

The "New" Church of God Messenger  
A Newsletter for the People of God  
April 30, 2022 --- Issue No. 65  
Special Edition

## Is God's Law Done Away?

(Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle  
(West Chester, Ohio)

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## Iron Sharpening Iron False Doctrines – "Vain" Worship: Does Jesus Christ Really Know You?

Article by Richard Frates  
Comments by Laura Lee  
(Bismarck, North Dakota)

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**Publisher:** Church of God, Bismarck, Darwin & Laura Lee, **Editor:** Laura Lee, **Assistant Editor:** Darwin Lee We do not necessarily agree with all contributors, or their works submitted and printed in this newsletter. It is up to you to get out your Bible and see whether these things are true. Iron sharpens Iron

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## Articles

### Is God's Law Done Away? (Part 1) (Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)

Picture this: a man is in court for grand theft, the judge is ready to pronounce judgment, then a stranger steps forward and pays the fines and agrees to suffer any other penalty due in place of the offender. The judge agrees and the convict is overwhelmed and grateful! He thanks this kind stranger and leaves the courtroom a free man. The man exclaims "I am so happy to be forgiven and can now steal all I want because of what the kind stranger did for me". Everyone is now thinking of what ridiculous reasoning that is. Common sense dictates that the man is forgiven for his past - not all future crimes! Believe it or not, the convoluted reasoning described above is exactly what most Christians believe today. It seems religion is the one area where people will believe anything and fail to use common sense.

The idea that Jesus not only paid the penalty for all our sins, he also did away with the very law that condemns us is not a new belief, in fact it is "the mystery of lawlessness" spoken of in the bible {2 Thess 2:7}. The apostle Paul has been widely quoted as being the champion of the anti-law cause. Peter actually commented in his epistle that some twist Paul's words to teach this {2 Pet 3:16-17}. A careful reading of Paul's letters show just the opposite. In the book of Romans alone, Paul quotes the Old Testament over 50 times and relays that DOERS of the law are justified; do we make void the law? - certainly not; the law is holy, just and good; the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives; for by the law is

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the knowledge of sin.

There are many excuses to law breaking. Some say the church has the authority to change laws; others interpret what the law is. Some say just the 10 commandments, only the New Testament; only Paul’s letters; all the bible; only for the Jews to obey; or only what the believer feels in his heart. Historically the actual definition of the Law is the Torah {Pentateuch} or the first 5 books of the Bible is the Law.

One would think that the confusion over the law would be absent in the first century, but early writings show pagan factions assaulted the fledgling church from the outset. Antinomian {literally: against the law} was the thrust of Hellenistic, Gnostic Christians. Even cultured, pagan Greece was interested in spiritual development. Their belief was that spirituality and law are hopelessly irreconcilable. Paul addresses this very thinking when he said, “the *carnal* mind is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God...” {Romans 8:7}

As mentioned in the beginning, common sense would make this issue clear: whom do you think would want people to sin, God or Satan? Thinking people will say Satan. As in our human family- we want our children to love and obey us. God is no different, He has rules just like us and is pleased when we obey them. What is the message God gets when we obey him? Let’s read: “If you love me-Keep the commandments”; and whatever we ask we receive because we keep his commandments; for this is the love of God that we keep His commandments; to enter into life-keep the commandments; for the Lord will keep the covenant to those that Keep the commandments {John 14; 1Jn 3; 1Jn 5; Mt 19; Dan 9}. The message is quite simple: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man {Ecc 12}. But many respected individuals have declared that the Law is Void! True, but God’s Word states that the wicked and proud regard the law as void {PS 119:126}.

Jesus said, “think NOT- that I have come to destroy the law...” so modern Christians think He came to destroy the law. My challenge for those that believe that the Law is void is to read Psalm 119, then ask themselves if it is a good thing to break the Law. Abraham, the father of the faithful, was also noted for his great obedience. Don’t fall into the error of lawlessness. Show God you are a faithful AND obedient servant. {additional proof texts: Jude 4; Rev 12:17; Rev 22:14; Prov 3& 7; Isa 51:7; Isa 30: 9; Isa 5: 24; Jam 2:10; Deut 5: 29 & 8:1 & 10:12; Gen 26:5; Psalms many}

## **Is God’s Law Done Away? (Part 2)** **(Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)**

Many times, the biblical record of the apostolic era as recorded in Acts 15 is touted as proof that the Law is not binding on Gentiles. The reason for the council is that Paul brought up questions because of the many gentile converts that were coming into the church. These gentiles were not brought up in the Faith revealed by God to Moses. This was all new to them as they were brought up in the various pagan mystery religions. Notice the few things mentioned that the new converts should adhere to, “abstain from things polluted by idols; sexual immorality; things strangled; and blood” {verse 20}. Out of the entire Law of God those are some odd things to pick out, and it obviously was a particular problem for them in the first century.

Strangely there are ministers today that insist those are the only laws binding on Christians even today! The easy answer is revealed in the very same chapter. James relayed in verse 19 “not to trouble those Gentiles who are TURNING to God”, and verse 21 says, “for Moses is preached in every city and read in the synagogues every Sabbath”. Sure, enough we see Paul preaching to the Gentiles every Sabbath in their areas. The problem was that some of the Jews of those synagogues insisted, and probably as they always had, that any convert adhere in all points of the Law when they initially enter. All the council of Act 15 did was allow converts to learn things at their own pace, much like we would do for any new convert coming into our churches today. The arguments put forth today are far from new. Throughout history this has been a point of contention and continues to be perpetuated by shallow thinking ministers. In nearly all cases the Apostle Paul is quoted as support to their view, but texts are easily shown to be FOR the Law when read in proper context.

Another popular verse is Romans 14 where Paul speaks of observing special days and eating certain foods. A careful reading in context does not make any pronouncement on what is right- but the whole point of the passage is not to judge

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one another. The letter to the Galatians offers a few verses for anti-law advocates. In the first chapter we learn that it is addressed to gentile churches {which were the focus of Acts 15 previously discussed} who were turning *back* to their former PAGAN religions not Law observing. The first couple chapters enforce the truth that no amount of any law keeping can save anyone- even Abraham and Moses. Chapter 4 speaks of bondage of observing the pagan roots they were brought up in, described as “weak and beggarly elements”. In many places the phrase “under the law” is used. Good commentaries will show that this is not the Law, but rather the *death sentence* for breaking the Law. As great as Paul was, he couldn’t create a different code to live by- in fact he did say that anyone that preaches another gospel let him be accursed. Paul had a very difficult ministry in going to the gentiles, who had no background in the society structure revealed to the Hebrew people. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians reveals, “Christ abolished in His flesh the law of commandments contained in ordinances” those laws that pertained to sacrifices.

In addition to the difficulty of bringing a new and very different religion to Gentiles, Paul had a sometimes-confusing writing style. Also, it should be remembered that his writings were actually letters to specific churches whom were aware of the background information addressed but not revealed in the letters. Peter warned that some would twist Paul’s letters for the purpose of lawlessness. Never quoted is James “but be DOERS of the Word and not hearers only”, nor John in Revelation 12: “Blessed are those who DO His commandments that they may have right to the tree of Life”

### **Is God’s Law Done Away? (Part 3)** **(Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)**

What exactly is the law and is it relevant to modern man? I have heard many preachers’ beliefs of what sin is such as drinking alcohol, dancing; card playing or wearing makeup, but few actually quote the bible definition of sin. First John 3:4 “... for sin is the transgression of the LAW”. Historically, God’s law in the bible is the first 5 books of the Bible. In particular, Deuteronomy is the accepted code for people to follow. Deuteronomy, the fifth book of the law, is named so due to the “Doubling” or repetition and a recapitulation of various addresses delivered at various times. Jesus also quoted from this book, in fact the passage used by some to disregard the Law is from Deuteronomy, where He said, “You shall love your God with all your heart, soul, and mind” {and from Leviticus}- “you shall love your neighbor as yourself”- on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. H H Halley had said, “Some passages of Deuteronomy for genuine eloquence are unsurpassed in literature. Adam Clarke said, “very few parts of the OT can be read with greater profit by the genuine Christian than the Book of Deuteronomy.”

Deuteronomy was penned by several authors and can be useful to modern people wishing to follow the path for successful living. We are told to rightly divide the Word of Truth. As bible readers will quickly see the world has changed much over the centuries, yet human nature remains constant. Some meditation is necessary as we read the Law to see its relevance to us today. Chapter 5 contains the list of the Ten Commandments similar to the list in Exodus 20. Many times, God warns of the calamities for not keeping the law and urges them to teach them to your children. We also see many “New Testament” doctrines such as “Circumcise the foreskin of your heart and not be stiff-necked.” “Administer justice for the orphan, widow, and stranger”. God orders His people to discard the old images and practices of idolatry, we still see extant even today in a space age society! Burnt offerings are commanded to be performed- but as we divide the Word, we believe Jesus fulfilled the sacrifices and also there is no temple, necessary utensils, and Levitical priesthood to perform the ritual. There is a chapter of things we can do like abstain from unclean meat in chapter 14. We read about finances, loaning money, and giving to the poor. Holidays are a fun time, and God has even provided them in chapter 16. There are principles for warfare, dealing with slaves, criminals, farming, child rearing, and divorce. Near the end of the book, we see a detailed listing of the blessings for obeying the laws and curses for disobedience.

During Jesus’ ministry, he came to magnify the law and make it honorable. He added the Spiritual element that cut to the heart- whereas before to break the letter of the Law against adultery the very act was to be committed- Jesus expounded upon the command that even to lust after another was the same as committing the sin!

Sadly our society has decided to throw out God’s instructions and create a new code for this land, which in many cases are far from the revealed wisdom of our Creator. The old saying “live and learn” has been man’s excuse for getting into trouble and residing himself that thru the misfortune he will have at least learned something from the mistake. Conversely, there is an old Jewish proverb “learn and live”. Short and to the point and expresses the wisdom to learn first at a young

age of how to live instead suffering the pain of mistakes. How will you learn?

## **Is God’s Law Done Away? (Part 4)** **(Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)**

Like any set of laws, a fair question is to whom do the laws apply. It is a very popular theory to say that the laws put forth in the Bible only apply to the people of Israel. In a very broad sense that is true if you understand why. First of all, God did indeed only reveal His laws to the children of Israel. He never required other nations to adhere to His rules nor did He consider them His children either. In addition, we see over and over that Israel was required to faithfully observe His Laws forever. Plus, an important point to remember is that gentiles were welcome to dwell with Israel- but were required to keep the same laws as Israel {Lev 24:22}.

Some have the impression that there is a code for Israel and another code for gentiles, but it may be a shock to people, but there is only ONE path to salvation as there is one Lord, one Faith {Eph 4:5}! You can only find a salvation covenant for the seed of Israel alone. An oft-quoted passage is Jeremiah 31 that is said to provide a way for Gentiles and Israel alike. But as you read it closely it says no such thing: verse 31, “Behold the days come when I will make a new covenant with the house of ISRAEL and the house of JUDAH”, notice it only mentions the Hebrew people. And here are the terms of this new covenant: “I will put My laws in their minds and write it on their hearts”. Throughout the Bible you see God’s unconcern for any people other than Israel. In fact, the only mention of other nations in the Old Testament is the seven nations that occupied Canaan, and they were to vacate the premises or be wiped out.

So what is a person to do? Here is the only hope for gentile people: Galatians 3:29, “if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed and heirs according to the promise”. Also, we read in Romans 11 of the grafting in of the gentiles to that same way of salvation shown to Israel. Notice Gen 17:7, “I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after as an EVERLASTING covenant”. How was Father Abraham in his walk with God? It says he showed his Faith by his obedience {Heb 11}. Genesis 26:5: “Abraham obeyed My voice and kept my charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” He didn’t intentionally disobey to show his great faith, which is the convoluted reasoning of today.

A common message you will hear from pulpits today is that Israel could have avoided the punishments if they had only followed God and kept His laws, but at the same time they will say that the law is impossible to keep, and to even try to keep the law is somehow an insult to God. Doesn’t Paul say, “The just shall live by Faith”? Yes, he did, in fact he took that very passage from the Old Testament prophet, Habakkuk.

The prophet Isaiah had much to say about the Law. Speaking in chapter 2 of the “latter days”: “The Lord’s house shall be established... ALL nations shall flow to it... God will teach us His ways and out of Zion shall go forth the LAW. Chapter 8: on those who would teach you: “to the LAW and the testimony! If they speak not according to this word there is not light in them”. Chapter 30: “rebellious people, lying children, who will not hear the law and say to their prophets, speak to us smooth things, prophesy deceits”.

It is assumed by many that the Old Testament personalities were somehow saved by various works of the law- but the truth is just the opposite because they were saved in the same manner as modern Christians {Acts 15:11}. Salvation doesn’t have to be either or, it should be both faith *and* obedience. First Peter 1:14 encourages Christians to be obedient children, not conforming to the former lusts, as in your ignorance... be Holy, for God is Holy.

## **Is God’s Law Done Away? (Part 5)** **(Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)**

*When I get in confusing arguments over bible related thing and various scriptures are used as swords by quoting Paul, James, Peter, or other personalities, I will usually stop, clear my mind and limit my study to just what Jesus said. In my bible, like most others, the first-person quotations of Jesus are recorded in red which makes it easy to locate for study. On the topic of whether the Law was done away, consider these brief statements from Matthew five: “do not think I have*

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*come to destroy the Law” ... “whoever breaks one of the least of the commandments and teaches men to do so shall be called the least in the Kingdom of God.” Chapter 7 “...depart from me you who practice lawlessness.” Chapter 13 “...and they will gather out of His Kingdom those who practice lawlessness and cast them into the furnace of fire.” Chapter 19 contains a story any person may want to ask of Jesus... “what good thing may I do to enter into eternal life?” Jesus responded: “If you wish to enter into eternal life: KEEP the commandments, and if you want to be perfect: sell what you own and give it to the poor”. If anyone would say that to you today, the cry would be heard that is salvation by works- but I think few would say that to Jesus.*

*On several occasions Christ quoted from the law and showed that the spirit of that particular law was much greater, such as hating someone was the same as murder. He raises the bar to a new height for a Spirit led believer yet does not “do away” with the letter of the law against murder.*

It is common to hear ministers today downgrade the “law of Moses” as some burden or unnecessary code for modern man. But you will search in vain to read that Moses was the originator of the laws! A causal reading will show that God told Moses what to say because the people did not want God talking directly to them. The clincher is, that revealed in the “New Testament” we see that the One giving instructions to Moses was none other than Jesus before His incarnation to fleshly man.

We also see the red letters of Jesus appearing in the book of Revelation. In the letters to the seven churches, we see Jesus urging them to overcome their trials and promising rewards for their good works. Oddly, one church hates the deeds of the Nicolaitans, just as Christ does, and is commended, and another has people that embrace the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. One can quickly read over that archaic name and fail to grasp the importance. Post apostolic history reveals that this was the origins of the anti-law doctrine we see today, possibly brought in by a man named Nicolaus who was the first proselyte to gain an office in the Church {Acts 6}. {Inter. Std. Bible Encyc. pp 2142-3}

The “great Commission” to the church in Matthew 28 is oft quoted about going throughout the world converting people and baptizing them, but also Jesus said: teaching them to OBSERVE all things that I have commanded you. That seems to be the missing element in preaching today. In the quest of making conversion easy, the “no works” gospel has deleted the integral part of repentance. As Jesus instructed the woman at the well: your sins are forgiven, now go and SIN NO MORE. {John 8:11}

## **Is God’s Law Done Away? (Part 6)** **(Copyright) by Wayne Schatzle (West Chester, Ohio)**

In this part of the study of whether God’s Law is done away, let us look at the attitude and mindset of the professing Christian. Decades ago, when I cried out to God for salvation- I knew only that I was a sinner and needed to be saved by the blood of Jesus Christ. I realized what an enormous gift I was receiving and would do anything to show my gratitude. From that point my life changed and the topics that now interested me were reading the bible and any religious material I could get my hands on. I took seriously Peter’s admonition to grow in grace and knowledge. One small booklet I read changed the course of my life. It was about the need for believers to keep the Law of God. That booklet set off a study that lasted many months. In that bible study I listed every passage that showed the positives and negatives of Law keeping, actually very few scriptures showed believers were not to obey the Law, and over time I learned how to easily interpret those negative passages.

Law keeping is a thorny issue, and I have learned that some can get quite angry over the prospect that they should obey some laws. Sometimes we can get too entangled in technical studies to see the big picture. What I learned early on was that God reveals Himself as a loving Father. How simple to apply my life experience as a father to help me understand how God would look at the argument. My children could not in any way EARN a place in our family- it was a free gift to them, and I give them unconditional love regardless of their actions. At the same time, we had rules that we expected all members to adhere to- as well as punishment for disobeying them. When we had a new addition to the family the rules were still in place, yet we never expected a baby to observe the rules, but only to grow in knowledge and learn obedience that it may be well with all the family members. Even though the kids often did not like a rule, as parents, we think of our house rules as being fair and necessary, but the children do not know all the ramifications of a rule, they just need to trust

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that the parents know best. In addition, the rules we make are for our family only, just as God’s laws apply only to those “called by His name”, we are unconcerned if our neighbors observe our house laws.

“Listen to the law which I teach you to observe that you may live, do not take anything away from the Word I give you and be careful to observe them for this is your wisdom and understanding. Others will say you are a wise people, and what nation is there that has a God so near and a great Law as I give you this day. Take heed that you diligently keep them and teach them to your children and grandchildren. Therefore know this day that the Lord is God overall and there is no other, you shall keep His Law that it may go well with you and your children after you and that you may prolong your days upon the earth {Deuteronomy 4 paraphrased}.

First John five reveals that the true children of God will show their love to God by keeping the Law! And contrary to popular belief- they are not burdensome. Obedience to God, not only shows our love to Him, but also shows that we trust Him as well.

It is hard to imagine that a person truly seeking God would turn his head from the wisdom and knowledge revealed from, not only the Creator of the world, but a loving Father that wants only the best for His children. “My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you. Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. Bind them on your fingers and write them on the tablets of your heart.” Proverbs7.

**Iron Sharpening Iron**

**New American Standard Bible (Proverbs 27:17)**  
**As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.**

**Iron Sharpening Iron**  
**False Doctrines – “Vain” Worship:**  
**Does Jesus Christ Really Know You?**

**Article by Richard Frates**  
**Comments by Laura Lee (Bismarck, North Dakota)**

This was a really great article until we got to the bottom of the second page where it says:

Genesis 9:1-4 – These scriptures seem to contradict Leviticus and Deuteronomy. But, as our Lord said, “scripture cannot be broken” or scripture does not contradict scripture. **So, the words “everything will be food for you applies to the world, and not to those God has called out of the world.”** John 15:19 “You do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world.”

The entire world is supposed to be obeying God’s Laws. There is not a different law for those who are not called at this time than there is for those who are called. When it says “everything” here it would mean everything that is clean to eat. It does not include things that are unclean.

Gen 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth.

Gen 9:2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

**Gen 9:3** Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

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Gen 9:4 But flesh with the life thereof, *which is* the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

These scriptures take place after the flood. Noah and his entire family knew which animals were clean and which animals were unclean. So, Noah and his family would not be eating unclean animals. Also, at this time there was no world filled with people. There were only eight people when God blessed Noah in verse 1.

Also, I am sorry for how your family treats you. Darwin and I and many others experience the same problem with our families.

## **Holy Days 2022**

**Passover – April 16, 2022 (Observed at Sunset the Evening Before)**

**Unleavened Bread – April 16-22, 2022**

**Pentecost – June 5, 2022**

**Trumpets - September 26, 2022**

**Atonement – October 5, 2022**

**Tabernacles – October 10-16, 2022**

**Last Great Day – October 17, 2022**