

Death Warrant

Exodus 20:1 – 17

~ One thing the lost man in judgment will definitely carry over into eternity with them is their memory. Abraham said to the rich man in torment, “.... remember...” Well, that will make hell quite terrible. They will remember many things, such as the opportunities they had to turn to God. They will realize what Christ did for them in this life, but they will also remember that they rejected salvation. Memories can be wonderful; but memories can be unbearable and tormenting. Someone has said, “.... the only hell I believe in is the one that a person makes for themselves.” There is an element of truth there, so I don’t argue that. Hell is both a very real and tangible place but it’s also a state of being in the mind. The lost are going to remember a whole lot of things they won’t want to remember.

In this report from our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God we have the law of God given for us to learn and remember. The first part of the Mosaic System of Levitical Law is the Ten Commandments themselves. This is part of the moral code for the children of Israel. God says that, on the basis of Him bringing these people out of slavery, He wants to impart to them His laws and precepts. The children of Israel have already agreed to the law, even though they had no idea what it was going to be. So, these Ten Commandments are the foundational basis that God wants to deal with His people on.

Modern man attempts to manufacture a new morality. It's an age-old cycle. The problem is: the new morality of today predates the giving of the Ten Commandments. Those ancient people were already living sinfully so it wasn't even new back then! Remember, before the flood, man had already disobeyed God - way back in the Garden of Eden. Sin was still around after the flood so it's nothing new. Today, we like to think we are refined and sophisticated; but we're just as crude and disgusting as any heathen or pagan ever was in a raw, natural sense.

When we come to God – and even if we reject God – we won't play fast and loose with the Ten Commandments and get by with it. That's not going to happen. If you want to play patty-cake with your Creator and contradict your Maker and remain spiritually dead, no one will weep for you. You cannot defy these commandments and escape the punishment of God, friends. Those of us who preach the grace of God are often accused of not possessing a proper appreciation of the law. Many people think we actually despise the law and they usually think we have some unconfessed, hidden sin. They mistakenly think that I believe the law can be violated at will and with impunity! On the contrary, we likewise realize the lofty character of the law and the implications it entails. Paul asks, "... shall we continue in sin because we have been saved by grace?" The answer is: no! It cannot be that way. If you can live with no thought of obedience to the Lord God, then you are simply not saved by the grace of God! If you are saved by the grace of God, then you will want to do His will and you will want to be as pleasing as you can be to Him! Well, these Ten Commandments certainly reveal the will of God.

Every preacher, teacher, church member and lay person should have a healthy respect for and a thorough knowledge of the law contained in the Mosaic System. The Psalmist says, "... oh, how I love Thy law; it is my meditation all the day long!" The law has been defined as a direct transcript of the mind of God; and that is a totally defective definition. The law is the expression of the mind of God relative to what man ought to be; and an expression of His will for mankind and His nature and character towards man. Remember, though, there is no grace or mercy in the law. The law is the absolute Holy will of God. The Psalmist says, "... the law is perfect." That means it requires perfection on your part, also. Unfortunately, I have yet to meet one single person that ever measured up to that high standard. This is not some vague notion of good intentions; the law demands perfection in obedience. The law is perfect and right and correct. Man's notion of right and wrong are colored, to say the least. Our environment and fallen nature see to our misconceptions alone. The law is a revelation from God Almighty and this is where He has drawn the line between right and wrong!

In modern society it can honestly be difficult to ascertain what is right and wrong. It can be extremely confusing to negotiate what is correct and incorrect today. What is right, wrong, correct and not? What the Word of God says, friends; that is what is right and wrong. Nothing has changed since God said it first. Our modern thinking is so utterly inconsistent and ignorant of the law of God that we end up in a hopeless ball of confusion. Why is it wrong to lie and to commit adultery? – Because God says it’s wrong! – No other reason, friends. Well, the law is for the good of mankind; because anything God wants or demands is for the good of mankind. It would be a wonderful thing if man could keep the law - but they don’t - because they can't. The prison wall and the locks on the doors of homes are testament to that truth. If you take out a loan at the bank you will be required to sign your name about twenty-five times or more! Why? – They don’t trust you! Perhaps a man used to be as good as his word - but that’s just not true today.

So, “the law” is an expression that encompasses the standard for human decency and proper conduct. Lying and stealing are wrong because God says they’re wrong; but the law does not enforce itself automatically. The giver of the law must have a power to demonstrate his authority to enforce these laws. If we look around at the laws of God and nature we'll notice that they really enforce their own precepts with tremendous vengeance. Take the law of gravity, for example, you can get as high as you want to get, but you better not turn loose of the balloon. The law of gravitation is in full affect and you can’t change it. If you jump off a ninety-story building, then down around the twenty-fifth-floor things won’t seem all that bad. The law of gravitation enforces itself at the sidewalk level. If a law cannot be enforced, then it is not a law – it’s a suggestion! God said, “.... the soul that sinneth shall die!” That’s no suggestion. That's the law of God.

We have another prevalent erroneous viewpoint concerning law that we need to take some time to correct: the blending of law and grace. Confusion confounded into one system is disastrous. When this occurs, the law is diminished of majesty and meaning. There is no love and there is no grace found in the law. Grace is robbed of its goodness, glow, glory, and wondrousness and the worthwhile aspect of grace is lost when law is mixed with it. When the claims of law are unanswered, then the law loses its

attractiveness and beauty. A sinner's needs are never met when he is brought under law. Law sets forth what man ought to be, reveals what he isn't - and then grace sets forth what God IS!

Well, law succinctly also reveals the gap is not crossable between man's ability and God's law. Paul asks, "... tell me ye that desire to be under the law?" We better listen to the law before we agree to it on a knee jerk, emotional reaction - because that's what Israel did - and it didn't go well for them. Man has been weighed by the balances of God's law and man is found seriously lacking! We aren't to view each other on the ladder of life and say we are a better person because we are higher than the next man. Someone made it to the moon on his own; but we won't make it anywhere near Heaven trying to measure up to the standards of the Lord God on our own.

The law reveals who man is and the law also reveals man's total inability to bridge the gap between himself and God. Whatsoever things said by the law to those who are under the law are said that every mouth may be stopped. The whole world becomes guilty before God, friends! There is no problem with the law - but there's a whole lot wrong with us. Don't be a hearer of the Word only but be a doer! These people who run around with a set of rules and regulations that they call the law look at themselves in the mirror and they think they are alright. Well, that's just like the queen asking the mirror on the wall who was fairest of all - it's ridiculous! At least the mirror lied and said, "... you are!" - whereas, these people today say, "... I am!" We really need to get a more accurate perspective of who we are; and this so-called Spiritual Safari is just the place to do that, my beloved...

1 And God spake all these words, saying,

2 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:

5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;

6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

8 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:

10 But the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:

11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

13 Thou shalt not kill.

14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.

15 Thou shalt not steal.

16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.

~ So, the Ten Commandments are divided into two sections: the first four cover mans relationship to God and the remaining six deal with mans relationship to our fellow man. God makes a command against polytheism; but makes no commandments against atheism - because there was no atheism in this time period we are studying. These people were a little bit too close to the removal of the mask of revelation - and it was frightful. It is around the time of David that atheists begin to appear. Atheism is very prevalent today because man is very far from a mooring in the Word of God. Remember, though – it was David that said the FOOL hath said in his heart there is no God. Today, that’s usually in the form of a college professor or anyone considered an intellect. I don’t see many, if any, that are all that smart, frankly. Some of the dumbest men in the world have more letters than the alphabet after their name. They may have a photogenic mind, but they are sure dumb in general relations!

God says Israel is to have no other gods before Him because there were many gods in the land they came from and in the one they were going to. Today, nothing has changed except the lost man cannot recognize the gods he worships - mainly himself - so, he denies worshipping gods or believing in anything. Well, they have gods; they're usually the only ones who don't know it. God condemns polytheism; irrespective of how ignorantly it is done. To make matters worse, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God but became vain in their imaginations and their foolish hearts were darkened. Atheists worship the creation rather than the Creator. God says He gives those people up, friends - Romans chapter one.

This law also covers idolatry. Many people think we don’t have idolatry today, either - but we do; the Bible says covetousness is idolatry – so – we definitely have idolatry today! It’s one of the greatest sins of this hour. Anything that you give yourself to, particularly in abandon, is your idolatry and that is your god. You may not worship Baal - but are you worshipping a bottle? Some people worship Aphrodite and some worship the dollar. It’s all the same thing, friends. We have millions of alcohol worshipers in this

country today. The alcohol industry doesn't even cover one - one hundredth of one percent in paid taxes compared to what they cause in destroyed lives, such as automobile accidents. Our generation is being fed propaganda and we are being brainwashed like no other time in history, you may be sure. God says we are to have no other gods before Him!

Refraining from blasphemy, that is, taking the name of God in vain, is still a commandment to us today; and it is so common in the church. It's wrong to use His Name in vain because He said it is wrong; and He is God and He is Holy! Of course, many people cannot express themselves properly, so they start using all sorts of blasphemy. Concerning the Sabbath: that day is given specifically to the nation Israel in a very unusual way. God said it was a token between Him and the children of Israel. We have no way of knowing if the Sabbath is on our Saturday or not. Personally, I don't think it is; but it makes no difference what day you observe as the Lords Day. Sunday may or may not be the first day of the week, but we recognize it as we do because the third day is when Christ came back from the dead! I want to worship on that day.

We're going to come back to all of these laws again and again, so we won't bog down completely here by overstating the obvious; except to say that people interpret "thou shalt not kill" in some very weird ways today. Well, nations are given by God the right to protect its interests and to protect human life within that nation. If that nation must take human life to enforce the laws, then that is what needs to happen. Thou shalt not kill has no relation to the execution of a criminal or to a soldier fighting a war for his country at all. Again, it's positively absurd to entertain that thinking. The Lord Jesus says we aren't to even be angry with our brother without a cause - or we are guilty of murder! Adultery is all sex outside of the confines of a marriage of a man and a woman. Sex is not revolutionary - it is sinful outside of marriage. Lying and stealing are nothing new - it's still sin! All of these things does God condemn; and we will look at them all in every possible different light as we move forward in our safari. This law reveals we need a Savior and that we all come short of the glory of God ~

^^^