

Hearts of Love

Tom & Debbie Tillman "to touch the world for Jesus Christ"

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bless you!***

Tom & Debbie

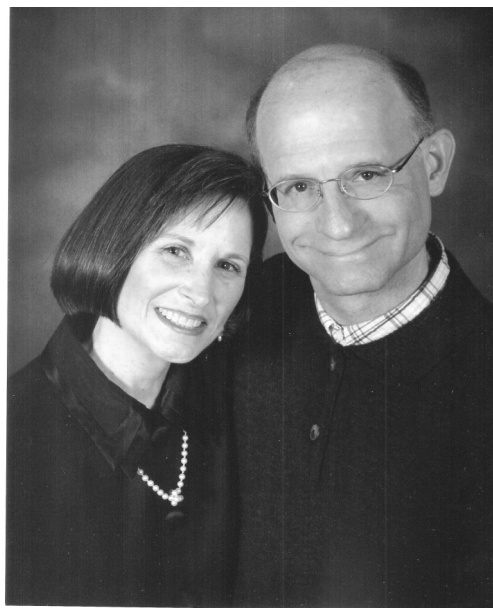
Are Christians 'Under the Law?'

How were Old Testament Saints saved? Do Christians still have to follow The Ten Commandments? God does not change and His Word does not change. If believers were saved in the Old Testament by keeping the Law, then New Testament believers should be also. However, if no one was ever saved by keeping the Law, then that would still be true.

At different times in the Bible, God initiated various contracts, or covenants, with people and nations. The 4 most important were the 'Adamic, Abrahamic', 'Mosaic' and 'New' Covenants.

The first, the Adamic, was God's response to Man's sin. In it, He promised that eventually, a Savior, the Seed of the Woman, would come to destroy the work of Satan. With the Abrahamic Covenant, God initiated it and promised Abraham that he would have many descendants and that they would have a land of their own. Abraham believed God and God accounted it to him as being righteous but God still wanted Abraham's 'signature' on the contract. Abraham's signature, the 'sign' of the contract was circumcision. The recipients of God's promises would be descendants of Abraham down through his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob. All males, to be included in the promises, had to be circumcised. Anyone not circumcised will have broken God's Covenant and been 'cut off' from God's promises.

After the Israelites had spent 400 years in slavery to Egypt, it says, God *remembered* His covenant with Israel and raised up Moses to lead them out of slavery to the land He had promised them. But before they were ready to go in, God created another contract with them through Moses; God gave them the Law: the Ten Commandments. God offered a contract to all the people of Israel. If they kept the Law perfectly, God would give them a series of blessings. If they broke the Law, even the smallest part, they would receive a series of curses. All the people said, 'We will do it!' The sign of this contract, their 'signature,' was the



*He has committed to
us the word of
Reconciliation.*

*Therefore, we are
Ambassadors for Christ.*

2 Corinthians 5:19,20

Sabbath; they were required to keep the Sabbath. Anyone not circumcised was 'cut off' from the people. Anyone not keeping the Sabbath was cut off. God initiated both contracts. The Abrahamic was all God's work. Abraham was required only to believe God. The Mosaic Law, however, required perfect obedience from man. Its purpose was to show the absolute holiness of God and the complete sinfulness of all people. No one ever kept the Law because no one ever could. God knew that. His plan all along, since eternity past, was the sacrifice for sin of His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Mosaic Covenant, God establish the system of animal sacrifices to give an illustration of God graciously forgiving sin, and also to point to the coming Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, the true sacrifice which really would forgive sin for all time. The Law was never intended to make anyone holy, it never could. Everyone broke the covenant by sinning but they were then forgiven through believing in God's mercy and grace through his promised coming Messiah.

All of God's promises to Israel were according to God's promise and His faithfulness through the Abrahamic Cove-

nant and not contingent upon their keeping the Law... only on their faith, believing God's Word.

The Law, the Mosaic Covenant, was added as a 'fence' to contain sin until the promised seed, Jesus Christ, came bringing the New Covenant: 'Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as *referring* to many, but *rather* to one, "**And to your seed,**" that is, Christ. What I am saying is this: the Law, which came 430 years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.¹⁸ For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but **God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.**

¹⁹ Why the Law then? **It was added because of transgressions... until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.**' Gal. 3:15-19

The Law always had an expiration date: **till the Seed should come**... the same Seed that was promised in Gen. 3... the promised Seed, Who would break the serpent's head: Christ!

Again, the Law, the Mosaic Covenant, had two purposes: it illustrated God's perfection and holiness which eventually the Lord Jesus Christ would fulfill and also man's complete sinful-

ness, that every person was guilty and under God's curse, in need of a Savior. It allowed for animal sacrifices to temporarily 'cover' sin until the Lord Jesus Christ, the promised Seed, would come, to be the perfect, once for all sacrifice for all the sin of all time for all who would come to Him by faith. Salvation has always been only by faith in the finished work of God's Son, the Seed, the Word: the Lord Jesus Christ.

Anyone trying to be righteous by keeping the Law must keep all of it perfectly or he is guilty of all of it completely. 'For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' James 2:10.

Paul wrote, '...no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, the just shall live by faith.' Gal 3 He explains, in Galatians and Romans, that just like a widow is freed from the law of marriage when her husband dies, so too, we were freed from the bondage of the Law when Jesus Christ, Who had kept the Law for us, died and rose again. Then we were freed to be married again, by faith, to our risen Savior under the New Covenant.

Saints under the Old Covenant were saved in the same way that we are: belief in the promised Messiah. God announced His plan back in Jer. 31: 'Behold... I will make a new covenant with (Israel):... I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.'

Jesus Christ was the rightful heir to all of the Abrahamic promises and all of Creation. He was qualified to initiate the New Covenant, in His Blood, and to offer its promises to all who would come to Him by faith. The books of Hebrews and Galatians clearly bear these things out. Carefully and prayerfully read them.

The heart of the Old Covenant was the Day of Atonement when only the High Priest could enter the Holy of Holies, where God's Presence remained, to offer sacrifice for the sins of the people. When Jesus died on the Cross, the Veil hiding the Holy of Holies was torn from top to bottom, no longer separating men from God; no longer was there need for the Earthly High Priest or any of the Old Cove-

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nant. It was all replaced by our Heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ with His New Covenant.

Jesus said, 'Think not that I am come to destroy **the law, or the prophets**: I am not come to destroy, **but to fulfill**.¹⁸ 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**. Matt 5:17 Several times in the Gospels, when Jesus did something, it says, 'Jesus did... **that it might be fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet**, (Isaiah or some other.) Everything He did was to fulfill Messianic Prophecies. Finally, when He fulfilled that very last one from Psalm 69, 'They gave me vinegar to drink,' He said, **It is finished**. The word He used for finished is **the same word** He used when He said, I came **to fulfill** the Law and the Prophets. He actually said, '**It is fulfilled!**' He had fulfilled the Law and the Prophets, He died as the Perfect Sacrifice, the Veil in the Temple was torn apart, the Old Covenant had passed away and He inaugurated the New Covenant in His Blood. Of course we are not to disobey any of the things written in the 10 Commandments but we are no longer under the bondage or the Curse of that Law. Now God's laws are written on our hearts and minds. We no longer need to be fenced in like mindless beasts. Now we know right from wrong, by God's Holy Spirit within us, and our righteousness is

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not at all according to what we do or do not do; it is only according to faith in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ gave 2 New Commandments which superseded the entire Old Covenant... just 2. 'Love God with all your heart and Love others.' To make certain that we understood what He meant, He instructed Paul to explain exactly what Love is. He wrote that *love is patient, kind, not jealous or arrogant, doesn't seek it's own, rejoices in the truth, bears, believes, hopes and endures ALL things*. 1 Cor 13 Now... if we act that way toward God and others, obviously we won't be murdering, stealing, coveting etc. Paul commanded husbands to 'Love and honor their wives as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself up for her.' He didn't need to write, 'Don't hit your wife, don't yell at your wife, don't put her down in front of others or anywhere else, don't commit adultery,' etc. He was writing to Christians who had God's Holy Spirit within them to teach them truth and to

convict them when they erred.

In the Adamic Covenant, God promised a Savior to humanity; it was God's promise and would never be annulled. In the Abrahamic Covenant, God made promises to Abraham and his descendants including land, eternal blessings and the Savior. It was based only on God's faithfulness and would never be annulled. With the Mosaic Covenant, The Law's purpose was to show God's holiness and man's sinfulness, to be a teacher and guide until the Savior came. It was based on the impossibility of man's obedience and was never intended, by God, to be permanent. It was meant to be replaced by the New Covenant officiated by our Heavenly High Priest, inaugurated in His Blood, set in place by His death and resurrection.

Those who seek to be justified by keeping the Law will die in their sin under the curse of the Law; those who trust in the life, death, resurrection and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ will live forevermore and be recipients of all God's eternal blessings and promises as well as being fellow heirs with Jesus Christ and ruling and reigning over all Creation, forever with Him.

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The Harvest is Great, but the laborers are few. Matt 9:38

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