a symbol of its permanency. When Job uttered his profession of faith in a living Redeemer, and the gift of eternal life through Him, the climax of his wish and his highest thought of permanency was to have it engraved in stone. "Oh, that my words were now written! . . . That they were graven. . . in the rock for ever!" Job 19:23,24. Thus God's Ten Commandments will stand for ever.

Remember, "God is love," and all that He does is inspired by love. He gave these wonderful commandments because He loved His people. In Deuteronomy 33:2,3, we read, "The Lord came from Sinai ... from His right hand went a fiery law for them. Yea, He loved the people." "God's Eternal Ten" were written in love by a God of love. They were written in stone to show their eternal nature. They were the only words which God Himself personally wrote to show their importance. They are the foundation of God's eternal kingdom.

When King Solomon summed up the results of his long life of experience, he said, "Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Ecclesiastes 12:13. In the estimation of Solomon, the wisest man of the ages, to obtain real peace and satisfaction in this world there is nothing to equal fearing God and keeping His commandments. The Apostle Paul, the greatest Christian writer the world has known, put the commandments of God in the same exalted position. "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God." 1 Corinthians 7:19. To make it more apparent, note Goodspeed's translation of this verse: "Being circumcised or being uncircumcised does not make any difference; all

that matters is keeping God's commands." Or as Weymouth puts it: "Circumcision is nothing, uncircumcision is nothing: obedience to God's commandments is everything." Ten precepts: brief, comprehensive, authoritative, eternal.

Of course, one should not confuse the Ten Commandments with the ceremonial precepts and ordinances of Old Testament sacrifices, which merely pointed forward to the cross, and naturally ceased with the wonderful sacrifice of Calvary. This is so clear that Bible commentators have explained the difference, and many great church creeds clearly mention this truth. You see, the laws of types and shadowy sacrifices would never have been needed, had God's Ten Commandments not been violated. It was sin, the breaking of God's law, that made the ceremonial sacrifices necessary. They pointed to the sacrifice of Jesus, just as baptism and the Lord's Supper now point back to the cross. But the Ten Commandments will be the standard when we stand before the judgment bar of God. (James 2:10-12; Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14.)

It is interesting to note in the Epistle to the Romans, that Paul speaks of "law" seventy-seven times, while John in his Gospel and Epistles mentions "love" seventy-eight times. There is no conflict between "law" and "love." Weymouth translates 1 John 5:3, "Love for God means obedience to His commands; and His commands are not irksome." Paul writes, "Love avoids doing anything wrong to one's fellow man, and is therefore complete obedience to law." Romans 13:10, Weymouth. The apostles of love and law stand together in perfect harmony, for love is the magic spirit that makes every burden light, and obedience is the highest evidence that we love Christ. If you love Me, keep My commandments," drifts down the valleys of time as a gentle whisper from the lips our Redeemer. Love is the golden chain that binds the believer to his God. Love binds us with a chain that is stronger than steel and yet is softer than silk. Love is the foundation of all God's dealings. But love cannot be won by force or authority. Only by love can love be awakened.

Moreover, love cannot live without action. "God so loved. . . that He gave His only begotten Son." If you love Me, keep My commandments." Yes, love brought Christ from the glory land to a rebel's camp. Love plans to bring the transformed rebels to the glory land. Will you go with them? On the last page of the Bible in Revelation 22:14 we read, '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.' We must be in that company.

Of course, in order to keep the commandments you will need Jesus in your heart and life. Those who would be like Jesus must look to Jesus. Only through Him is obedience possible. In Revelation 14:14-16 I read regarding the last day, I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand, a sharp sickle." What a wonderful picture of our returning Lord! "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." Jesus said, "The harvest is the end of the world." Matthew 13:39. Now notice, just before the final reaping of this earth, Jesus points out His people-those who will be going home to glory with Him. 'Here they are,' says Jesus, "in the last days, kneeling at the foot of the cross and looking for Me to come. They keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

Sometimes we hear it said that no man can keep God's commandments. This is but a half truth and a half truth is usually more misleading than an out and out falsehood. Tennyson has truly said, "A lie that is half a truth is the greatest lie." Beware of half truths, for remember you probably have the wrong half. Would it not be terrible to accuse God of commanding us to do something that no man can do, and then hold us responsible for failing? In James 2:12 we are plainly told we shall be judged by the Ten Commandments. The full truth is that no man in his own strength can keep the commandments of God and satisfy His demands. But, it is also gloriously true that through Jesus Christ dwelling in the heart, His holy commandments are kept. Our obedience or righteousness is not of ourselves but of Jesus. He not only commands us to obey, He also gives us grace and power to keep the eternal Ten Commandments through faith in Him. It is Christ's power flowing through us that enables us to obey. "For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Philippians 2:13.

Friend, will you not by God's grace be one of those who follow the path that leads to the city of God-the path of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus? Jesus wants you to be ready when He returns. He wants you to be with Him in glory. Thus He whispers down the corridors of time, If you love Me, keep My commandments."

## 6. God's Two Laws

WE ARE PLAINLY told in the Bible that when Christ was crucified, a certain law was nailed to Christ's cross and thus it expired. "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. What was this handwriting of ordinances?

It was the ceremonial law which dealt with the offering of sacrifices. That is the reason why we do not offer sacrifices today. If a man were to offer a sacrifice now, it would indicate he did not believe in the death of Jesus. When Christ died on the cross, all the sacrifices and offerings were nailed to the cross in Him, for He was the focal point of the whole sacrificial system. (Hebrews 9:8-14; Romans 10:4.) Every lamb offered in Old Testament times pointed forward to Christ, and when He died on the cross the sacrifices thus had accomplished their purpose. They finally had led to the real "Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

Remember, however, that all the sacrifices ever offered could not cleanse one single sin. It is clear, therefore, that the sacrifices had no value in themselves, except to point the sinner forward to the coming Messiah who was to bear "the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6. Thus when Christ died on the cross, the sacrifices had no more value.

Their purpose had been accomplished. When the Messiah Himself "appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Hebrews 9:26), the sacrifices and ceremonialism ended. Thus this ceremonial law is spoken of as being nailed to the cross with

Christ. If a person offered a sacrifice today it would be a denial of Christ. Thus it would be against our Christian religion. But the Ten Commandments are not against the faith of a Christian. Turn to Exodus 20 and look over the Ten Commandments. Think of them for a moment or two. The first commandment states, "Thou shall have no other gods before Me." This certainly is not against us. The millions of heathen worshipping other gods need to know this commandment. How can we turn them from their dumb idols to serve "the living God," if this commandment is abolished and nailed to the cross? Surely we need to re-emphasize this command.

The second commandment guards the manner in which we worship the Supreme Deity. "Thou shall not make unto Thee any graven image. . . . Thou shall not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." Is this command against us? Is it contrary to us?

The third commandment guards the sacredness of the name of God, and this certainly is needed today. "Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain." In Psalm 111: 9 God's name is said to be "holy and reverend." Men need to be reminded that taking God's name in vain is no trifling matter. For this offence they must answer at the judgment bar of God, for God "will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain."

The fourth commandment protects God's property. "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." In the midst of the mad rush of this twentieth century, what word can be more soothing to us than "rest? We should thank our kind heavenly Father for this rest day He has given to us in this rushing age. It comes to us from the sinless days of Eden, and is wafted down the centuries from the gates of Paradise. The Sabbath was made "for man" and is not against him in any Way. (Mark 2:28.) The peace-bringing rest day of God is needed more than ever before by this restless generation.

The fifth commandment guards the home. "Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God gives thee." Disobedience to parents is one of the outstanding sins of these last days. In 2 Timothy 3:1,2 we read, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents." In these days of juvenile delinquency and disregard of parents, surely we need this commandment of God, this greatest of all restraining forces. Who would dare say that this command is against us?

The sixth commandment is the shortest of all the Ten Commandments: "Thou shall not kill." This command guards life, the most valuable trust given to man. This commandment should be written in letters of fire for this generation. Who would dare say that this commandment is abolished? This certainly is not against us.

The seventh commandment, "Thou shall not commit adultery," has a special message for our day. This sin of Sodom is eating into the very vitals of modern society. What can halt this flood tide of impurity and immorality? We must call-it by its right name or nothing will avail against it. We must call it. sin and write it large before all. People must see that this is not alone a matter of personal inclination - for there is a God to be reckoned with on this question. But, friend, you cannot call it "sin" without the law, for "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

The eighth commandment, "Thou shall not steal," guards human property just as the fourth guards God's property. This commandment makes our neighbor's property a sacred thing. Today, however, this world is full of thieves. Banks and safe deposits have to be built of double strength material. Thieving has become big business. This alarming situation throughout the whole world calls for a new emphasis and declaration 'of God's Ten Commandments. This command is certainly not "against us."

The ninth commandment, "Thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor," guards the character. Bribery and perjury are outstanding sins of this age, and many feel they can get away with it. However, the Bible paints a very dark future for all liars. Those keeping the commandments will be blessed, but all liars will sink into a lost eternity. Note this declaration: '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. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whore mongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loves and makes a lie." Revelation 22:14, 15.

No one who belongs to the liar class can expect to enter the glory land, for we read in Revelation 21:8, "All liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." The violators of the ninth commandment are found at last in the same place as the transgressors of the other Ten Commandments. It makes no difference which commandment we disregard-whether the first or the last-the end of the road is the same. "The wages of sin is death."

The tenth commandment is the law of contentment. "Thou shall not covet." This sin of coveting appears innocent, and its subtle nature is not easily detected. Thus the Apostle Paul states, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet." Romans 7:7. If Paul needed the Ten Commandments to identify sin, we certainly need them today. This sin of covetousness will be dominant in the last days. (2 Timothy 3:1, 2.) It is a sin that will bar a person from heaven. (Romans 1:29; Ephesians 5:5.) Anything that will shut a person out of heaven should not be treated lightly.

It is clear, therefore, that it is not the Ten Commandments of which Paul writes as "the handwriting of ordinances that was against us." He is speaking about the ceremonial law with its sacrifices, rites, and ceremonies. (Hebrews 9: 1, margin.) The law of ceremonialism, which pointed forward to the atoning work of Jesus, naturally ceased at the cross.

In 1 Corinthians 7:19, Paul draws a very sharp distinction between this law of types, ceremonies, and ordinances, and the Ten Commandments of God. He says, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing: obedience to God's commandments is everything." (Weymouth.) Since the cross, circumcision-the outstanding sign of ceremonialism-is classed as nothing, but the commandments of God are still to be respected and obeyed. They are still of paramount importance.

Some have thought that Paul was opposed to the law, but it is clear he is the strongest champion and chief defender of God's commandments. To Paul, the commandments of God meant everything. While he clearly sweeps aside the rites, ceremonies, and ordinances that through Old Testament times had typified the work of Jesus, the commandments of God remain as firm and steadfast

as Gibraltar. He says, "Obedience to God's commandments is everything." In this he follows the wonderful teaching of our Lord who said that whosoever would keep the commandments of God, and teach others to do likewise, will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5: 17-19.)

Paul had learned to love the commandments of God. He had found in Christ the way out of his distress. He found in Christ, not the way to avoid obedience, but the way to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. The commandments were no longer hard and cold, but warm with the love and life of Christ. Christ had lifted Paul to the place where the law was no longer far above him, but near-right in his heart.

So do not despair, my friend, because you find your efforts fall short of your goal. Christ forgives our past transgressions, and then comes and lives out God's law in our lives (Hebrews 8: 10), and finally He will present us faultless before the eternal throne. (Jude 24.)

Truly we have a wonderful Savior with a wonderful salvation.

## 7. The Lord's Day

I BELIEVE that the Lord has a day, a special day, a true day for Christians to keep holy. In Revelation 1:10 the Apostle John records, I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day." Therefore at the close of the Bible, written sixty years after the cross, the Lord still had a day, a specific day, referred to as "the Lord's day."

With this clear statement of Scripture before us, it is apparent that any who maintain that today there is no special day for Christians to keep holy must be wrong, for at the close of the Bible it states the Lord has a day. Some may say it is all right to keep "any day that is convenient," but note carefully that the Lord has a day. It is His day. It is the Lord's day.

Which day is our Lord's special day? Notice what Luke 4:16 has to say: "And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up: and as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read." "As His custom was." That means Jesus was in the habit of doing this. What was it He did? "As His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up for to read."

When Jesus our Lord walked the dusty roads of old Palestine, He went on the Sabbath to a place of worship. You can read the Bible from cover to cover and you will find that there was only one day that Jesus our Lord kept.

That day was the Sabbath-the seventh-day Sabbath. Remember, Jesus is our example in all things. He not only died for us, but He lived His life to set an example for us. See 1 Peter 2:21. We are Christians, and Christians are followers of Christ. Now if we follow in the footsteps of Jesus, and Jesus was in the habit of attending a place of worship on the Sabbath, pray tell me what should we do? It is clear we should attend the place of worship on the Sabbath. Remember you can never make a mistake while you are following Jesus. In fact He said, "He that follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8: 12.

"Jesus Christ [is] the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Hebrews 13: 8. Jesus never alters. Therefore if Jesus kept the seventh-day Sabbath when on earth, and Jesus never alters, if He was on earth today, which day would He keep? He would keep the very same day-the seventh-day Sabbath. His observance of this day was no chance act by Jesus our Lord. In Matthew 12:8 we read, "For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day." Jesus said, I am the Lord of the Sabbath. I am the protector of the Sabbath. It is My day." It is the only (lay over which He ever claimed to be Lord. The Sabbath is the Lord's day. Now notice something interesting: "He [Jesus] was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not." John 1: 10, 11. Note that statement, "the world was made by Him." Jesus was the Creator. If the New Testament is clear on anything, it is the fact that the same One who died on Calvary for you and for me, is the One who created the world at the beginning. The Creator was the One who made the Sabbath. It is the Lord's day.

Turn back to the beginning of the Bible and read Genesis 2: 1: "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made." There you have the origin of the Sabbath. After God had created the world in six days He rested on the Sabbath-that is what made it a Sabbath, because the word "Sabbath" means "rest." It is the Sabbath, or rest day of the Lord.

But that is not all He did. "God blessed the seventh day." Genesis 2:2. Jesus put His own blessing on that day. He made it holy. Those who would say, "You can keep any day you want, as one day is as good as another," are treating the blessing of our God as of no account. If Jesus blesses a day, surely that day should mean more to us than a day that is not blessed. From personal experience, thousands have testified that they have found a blessing in keeping the Sabbath, a blessing they found in no other day. The reason is clear, Jesus blessed the seventh-day Sabbath, and He hands it down the ages as a love gift to His blood bought children in these last days. The seventh-day Sabbath is holy. Why? Because Jesus made it holy. He made it His Sabbath, His rest day, the Lord's day.

That is not all. He not only rested on it, He not only blessed it, He also sanctified it. See Genesis 23. To "sanctify" means to set apart for a holy use." That is, He set the seventh day entirely apart from the other days for a holy use. That is why He said, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." Exodus 20:8.

Remember, this is the only day you will ever be able to keep holy. You couldn't possibly keep any other day holy, because the other days are not holy to begin with. And you and I can't make anything holy. It takes a holy God to make a day holy. Jesus made that day holy when He sanctified it.



To illustrate, let us take two handkerchiefs, a white handkerchief and a blue one. If I handed you the white handkerchief and said, "Keep this white," it is possible for you to do this. But if I handed to you the blue handkerchief and I said, "Keep this white," you could not. Why? Because it is not white to begin with. It is the same with the Sabbath. It is the only day you could possibly keep holy, because it is the only day that God made holy, and as you keep it aright you will find that the presence of Jesus is in every moment of that sacred day. You and I ought to love the Sabbath. Remember it was given to us by the nail scarred hands of Jesus. He hands it down to us as His day. He called it, "My holy day." Isaiah 58:13.

When the sun sets in the golden west next Friday evening, you and I step from ordinary time on to holy time. God once told Moses, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou stand is holy ground." Exodus 3:5. May we never be guilty of treading underfoot God's holy Sabbath. It is the only day He ever sanctified. It is the only day He ever kept. It is the only day He ever asked you to keep.

It is impossible to preach Jesus in His fullness without the Sabbath, because it was Jesus who made the Sabbath, and it was Jesus who blessed it. It was Jesus who came down on Mt. Sinai and wrote the Sabbath commandment with His own finger on the tables of stone. It was Jesus who kept it while He was on this earth. It was the Lord's day when John the revelator on the Isle of Patmos received a vision and message from Jesus. He kept the same day as his Lord kept. Yes, the Sabbath is just full of Jesus. It has the very blessing of Jesus.

As Jesus made the Sabbath, He ought to be the best One to tell us for whom He made it. In Mark 2:27 Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man." Some will tell you, "The Sabbath was only made for the Jews." But Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man." Does "man" spell "Jew"? Actually, He made the Sabbath 2,500 years before there was a Jew in existence. He made it when there was only one man, and that man was Adam. God commands us, "Remember the Sabbath day," but the world has forgotten it. Today, fifty two weeks of every year, it is trampled underfoot by many and our Lord's holy day has become the day for business and sport.

In the Bible there is not a word about Sunday sacredness. It is interesting to note that the first record you have is that God worked on the first day of the first week. Did you ever think of that? You see, it couldn't possibly be a sin to work on Sunday, because God did. See Genesis 1:1-5. In fact, God not only worked on Sunday, but He also commanded that work should be done on Sunday. He said, "Six days shall thou labor and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath [or rest day] of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:9, 10. Not only did God work on Sunday, not only did He command work to be done on Sunday, but, if you please, God calls it a working day. See Ezekiel 46: 1. The only thing the Bible has told us to do on Sunday, is work.

Never once is there any indication in the Word of God that it is a holy day. God never blessed Sunday. Christ did not rest on it. It was never sanctified. The New Testament nowhere forbids work to be done on it. There is no penalty whatsoever for its desecration. No blessing is ever pronounced for its observance. No regulation is ever given as to how it should be observed. It is never called the Christian Sabbath. It is never called the Lord's day. People may call it the Lord's day, but calling it the Lord's day doesn't make it the Lord's day. Neither God, Christ, nor any inspired writer ever said a single word in favor of Sunday. There is no requirement anywhere in the Bible to break bread on the first day of the week. The Bible nowhere says that the first day of the week is the memorial of the resurrection. That is merely a human tradition which makes void the command of God. See Matthew 12:6.

Come now to Calvary, to the death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Inspired Record states: "This man went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre which was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on. And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day according to the commandment." Luke 23:52-56. They had seen Jesus keep the Sabbath, and when the sunset in the west on that fateful Friday evening, the Sabbath was so sacred to them they wouldn't even embalm the body of Jesus on that holy day. They kept the Sabbath according to the commandment.

It is significant, my friend, that when Jesus finished His work of creation in six days, He rested on the seventh day from His work. When this world went astray in sin, and Jesus came down here to save it, and He died on that fateful Friday afternoon, again He rested on the Sabbath, this time in the tomb. The Sabbath thus is a sign and memorial both of Creation and Calvary.

Notice the next verse in Luke 24: 1. "Upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre." They went on that Sunday morning to do a work that they wouldn't do on the Sabbath. They kept the Lord's day according to the commandment, but to these disciples Sunday was only a working day. Christian friend, you cannot possibly make a mistake in keeping the seventh-day Sabbath-the Sabbath that Jesus Himself made, and handed down to you as a love gift from the golden days of Eden. It comes down to you, stained with the life blood of Jesus of Calvary.

Jesus points out His people in the last days as those who "keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. They are the people waiting to go home to the land of glory. When Jesus comes and gathers up His people and transports them home to the glory land, they will go right on keeping holy God's Sabbath. I read in Isaiah 66:22, 23, "For . . . the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, says the Lord. . . It shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before Me, says the Lord." If you reach the land of glory you will be a Sabbath keeper.

Remember, the Lord Jesus Christ made, blessed, and kept the Sabbath. With a hand that is nail-scarred for you and me He is beckoning, "Follow Me."



## 8. The Change of the Sabbath

I BELIEVE what Jesus said as it is found in Matthew 5:17,18: "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."

Jesus had brushed aside man-made traditions, so much so, that some feared He was laying aside all the commandments; so Jesus in His very first sermon reassured, in the strongest way, those who loved the commandments of God. Note the clear statement of our Lord: "Think not." Don't even think that I am come to destroy the law. Some may say Jesus did abolish the law. But in this they certainly carry things with a high hand, for Christ says, "Do not even think such a thing-perish the thought that I have in any way come to destroy or change the law." "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil."

"Fulfil" means to live and to fully preach the law. To John the Baptist Jesus declared His purpose was to "fulfil all righteousness." To make it more emphatic Jesus continued, 'Verily I say unto you, 'Fill heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.'" In other words "until everything is accomplished." Jesus points down to the farthest extremity of man's thought, to the very passing away of earth and heaven, and assures us that as long as there is an earth beneath our feet and a heaven above, the holy law of God will remain. It is as immovable as the throne of God.

Then, lest anyone should still retain a doubt of the eternal nature of God's law, Jesus plainly states the consequences of disregarding its sacred claims. Verse 19: "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" (or in other words, he shall be shut out of the courts of glory). But those who obey the law and lead others to do the same will receive a wonderful reward. For note the statement of Jesus, "But whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

To be called great in the kingdom of heaven is well worth striving for. Jesus says those that keep the commandments and teach other people to keep them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. It is very evident that Jesus our Lord did not change the commandments of God. There is no record in the Scriptures that after Christ rose from the dead He spoke of any change in the commandments, including the Sabbath. There is no record that He observed Sunday as the Sabbath.

If Saturday is not the Sabbath for Christians, Jesus would have told us. The apostles of Christ did not change the commandments. If Jesus did not change them, then the apostles could not do it. No man could do it. What is more, they would not have attempted to do it without leaving us a record. And there is no record anywhere in the New Testament of the apostles trying to change either the Sabbath or any one of the Ten Commandments. Since the Bible closes with Saturday as the only Sabbath, who shall step up and tear that Sabbath out and put Sunday in its place? Listen to the very last page statement in the Bible. Revelation 22:18,19: "For I testify unto every man that hears 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." In other words, we dare not take away from this Book and we dare not add to it.

Yet some power, since Bible times, has attempted to tear out the Sabbath of God and bring in Sunday. For, if Sunday observance is not found in the Bible, how is it that so many keep it today? Let us now look at a prophecy of a power that would attempt to change the law of our God. Daniel 7:25: "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws." That this is a prophecy of the Papacy is beyond all question. The Reformers to a man proved that this prophecy applied to the Roman Papacy. Now God says that nobody on earth could change them, for if everybody on earth broke them that would not change them, because they are for ever settled in heaven.

But this power would actually think that she could do it. The Papacy thinks that she has done it. She abbreviated the commandments down until they mean nothing at all, as her catechisms clearly reveal. She did not stop even there. For the prophecy states that she would think herself able to change the times and the laws. Now you read through the Ten Commandments and you will find that only one deals with time. That commandment is, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. . . . The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:8-10. That is dealing with time. Now here is a power that God says would not only change the laws of God but would change the very times in the law of God.

God says the Papacy would attempt to change the Sabbath of God. We go along and we say, "Did you do it?" For an answer we can turn to the "Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine." On page 49 we read:

Question: What is the third commandment?

Answer: The third commandment is, Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

Question: Which is the Sabbath day? Answer: Saturday is the Sabbath day.

Question: Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday.

Answer: We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church in the Council of Laodicea in AD. 336 transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.

Now notice. The prophecy told us about a power that would think itself able to change the times and the law of God. The Sabbath is the only commandment dealing with time, so we ask, "Rome, did you change the Sabbath?" And the reply comes back, "Yes, sure we did." Rome makes no secret about it whatsoever. In fact she is very proud of it. Notice again:

"Question: Have you any other way of proving that the church has the power to institute festivals of precept?

"Answer: Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority. "-"A Doctrinal Catechism," Reverend Stephen Keenan; approved by the Most Reverend John Hughes, D.D., Archbishop of New York, page 174. New York: Edward Dunigan and Brother, 1851.

Note what Father T. Enright, President of Redemptorist Father's College, said in a lecture in 1893: "There is but one church on the face of the earth which has the power to make laws binding under pain of hell fire. For instance the institution of Sunday. What right has any other church to keep that day? You answer, by virtue of the third commandment, which says, 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.' But Sunday is not the Sabbath. Any schoolboy knows that Sunday is the first day of the week. I have repeatedly offered one thousand dollars to anyone who will prove by the Bible alone that Sunday is the day we are bound to keep, and no one has called for the money. It was the holy Catholic Church that changed the day of rest from Saturday, the seventh day, to Sunday, the first day of the week. Which church does the whole civilized world obey? The Bible says, 'Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day' but the Catholic Church says, 'No, keep holy the first day of the week,' and all the world bows down in reverent obedience to the mandates of the Catholic Church."

But the Papacy went even further. In the Bible the day is from sunset to sunset. For instance, in Leviticus 23:32 we read, "From even unto even, shall you celebrate your Sabbath." The first chapter of Genesis reveals that each day of creation was an evening and a morning. Thus the days began at sunset, with the evening-the dark part-and then came the light part. That is the reason why, when they took Jesus down off the cross on that fateful Friday afternoon, Luke 23:54 states, "The Sabbath drew on," for the sun was setting. The Scripture plainly says, 'From even unto even shall you celebrate your Sabbaths. " Leviticus 23:32.

The Papacy did not merely change the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first; it altered the whole reckoning of days. From the Catholic Encyclopaedia, Volume 14, page 333, under the article, "Sunday," we read, "As with the Sabbath, the observance of the Christian Sunday began with sundown on Saturday and lasted until the same time on Sunday. The method of reckoning Sunday from sunset to sunset continued in some places down until the seventeenth century, but in general, since the Middle Ages, the reckoning from midnight to midnight has been followed."

Now the Middle Ages was the period of the reign of the Papacy. It has been commonly referred to as the Dark Ages. In those Dark Ages the reckoning from sunset to sunset was changed to midnight to midnight. Thus today, when trying to keep Sunday, people do not keep any day. They keep a part of two days. Actually I do not know of any people who keep the first day of the week; they all keep a part of two days. To really keep the first day of the week they would need to keep it according to Bible reckoning from sunset on Saturday to sunset on Sunday.

When you come to this dear old Book of God, you find every good person in the Bible was a Sabbath keeper. The Scriptures of truth further reveal that away down in the last days God will have a message going around the world to call people back to the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus; it will also expose the great commandment-changing power. This old world needs that message from God. It needs the light of God. Thank Him, that light is now being revealed to this dying world, in crystal clearness, and, praise His name, thousands are accepting it. Let us follow very closely in the footsteps of Jesus, keeping the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

## 9. The Law and the Gospel

I BELIEVE that there is no conflict whatsoever between the law and the gospel. In fact there could be no conflict. They both have a place in God's plan. If there were no law there would be no gospel. There is a gospel because there is a law. Because the law was disobeyed the gospel is necessary. The law reveals sin. The gospel reveals the Savior. At Sinai we find out what we should do. At Calvary we find out how to do it.

The gospel saves from sin. (Matthew 1:21.) It raises people to the law's level. The "gospel of grace" is so far reaching that it touches every man. In Titus 2: 11 we read, "The grace of God that brings salvation bath appeared to all men." One writer has called it "grace abounding." It is so deep it can reach to the lowest human. It is so high it reaches to the throne of the Great Eternal. It is so wide that it removes our sins from us as far as the east is from the west. (Psalm 103:12.) It is also so long that it reaches from Paradise lost to Paradise regained-from Eden to Eternity. In fact, all who enter the glory land will enter saved by grace, and saved by grace alone. Not a single soul will pass through the pearly gates because he was saved by his own works.

Some would have us believe that prior to the cross of Christ men were saved by keeping the law, but now they are saved by grace. If this were true we would have a divided heaven. Some would be in heaven because of their own works, and others would be there solely by the salvation of Christ. No! There will not be a divided heaven. Neither are there two ways to the glory land. There is only one way and Christ is the way. (John 14:6.) "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12.

Every soul who steps through the pearly gates will enter there saved by grace and saved by grace alone. Not a single person will enter heaven by the merits of his obedience. In Old Testament times people were saved by grace, the same way as we are saved

today. St. Peter, speaking of the Old Testament saints, stated in Acts 15: 11, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."

There is but one way to glory and that is the way of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. That men were not saved by works in Old Testament times is clearly stated by the Apostle Paul, "Even as David also describes the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputes righteousness without works." Romans 4:6. It is crystal clear that all who are saved, whether under the old dispensation or the new, are saved by grace. There is no difference.

Note this fact also that all good men count the law of God as a friend. David, a man after God's own heart, writes, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul." Psalm 19:7. Paul, the great New Testament missionary to the Gentiles, writes, "The law is holy." Romans 7:12. In verse 14 he states, "The law is spiritual." In 1 Corinthians 7:19, Weymouth's translation, he makes it even more emphatic, "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing: obedience to God's commandments is everything."

In both the Old Testament and the New, all good men were friends of the law of God. They stand with our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who says, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within My heart." Psalm 40: 8. See also Hebrews 10: 5-7. The law is in the heart of Christ. No one can trample on that sacred law without grieving Christ.

Yet, some persons today are strongly opposed to God's law. The Word of God, however, puts opponents of the law in a most unfavorable light. Note the clear statement of Scripture, "The lower nature is enmity with God; it is not subject to the law of God." Romans 8:7, N.E.B.

It is because God's law is eternal and more firmly established than Gibraltar that grace is necessary. The stronger the law, the more the need of grace; for the word grace means unmerited favor or undeserved kindness. When a person is condemned to die, and is given a pardon that he does not merit, that is grace. I understand in some places when the governor pardons a man who is under the sentence of death, there is written across the pardon the words, "Saved by grace."

Grace is not something that exists apart from law, but exists because there is a law. Thus it is foolish to speak of one age as a dispensation of law, and of another as a dispensation of grace: law and grace work side by side, and have done so ever since the first man sinned, and will continue to work together until the day of mercy closes. Grace or pardon cannot be extended to anyone if he has not broken the law; "for where no law is, there is no transgression." Romans 4:15.

If the law of God could have been abolished, then there would have been no need for Christ's death on Calvary. Actually the cross of Christ is the strongest argument of all that God's law could not be changed or laid aside. If the law could be set aside then sin could also be set aside, and the "wages of sin" could be set aside, for "the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23.

Christ died in the sinner's stead. Christ did not want to die, but there was no other way to redeem the sinner. When Jesus went to the cross He demonstrated beyond any shadow of a doubt that God's law cannot be set aside. "The wages of sin is death," and "sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4.

Now, when we who have sinned, and deserve death, seek Christ as our Savior, we are not saved by the law but by the love and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ. We are saved by grace and grace alone. However, being saved by grace does not sweep away the claims of the law. Now that we are free from death through Christ, we are not at liberty to ignore the law and break its commands. Actually, every blood-bought, redeemed person is under a double obligation to obey God's law.

This is so, firstly, because we must obey God. Secondly it is out of love and gratitude for His wonderful love and redeeming grace that we delight to do His will, and His every command becomes our joy to obey. That is what the Apostle Paul states in Romans 3: 3 1, "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Thus every child of God has an added reason to "keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." Revelation 14:12. He will be doubly careful to keep God's law so he will not bring disgrace upon Him "who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Galatians 2:20.

Christ Jesus, our Lord, loves the law. It is recorded of Him in Psalm 40:8, I delight to do Thy will, O My God: yea, Thy law is within MY heart." The law of God is enshrined in a sacred place-in the very heart of our wonderful Redeemer. As you invite Christ into your heart, He brings God's law into your heart and life, for Christ has that law in His heart when He enters your heart. Thus the commandments of God will be seen lived out in your life, and will become the evidence to all that Christ is truly in your heart, as is stated in 1 John 2:3, "Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." If on the other hand we are not keeping God's commandments, it is a clear sign that we do not have Christ within. This is clearly stated in 1 John 2:4, "He that says, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."

As you fully surrender to Christ, He not only pardons your past transgressions of God's law, but comes right into your heart and thus fulfils God's law in your life. Thus "the righteousness of the law [is] fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Romans 8:3. No wonder Paul was not ashamed of the gospel that revealed this wonderful righteousness. (Romans 1: 16, 17.) This is what it means to be saved by grace. Christ does it all past, present, and future-yet we get the full benefit of it. He forgives our sins, He keeps God's law within us and through us, and finally He clothes us in His own righteousness, and thus presents us "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." Jude 24.

What a wonderful Savior!

What a wonderful salvation! Christ does it all. We are saved by grace-the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

## **10. The Soul and the State of the Dead**

IN I John 5:11, 12, we are told, "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that bath the Son bath life; and he that bath not the Son of God bath not life."

You see, eternal life can be found only in Jesus. There is nothing about man that is eternal; man is a mortal creature; the Bible says so. See job 4:17 and Romans 6:12. Of ourselves, we are absolutely hopeless beyond death and the grave, except as we find hope in Jesus. He is the only source of eternal life.

In 1 Timothy 6:15, 16, we read of the "King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only bath immortality." Nowhere in the Scriptures do you read of an immortal soul" or a "never-dying spirit."

The record of the creation of man is very simple and clear. Genesis 2:7 says, "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Notice carefully that this text simply says that the breath of life entered the form of clay-the man made of lifeless dust-and man became a living soul, that is, a living person.

Note also that it does not say man received a living soul, but man became a living soul. Man is a soul. In Exodus 16:16, regarding the manna, the command was, "Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons." The marginal reading substitutes "souls" for "persons." Persons are souls. In Joshua 11:11 we read, "They smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them." Note that carefully: not only are persons referred to as souls, but the souls were destroyed, utterly destroyed. It is very apparent that souls are not immortal, but can certainly be killed. No, the soul is not immortal.

While some would try to discredit the account of the creation of man, it is really a very beautiful concept of how man was brought into existence. God Himself formed man with His own hands of love in a very personal way. Then with His own breath He breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being or soul. Thus man, creation's masterpiece, was made by the Creator Himself, for God made man in His own image.

But! And mark this point: when God created man He did not make him immortal, for in Genesis 2:17 we read, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eats thereof thou shalt surely die." If God had made man immortal it would have been useless to threaten him with death for disobedience, for once a person is immortal he is not subject to death.

Man has not taken kindly to the idea that he is not immortal, but the Scriptures are clear and definite on this fact. The King of kings "only hath immortality." 1 Timothy 6:15, 16. God alone has immortality. Romans 5: 12 puts it this way: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Death comes as a result of sin. Even Lucifer, later called the Devil and Satan, was cast out and awaits his destruction because he sinned. If the mightiest of the angelic host is subject to death, it is clear that God only has immortality.

While man does not by nature have immortality, he is urged to seek it through Christ, as we read in Romans 2:7, "To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." Why seek for immortality if we already possess it? This marvelous gift of immortality will be bestowed by God only upon those who have proved themselves fit to use it properly. To those who love God with all their hearts will be given the amazing gift of living as long as God Himself.

In the beginning man would have gained immortality through obedience to his Creator, but when he sinned he lost this privilege. Now man's only way to obtain immortality and live as long as God lives is through the Lord Jesus Christ. What man lost through sin can be restored to him through Christ. As we read in 2 Timothy 1:10, "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel."

Note! It is only through the gospel that life and immortality have been revealed. Without Christ there is no immortality. Thus any who refuse Christ will never see life. What tremendous importance the Lord Jesus Christ assumes in the life of every one! Through Christ, immortality is assured; but without Christ immortality will never be given to anyone.

When a person dies, his spirit, or life, returns to God who gave it. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return to God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12: 7. When a person dies he is in the power of death, and death is an enemy. 1 Corinthians 15:26 says: "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." However, Jesus has the keys of death and the grave. Revelation 1:18 makes this plain: I am He that lived, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." With Christ as a friend you have nothing to fear. This Friend has the keys of the grave, and while you sleep in the dust Jesus takes charge of your life or spirit, and He gives it back to you on the great resurrection day. As we read in Colossians 3: 3, 4, "For you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall you also appear with Him in glory."

What could be more wonderful or sure than to have your life hidden with Christ in God? Your life is cared for by the two mightiest beings of the universe. When life is restored to the saint of God it will not be a weak mortal life, but an immortal, eternal life, a life akin to the life of God. Notice this great statement in 1 Corinthians 15:51-55: "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

When Jesus Christ returns, His people will be made immortal. Death holds sway until the coming of the Life Giver. Not until then can it be said that death is finally conquered. Not until this event will "this mortal" "put on immortality." How wonderful, clear, and logical are the Scriptures! It is the resurrection that assures men that they will live again. If there be no resurrection of the dead," says the Bible, "then they. . . which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."



The saints are not in heaven; they are asleep. In 1 Thessalonians 4:14 Paul writes, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him." The saints are sleeping in Jesus, waiting for the advent of Christ. Jesus Himself makes this very clear. In John 6:44 we read, "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day." And in verse 39 we read, "This is the Father's will which hath sent Me, that of all which He hath given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." It is clear, therefore, that our Lord based all hope of the future life upon His raising men "at the last day."

Jesus considers the resurrection of paramount importance. In John 11:25 He says, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." Note that carefully! Christ is pleased to call Himself "the resurrection" for it is only through Him that the dead can live. This is quoted in the chapter that records the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Christ said concerning Lazarus: "I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." In verse 11, Christ states also what He meant by sleep; it was the sleep of death, for He says in verse 14, "Lazarus is dead." Thus Jesus shows that the nearest word to describe man's condition in death is "sleep." In fact, fifty-five times in the Bible, death is referred to as a "sleep."

And just as Jesus called Lazarus forth from the tomb, so will be the resurrection of us all in that great, final day. This was but a miniature representation of that glorious day. Jesus says in John 5:28, 29, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall bear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

But take note: it does not say that they will hear His voice and the good will come down from heaven and enter their bodies and the wicked will come up from hell and enter into their bodies, but it does say that "in the grave they will hear His voice." Jesus says both the good and the evil will be in their graves on the great resurrection day, and there they will hear His voice and come forth unto the resurrection of life or the resurrection of damnation, according as they have lived their lives in this world.

Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." John 14:6. Jesus is the life, and without Him there is no life, and there is no prospect of life. How important, then, the Lord Jesus Christ becomes to mankind when we consider that there is life in Him alone. No wonder the Apostle Paul writes "Christ is all, and in all." Colossians 3: 11. Christ is the life; He is the way to life and immortality; He is the resurrection.

Thus we have everything to gain and nothing to lose in welcoming into our hearts and lives this wonderful Savior. If you have not made Jesus your personal Friend and Savior, this is the most opportune moment that you will ever have to accept Him. The Bible says, "now is the accepted time." 2 Corinthians 6:2. Waiting for a more favorable time is dangerous. The most favorable time to accept Him is now. Do not put off the day of salvation, but accept the Lord Jesus Christ now and be assured of immortality and life for evermore in the wonderful world to come.

## 11. The True Church

IN Matthew 24:4, 5 there is a warning given by Jesus that we should believe and heed: "And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

Matthew 24 records Christ's great sermon on His second coming and the signs that will show that His coming is near at hand. In this sermon, Jesus said that, in the last days, there would be many religious deceivers who would deceive "many" people. Therefore, neither multitudes nor miracles can be a sign of truth. Those who do not love truth "will believe a lie." (2 Thessalonians 2:10,11) Those who reject truth will be ensnared by falsehood. Deceivers will camouflage their works so well that only those who love the truth of God will be safe from their deceptions. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.)

We live in a time of religious confusion. Christ refers to it as Babylon. (Revelation 14: 8.) Babylon means "confusion" (Genesis 11:9, margin), truly an appropriate description of the conflicting voices that cry in this sunset hour of civilization.

To find the true church of our Lord in such an hour is vital. It is logical to believe that the true church is the one that teaches truth, for we read in 1 Timothy 3: 15 that "the church of the living God is the pillar and ground of the truth." God's church is His channel of light and truth. Through it He communicates His purposes, His will, and His truth to the world. The dearest thing to the heart of our God is His church. Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it." Ephesians 5:25. It is spoken of as the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." Acts 20:28. Every child of God will likewise love God's church. He does his best to find it, and come into its fold.

So that none may make a mistake here, the Lord Jesus has clearly revealed certain marks that will with certainty identify the true church today. In fact Christ has given a whole chapter that clearly reveals His church. This significant chapter also reveals the devil's hatred of and opposition to the church of God. The twelfth chapter of Revelation shows this warfare against Christ and His church. The true church is represented by the figure of a pure woman (Revelation 12:1; see also Jeremiah 6:2; Isaiah 51:16; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 19:7, 8), while a corrupt woman is used to represent a corrupt church. (Revelation 17:1-6.) This is so clear that it is generally agreed upon. Dr. Albert Barnes, the well known commentator of the Presbyterian Church, writes, "The woman is evidently designed to symbolize the church; in this there is a pretty general agreement among interpreters." He further writes, "The woman, beyond all question, represents the church." -- "Notes on the New Testament," by Albert Barnes, on Revelation 12:1.

The Douay Version, or what is commonly known as the Roman Catholic Bible, has this note on Revelation 12: 1: "The woman represents the church of God." Thus it is clear from Scripture, and is, common consent of both Protestants and Catholics, that this prophecy covers the history of the true church. Thus the man child who "was caught up unto God, and to His throne" (Verse 5) is



Christ. This child was destined “to rule all the nations with a rod of iron,” which role is assigned exclusively to Christ. In Revelation 19:11-16, He is clearly identified as “King of kings and Lord of lords.”

The dragon is explained in Revelation 12:9 as being that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan.” His attempt “to devour” the child represents the devil’s attempt to destroy our Lord at His birth and throughout His ministry.

Note verse 4: “The dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.” This clearly reveals that the devil already knows and hates the unborn child. Verses seven to nine explain this prior acquaintance and hatred. “And there was war in heaven” (Verse 7) gives us a background to this great controversy and the reason for the relentless hatred of Satan towards Christ and His church. The devil’s rash attempt to usurp the authority of Christ ended in failure. He “prevailed not.” Verse 8. “He failed” in heaven. (Moffatt’s translation.) Defeated in every battle with Christ, Satan can now make war only on Christ’s people on earth, and to them he now comes in great wrath.

Verse 13. “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.”

At this point “the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.” Verse 6. In the symbolism of prophecy this represents the 1,260 years of the Middle Ages, or Dark Ages. However, note! In this thrilling chapter the dragon is defeated three times. He was vanquished in heaven. Verse 8. Then he was prevented from destroying the man child, Christ. Verse 5.

Finally the woman” (the church) was providentially delivered and preserved through the bitter “flood” of persecution with which the dragon endeavored to destroy the true church of God. Verse 16. The question is sometimes asked, “Where was the true church during the Dark Ages?” As there was but one great religious organization ruling Europe during that time, some have concluded that it must be the true church. However, this chapter which reveals the true church clearly shows that during this period the true church would be hiding in the wilderness’ hiding in caves and among the mountains. The ruling religious power of those days is also foretold in Daniel 7:25 and Revelation 17. It was persecuting while the true church was hiding “in the wilderness.” A much more important question, however, is “Where is the true church today?”

The answer is in the Word of God. Notice carefully Revelation 12:17, “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.”

This last verse in the chapter describes the true church as it will appear in the last days. Note that this verse refers to the “remnant” of the church. The remnant must mean the last part of the church, or the church in the last days, just before the return of Christ at “the last day.” See John 6:39, 40, 44, 54.

Is the remnant of the same pattern as the first part of the bolt? Yes, it certainly is. The remnant of a bolt of cloth is a continuation of the same pattern as at the first. This remnant church will be a continuation of the original church of Jesus Christ, the last part of His church before He returns to the earth.

At what time in the world’s history will this remnant church be carrying on its work? The answer is: In the last days—in the closing age of the earth’s history. It is clear that the last part is bound to be in the last days—in the last generation. And these are the last days. The fulfillment of the signs which Jesus has given proves that His coming is near, even at the door. So this is the day of the remnant. If one can discover which church is the remnant church, he will have identified the true church of Jesus Christ for today.

Now the question is: “How can one tell which church among all the different denominations and religious bodies is this remnant?” God has not left any doubt. He tells how it can be known. Read Revelation 12:17 again: “The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant. .. which keep the commandments of God.” Isn’t this plain? The remnant church will be distinguished by the keeping of the commandments of God. It will also have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Please note that practice keeping of the commandments of God is not at variance with the acceptance of Jesus Christ. The keeping of the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ go together.

This remnant, then, will keep the commandments of God, and they will have the testimony of Jesus Christ. What is meant by the commandments of God? A reading of the sixty-six books of the Bible once, or a hundred times, will demonstrate that the only commandments which God ever spoke with His own voice to His people, or ever wrote with His own hand, are the Ten Commandments. The Bible contains many commandments from God, aside from the Ten Commandments. The commandments of God include all that

God requires of man. But “the commandments of God,” must mean pre-eminently the Ten Commandments.

Here are two questions. This remnant keeps the commandments. What day of the week do the Ten Commandments require man to keep? What is the answer? The seventh day. In the fourth of God’s Ten Commandments, He says, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work.” You will find that in your Bible in Exodus 20:8-10.

The seventh day is the only day of weekly observance which God has ever commanded man to keep. Since Christ’s remnant church keep the commandments, what day, then, will they keep? The seventh day. If they do not keep the seventh day, they are not keeping the commandments. It is as plain as two and two make four that the remnant church, or Christ’s true church for the last days, will be composed of a seventh-day Sabbath-keeping people.

There is no command of God in the Scriptures for the keeping of the first day of the week, that is, Sunday. Hence any church that keeps the first day of the week, or Sunday, cannot be the remnant church of Revelation 12:17. This remnant church has the testimony of Jesus Christ. What does this mean? Revelation 19: 10 reads, “The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” The remnant church will be a people of prophecy, and will understand prophecy. They will teach prophecy. They will have among them the revelation of truth that God gives through the gift of prophecy.

As the Seventh-day Adventist Church obeys the commandments of God and meets all the marks of the true church, it must be the true church of the last days.

## 12. God's Last Message to the World

THE REMARKABLE fourteenth chapter of Revelation presents us with a graphic picture of a special movement which will take place just before Christ comes to reap the harvest of the earth.

In Revelation 14:14 we read, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to Him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in Thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." Revelation 14:14-16.

This is the end of the world. Christ said, "The harvest is the end of the world." Matthew 13:39. We are shown by Christ that just before the end, a special movement would rise bearing Christ's special message to the world. Revelation 14:6 says, "And I saw another angel [or messenger] fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."

As the prophet watched, he heard the message of this special gospel movement. Verse 7: "Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

The prophet was shown the kind of people who bear this last message of "the everlasting gospel." He wrote their description in the twelfth verse: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." The prophecy is plain. The true church of Christ has a special message.

You will recall that Christ pointed forward to the last days and foretold what His church would be doing. Here are His words found in Matthew 24:14: "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Therefore, Christ's true church today will be engaged in taking to all the world the truth concerning the coming kingdom of Christ. Consequently, in our search for the true church we must look for a company of Christians who are thoroughly convinced that Christ's second coming is near at hand. They will awake to the all important task of proclaiming this truth to all the world. They will have a world program. They will be teaching a world wide message. Such a movement and such a message will be one of the signs of the impending advent of our Lord. This world wide announcement will fulfil prophecy.

Agreeing with this prediction of Christ is the prophecy of Revelation 14. Here is the proclamation of the gospel. It will be delivered to all the world. This will be the most stupendous announcement of all history. Christ is coming. The whole world must know about it. In this message of His second coming, God designs that all the truths perverted and hidden during the Dark Ages will be made clear to all. As this is the last message of "the everlasting gospel" it must contain all the truths of the gospel. It will hold every truth. Every false teaching, and every error will be rejected in this last message. The truth of God in its fullness and in its purity will be presented again to all.

Before the first coming of Christ, John the Baptist delivered the message of His coming. That message was to "make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke 1: 17. That message was based on the prophecy of the Bible. Before the second coming of Christ another message will be delivered to all the world. It will warn humanity of the coming of Christ. It, too, will be based upon the prophecies of the Bible. It will be "to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Thus it will be the final gospel message. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

Note carefully. This sign foretold by Jesus does not point to the spreading of a partial gospel or some special phase of the gospel, but to the whole gospel, the complete gospel, in the setting of the soon coming "King of kings, and Lord of lords." It is the good news about the kingdom, the coming kingdom, the coming of the King in His kingdom. This great sign of the true church, with God's complete truth, is now displayed before our eyes. This movement of prophecy is going forward. This message is now going to all the world. If you are looking for the true church today, you should not have any difficulty in finding it.

Note! The fulfillment of this prophecy calls for the raising up of a people or organization to accomplish this worldwide work. They must be under strong conviction that they are the instruments of God to do this work. They must be pushed out by the Spirit of God to all parts of the world. They must carry on a never-ending and ever enlarging campaign of missions. If you find a movement as here described doing such a work, then you can know you have found the true church for today, the last message for the world, the movement described by Jesus.

Explain it as one may, there is in the world today a missionary movement pressing on toward "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Revelation 14:6), proclaiming the very words of this prophecy. They warn against modern Babylon and call people out of it. See Revelation 14:8 and 18: 1-4. They warn against the beast and its work. See Revelation 14: 8-11. They bring forth a people in all lands that answer to the description of the prophecy: "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Verse 12.

Speaking of the world-wide work of Seventh-day Adventists, some time ago a leading publication of one of the great churches said, "Small though the denomination is, their missionaries are found in every quarter of the earth." Seventh-day Adventists are called such because they keep the seventh-day Sabbath of the Ten Commandments, and believe and stress the second advent of Christ. They point people to the fact that signs indicate the glad day is near.

Yes! Our Lord has clearly revealed His true church in these last days. Revelation 12:17 says, "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." Note! The remnant or last section of the church is described as those "which keep the commandments of God." It is to be a commandment-keeping church. They are the people who take God's last message.

Twice our Lord emphasizes the fact of a commandment keeping church. (Revelation 12:17; 14:12.) This means more than is first apparent. If all churches in these last days were keeping His commandments, God would not use this identifying sign. He clearly implies that the vast majority would break His commandments. It is clear that in the latter days there would be among professed Christians, an issue over the "commandments of God," and that His true church would be keeping these commandments in contrast with, those churches which are ignoring or breaking them. A commandment-keeping church will be a church which observes and obeys all the commandments of God.

This prophecy of our Lord is fulfilling today. There is an issue, a controversy over God's Ten Commandments. The issue does not concern all the commandments. In general, Christendom acknowledges nine of the ten. The issue is over the Sabbath commandment. (Exodus 20:8-11) This commandment declares, "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy... the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Only one worldwide church of Christians does observe this commandment and keep the seventh day. Others do not. They have substituted another day for the day chosen by God. They observe that other day, the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday.

Some seek to minimize the difference. They refer to this matter of God's holy day as a matter of no consequence. God does not so speak. He refers to His people, His "remnant" church, by the fact that they are a commandment keeping church, while those He does not claim as His own are commandment-breaking. A people who only keep nine of the commandments while breaking one cannot be called a commandment-keeping church at all.

God's church teaches the observance of God's Ten Commandments in fulfillment of these prophecies. It teaches Sabbath-keeping. It has the "testimony of Jesus" (Revelation 12:17), which is revealed to be "the spirit of prophecy." Revelation 19: 10. This church is in very truth delivering to the world the message of the coming of Christ. It is the very opposite to the apostasy of the Dark Ages. It warns against the beast and its mark. Our Lord has not left error to work its way unchallenged. He has not left this world to drift blindly into a fearful future when the enforcing of the mark of the beast will be attempted, with death as the declared alternative. See Revelation 13: 15-17.

This three-fold message warns against this Satanic attempt. In this final testing time, Satan will attempt to brain-wash all mankind into following his leadership. God's answer to this is found in this message of Revelation 14:9,10: "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb."

The living God will deal with error and evil. The great controversy of the ages is soon to be ended. We must heed this last-day message. We must be a part of it and have a part in it. Victory is assured. Truth will triumph. Revelation 15:2: "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God."

God's last message reveals the enemy of truth and shows you how victory may be gained. It is the last gospel message that is now going to the world. It is the finishing of the work of human salvation. It is the march of God. It is the marvel of missions. It is the heralding of the coming King. It is the greatest and most certain sign of the soon coming of the Savior. From Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand the message is going. It is winning them out of "every nation" to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Today, Christ is seeking for every honest-hearted person to enlist in His last legion, to take part in His last great message of mercy to the world. No higher privilege, no greater opportunity has ever been accorded men in any age. May you respond to this final call of the Man of Calvary!

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