

God's Law the Foundation of Reformation.--The law of God is to be the means of education in the family. Parents are under a most solemn obligation to walk in all the commandments of God, setting their children an example of the strictest integrity. . . . {CG 489.4}

The law of God is the foundation of all enduring reformation. We are to present to the world in clear, distinct lines the need of obedience to His law. The great reformatory movement must begin in the home. Obedience to God's law is the great incentive to industry, economy, truthfulness, and just dealing between man and man. {CG 489.5}

The Right Definition of Love

The law of God is as sacred as God Himself. It is a revelation of His will, a transcript of His character, *the expression of divine love and wisdom*. The harmony of creation depends upon the perfect conformity of all beings, of everything, animate and inanimate, to the law of the Creator. God has ordained laws for the government, not only of living beings, but of all the operations of nature. Everything is under fixed laws, which cannot be disregarded. But while everything in nature is governed by natural laws, man alone, of all that inhabits the earth, is amenable to moral law. To man, the crowning work of creation, God has given power to understand His requirements, to comprehend the justice and beneficence of His law, and its sacred claims upon him; and of man unswerving obedience is required. {PP52.3}

John 14:15,21.

But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. *The law of God is* an expression of His very nature; it is *an embodiment of the great principle of love*, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new covenant promise is fulfilled. . . . Obedience--the service and allegiance of love--is the true sign of discipleship (Steps to Christ, pp. 59, 60).

The commandments of God are comprehensive and far reaching; in a few words they unfold the whole duty of man. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Mark 12:30, 31). *In these words the length and breadth, the depth and height, of the law of God is comprehended; for Paul declares, "Love is the fulfilling of the law"* (Rom. 13:10). The only definition we find in the Bible for sin is that "sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). The Word of God declares, "All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). "There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3: 12). Many are deceived concerning the condition of their hearts. They do not realize that the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked. *They wrap themselves about with their own righteousness, and are satisfied in reaching their own human standard of character;* but how fatally they fail when they do not reach the divine standard, and of themselves they cannot meet the requirements of God. { 1 SM 320.1 }

A Fatal Mistake

Those who are self-righteous, who claim *that they are saved*, are not *always* patterns of piety. We have found that those who say most concerning their sanctification, are most opposed to the principles of God's law. Satan often deludes the mind, and men are led to erect *false* standards of their own, whereby they measure character. They exalt their own *ideas*, boast of their attainments, of their *assurance*, and place all their confidence in their *feelings*. They do not find a foundation for their faith in the *word* of God. ***Many have a fanciful religion. They talk of God's love, claiming that he is not severe and exacting, but long-suffering and lenient; at the same time, they echo the suggestion of Satan, "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? . . . Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." It was though he had declared that God's threatening was all a pretense, and man need not be alarmed, for God would not be so severe and exacting.*** The very same reasoning is employed today in the Christian world. When the claims of the law are presented, men begin to frame excuses for continuing in disobedience, stating that God will not punish them for the breaking of his precepts. But let us think of it soberly. Will God change his holy law to suit my convenience? Will he sanction sin, and countenance disobedience? If God had a character of this kind, we could not reverence him. His authority could not be respected. Every transgression of God's law will be visited with its penalty upon the transgressor. The wages of sin is death. God is jealous for the honor of his law; it is the foundation of his government in heaven and earth, and it will stand throughout eternal ages. The prophet declares, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Sin is the transgression of the law. But, again, it is written for the comfort and salvation of the penitent: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." {RH, November 18, 1890 par. 5}

That religion which makes of sin a light matter, ***dwelling upon the love of God*** to the sinner regardless of his actions, only encourages the sinner to believe that God will receive him while he continues in that which he knows to be sin. This is what some are doing who profess to believe present truth. The truth is kept apart from the life, and that is the reason it has no power to convict and convert the soul. {5T 540.2}

This goody-goody religion that makes light of sin and that is forever dwelling upon the love of God to the sinner, ***encourages the sinner to believe that God will save him while he continues in sin and he knows it to be sin.*** This is the way that many are doing who profess to believe present truth. The truth is kept apart from their life, and that is the reason it has no more power to convict and convert the soul. There must be a straining of every nerve and spirit and muscle to leave the world, its customs, its practices, and its fashions. . . . {3SM 155.1}

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There is a necessity of dwelling upon the love of Jesus Christ; this is essential. But it is not all

that must be spoken. The great standard of character--God's holy law, with all its solemn injunctions--should be distinctly set forth, together with the circumstances of the giving of the law from Mount Sinai in awful grandeur. The Lord Jesus Christ was there in person. He spoke that law, and gave the commandments, which are unalterable, unchangeable, and eternal in their character. {1888 Materials. EGW. Chap. 100 - Diary Entries. 781.1}

Take not the position that men can be moved by the presentation of the love of God alone. You may build ever so fine a structure, but it is without foundation. Dig deep, lay the foundation on Christ alone--a crucified Redeemer who died for the *transgressor* that he should not perish but have eternal life. How? ***Only by coming back to his allegiance to God's holy law.*** "Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20:21. {1888 Materials. EGW. Chap. 100 - Diary Entries. 783.1}

The law and the gospel go hand in hand. The one is the complement of the other. ***The law without faith in the gospel of Christ cannot save the transgressor of law. The gospel without the law is inefficient and powerless. The law and the gospel are a perfect whole.*** The Lord Jesus laid the foundation of the building, and He lays "the headstone thereof with shoutings, crying, Grace, grace unto it." Zech. 4:7. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. The two blended--the gospel of Christ and the law of God--produce the love and faith unfeigned. {1888 Materials. EGW. Chap. 100 - Diary Entries. 783.2}

The closing words of the third angel point directly to a body of Christian commandment-keepers. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Rev.14:12. The Jew takes no stock in this text, because he sees in it the despised Jesus of Nazareth. Many professed Christians find it as objectionable as the Jew, for the reason that they find in it the equally-despised commandments of God. But said the adorable Jesus. "I and my Father are one." So the law of the Father and the gospel of the Son pass through all dispensations of man's fallen state, in perfect harmony. Would God that both the blind Jew and the blind Christian might see this, and embrace the whole truth, instead of each a part, might keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, and be saved.

But here let it be distinctly understood that there is no salvation in the law. There is no redeeming quality in law. Redemption is through the blood of Christ. The sinner may cease to break the commandments of God, and strive with all his power to keep them; but this will not atone for his sins, and redeem him from his present condition in consequence of past transgression.

Notwithstanding all his efforts to keep the law of God, he must be lost without faith in the atoning blood of Jesus. And this was as true in the time of Adam, of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses and the Jews, as since Jesus died upon the cross. No man can be saved without Christ.

On the other hand, faith in Jesus Christ, while refusing obedience to the law of the Father is presumption. An effort to obtain friendship with the Son, while living in rebellion against the Father, is Heaven-daring. No greater insult can be offered to either the Father or the Son.

What! separate the Father and the Son, by trampling on the authority of the one, and making a friend of the other? "I and my Father are one." **The Jew insults the Father, in his rejection of the Son; and the Christian flings in the face of the Heaven equal insult, in all his acts of worship in which he vainly thinks to make Jesus his friend while, with light upon the subject, he breaks the commandments of God.** {LG J.W. 6.4-7 reprint}

What solemn words were those that fell from the lips of the divine Teacher, who came to make honorable the law of his Father: "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven." Ministers and people should comprehend the full significance of these words. ***Those who by word or action, or interpretation of Scripture, lessen, or explain away the sacred claims and dignity of God's holy law*** shall have no place in the kingdom of heaven. ***Christ would here have us understand that our righteousness must include,*** not only the observance of the letter of the law, but also the spirit and principle of it. ***The letter of the law specifies how we must walk in order to please God;*** the spirit of the law points to Jesus Christ as the atoning sacrifice, through whose merits the sinner can fulfill the requirements of the law, Christ said, "I and my Father are one." There is therefore perfect harmony between the law and the gospel. {ST, July 18, 1878 par. 22}

"It is not enough to believe about Christ; we must believe in Him. The only faith that will benefit us is that which embraces Him as a personal Saviour; which appropriates His merits to ourselves. Many hold faith as an opinion. But saving faith is a transaction, by which those receive Christ join themselves in a covenant relation with God. Genuine faith is life. A living faith means an increase of vigor, a confiding trust, by which the soul becomes a conquering power. GW 259-261

The third angel's message is the proclamation of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus Christ. The commandments of God have been proclaimed, but the faith of Jesus Christ has not been proclaimed by Seventh-day Adventists as of equal importance, the law and the gospel going hand in hand. I cannot find language to express this subject in its fullness. {12MR 193.3}

"The faith of Jesus." It is talked of, but not understood. What constitutes the faith of Jesus, that belongs to the third angel's message? Jesus becoming our sin-bearer that He might become our sin-pardoning Saviour. He was treated as we deserve to be treated. He came to our world and took our sins that we might take His righteousness. Faith in the ability of Christ to save us amply and fully and entirely is the faith of Jesus. {12MR 193.4}

Counterfeit holiness, spurious sanctification, is still doing its work of deception. Under various forms it exhibits the same spirit as in the days of Luther, ***diverting minds from the Scriptures and leading men to follow their own feelings and impressions rather than to yield obedience to the law of God.*** This is one of Satan's most successful devices to cast reproach upon purity and truth.

There is a spurious experience that is prevailing now everywhere in regard to the love of Jesus--that we must dwell on the love of Jesus, that faith in Jesus is all we need--but these souls must be instructed that the love of Jesus in the heart will lead to humility of life and obedience to all His commandments. "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar,

and the truth is not in him" (1 John 2:4). The love of Jesus that goes no farther than the lips will not save any soul, but be a great delusion.--Manuscript 26, Oct. 17, 1885, "First Visit to Sweden, diary." {TDG 299.1}

Some who claim to love Jesus are deceivers and all their religion is lip service. It does not transform the character. It does not reveal the inward working of grace. They do not show that they have ever learned in Christ's school the lessons of meekness and lowliness of heart. They do not show by life or character that they are wearing Christ's yoke or lifting Christ's burdens. They are not reaching the standard given them in God's Word, but a human standard. Their life is not pure like Christ's life. They are not being refined and ennobled by His Spirit. The way of truth they have not known, and they are of that number who will say, "Lord, Lord, open unto us. We have taught in the streets. We have done many wonderful works." But Christ will say of them, "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:23).--Ibid. {TDG 299.2}

Those who reject the truth of the Bible do it under a pretense of loving Jesus. Those who love Jesus will reveal that love by being obedient children. They will be doers of the Word and not hearers only. They will not be continually pleading, "All that we have to do is to believe in Jesus." This is true in the fullest sense, but they do not comprehend, they do not take it in its fullest sense. To believe in Jesus is to take Him as your Redeemer, as your Pattern. All who love Jesus must follow His example. They must connect themselves with Jesus as closely as the branch is connected with the living vine. They are abiding in Jesus and Jesus is abiding in them and they are doers of His Word, partakers of His divine nature.--Ibid. {TDG 299.3}

The Bible is interpreted in a manner that is attractive to the unrenewed heart, while its solemn and vital truths are made of no effect. *A God of love is presented; but his justice, his denunciations of sin, the requirements of his holy law, are all kept out of sight.* Pleasing, bewitching fables captivate the senses of those who do not make God's word the foundation of their faith. Christ is as verily rejected as before; but Satan has so blinded the eyes of the people that the deception is not discerned. {4SP 405.2}