

The Law of Christ

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Introduction

It can be confusing trying to distinguish how the Law of Moses relates to Christ's law that He gave primarily in His Sermon on the Mount. Is Christ's law completely new and distinct from the Law given through Moses? Do the Ten Commandments or any of the commandments given through Moses still apply to God's people today? If some still apply but others don't, how do we distinguish which?

Christ's coming 2,000 years ago is the end purpose and consummation of the Law of Moses, "For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom 10:4). The Law was never intended to be an end in itself but a means to an end—God's righteousness through His Son Jesus Christ. Paul said that the Law and the prophets even witnessed and attested to this end, "But now **the righteousness of God** without the law is manifested, **being witnessed by the law and the prophets**" (Rom 3:21). God's righteousness or being right with Him by the way He ordained, is what Jesus Christ taught, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mat 6:33).

The Sermon on the Mount

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. 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. Whosoever therefore shall break one of **these least commandments**, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except **your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees**, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. (Mat 5:17-20)

The repeated pattern through the rest of the chapter is Christ quoting what the scribes and Pharisees had said and taught to God's people about the Law of Moses, contrasted by what He was now saying and teaching about it, "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time ... But I say unto you" (vs. 21-22), "Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time ... But I say unto you" (vs. 27-28), "It hath been said ... But I say unto you" (vs. 31-32), "Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time ... But I say unto you" (vs. 33-34), "Ye have heard that it hath been said ... But I say unto you" (vs. 38-39), "Ye have heard that it hath been said ... But I say unto you" (vs. 43-44). The scribes and Pharisees, like unjust stewards selling their master's debts for pennies on the dollar (Luke 16:1-8), had been teaching a lower standard of moral righteousness than the Law required. Christ, on the other hand, upheld the moral standard of the Law in His Sermon and defined it succinctly as it pertains to the very thoughts and intents of the heart.

Christ wasn't teaching a new moral law that supplanted or replaced the moral requirements of the Law of Moses. He was defining the morality in the Law and commanding that morality by His sayings, "these least commandments" (Mat 5:19), "Therefore whosoever heareth **these sayings of mine**, and doeth them" (Mat 7:24), "And every one that heareth **these sayings of mine**, and doeth them not" (Mat 7:26). His sayings

weren't in contrast with the moral righteousness of the Law, but in contrast with the lower standard of moral righteousness that the scribes and Pharisees had been saying.

Christ didn't come to destroy the Law and the prophets to establish something completely different, "Think not that I am come **to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil**. 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.**" (Mat 5:17-18). He is the end purpose and consummation of the Law, "For **Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to every one that believeth" (Rom 10:4). Christ fulfilled the Law and the prophets in three primary ways: (1) He fulfilled or embodied the morality required by the Law within His own law, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: **for this is the law and the prophets**" (Mat 7:12); (2) He fulfilled the prophecies concerning Him, "These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that **all things must be fulfilled**, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, **concerning me**" (Luk 24:44); (3) He fulfilled or satisfied the curse upon God's people for having broken the Law, "**Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law**, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree" (Gal 3:13).

He didn't destroy the moral righteous standard of the Law but expounded, defined, and confirmed it. His two statements "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets" (Mat 5:17), "for this is the law and the prophets" (Mat 7:12), formed the bookends of His own commandments all summarized by, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Mat 7:12). It's not "the golden rule" as it's flippantly and irreverently called by many. It's Christ's holy commandment.

Early in the Sermon He stated, "For I say unto you, That except **your righteousness** shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, **ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven**" (Mat 5:19-20). The moral standard of righteousness by which we live must be to the level of what Christ taught and commanded in this Sermon or we won't be entering into His Kingdom. And He said there will be no cases of exceptions.

Three times in His Sermon, Jesus used the Greek word *nomos* for the Law of Moses, "Think not that I am come to destroy **the law [nomos 3551]**, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from **the law [nomos 3551]**, till all be fulfilled." (Mat 5:17-18), "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is **the law [nomos 3551]** and the prophets" (Mat 7:12). And toward the end of His Sermon, He stated that He will deny knowing those that worked *anomia* or lawlessness:

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity [anomia 458]. (Matthew 7:21-23)

He made a similar statement later in His ministry, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and **them which do iniquity [anomia 458]**" (Mat 13:41). He was upholding the moral righteous standard commanded in the Law of Moses and restating it as His law and commandments. And it's His commandments that we're to teach new converts to obey, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: **Teaching**

them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.” (Mat 28:19-20).

The Law of Moses codified morality

The Law of Moses didn’t create morality but codified it. For example: it didn’t become morally evil to kill once the sixth commandment was given from Mount Sinai—it has always been evil since the beginning, “For this is **the message that ye heard from the beginning**, that we should **love one another**. Not as Cain, *who* was of that wicked one, and **slew his brother**. And wherefore slew he him? Because **his own works were evil**, and his brother’s righteous.” (1Jo 3:12). When Christ quoted “Thou shalt not kill” (Mat 5:21), He wasn’t placing us under the Law of Moses. He was defining, upholding, and enforcing the very moral righteousness of loving one another that had been true since the beginning. Also, that morality isn’t just the action but the very thoughts of the heart, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer” (1Jo 3:15).

Paul alluded to the message of love given in the beginning, “For all the law is fulfilled in one word, *even* in this; **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself**. But if ye **bite and devour one another**, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another.” (Gal 5:14-15). Snakes bite and devour their prey. The serpent was cursed with eating dust, “**upon thy belly** shalt thou go, and **dust shalt thou eat** all the days of thy life” (Gen 3:14), and man is dust, “for dust thou *art*” (Gen 3:19). The message from the beginning is that we’re the devil’s children when we don’t love one another as ourselves—we’re biting and devouring like snakes and moving on our bellies.

Jesus Christ commanding the moral standard of righteousness embodied within the Law of Moses makes it His law. If Christ defined and restated the moral righteousness contained within the Law as His law, then those same moral commandments are now His commandments. Essentially, all of the morality contained within the Law of Moses is also embodied within Christ’s law and imposed upon us as His servants. Submitting ourselves to the moral righteousness of the Law of Moses in obedience to Christ doesn’t place us under the Law of Moses but under Him.

Jesus, Paul, and James all affirmed the commandment of loving our neighbor, “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Mat 22:39; Mar 12:31; Rom 13:9; Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8). Paul even restated and summarized the latter half of the Decalogue in the one commandment of love, “For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself**.” (Rom 13:9). And by charging the Fifth Commandment upon the Ephesians, “Honour thy father and mother” (Eph 6:1-2), he obviously didn’t consider this as placing them under the Law of Moses. After quoting the commandment “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Gal 5:14), he even called it “the law of Christ” (6:2).

We can’t be under both Covenants at once

The Law of Moses was the law of the Old Covenant while Christ’s law is the law of the New Covenant and nobody can be under both at once. In fact, we can no longer even be under the Old because it was replaced by the New, “In that he saith, **A new covenant, he hath made the first old**. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old **is ready to vanish away**” (Heb 8:13). The former Covenant became “old” by virtue of the “new”

superseding and replacing it. But Christ's law itself isn't new or unheard of—it's the very morality that had been true since the beginning and later codified within the Old Covenant Law of Moses.

The problem in the early church was the false teaching that Gentiles needed to be circumcised with the intent of keeping the Law of Moses, "But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, **That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses**" (Act 15:5), "Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, **Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law:** to whom we gave no *such* commandment" (Act 15:24). But to keep the law, one had to keep the whole law including animal sacrifices, "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to **do the whole law**" (Gal 5:3). The problem with trusting in animal sacrifices, of course, is that it excludes oneself from Christ's sacrifice, "**Christ is become of no effect unto you**, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace [*favor*]" (Gal 5:4).

"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. **Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised**, Christ shall profit you nothing" (Gal 5:1-2). It's as though Paul was saying, "Look at who's talking to you. I was born from Benjamin and circumcised the eighth day. Who are you Gentiles to think you can get circumcised and become justified by the Law of Moses without Christ?" He warned them that if they get circumcised with the intent of seeking justification under the Law, they'll be rejecting Christ and "fallen from favor," or no longer favored as one of God's people. They can't be under both covenants at once. To seek justification by the Law is to reject justification by Christ and no longer belong to God.

Statutes and judgments

Paul quoted Leviticus 18:5 in two of his letters indicating that eternal life by the Law of Moses required keeping all of it, "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, **That the man which doeth those things shall live by them**" (Rom 10:5), "And the law is not of faith: but, **The man that doeth them shall live in them**" (Gal 3:12). And "those things" that had to be done included all of the statutes and judgments, "Ye shall do my **judgments [*mispat* 4941]**, and keep mine **ordinances [*huqqa* 2708]**, to walk therein: I *am* the LORD your God. Ye shall therefore keep my **statutes [*huqqa* 2708]**, and my **judgments [*mispat* 4941]**: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I *am* the LORD" (Lev 18:5).

The statutes were comprised of such things as: the annual Passover, "And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations; ye shall keep it a feast by an **ordinance [*huqqa* 2708]** for ever" (Exo 12:14); the consecrating of the priests, "And thou shalt gird them with girdles, Aaron and his sons, and put the bonnets on them: and the priest's office shall be theirs for a perpetual **statute [*huqqa* 2708]**: and thou shalt consecrate Aaron and his sons" (Exo 29:9); abstinence from ingesting fat and blood, "*It shall be* a perpetual **statute [*huqqa* 2708]** for your generations throughout all your dwellings, that ye eat neither fat nor blood" (Lev 3:17); the high priest abstaining from alcohol before entering the tabernacle, "Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be* a **statute [*huqqa* 2708]** for ever throughout your generations" (Lev 10:9); the annual Day of Atonement, "And this shall be an everlasting **statute [*huqqa* 2708]** unto you, to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year" (Lev 16:34).

Many of the judgments were stated in Exodus 21 after the giving of the Ten Commandments, “Now these *are* the **judgments [mispat 4941]** which thou shalt set before them” (Exo 21:1). The judgments included the treatment and handling of: Hebrew servants (vs. 2-6), giving of a daughter in marriage (vs. 7-11), murder and manslaughter (vs. 21-15), kidnapping (v. 16), cursing father or mother (v. 17), injuries sustained from a fight (vs. 18-19), the beating of a servant (vs. 20-21), injuring a pregnant woman (vs. 22-25), injuring a servant (vs. 26-27), an ox or an open pit causing damage (vs. 28-36).

The law of liberty

Paul taught that Abraham’s two sons Ishmael and Isaac born of Hagar and Sarah respectively were intended by God to be allegorical and prophetic of the coming Old and New Covenants, “But he *who was of the bondwoman* was born after the flesh; but he *of the freewoman* was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.” (Gal 4:23-24). Paul would go on to say, “Stand fast therefore in **the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free**, and be not entangled again with **the yoke of bondage**” (Gal 5:1). Abraham’s own family from which Israel descended showed that Christ’s law of the New Covenant had been God’s plan all along. God declared beforehand through Abraham and his two sons that His people would be given the Law of Moses along with all of its bondages, but Christ would come later and give to them His law that would free them from those bondages.

Paul and James both restated the commandment “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8) upon God’s people and called it “liberty” within the same contexts, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free” (Gal 5:1), “For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty” (Gal 5:13), “the perfect law of liberty” (Jas 1:25), “the law of liberty” (Jas 2:12). It’s “liberty” because Christ set us free from all of the statutes and bondages that accompanied the Law of Moses such as abstinence from certain meats, “Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man” (Mat 15:11), and circumcision, “What God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common” (Act 10:15). And he freed us from the requirement of traveling to Jerusalem three times a year for the feasts, “Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, **nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father**” (Jhn 4:21). That Christ freed us from the statutes and bondages of the Law implies that He DID NOT free us from its morality but upheld it.

For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath **broken down the middle wall of partition between us**; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even the law of commandments contained in ordinances*; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body **by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby**. (Ephesians 2:14-16)

Christ Himself became the object of the enmity that separated Jews from Gentiles. When His flesh was torn, “the middle wall of partition” between these two classes of people was also torn: “And, behold, **the veil of the temple was rent in twain** from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent” (Mat 27:51); “And **the veil of the temple was rent in twain** from the top to the bottom” (Mar 15:38); “And the sun was darkened, and **the veil of the temple was rent in the midst**” (Luk 23:45); “Having therefore, brethren, boldness to **enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus**, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, **through the veil, that is to say, his flesh**” (Heb 10:19-20). God Himself tearing the veil of the Temple showed that the annual Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) and all other sacrifices had officially ended.

The writer of Hebrews alluded to Yom Kippur commanded in Leviticus, “not laying again the foundation of repentance from **dead works** [*nekros 3498 ergon 2041*], and of faith toward God, Of **the doctrine of baptisms** [*baptismos 909*], and of **laying on of hands**” (Heb 6:2), “therefore shall he **wash his flesh in water**” (Lev 16:4), “And Aaron shall **lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat**” (Lev 16:21), “And he shall **wash his flesh with water** in the holy place” (Lev 16:24). He called it “dead works” because the blood of animals could never atone for our sins, “For if **the blood of bulls and of goats**, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall **the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit** [*breath*] offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from **dead works** [*nekros 3498 ergon 2041*] to serve the living God?” (Heb 9:13-14). Animals don’t live again after being sacrificed but God’s own Son now lives forever by “the eternal Breath.”

His law is written in our hearts

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that **I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah**: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day *that* I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, **I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts**; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

Jeremiah prophesied that God would make a new covenant with His people that would be written, not on stone tablets, but on their very hearts. The writer of Hebrews quoted this twice, “I will put my laws into their mind, and **write them in their hearts**” (Heb 8:10), “I will put my laws into their hearts, and **in their minds will I write them**” (Heb 10:16). Paul also alluded to Jeremiah’s prophecy in two of his letters, “For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: Which shew the work of **the law written in their hearts**, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their* thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another” (Rom 2:14-15), “*Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit [*breath*] of the living God; **not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart**” (2Co 3:3).

Christ commanded morality as it pertains to the heart: “Blessed *are* the **pure in heart**: for they shall see God” (Mat 5:8); “But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already **in his heart**” (Mat 5:28); “For where your treasure is, there will **your heart** be also” (Mat 6:21); “But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth **from the heart**; and they defile the man. For **out of the heart** proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies” (Mat 15:18-19); “So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye **from your hearts** forgive not every one his brother their trespasses” (Mat 18:35); “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God **with all thy heart**, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Mat 22:37).

Morality from the heart that Christ commanded isn't something new that hadn't been heard before—it's what the Law and the prophets had always taught. The Old Testament is replete with teaching about the heart. Here is a short list of some of the more familiar statements: "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of **the thoughts of his heart** *was* only evil continually" (Gen 6:5); "Thou shalt not **hate thy brother in thine heart**: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him" (Lev 19:17); "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God **with all thine heart**, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deu 6:5); "But the word *is* very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and **in thy heart**, that thou mayest do it" (Deu 30:14); "Only fear the LORD, and **serve him in truth with all your heart**: for consider how great *things* he hath done for you" (1Sa 12:24); "But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but **the LORD looketh on the heart**" (1Sa 16:7); "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of *them whose heart is perfect toward him*" (2Ch 16:9); "If **mine heart have been deceived by a woman**, or if I have laid wait at my neighbour's door" (Job 31:9); "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and **speaketh the truth in his heart**" (Psa 15:2); "Create in me a **clean heart**, O God; and renew a right spirit within me" (Psa 51:10); "Harden not **your heart**, as in the provocation, *and as in* the day of temptation in the wilderness" (Psa 95:8); "Trust in the LORD with all **thine heart**; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Pro 3:5); "I the LORD search **the heart**, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, *and according to the fruit of his doings*" (Jer 17:10); "But this *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and **write it in their hearts**; and will be their God, and they shall be my people" (Jer 31:33); "And I will give them **one heart**, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and **will give them an heart of flesh**" (Eze 11:19); "And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor; and let none of you **imagine evil against his brother in your heart**" (Zec 7:10).

The Old Covenant Law of Moses required obedience and morality from the heart. But rather than keeping their hearts pure in God's sight and obeying Him with the right motives, God's people kept His commandments to the extent they appeared obedient in the sight of their fellow brethren. Therefore, their hearts became hard like the very stones upon which their commandments were written. Under the New Covenant however, God's breath in our hearts gives us the strength and ability to keep the moral righteousness required since the beginning, then codified in the Law of Moses, and consummately commanded by Christ. As God literally wrote His commandments on stone tablets, He figuratively "wrote" them on our hearts by His breath, "*Forasmuch as ye are* manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, **written not with ink, but with the Spirit [breath] of the living God**; not in tables of stone, but **in fleshy tables of the heart**" (2Co 3:3), "Who also hath made us able ministers of **the new testament [covenant]**; not of the letter [*writing*], but **of the spirit [breath]**: for the letter [*writing*] killeth, but the spirit [*breath*] giveth life" (2Co 3:6).

Christ taught us a "form" or "body" of doctrine that is to be obeyed from our hearts, "But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have **obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine** which was delivered you" (Rom 6:17). But He didn't address every possible situation and circumstance we might encounter. He gave us a general or overall pattern of teaching to follow and now actively leads us by the breath, "For as many as are **led by the Spirit [breath] of God**, they are the sons of God" (Rom 8:14), "But if ye be **led of the Spirit [breath]**, ye are not under the law" (Gal 5:18). He's speaking His commandments into our hearts by His breath every day. As the sons of God serving His Son Jesus Christ, we don't just obey the "form of doctrine" He gave while on earth but also what He's actively speaking into our hearts today.

We must be faithful servants to the Lord

One of the main keys to understanding God's righteousness is acknowledging and distinguishing between how we relate to God the Father and how we relate to His Son Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Salvation comes only through the Lord Jesus Christ—relinquishing our freedom and becoming His servants or slaves. Because we've all sinned, we all owe a sin debt to God the Father that we can never repay. It's like making interest payments on a loan without ever paying down a penny of the beginning principal balance. Christ paid-in-full our sin debt on the cross and therefore has the authority to forgive our sins that are separating us from God the Father. When we make Jesus Christ our Lord, He owns us as His servants along with all of our sin debt and frees us from it. For example: when someone purchases a company, they not only own all of its assets but also assume all of its liabilities. We're freed from our debt of sin toward God the Father, but are now completely indebted to His Son the Lord Jesus Christ who owns us as His servants. We're no longer free to live how we want because we're servants of Christ and indebted to live righteously according to His law and commandments. It's the paradox of becoming completely indebted to become completely debt free.

"Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him?" I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, **We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.**" (Luk 17:9-10). The Lord doesn't thank us for obeying Him—we're not doing Him any favors. Our obedience to Him is out of duty for what He did for us and the favor He granted us before God the Father.

Part of the confusion with understanding righteousness before God comes from blurring the distinction between merit and duty. Being right before God by Christ's law is fulfilling our duty of living righteously for the standing we've already been freely given by Christ's merit before God. We are to live righteously, not attempting to merit favor we don't have, but fulfilling our duty for the favor we do have. An employee of a company is free and works to earn or merit income to pay his own debts. A servant is owned by his master and works out of duty for his debts that His master already paid.

We're indebted to our Lord to do everything He commanded, and since He commanded us to love one another, we owe each other the debt of love out of duty to our Lord, **"Owe** no man any thing, but **to love one another:** for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."** (Rom 13:8-9).

Conclusion

Christ didn't come to destroy the Law or the prophets but fulfilled them in three primary ways: (1) He fulfilled or embodied the morality required by the Law in His own law; (2) He fulfilled the prophecies concerning Him; (3) He fulfilled or satisfied the curse upon God's people for having broken the Law. Christ defined and upheld the morality of the Law. Commanding the moral standard of obedience from the heart embodied within the Law of Moses doesn't place us under the Law but under His. It's circumcision with the intent of seeking

righteousness by the Law that places someone under the Law and severs them from Christ and consequently from God's favor.

Righteousness by the works of the Law required not only keeping all of its moral requirements but all of its statutes, judgments, and bondages as well. Christ freed us from all of the bondages of the Law which is why His law is called "liberty." That Christ freed us from the statutes and bondages of the Law implies that He DID NOT free us from its morality but upheld it.

Sin results in a heart as hard as the stones upon which the Ten Commandments were written. We must obey Christ from our hearts. Christ's Law is "written" on our hearts in the sense that we're not obeying a code of ethics external to ourselves but obeying the Lord Himself dwelling in our hearts by the breath of God.

The confusion with understanding righteousness before God comes from blurring the distinctions between merit and duty. Being right before God by Christ's law is fulfilling our duty of living righteously for the standing we've already been freely given by Christ's merit before God. We're indebted to our Lord to do everything He commanded and He commanded morality from the heart which been true since the beginning.