

The Old Moral Code of Ten Commandments Not Revised

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WE have shown in another tract that the first day of the week is mentioned only eight times in the New Testament, and is not in a single instance spoken of as a sacred day, or a day of rest. In contrast, we have shown that the Sabbath is mentioned fifty-nine times in the New Testament, and in every instance reference is made to the day of the week on which the Creator rested from his work, the day he set apart as his, the day on which he put his blessing.

We have also shown that the observance of the first day of the week cannot gather strength from the example of Christ and the first apostles, but that the example of the apostles is decidedly on the side of the divine precept in support of the observance of the seventh day of the week as the sanctified rest-day of the Lord.

But here we are met by a certain class of opponents of the primeval Sabbath with the assertion that only nine of the ten commandments are given in the New Testament, and that the Sabbath is purposely left out. Writers and speakers use different terms. It is sometimes stated that "every precept of the decalogue is re-affirmed in the New Testament excepting the Sabbath." And it is not unfrequently the case that ministers will so far

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presume upon the ignorance and credulity of the people as to affirm that nine of the ten commandments are given *verbatim* in the New Testament, and that the Sabbath of the Old Testament is carefully kept out of the New.

With these statements, which, as we shall show, are utterly void of truth, they give the impression that the Sabbath is not as

important in the Christian, as in the Jewish, dispensation. And those who can accept such statements without investigation, will not only rest satisfied with a false position, but they will regard the agitation of the Sabbath question as unnecessary and even wrong. The fact that our opponents make a stronger impression on the public mind with their broad assertions on this point than by any other attack, is our apology for testing their statements in a plain and thorough manner by the word of God.

We appeal to men of candor, who will respect truth and love it for the truth's sake. Of men who will through prejudice reject the plain truth of God's word, and trample it under their feet, we have no hope. We freely admit that the fourth commandment is not given *verbatim*, that is, word for word, in the New Testament. And it is just as true that only the three short commandments are thus repeated. The sixth, seventh, and eighth only are repeated in the New Testament. Does this fact release men from keeping the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, ninth, and tenth? No, indeed. "Thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steal," are the only precepts of the decalogue which are repeated word for word in all the New Testament. Let the most critical eye search this matter fully. We state the facts in the case.

What, then, can be said of those ministers who will state to audiences hasting to the bar of God to

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be judged by the moral law, and in the very face of Heaven, that nine of the ten commandments are given *verbatim* in the New Testament? Their egregious assertions must be attributed either to inexcusable ignorance of the subject, or to the custom of handling the word of God deceitfully. If they are so grossly ignorant of the subject as to shield them from the charge of clerical trickery, and uttering deliberate falsehood in the house of God, they have no business meddling with the subject.

The ten precepts of the moral code did exist from the days of fallen Adam, and were binding on the people before they were spoken from Sinai, and written upon tables of stone. This is evident from the fact that the Bible contains a record of the very

sins which are the violation of each one of the ten commandments, as existing before the law was declared in the hearing of the people at Sinai. Where there is transgression, there must be law. Remove law, and sin ceases to exist. "For where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom.4:15. The sin of Sabbath-breaking was rebuked as early as thirty days before the ten commandments were spoken from Sinai. This fact is fully established by comparing Ex. 16:1, 23-30; 19:1.

And there is no intimation in all the Old Testament that God would at any time change any of the precepts of his moral code. That law being in its nature changeless as the very throne of Heaven, once written in the Old Testament, accompanied with the record of the circumstances of awful grandeur that attended its rehearsal at Sinai, the Lord has not seen fit to have it written a second time in the New Testament. The Holy Ghost never undertook to give the divine law over again on a new account in the New Testament.

The apostles, in their writings long years after

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the death and resurrection of Christ, appeal to the moral code as given in the Old Testament as the highest living authority in Heaven or on the earth. They state moral duties and obligation, and refer to the precepts of the moral code to sustain their propositions. If it had been left to Paul, Peter, James, John, and Jude, to give the moral code, or nine-tenths of it, over again in the New Testament, those faithful men would have done it, and we should be able to read those precepts word for word in their writings.

Our opponents see as clearly as we do that it is necessary to their position that nine of the ten commandments should appear in the New Testament, word for word. Hence those ministers who feel that they must preserve the unity of their flocks are constantly tempted to give a false impression upon the Sabbath question, to quiet the minds of the people.

This fact crops out in the statement of those opponents who manifest more regard for party than a clear conscience when they

claim that nine of the ten commandments are given *verbatim* in the New Testament. They see the need that it should be so; and, feeling it important that the people should view the matter thus, in order that they be shielded from the claims of the fourth commandment, they seem to adopt the policy of the Roman church, that "the end justifies the means," and give themselves up, even in the house of God, to the utterance of a deliberate untruth.

We stand upon the grand old moral code, the only document in the universe that has the honor to have been spoken by the voice of God in the hearing of the assembled people, and to have been engraven with his finger on the tables of stone. Do our opponents declare that moral code revised, so that

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only nine of its precepts should be observed by Christians? Then we inquire: What prophet has foretold that this should be done? What apostle has recorded the fact that this has been done? The Bible is silent upon the subject. No such revision of the moral code has taken place.

Do any still urge that the apostles have revised the moral code so as to release men from the claims of the fourth commandment? Then we again inquire: Where is the revised code? What scribe ever copied it? What printer ever printed it? What book-seller ever sold it? What colporteur ever carried it about the country to throw into the laps of the dear children to impress them with the fact that there are nine commandments, and only nine, for Christians to observe?

Our pen is at this time dealing with plain facts in a pointed manner. And, may be, we shall be pardoned by the candid reading public for inquiring: Do these men who have the moral code revised, or changed in some way so as to release Christians from the observance of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, really believe that any such revision has taken place? If they do, why not produce a copy of the revised code? Please pass it in, gentlemen. When you will produce the new code, brought into existence by as good authority as that which originated the old, we will be happy to accept it as the moral law for Christians, and cease to agitate the

public mind with the Sabbath question. But until you do this, we shall cling to the original document, and plead for the observance of all its precepts by Christian men.

Again we inquire: Do these men believe what they say, when they tell the people that the fourth precept of the moral code has been revised, or so changed that Christians are released from the observance

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of the last day of the week? We make this pointed appeal with the fact in full view, known everywhere, that in the several branches of the mammoth Sunday-school institution the old moral code of ten commandments has been thrown into the laps of a million of the dear youth of our land, printed word for word as God spoke it from Sinai, and as he wrote it on the tables of stone. If the divine law has been revised, why do not the managers of the American Tract Society, which has the support of nearly a score of the leading denominations of our land, publish the new code for all the Sunday-schools? Why send out from their publishing house in New York cart-loads of primers and cards on which are printed the ten commandments to make a false impression on the tender minds of the lambs of Christ's fold, if that moral code is not to be understood and observed word for word, just as it reads? Why not print the revised code, make a correct impression on the minds of the youth, and free the subject from present embarrassment, if they believe what they teach?

It will appear evident to every candid mind that these religious bodies, who are printing and circulating the original moral code, do not really believe that it has been revised. To say the least, want of faith in the revision doctrine has kept them from getting the several precepts of the revised code together in due form, and publishing it to the Christian world.

We are delighted to see that one of the fair pages of the Baptist hymn book is devoted to the ten commandments, word for word, just as we teach and observe them. Most certainly they did not put the ten commandments in their beautiful hymn and tune book that

they might sing them. No, they have put this grand old moral code with the sacred

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songs of the house of God from reverence and love for its divine Author, and that while under the inspiration of worship their hearts may be impressed with the sacred duty to observe all his commandments. God bless the Baptists. In making the commandments thus prominent, they remind us of the word of the Lord to the Hebrews by Moses: "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates." Deut.6:7-9.

In 1873, before a large audience at Woodland, Cal., we called for the revised copy of the moral code from the New Testament, containing nine of the ten precepts of the decalogue. Prof. Martin, of the Christian College of that place, in a review undertook the task of presenting them. But this work of cutting and carving for the Almighty is by no means confined to the city of Woodland, or to the State of California. One thousand and one ministers of several of the denominations, in different parts of our country, take precisely the same position. And as there is a general agreement with those who hold this view, we give Mr. Martin's nine as a sample of the rest. If, however, any should be dissatisfied with any of his, they are urgently invited to improve Mr. Martin's revised New Testament code. And in order to bring the matter directly before the eye of the reader, we will give nine of the precepts of the moral code as repeated from Sinai, and engraven on the tables of stone, side by side with what is said to be the revised code in the New Testament, as made out by Prof. Martin.

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ORIGINAL CODE.

1. Thou shalt have no other

REVISED CODE.

1. Get thee behind me, Satan;

gods before me.

2. 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. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor GOD.

serve them; for I the Lord thy by 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, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

3. 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.

5. Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. Thou shalt not kill.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. Thou shalt not steal.

9. Thou shalt not bear

for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Luke 4:8.

2. Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' Hill and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands. Acts 17:22-24.

3. But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by Heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath; but let your yea be yea, and your nay, nay, lest ye fall into condemnation. James 5:12.

5. Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right. Honor thy father and mother, which is the first commandment with promise, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on earth. Eph.6:1-3.

6. Thou shalt not kill. Rom.13:9.

7. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Rom.13:9.

8. Thou shalt not steal. Rom.13:9.

9. Thou shalt not bear

false witness against
thy neighbor.
10. Thy shalt not covet
thy neighbor's house; thou
shalt not covet thy neighbors
wife, nor his man-servant, nor
his maid-servant, nor his ox,
nor his ass, nor any thing
that is thy neighbor's.

false witness. Rom.13:9.
10. Thou shalt not covet.
Rom.13:9.

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Before calling special attention to the quotations which are said to constitute the new moral code for Christians, we wish to make some general remarks touching the heresy we are reviewing.

1. All talk about the "re-affirming of the nine commandments," and the "revised moral code," is on the supposition that the ten commandments were abrogated at the death of Christ. Mark this: The position is that all ten of the commandments were in full force up to the time of the death of Christ, and that, with the death of the world's Redeemer, the moral code also died.

2. As the decalogue was the living moral code throughout the entire ministry of the Son of God until the hour of his death upon the cross, it would be more than childish to quote any of Christ's words spoken during his public ministry, as re-affirming any of its precepts. Whatever, therefore, may be claimed from the New Testament as re-affirming nine of the precepts of the decalogue, must be found in the Acts and epistles of the apostles.

3. But, bad for their theory, this gives a period between the death of the moral code at the cross and the re-affirming of the nine precepts by the apostles, in which there is no law. And "where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom.4:15. This view gives to the world a sinless period of more than twenty long years. Not sinless, however, because of any change in men; but because of the supposed decease of God's Moral Detector; "For by the law is the knowledge of sin." Rom.3:20.

Beginning with the first, we now briefly notice the passages which these gentlemen who have the divine law abolished, and a part of it re-enacted, would have the Christian world believe are

the new code for the Christian age. For their first commandment they cite Luke 4:8. The reader will

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please notice the passage as we have placed it in juxtaposition with the original first commandment of the decalogue. But right here these gentlemen face fearful absurdities.

1. According to their position, the first commandment for the Christian church was addressed to the devil. We naturally inquire whether this Christian precept was given for the especial benefit of his Satanic majesty. Or, did the great Head of the church give the second edition of the first commandment to the Christian church through the devil!!

2. The original first commandment was announced from Sinai by the voice of the Lord, as the trembling people stood before the burning, quaking mountain. The scene was awfully grand. But in this case the first commandment was re-affirmed in the wilderness of temptation when but two beings were present; one, the Son of God in his humility; the other, the devil! "Be ye astonished, O ye heavens, at this!" Right here, in the desolate wilderness, we are told, the first commandment of the divine law was re-affirmed to the Christian church through the devil!!

3. But as the very climax of all absurdities, the position of these gentlemen has the first commandment re-affirmed at the commencement of Christ's ministry, at least three years and a half before the supposed decease of the ten at the close of his ministry. This gives eleven commandments for the period of three and a half years! And if, according to our law-abolishing friends, all the precepts of the divine law were swept by the board at the cross, clean work was made, not only of the ten, but of the one prematurely re-affirmed to Satan, leaving the Christian Church but eight precepts in the new moral code, instead of nine, and the devil not one!

So much for the first precept of the new code.

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And of the second re-affirmed precept we will here state, that it is simply a record of facts in Paul's visit and labors in Athens that is

given in Acts 17:22-24, having no form of a precept whatever. Neither can the second precept of the decalogue be found in any of the books of the New Testament. Reference is made to the sin of violating the second commandment, and Christians are warned against it; but we search in vain for the second precept of the decalogue in the New Testament.

When the second commandment has been urged against the images of the Romish church, Papists have proudly trampled it under their feet as a Jewish precept, declaring that it was not in the New Testament. Hence, the second commandment is left out of their numerous catechisms. And now a host of Protestants use the same old papal argument to excuse their practice relative to the fourth commandment. When we urge the claims of the Sabbath law upon Protestants, they in their turn reply, "The Sabbath precept is not given in the New Testament."

But if it be still urged that Paul did re-affirm the second precept of the decalogue from Mars' Hill for the Christian church, then we reply that there is no evidence that there was a single follower of Christ in the city of Athens to hear it. Read Acts, chapter seventeen. It was when Paul's attendants had returned to Berea, leaving the apostle alone, that he addressed the people. And did the great apostle then and there re-affirm the second precept of the decalogue for the Christian church through the curious, Christless crowd of that city wholly given to idolatry, and not one Christian present?

And further, it may be worthy of note that Paul's speech at Mars' Hill was full twenty years after the

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death of Christ. If, therefore the decalogue was abrogated at the cross, and the second precept was really re-affirmed in the apostle's memorable address at Athens, all men were released from the second commandment for the space of twenty years!

We pass to the third commandment, and again call the reader's attention to the old moral code, and to those passages supposed to constitute the new Christian code, as we have placed them side by side on page 8. Please read the two, and then answer the inquiries.

Has the apostle James re-affirmed the third commandment in the text quoted? If he has, why change the language employed? Has the apostle improved upon the style of the High and Holy One? The Friends, and thousands besides, hold that the apostle here opposes the judicial oath. He probably refers to that which is forbidden by the third commandment, but it is preposterous to say that the apostle is here resurrecting the third commandment, and giving it over a second time for the Christian church.

The apostle claimed no such thing; but in the same epistle he says, "There is one Lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy." If the work of revising or re-affirming the moral code was left to the apostles, then there were twelve lawgivers instead of one, as affirmed by the apostle. James 4:12. He wrote A.D. 60. Was there no third commandment for more than a quarter of a century?

We pass to the fifth precept. Paul states a moral duty, and cites the fifth commandment as his authority. He is not re-affirming the fifth precept of the decalogue in his letter to the church at Ephesus, therefore he does not repeat it *verbatim* and entire. See page 8. This epistle was written A.D. 64. Did the fifth commandment lie dead, from the blow

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it received at the death of Christ, for more than thirty years?

The sixth, seventh, and eighth precepts are repeated *verbatim* in Paul's epistle to the church at Rome. And why? Is it because the apostle is re-affirming them, or giving them over again on a new account? No; he is doing no such thing. If this work of re-affirming nine of the precepts of the decalogue had been left to the trusty men who wrote the New Testament, we should find all nine precepts in the New Testament word for word.

These three short precepts only of all the ten are quoted *verbatim*, because of their brevity. The writers of the New Testament state moral duties, and appeal to the moral code, which was to them in the first century, and is to us in the nineteenth century, the highest authority in all Heaven and earth. Paul's letter to the Romans was written A.D. 60. Were the precepts against

murder, adultery, and theft, lying dead more than twenty-five years?

We now come to the last, the tenth. What difference between the two? See page 8. There is in the old edition the sum of thirty-three good words. But in what is supposed to be the new, re-affirmed precept, there are only the first four words of the old. Was the Lord too lengthy in the first edition making it necessary for the learned apostle to improve upon his work? Or, was "the law of the Lord perfect" as it came from its Author, and was Paul unfaithful to duty? These inquiries are made on the supposition that it was left to Paul to re-affirm the tenth commandment for the benefit of the Christian church. But no; the apostle assumed no such position as belonging to a fraternity of law-givers. He simply cites the tenth precept of the decalogue, quotes enough of it to be understood, and honors it, a quarter of a century after the death

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of Christ, as resting on its original, immutable basis, the highest living authority in the universe.

If it had been left to the writers of the Acts and epistles of the apostles to re-affirm nine of the precepts of the moral code, they would have faithfully attended to the matter, and we should find them there word for word. But as they had no such work on their hands, and as they simply referred to the divine precepts as their highest authority, all is plain. The short ones are given word for word because of their brevity; and the sensible writers of the New Testament did not burden their writings in point of length by repeating the long precepts *verbatim*, when a simple reference to them by repeating a portion would fully answer their purpose.

Driven from the position that all the precepts of the divine law, excepting the fourth, are re-affirmed in the New Testament, this class of opponents are compelled to admit that in the case of the second commandment reference is made only to the principle or facts upon which the precept is based. This is all they can possibly maintain. When fairly and squarely on this ground, then we are prepared to say to them that the term "Sabbath," in the singular number, which expresses the very institution sustained by the

fourth precept of the moral code, is mentioned fifty-nine times in the New Testament. So that when it comes to this, that in some of the nine precepts reference is made by the apostles to only the principle or fact which gave rise to the precept, then it will be seen that Sabbatarians are ahead, having fifty-nine references to the Sabbath of the fourth commandment in the New Testament. Can as many references be shown from the New Testament to any other one of the ten precepts of the decalogue? Search and see.

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But why labor to dodge the point? The Sabbath is either abrogated, or it is not. It is either the duty of the people of God to observe the Sabbath, or it is not their duty. It is either binding, or it is not. The observance of the Sabbath is not partly right and partly wrong. If the Sabbath was abolished at the death of Christ, it was a living institution in full force up to the cross, and there has been no weekly Sabbath since.

The Sabbath has either been changed from the seventh to the first day of the week, or it has not been changed. We should observe the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, or we should not. We should observe the seventh day, or we should not. Where is the plain proof from the New Testament that the Sabbath is abrogated? What prophet of God has declared that the moral code of the Infinite One should be abolished, or changed? And what apostle has stated in plain terms that anything of this kind has taken place?

Christ, in his memorable sermon on the mount, seems to appreciate the discussion of the law question in the Christian church, and as a rebuke of wrong positions upon the subject, and as a guide to correct thoughts, he says: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. 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." Matt. 5:17,18. "And let all the people say, Amen."