

Spiritual How-to's

How Can I Live Up to God's Laws?

Debbie Chaney

Intro. What is it that makes a "civilized society"? What would you list?

Although it is defined as a group of people living in an area, there are certain characteristics that actually make it civilized and safe for all.

Found on many lists are:

Authority – a central authority that acts as the government and makes laws

Safety & Protection

Education

Basic Freedoms

- * We could then conclude, that **every successful society will have some type of authority** or government with it's own laws.
- * **God's societal kingdom** is no different. The governmental authority is on His shoulders- and all other authority flows from Him. His laws are given and they demonstrate the values of His society. Isa. 9:6-7; Rom. 13:1
- * This then, becomes a sticking point for **those who struggle with devoting their lives wholly to God**, and submitting themselves to His government, laws and rules.

I. Can we live up to God's laws? Can we fulfill them?

A. There was a very religious group in the NT called the **Pharisees**.

1. They lived their lives in **strict compliance to the Hebraic law**. **All 613** of them.
2. Even the **Apostle Paul**, as a Pharisee lived that way before his conversion to Christianity.
3. Yet, these Pharisees were actually **breaking those laws by their traditions**.
Matthew 15:3
4. And their **self righteous belief** that they were keeping all the law was like a poisonous leaven. Matthew 16:6
5. Jesus said that they don't practice what they preach. He called them **hypocrites** Matthew 23:1-39

B. Most Jews live their best to fulfill the law, one in particular mentioned in the NT is the "**rich young ruler**" of Matthew 19:16-22

1. He came to Jesus asking how to inherit eternal life.
2. Jesus told him to keep the commandments. The young one asked, which ones?
3. Jesus listed 5 of the 10 commandments to him.
4. The rich young man told Jesus he had kept those 5 commandments since he was a kid.
4. Jesus said, "One thing you are lacking...sell your stuff and give to the poor..."

- a. and you will have treasure in heaven
- b. then, come & follow me

C. **Then, early in His ministry** Jesus makes this declaration –

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” Matthew 5:17

D. So, wait, the 613 are still standing and you’re what??? Fulfilling them? What? How?

II. The purpose of the law is to show us what sin is. Romans 3:20; 7:7 Because of rules and laws, we learn what is right and wrong.

A. The book of **Romans makes it perfectly clear it is impossible to fulfill the law**

B. But the hope offered is that through **the life and death of Jesus**, as we believe in Him, He gives us **mercy & forgiveness** for our breaking the laws, but also the **power of grace to live in His righteousness**, not our own.

C. **We now live under grace, if Jesus is our Savior, for “the law of the Spirit of life has set us free”.** Romans 8: 2

D. What does this mean? **It means,**

1. It is impossible for me to fulfill those 613 laws. Absolutely right.

2. But Jesus in me enables me to complete the Spirit of those laws.

E. So the law is there to show me that on my own, I cannot fulfill it. I need Jesus and He has provided all I need. It is by grace and not by my works. Ephesians 2:8-9

III. Jesus told us the greatest commandment was to Love the Lord.... and love your neighbor as yourself. THOSE TWO COMMANDMENTS FULFILLED ALL THE LAW.

Matthew 22:34-40

A. **Think of it. All 613 summed up by fulfilling these 2**

B. The 10 Commandments are often divided into 2 groups: Exodus 20:1-17

1. Commandments 1-4 are directed to our **service to God**

- a. have no other gods...
- b. make no carved images
- c. don’t take the Lord’s name in vain
- d. remember the sabbath day

2. Commandments 5-10 are directed to our **service to people:**

- a. honor your parents
- b. don’t murder
- c. don’t commit adultery
- d. don’t steal
- e. don’t lie
- f. don’t covet

C. **The Spirit behind the law is fulfilled as I love God and love others.**

1. The whole point of the OT is to show us our absolute need to love God whole heartedly and rely on His mercy and forgiveness when we blow it.
2. Apart from that, disastrous things happen.

IV. Love is the fulfilling of the law. Romans 8:8-10

- A. **Paul, the one-time Pharisee tells us to “clothe ourselves in love”.** Colossians 2:14
He goes on to say that **love is the greatest** of all qualities is love. 1 Corinthians 13:13
- B. So, **if you are loving God and showing love to others, then you are living up to God’s law** and functioning in God’s societal kingdom. His government, His rules. His love.
- C. In the weeks to come, I want to spend more time on these kingdom qualities
- D. Specific ways we demonstrate love like –
1. managing anger, lust
 2. divorce, and oaths
 3. retaliation & giving
 4. fasting and prayer
- E. We’re going to dive into these, based on Matthew 5-8 and see our love and understanding both grow as we learn how to please the Lord by loving God more and others better.
We hope to see you next week

Underdebraspalm.com