

"THUS SAITH THE LORD..."

FREE GENERAL NEWSLETTER

Encouraging people to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

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In The Spirit, And Not In The Letter (Romans 2:29)



How are we to keep the commandments?

"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not [in] the oldness of the letter." (Romans 7:6)

"Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." (2 Corinthians 3:6)

According to these verses, looks like a lot of people are wasting their time keeping the commandments literally. But some can point to other verses of the Bible, as you will see later, that states that we are to literally keep the commandments. This warrants a Bible study.

What are the 2 rules in studying the Bible?

1. *"Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? [them that are] weaned from the milk, [and] drawn from the breasts. For precept [must be] upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, [and] there a little."* (Isaiah 28:9-10) Gather many verses on the subject.

2. *"All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* (2 Timothy 3:16) That means no scripture contradicts. And that also means that we do not pick the verses we like and ignore the others that do not support our side. So if verses do appear to contradict, we have to work out the definition so that it does not.

So with the premise that we do not have to be keeping the commandments to the letter, let us see what other scriptures say.

What saith the other scriptures?

"He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." (1 John

2:6) Imitate your Savior! Did He keep the letter of the law? Yes. However, He did not keep the letter of the Pharisees.

Someone show me where Jesus did not keep the letter of the law, in fact, notice what Jesus did say. *"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."* (Matthew 4:4) To live by every word is to live by the letter. Today we hold the Word.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." (Revelation 12:11) Quite a few people are pictured dying unnecessarily if the spirit is all that matters. If they kept only the spirit, then no one would have noticed them being different for the spirit of the law is mostly internal and mental while the letter is mostly external.

Time to explain the confusing texts

The best way to deal with confusing texts is to work with texts that are explicit, that is, there is no mistaking the meaning.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." (Matthew 5:21-22)

Does this mean we are to keep the spirit of the law only? The spirit says not to be angry. The letter says not to murder someone. So if a person physically kills a person but is not angry with them, are they going to heaven? Of course not. And there are people like that. Some people in jail have admitted to simply killing another for the fun of it.

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman

WHO ARE WE?

We are not a church but rather a ministry, encouraging church attendance, not as blind pew warmers but rather as searchers of a TSTL — "Thus Saith the Lord"

The "Thus Saith the Lord..." General Newsletter is published monthly by "Thus Saith the Lord..." Ministries

MISSION STATEMENT:

To strengthen the faith in God's Word by enabling you to have a "Thus Saith the Lord..." for all that you believe.

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Do You Have A TSTL For That???

If someone asked you "why do you believe that or why do you do that" could you give them an answer from the Bible — a TSTL?

Hosea 4:6 *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.*

Debt Reduction Progress

Over our 10 year history, \$80,000 has accumulated in debt both from short periods of time of not being able to cover all of the ministry expenses and the over 4 year period (Jan. 2004 - May 2007) when Jerry lost his job due to religious conflict. Now financial blessings are occurring in his employment but it requires very long hours, especially with traveling home each night to see his family (1.5 hr drive), and then he must stay up late to do the work. Can you help lower this debt faster?

OVERALL STATS:

\$80,000 Starting Balance
- 7,564 Readership
- 16,547 O'Donnell's
\$55,889 Current Balance

JAN. STATS:

\$56,941 Prior Balance
- 653 Readership
- 399 O'Donnell's
\$55,889 Current Balance

Any request to be removed from our mailing list because you cannot assist us or feel guilty will not be honored. That is not what this appeal is about.

WEB SITES TO CONSIDER



TSTL.NET is for the general public



TSTL4MINISTERS.NET is for any minister, bible worker, teacher, etc.



TSTL4CHILDREN.NET is for the children and the contents will be a transfer of children's material from TSTL.NET to this new site.

to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matthew 5:27-28) Does this mean we are to keep the spirit of the law only? The spirit says not to look upon a woman lustfully. The letter says that no intercourse or other sexual activity is to occur. So would two people who are working late on a project and decide to take a break and go for a walk to clear the mind and they happen to hold hands and then move to arms around each other as they walk, but they have no desire to kiss or have sexual relations be innocent from committing adultery? Of course not. Such physical activities are reserved to the spouse.

So it appears that those that live by the spirit of the law insist that the letter be kept when it comes to murder and adultery. It probably would also include stealing. No spirit touting person would want their personal belongings taken. That is the letter of the law. Now tell a Christian that gambling is a sin and they may claim living by the spirit. Tell a Christian purposely killing yourself with smoking is a sin and again they claim the spirit of the law. Tell a Christian to spend a day with God and family, and they claim the spirit of the law. It is amazing that the excuse of living by the spirit of the law is invoked only when it crosses the will and desire of a person.

Let us ask if it is of Satan...

Theories and beliefs are not simply a misunderstanding. When a wrong theory or belief is engrained, there can only be one other source it has come from. Everything is either of God or Satan. Now those that are mixed up are not Satanists. People can be innocently caught on the wrong side. But the theory is still of Satan. This is what is meant by rescuing the lost. They are lost in a false theory.

Now the Bible says, *"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"* (Romans 6:16) Satan's desire is to get people to disobey, especially God's law. It does not matter how candy coated it is, if there is disobedience in any form, the theory is of Satan. Satan does not just explicitly tempt you to sin but with subtlety as well. Take "Once saved always saved." This permits Christians to sin a little, and some even a lot, without the need to repent and still enter into heaven. That is permission for disobedience. Therefore that is Satan's theory.

Good works and obedience earning heaven is a sinful act in itself. Earning heaven is built upon self and not Christ. It is selfishness covered in good works. Therefore, that is Satan's theory once again.

Not keeping the literal word or commandments because they are of the spirit means physically

they may sin and disobey as long as they spiritually do not. The key word is "disobey". Therefore it is Satan's theory.

So that means those initial verses of living by the spirit and not the letter must be misunderstood if one thinks the spirit living cancels letter living.

And then let us read it in context...

By this time reading the next verse with it. *"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not [in] the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? [Is] the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet."* (Romans 7:6-7) Paul, knowing his writings may be difficult to understand, quickly followed up with a strong verse so that people would not misunderstand. He even states that we are not to use the excuse of living in the spirit to sin, which sin is defined as breaking the commandments according to 1 John 3:4.

Conclusion

We are to keep both the letter and the spirit. In fact, the two verses read from Paul's writings simply mean that, for if you are a letter only person, you are a legalist.

The two groups Paul is addressing are those who look at the law and keep every letter of it but they do not go beyond the technicalities. They are called the lettered people. Simply put, if you serve the full spirit of the law, you will keep more than the letter requires.

How does the letter kill?

"Hey, I give God 10% of my money. Don't be asking me to contribute to this, that and the other thing. That's my money."

"Hey, I pay a monthly fee for that nursing home. Don't tell me I have to also visit my parents."

"Hey, I give God the Sabbath day. I'm not going to church for midweek service! I'm not studying the lessons during the week. That's my time."

"Hey, I haven't killed anyone. Don't be telling me to quit smoking and to stop drinking alcohol. It's my body."

As you see, letter only people are miserable. Do not let the letter of the law kill your relationship with God. Live it by the spirit as well. Go to church everyday if you would like. Give God all of your money if you can. Do everything you can for your aging parents.

Let us not love God with our minds and our actions as well.

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." (1 John 3:18)

DO YOU HAVE A TSTL FOR THAT?

The purpose of these Bible studies is to help you seek for a TSTL—"Thus Saith the Lord..." for all that you believe. May you go forward in this study with that goal.



Are you in love?

1. How are we to love God? **Matthew 22:37**
2. Who do we find difficult to love but yet are to love? **Matthew 5:44**
3. Who are you to love as much as you love yourself? **Matthew 22:39**
4. What object should you love? **Psalms 119:97**
5. What is the greatest act of love? **John 15:13**
6. In what manner are we to love God? **1 John 3:18**

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S STUDY:

What Are The Scriptures Good For?

1. All Scripture is given for what purpose? **2 Timothy 3:16** "All scripture [is] given by

inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

2. What do people need to live? **Proverbs 4:13** "Take fast hold of instruction; let [her] not go: keep her; for she [is] thy life."
3. What is another way for God to say that if you reject His Word, you shall be lost? **Proverbs 15:32** "He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding."
4. Which book of the Bible really examines the contrast between those going to destruction and those living forever? **Ecclesiastes 12:9** "And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, [and] set in order many proverbs."
5. Who should you chose to share information that you know with? **Proverbs 9:9** "Give [instruction] to a wise [man], and he will be yet wiser: teach a just [man], and he will increase in learning."
6. What will happen to those that think they do not need to ever change their ways? **Proverbs 15:10** "Correction [is] grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: [and] he that hateth reproof shall die."

ART THOU IN HEALTH (2 Samuel 20:9)



Acts 15:20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, and [from] fornication, and [from] things strangled, and [from] blood.

Acts 15:29 That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well.

Acts 21:25 As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written [and] concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from [things] offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

As we see in the New Testament, that Old Testament command to refrain from eating the blood still exists. Hardly a church mentions that. There is hardly any meat around that is

not served with the blood. But despite hardly a Christian obeying this, why would God keep this law around?

Genesis 9:4 But flesh with the life thereof, [which is] the blood thereof, shall ye not eat. Please note that this is not a Moses or Jewish command. He told Noah. And you and I are all physically related to him.

If the animal is diseased, eating the blood is eating the disease. So God already knew how Mad Cow disease can be passed on to humans before scientists recently discovered it.

The sad part is that animals in many cases can appear without disease and yet be diseased. So eating organic raised cattle is not necessarily the solution just so you can eat their blood.

If you must eat meat, Kosher meat is without the blood.

Think On These Things

How Much Do You Love God?

And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments (Exodus 20:6, Deuteronomy 5:10).

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (Deuteronomy 6:5, Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30).

Ye that love the LORD, hate evil (Psalms 97:10).

If ye love me, keep my commandments (John 14:15).

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him (John 14:23).

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

Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends (John 15:13).

My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth (1 John 3:18).

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:2-3).

And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it (2 John 1:6).

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**Does the Spirit Cancel
The Letter?**

(Main Article)

**How Good Does That
Blood Taste?**

(See page 2)

**How Much Do
You Love God?**

(See page 3)

WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT?

AND TO WHOM IS THE ARM OF THE LORD REVEALED? (Isaiah 53:1)



» WND, January 7, 2008 -
**SWAT officers invade home,
take 11-year-old at gunpoint**

Nearly a dozen members of a police SWAT team in western Colorado punched a hole in the front door and invaded a family's home with guns drawn, demanding that an 11-year-old boy who had had an accidental fall accompany them to the hospital. According to friends of the family, Tom Shiflett, who has 10 children including six still at home, and served with paramedics in Vietnam, was monitoring his son's condition himself. The paramedic and magistrate, however, ruled that that wasn't adequate, and dispatched the officers to take the boy, John, to a hospital, where a doctor evaluated him and released him immediately. The accident happened during horseplay, Tom Shiflett told WND. John was grabbing the door handle of a car as his sister was starting to drive away slowly. He slipped, fell to the ground and hit his head, Shiflett said. He immediately carried his son into their home several doors away, and John was able to recite Bible verses and correctly spell words as his father and mother, Tina, requested. There were no broken bones, no dilated eyes, or any other

noticeable problems. The family, whose members live by faith and homeschool, decided not to call an ambulance. But a neighbor did call Westcare Ambulance, and paramedics responded to the home, asking to see and evaluate the boy. The paramedics were allowed to see the boy, and found no significant impairment, but wanted to take him to the hospital for an evaluation anyway. Fearing the hospital's bills, the family refused to allow that. "This apparently did not go over well with one of the paramedics and they started getting aggravated at Tom for not letting them have their way," a family acquaintance told WND.

COMMENT: Matthew 11:12 *"And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force."* Society is so engrained with the idea that brick and mortar schools are the only methods of educating and that hospitals are the only medical solutions. Did we forget that government education was made as an option for those feeling inadequate to teach their children, but a couple centuries later we find ourselves subject to the education system that if you want to home school, there is so much justification and watch care over the

parents that it feels like a police state. Further, have we forgotten that before pharmacies and hospitals ruled society that such places were available only in situations people felt inadequate to care for themselves? How we have become lazy and now worse – police states. Retirement homes is another issue. Now they are being sold as type of condo that fully capable people rather surrender their freedom for ease of care - someone to cook, clean, and maintain the home. You may disagree and side with the care of the child at any cost, even if proven unnecessary as the story stated, but the more we empower institutions, it opens the path for other institutions to be a force and not a choice. The land of the free is crumbling. Beware.

Other items at TSTL.NET:

» AP, January 2, 2008 - **Evangelist Mum on Who'll Win 2008 Race**

» CBS, Dec. 30, 2007 - **Woman Escorted Off Bus For Reading Bible Aloud**

» WND, Dec. 20, 2007 - **Woman abandons home to escape public schools**

» WND, December 24, 2007 - **Was Jesus really born in another Bethlehem?**
