

Mailing address:

<p>Bible Study #3: <i>What Does God Want From Me?</i></p>
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Introduction and Review

Dear friend,

We are so glad that we are able to help you as you continue to study the Bible. As a reminder, in study #1 we learned, first of all, a few basic things about the contents of the Bible, and how to find verse references. We then looked at the inspiration of the Bible, and we saw that each and every word of the Bible was God’s Word, as much as if one heard Him speak audibly, so that from cover to cover the Scriptures are the error-free, perfect Word of God. We then looked at the preservation of the Bible, and saw that God has not allowed any of His inspired Word to be lost—it is available today, perfectly preserved and accurately translated into English in our King James Version, the standard English Bible. We then learned in study #2 about many characteristics of God. We saw that there is only one God, a Spirit, who created and sustains the universe, and who wants to have fellowship with us. We then looked at a number of attributes of God; among other characteristics, He is all-powerful, eternal, and self-existent, as well as holy, just, loving, and good. We also learned the meaning of the words *Eloheim*, *Jehovah*, and *Adonai*. Finally, we saw that this one God has eternally existed in three Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. With this understanding of what the Bible is, and who God is, we are now ready to see what it is that God wants from us, and what His Law promises for obedience and for disobedience.

With study #3 you have also received your completed version of study #2, which has been checked and graded. Please look over that study for corrections by your Bible teacher, especially on the quiz questions, and for comments, especially at the very end of the study. Also, please keep your completed studies available so that you can look back at them later. Remember that at the end of each

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study you have some questions to answer so that we can see that you have understood the Biblical teaching, and some blank space upon which you can write down any questions that you have. Also, please use this space to provide us with the names and addresses of any friends or acquaintances of yours who would also be interested in studying the Bible, so that we can send this free correspondence study to them as well. Once again, this Bible course is provided to you courtesy of Headwaters Baptist Church, P.O. Box 1261, Shelburne, ON, L9V 3M2, (519) 943-2922, www.headwatersbaptistchurch.org, pastor@headwatersbaptistchurch.org. Please let us know if you would like a personal visit for Bible study, and feel free to visit us at 426132 25 Sideroad, Mono, Ontario for Sunday morning worship at 10:30 a.m., followed by a fellowship meal and Sunday afternoon worship at 1:00 p.m., or Wednesday prayer and Bible study at 7:00 p.m. Once again, we are overjoyed that we can assist you in studying the Bible.

What Does God Want From Me?

The Importance of the Question

At the beginning of study #2, we saw that we were created to please God (Revelation 4:11), so, if we want to fulfill our purpose for existence, we must conform to His will, and be and do what He wishes. One who does not do what God says misses out on everything in this life, and in eternity, that has any real value. Furthermore, God has said that “it is appointed unto men once to _____, but after this the _____” (Hebrews 9:27). Someday we will stand before God and give an account of our lives. Some people “shall go away into everlasting _____: but the righteous into _____” (Matthew 25:46). Nobody will think at that time that he paid too much attention to what God wanted! Thankfully, God has told us what the standard for judgment is going to be. In John 12:48, Jesus said that “he that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the _____ that I have spoken, the same shall _____ him in the last day.” The Lord told us that “man shall not live by bread alone, but by _____ that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:4). We are going to be judged according to what the Bible, the Word of God, says. The result of that judgment will have eternal consequences. Imagine that you were in school, taking a very important class, which you needed to pass to graduate, and in that class the final exam was going to be 100% of your grade. What an important test it would be! If you failed, you would not be able to graduate, no matter how

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everything else went. Imagine, then, that the teacher told you that a copy of the exam, with the exact questions you were going to have to answer, and the correct answers marked in, was in the library, and all students were free to look at it and study from it. Would you say, “That is nice, but I don’t think I’ll do that. There are too many other things going on. I’ll just go to class on the day of the final exam and see what happens.” Of course not! You would run to the library to read over the exam. How carefully you would look at the questions and study the answers! Only a fool would do anything else. God has told us in His Word exactly what the standard for His “final exam” will be, and He has commanded us to “search the scriptures” (John 5:39) to get ready. To not diligently prepare for His coming judgment is the greatest possible folly. As the Lord Jesus said, “For what shall it _____ a man, if he shall gain the _____, and _____ his own _____?” (Mark 8:36). Let us, then, see what God’s Law has commanded for us!

God’s Law:

His holy standard

Our Bible has been calculated to contain 31,101 verses and 791,328 words, all of which are from God, and all of which we are to live by. Obviously we cannot cover everything the Bible tells us to do in just one study. (This is a good reason why, in addition to doing this Bible study, you should daily spend time reading the Bible on your own so that you get to know it cover to cover). We will, however, take a good survey, which will give us an idea of how we match up. Remember that God’s Law reflects who He is; He commands us “Be ye holy” because He Himself is holy (1 Peter 1:15-16). Also, the Bible tells us that “_____ is the transgression of the _____” (1 John 3:4); we sin when we do what God says not to do, do not do what He tells us to do, or are not what He tells us to be. With this in mind, let us begin our study of God’s Law with the ten commandments, found in Exodus chapter twenty.

The first commandment is found in Exodus 20:1-3: “And God spake all these words, saying, I *am* the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have _____ other _____ before me.” God here forbids all worship not directed to Him, Jehovah, the great Triune God. To worship anyone or anything else is idolatry and sin. This would forbid the worship of Islam, modern Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and all other non-Biblical

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religions, as well as the worship of those groups within Christendom that deny the Trinity, such as the Watchtower society (so-called “Jehovah’s Witnesses”), Mormonism, Unitarianism, Oneness Pentecostalism, etc. However, God wants more than just a rejection of all false religion; He wants to be in first place in your life. People can make “gods” of all sorts of other things. You could worship the “almighty dollar” by putting money first in your life. You could worship yourself by putting what you want ahead of what God says. You could put friends or family ahead of God. Jesus Christ (who is God) demands first place in your life, and if others will not follow Him, you must do so anyway. He said in Matthew 10:34-37, “Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his _____, and the daughter against her _____, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man’s foes *shall be* they of his own household. He that loveth father or mother _____ than _____ is not worthy of me: and he that _____ son or daughter more than _____ is not worthy of me.” Have you always put the true God first in your life, and loved and sought for Him before all other persons or things? If not, you have broken the first commandment!

The second commandment is found in Exodus 20:4-6: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any _____, or any _____ of _____ that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not _____ thyself to them, nor _____ them: for I the LORD thy God *am* a _____ God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.” Here God forbids any to worship Him with “pictures . . . [or] images” (Num 33:52). This prohibits the making of any pictures of God Himself, as well as practices such as bowing down before statues or pictures (Ezekiel 8:10) of saints¹ or Mary, even with the intent to worship God, not them. John 4:24 says, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in _____ and in _____.” All physical images of God necessarily misrepresent Him—as an invisible Spirit, He is not material and cannot be pictured. The Lord commands mankind to

¹ Many people think that the saints are only a tiny category of extraordinarily good dead Christians. However, the Bible teaches that every single one of God’s people is a saint, whether already dead or still alive (Psalm 16:3; 116:15; 1 Corinthians 14:33). The Word of God never tells us to pray to dead saints or supports the idea that they have special powers to intercede for us before God—Jesus Christ is the only Mediator. We should only come to God through Him (1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1).

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offer Him spiritual worship as commanded in His Word, not worship with images. Furthermore, the second commandment agrees with other Scripture in forbidding the making or use of images of Jesus Christ in worship. Since Jesus Christ is God, no images of Him should be made. No image could be made to represent His Divine nature, since that is invisible and spiritual. No image correctly represents the awe-inspiring glorified body He received after His resurrection. One who saw His glorified humanity fell at his feet as dead (Revelation 1:10-18); no image can make this happen. No image correctly represents His human nature during His earthly ministry, for the Bible records nothing of His appearance at that time (compare 1 Peter 1:8; 2 Corinthians 5:16). No image can, therefore, correctly represent the eternal Son of God, who is one Person with two natures, a human and a Divine. Furthermore, the common pictures of Christ with long hair are a Satanic attempt to imply that He was sinful, since “if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him” (1 Corinthians 11:14). If you have attempted to worship God using images, you have broken the second commandment—and worship with an “image . . . the LORD thy God hateth” (Deuteronomy 16:22). However, there is more to the second commandment than this. The point of the second commandment is that we recognize God for who He is and serve and worship Him in the way that He has commanded. Romans 1:18-25 explains how mankind turned from the true God to idolatry, which then led to many other sins (Romans 1:26-32). Please read Romans 1:18-32. We see there that “the _____ of God” (v. 18) was upon men for rejecting what the character of God (v. 19), which included His “eternal _____ and Godhead” (v. 20). They saw who God was, since v. 21 says that they “knew God,” but they “_____ him not as God, neither were _____; but became _____ in their _____, and their foolish heart was darkened” (v. 21). They would not recognize God for who He was, nor reverence Him, or love or be thankful for who He was, but set up their own ideas of God instead. This is very much the idea behind the second commandment. Since they would not have God for who He was, they “changed the glory of the _____ God into an _____ made like to _____ man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things” (v. 23). They turned from the true God to worship gods of their own imagination, gods that were like them, gods that they liked better. They “_____ the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the _____ more than the _____, who is blessed for ever” (v. 25), and had terrible judgment fall upon them (v. 18, 24, 26-32). God demands

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that you understand and accept Him for exactly who He says He is in His Word, and worship and serve Him on His own terms. The second commandment forbids, obviously, both the idolatry and image-use mentioned before, but also all other false concepts of God. For example, if you believe in a god that is so “good” that he lets you do whatever you want, and just overlooks sin, or who is so merciful that he will not punish anyone in hell (Rev 21:8), you have a false concept of God which violates the second commandment. If you want God to be kind of like a lucky charm or like Santa Claus, so that you don’t live for Him for His own sake, but only seek Him when you are in trouble and or want something—perhaps some material thing, or help in sickness, of a way out of a difficult situation—you have also broken the second commandment. Do you rebelliously get angry at God if He does not fulfill your own desires? To attempt to re-fashion the Lord of the universe into someone you like better is a very wicked thing, deserving of severe punishment. He is a “jealous” God (Exodus 20:5), demanding exclusive devotion (Exodus 34:14; Deuteronomy 4:24; 5:9; 6:15). He will not tolerate false worship.

The third commandment is found in Exodus 20:7: “Thou shalt not take the _____ of the LORD thy God in _____; for the LORD will _____ hold him _____ that taketh his name in _____.” This commandment certainly does forbid references to God and Jesus Christ in curse phrases. We have an example of a man in Israel who sinned by cursing using God’s name in Leviticus 24:10-16. The man “_____ the name of *the LORD*, and _____” (v. 11). Jehovah commanded, in v. 14-16, “Bring forth him that hath _____ without the camp; and let all that heard *him* lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation _____ him. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever _____ his _____ shall bear his sin. And he that _____ the name of the LORD, he shall _____ be put to _____, *and* all the congregation shall certainly stone him: as well the stranger, as he that is born in the land, when he blasphemeth the name of *the LORD*, shall be put to death” (Leviticus 24:14-16). Today many wickedly curse like this and think nothing of it, when God had those who did it in Israel put to death. A bad situation, such as getting dangerously cut off by a car on the road, or hitting your finger with a hammer, is no excuse. This man cursed during a fight (Leviticus 24:10), but he was still put to death. Although the government today will do nothing to you, if you have cursed with God’s name, you deserve to die. Furthermore, it was customary when one heard blasphemy in Israel to

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rend or tear his clothes as an expression of great sorrow and horror (2 Kings 18:37; 19:1; cf. 2 Kings 18:28-35; 19:3, 6). Perhaps you do not curse yourself, but it does not bother you when others do it—the kind of sorrow and horror over bad language that would make you tear your clothes is the farthest thing from your mind! Do you watch TV programs with cursing, or read books with it? When others do it do you reprove them, and try to get them to stop? Or do you say nothing, and so share in their guilt?

However, there is more to the third commandment than cursing or blaspheming God. What is forbidden is to take His name in “vain.” This would forbid speaking of God in a light or frivolous way, rather than speaking of Him reverently and giving Him the honor that is His due. The commandment forbids making jokes or speaking in an irreverent way about God, about Christ, the Bible (which God has “magnified . . . above all [His] name,” Psalm 138:2), the things of God, and so on. It would also forbid careless references to Him, such as singing hymns or songs about God without paying attention to what you are saying, or prayer where you are not really speaking to God but it is just a ritual or a formality or something done for show. Consider that “if any man . . . seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man’s religion *is vain*” (James 1:26). If you have cursed, or spoken of God in a light and careless way, you are guilty of breaking the third commandment!

The fourth commandment is found in Exodus 20:8-11: “_____ the sabbath day, to keep it _____. Six days shalt thou _____, and do all thy work: But the _____ day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any _____, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that *is* within thy gates: For *in* six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them *is*, and _____ the seventh day: wherefore the LORD _____ the sabbath day, and hallowed it.” In Israel, every Saturday was set apart for the worship of God, and secular work ceased. In the New Testament, churches assemble to worship on Sunday,² and Christians

² Jesus Christ rose from the dead on Sunday (Mark 16:9), and appeared to His assembled disciples (Matthew 28:8-10; Luke 24:34; John 20:19-23; etc.). The church met on Sunday on the day of Pentecost (Leviticus 23:15-16; Pentecost was fifty days after a Saturday Sabbath, and so was always on Sunday), and saw Christ's tremendous blessings (Acts 2:1-41). The New Testament example for church meetings is Sunday (Acts 20:6-7; 1 Corinthians 16:2); no Biblical pattern of churches keeping Saturday exists, and no verse commands churches to worship on Saturday. The Jewish Sabbath, a sign given specifically to the nation of Israel (Exodus 31:12-17; Ezekiel 20:10-12), and not enforced from the time of creation until Israel left Egypt (Nehemiah 9:13-14), was a type of salvation-rest in Jesus Christ (Hebrews 3-

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are not to be “forsaking the _____ of ourselves _____, as the manner of some is; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching” (Hebrews 10:25). If you skip church on Sunday, you are sinning against God. Watching a TV preacher, listening to Christian radio, spending some time on Sunday reading the Bible or talking with friends about spiritual things is not enough; the verse commands “assembling . . . together” in church. Furthermore, just as in Israel the Sabbath was set apart for the worship of God, so we should remember that church is about worshipping God, not about our convenience or preferences, and so we must go to one of Christ’s true churches,³ where the Bible is believed and practiced, and not just whatever happens to be closest to our house or whatever we prefer for some reason; if we are not in a real church, we are not obeying God’s command. Nor does it honor God if we go merely out of a sense of duty or necessity. The attitude of the godly is seen in Psalm 122:1: “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD.” Those right with God love His times of public worship because they love Him. They can say with Psalm 84:2, “My soul _____, yea, even _____ for the courts of the LORD: my _____ and my flesh _____ for the living God.”

We should not just serve God on Sunday, however; He wants us to use all of our time for Him. The worship and religious service of those who live for themselves is “vain . . . abomination . . . iniquity . . . [something God’s] soul hateth . . . a trouble unto [Him],” and when they “make many prayers, [He] will not hear” (Isaiah 1:13-15; cf. Psalm 50:16; Zechariah 7:4-14). We are to be “redeeming the time, because the days are evil” (Ephesians 5:16). 1 Corinthians 10:31 commands, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or _____ ye do, do _____ to the glory of God.” Does all your time belong to God? Certainly if it does, you will be in church—but can you say your time is His if you do not daily practice even such basics as reading His Word (2 Timothy 2:15) and prayer (Psalm 5:3)? Do you spend more time on hobbies, watching TV, amusing yourself, and doing other non-Scriptural things, than you do in the service of God? Certainly we learn from the fourth commandment that church attendance is necessary, and if you skip it for anything other than

4), and so has been fulfilled. Since it is fulfilled, the New Testament tells Christians they do not have to keep it (Colossians 2:16-17; Romans 14:5-6). Groups that say that Christians need to meet and worship on Saturday are consequently in error. If you have questions on this subject, please ask us, and we will be happy to explain this truth in greater detail.

3 A later Bible study, *The Church of Jesus Christ*, deals with the nature of Christ’s true churches.

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matters like severe sickness, you are guilty. God commands you to go to church, love His worship, and glorify Him with all your time. If you do not, you are guilty!

The fifth commandment is found in Exodus 20:12: “___ ___ ___ ___ ___ thy ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ and thy ___ ___ ___ ___ ___: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.” Obedience is certainly related to honoring parents (Ephesians 6:1, “Children, obey your parents,” cf. Colossians 3:20); if your parents command you to do something, unless they command you to act sinfully, it is hard to see how you could honor them and disobey. But honor is more than just obedience. Notice Deuteronomy 27:16: “___ ___ ___ ___ ___ *be* he that ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ by his father or his mother. And all the people shall say, Amen.” Honor involves respecting your parents and giving great weight to their wishes, desiring always to please them. It goes beyond obedience to their commands to knowing their desires, and, with a spirit of love and respect, acting in accordance with their wishes without ever being asked. Notice Leviticus 19:3: “Ye shall ___ ___ ___ ___ every man his ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ , and his ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ , and keep my sabbaths: I *am* the LORD your God.” You must give your parents a reverential fear and respect from your heart. To not honor your parents is terrible evil. In Israel, God commanded that one who hit his parents (Exodus 21:15), or who cursed his parents (Exodus 21:17), should “surely be put to death,” and a child who is “stubborn and rebellious” and consistently will “not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother” was worthy of death (Deuteronomy 21:18-21). God also specifically condemns not listening to and despising parents (Proverbs 23:22), robbing them (Proverbs 28:24), not blessing them (Proverbs 30:11), and mocking them (Proverbs 30:17). Children must behave in this way simply because of their parents’ position over them; God never says that only parents who are a good example themselves, or who always treat their children correctly, or who are loving and kind, etc. must be treated in this way. While parents are responsible to act properly toward their children (Proverbs 22:6), children must honor them no matter what. You should also honor your elders in general; Leviticus 19:32 commands, “Thou shalt ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ before the hoary head [someone with gray hair], and honour the face of the old man, and fear thy God: I *am* the LORD.” If you have not at all times and in all ways honored your parents, you are guilty of breaking the fifth commandment!

The sixth commandment is found in Exodus 20:13: “Thou shalt not ___ ___ ___ ___ .” God forbids the taking of innocent life. Since mankind is in the image of God, murder strikes at Him by killing one

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created in His image (Genesis 9:6). Not only is killing adults and youth murder, but abortion is the murder of a pre-born baby. In Exodus 21:22-25, if a man hurt a pregnant woman with child, so that she gave birth prematurely and the child died, God said to give “life for life.” God uses the same word for both the “babe . . . in [the womb]” (Luke 1:41, 44) and the “babe” outside of his mother, in a crib and desiring his mother’s milk (Luke 2:12, 16; 1 Peter 2:2). God has a purpose for and knows children before their birth (Jeremiah 1:5; Psalm 139:13-16). One becomes a new person in the image of God at the time of conception (Psalm 51:5). You are a murderer, or are involved in the commission of murder, if you have had an abortion, assisted in an abortion, counseled someone to have an abortion or not warned someone you knew who planned to have one, voted to support abortion (the official party platform of the Democrats, and the position of some Republicans), directly owned companies that support abortion through possessing their stock, or indirectly possessed such stock through mutual funds. Furthermore, some “contraceptive” devices actually prevent the implantation of the already conceived child, rather than conception, and so lead to abortions: the IUD regularly causes early abortions, and the standard birth control pill, the “morning after” pill, Norplant, and other chemical “contraceptives” sometimes do not prevent conception but abort already conceived children instead. If you have used, sold, recommended, or not warned against any of these things you are involved in murder. Furthermore, you are responsible for more than just not killing others yourself; you must seek to protect those whom others seek to murder. Proverbs 24:11-12 reads, “If thou _____ to deliver *them that are* drawn unto death, and *those that are* ready to be _____; If thou sayest, Behold, we _____ it _____; doth not he that pondereth the heart consider *it?* and he that keepeth thy soul, doth *not* he know *it?* and shall *not* he render to *every* man according to his works?” If you do nothing to oppose abortion, you are guilty, just as you would be if you saw a criminal attack and kill someone in the street and did nothing. God absolutely forbids murdering anyone, and commands us to seek to protect innocent life.

The Lord Jesus Christ also commented on the sixth commandment in Matthew 5:21-22: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the _____: But I say unto you, That whosoever is _____ with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the _____: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in

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danger of _____.” Christ equated unjust anger with murder. The only just anger is a selfless hatred of sin (cf. Mark 3:1-5). If someone has done you wrong, so you have been angry with him, or someone has cut you off on the road and you have been angry with him, or you have in anger insulted someone (“Raca” was an insult in the Lord Jesus’ day), you are a murderer. If you have broken the sixth commandment, it is extremely serious; Jesus Christ said that you are “in danger of hell fire” (Matthew 5:22).

The seventh commandment is found in Exodus 20:14: “Thou shalt not commit _____.” God forbids all sexual relationships outside of marriage. Hebrews 13:4 reads, “Marriage is _____ in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and _____ God _____.” Adultery, sexual relations with someone other than one’s spouse in marriage, is sin. So is fornication, sex before marriage. Paul warns in 1 Corinthians 10:8, “Neither let us commit _____, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand,” referring to Numbers 25:1-9, when the Lord killed 23,000 in Israel for that sin in one day, and a total of 24,000 in the plague. God also condemns all sexual perversion, such as homosexuality and bestiality (Leviticus 18:22-30; Romans 1:26-28). Furthermore, Christ said in Mark 10:11-12 that “Whosoever shall _____ his wife, and _____ another, committeth _____ against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be _____ to another, she committeth _____.” Jesus Christ forbade divorce (“putting away”—Malachi 2:16), and if someone divorces his spouse and marries someone else, adultery is committed. Only after the death of one’s husband or wife is remarriage not adultery (Romans 7:1-3).

God not only commands us to abstain from the actual commission of sexual sin, but He commands in Ephesians 5:3-7 that “fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be _____ among you, as becometh saints; neither _____, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the _____ of _____ upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers

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with them.” God not only forbids all sexual immorality, but the dirty or off-color joke, and all uncleanness of speech.

Christ said in Matthew 5:27-28, “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever _____ on a woman to _____ after her hath committed _____ with her already in his _____.” You can have “eyes full of adultery” (2 Peter 2:14) without ever committing the actual act. If you look at pornography, allow your eyes to linger over people in immodest clothing (or wear it; compare Proverbs 7:10; Zephaniah 1:8; 1 Timothy 2:9), or simply have lustful thoughts, the Lord Jesus Christ says you are an adulterer. You have broken the seventh commandment!

The eighth commandment is found in Exodus 20:15: “Thou shalt not _____.” God forbids taking anything that is not yours. It does not matter if it is only a “little” thing which you may think does not matter. The commandment also condemns things like not telling the grocery store clerk when you are accidentally undercharged—you seek to get your money back when you are overcharged, don’t you? You are also a thief if you rip people off selling things—this is an “abomination to the LORD” (Proverbs 20:10; Leviticus 19:35-36; Proverbs 11:1; 16:11). God forbids exploitation of the poor for gain (Deuteronomy 24:10-15; Matthew 5:42), and all “extortion” and “dishonest gain” (Ezekiel 22:12-13). You break the eighth commandment if you do not put in all your time at work; arriving late or leaving early without the consent or knowledge of your employer is stealing, for you are not working all the time you said you would to get your pay; so is staying home “sick” when you feel fine. Using pirated software or violating copyright laws is stealing. Cheating on your taxes is stealing (Romans 13:6-7). Furthermore, in Malachi 3:8 God says, “Will a man _____ God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In _____ and _____.” If you do not give tithes (10% of your income) and offerings through God’s institution for this age, the church (1 Corinthians 16:2; 9:13-14; Matthew 23:23; Hebrews 7, etc.) you are robbing God! The Bible also condemns borrowing things and not giving them back. Psalm 37:21 reads, “The wicked _____, and _____ again: but the righteous sheweth mercy, and giveth.” We should work hard at honest employment, and then be generous with what we earn; as Ephesians 4:28 says, “Let him that stole _____ no more: but rather let him _____, working with *his* hands the thing which is good, that he may have to

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give to him that needeth.” God forbids all dishonest gain in the eighth commandment. If you have stolen anything, you are guilty!

The ninth commandment is found in Exodus 20:16: “Thou shalt not bear _____ against thy neighbour.” To “bear false witness” is to lie. Proverbs 6:16-19 tells us that “the LORD [doth] hate . . . a lying tongue . . . [and] a false witness that speaketh lies.” In fact, Revelation 21:8 informs us that “all liars . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” John 8:44 tells us that “the devil . . . is a liar, and the father of it,” so when you lie, you act like the devil. In contrast, God is a “God of truth” (Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 31:5), One who “cannot lie” (Titus 1:2). You break the ninth commandment not only by boldfaced lies, but also by “white” lies, twisting or coloring the facts a bit, such as saying that someone looked good when you did not think that was the case, saying on the phone that someone was not home when he was, and so on. The commandment also forbids slander, gossip, and other sorts of speech that falsely attack people. You also bear false witness if you tell only part of the truth and cover up the rest to make yourself look good and mislead people. The Son of God is “the faithful and true witness” (Revelation 3:14), so to bear false witness is utterly contrary to His character, and a horrible sin before God. In Matthew 12:36, Christ warns, “But I say unto you, That _____ idle _____ that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.” If you have ever borne false witness, you are guilty!

The tenth commandment is found in Exodus 20:17: “Thou shalt not _____ 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.” To covet is to desire what God has not provided for you or be dissatisfied with what you have. It is to see someone else’s house, or car, or clothes, or spouse, and to say, “Why does he get that, and I don’t?” When other people receive good things, you should be happy about it, and you should never rejoice because disaster or trouble comes to them (Job 31:29; Romans 12:15; 1 Corinthians 13:4). Hebrews 13:5 shows us that covetousness and contentment are opposites when it says, “*Let your conversation* [in KJV English, this word means “conduct”] *be without _____; and be _____ with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*” Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10. Verse eight commands, “having _____ and _____ let us be therewith content.”

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Gambling is certainly based on covetousness; out of a lust for wealth and a dissatisfaction with what God has provided for you, it hopes to take the money or other goods supplied by others without honest work (compare 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12; Ephesians 4:28). Covetousness is associated with envy, which God calls “earthly, sensual, devilish” (James 3:14-16). Covetousness also leads to complaining, against which God warns in 1 Corinthians 10:10: “Neither _____ ye, as some of them also _____, and were _____ of the destroyer.” God knows what is best for you (Matthew 6:25-34). When you wish for what God has not given you, you attack His goodness, and declare He is not caring, and is unjust towards you. This is why Colossians 3:5 states “covetousness . . . is idolatry.” When you are covetous, you break the first and second commandments as well as the tenth commandment. Ephesians 5:5 reads, “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.” Have you always been fully content with your own condition, and happy with the prosperity of others, without any envy of what is theirs? If not, you are guilty of breaking the tenth commandment!

The ten commandments do not cover all that God demands of you. Romans 1:18 tells us that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against _____ ungodliness and unrighteousness of men,” not just violations of the ten commandments. If you read Romans 1:19-32, you will see that many other sins are mentioned. For example, Romans 1:29-31 mentions “unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness . . . envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; [being] whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenantbreakers, without natural affection, implacable, [and] unmerciful.” Read that list carefully, pausing for a moment over each sin that is listed. Are you guilty of any of them? Romans 1:32 tells us that “the judgment of God [is] that they which commit such things are _____ of _____.” God also condemns the drinking of alcoholic beverages; Proverbs 20:1 reads, “_____ is a mocker, _____ is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (cf. Proverbs 23:29-35; Leviticus 10:9-11; Hosea 4:11). Habakkuk 2:15 warns, “Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink,” so giving alcoholic beverages to others by selling them, passing them to others at meals, or in any other way helping others drink, brings God’s curse. The Bible also states that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin”

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(Romans 14:23). Many other commands are also found in the 31,101 verses and 791,328 words of the Bible.

One day a man asked the Lord Jesus Christ what the greatest commandment was in the whole law. In Matthew 22:37-40, “Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt _____ the _____ with all thy _____, and with all thy _____, and with all thy _____. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt _____ thy _____ as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” Perfect love for God with all you are, which brings perfect obedience (John 14:15), and perfect love for all mankind, which will lead you to even “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you” (Matthew 5:44), is what the Lord demands of you. A lack of this love makes your sins far worse, and unless this sort of love motives all your attempts at obedience, all your “good” is also sin (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

Remember that the standard God has revealed in His Law reflects who He is; He commands you to be holy because He is holy. This is why Matthew 5:48 commands, “Be ye therefore _____, even as your _____ which is in heaven is perfect.” God orders you to be as sinless and righteous as He is. He will accept nothing less than this. He will allow no sin of any kind in His presence; “there shall in no wise enter into [heaven] any thing that defileth, neither *whatsoever* worketh abomination” (Revelation 21:27). You cannot hope to get by with keeping as much as you can but continuing to break some of His commandments: “For whosoever shall keep the _____ law, and yet offend in _____ *point*, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10). God has given you His Law, and He demands that it be obeyed perfectly. Perfect obedience will be the inflexible standard when you stand before Him.

God’s Law:

Results of obedience and disobedience

If you are entirely free from sin in your nature, thoughts, and acts, in all that you are, so that you are perfect, even as God the Father is perfect (Matthew 5:48), you will have life with God. Leviticus 18:5 reads, “Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in

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them: I *am* the LORD.” In Matthew 19:16, a man came to the Lord Jesus and “said unto him, Good Master, what _____ shall I _____, that I may have eternal life?” In reply, the Lord told him that he was sinful, since only God was good, and if he wished for heaven through doing good things he must perfectly “keep the commandments” (Matthew 19:17), and then listed some of them (Matthew 19:18-22). For those whom God views as holy and sinless He promises a tremendous reward. Immediately upon their death they are “present with the Lord” (2 Corinthians 5:8; cf. Philippians 1:23; Hebrews 12:22-23) in heaven, in unimaginable glory and joy. They remain with the Lord in heaven until the time described in 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, when “the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” At that time those whose spirits are already in heaven will receive their bodies again, and God's people then living on the earth will be caught up to the clouds to be with the Lord without ever facing death. (The resurrection of the saved dead, and catching up of living believers, could happen at any moment—it could happen today! As Luke 12:40 says, “Be ye therefore _____ also: for the Son of man _____ at an hour when ye _____.”) Following the removal of God’s people from the earth, a seven year period of terrible judgment on the wicked, who are left behind, follows, as described in Revelation chapters four through nineteen. Then Jesus Christ returns with His people, the “armies which were in heaven,” to set up His kingdom on the earth, as described in Revelation 19:11-16: “And I saw _____ opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in _____ he doth judge and make war. His eyes *were* as a flame of fire, and on his head *were* many _____; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God [This is Jesus Christ; see John 1:1-18]. And the armies *which were* in heaven _____ him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should _____ the nations: and he shall _____ them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, _____ OF KINGS, AND _____ OF LORDS.” The Son of God will then kill all the wicked people who are still alive after the seven years of judgment (Revelation 19:21), and rule the earth from Jerusalem for a thousand

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years with His people (Revelation 20:1-6; cf. Isaiah 2:1-5; 11:1-16; Zechariah 14), in a time of incredible peace and prosperity. At the end of this period, after the final condemnation of all the lost, He will create “a new heaven and a new earth” (Revelation 21:1) where He will dwell with them forever, as described in Revelation 21-22. They will live in “the holy city, new Jerusalem” (Revelation 21:2) where, as Revelation 21:3-4 states, “the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and he will _____ them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, *and be* their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be _____, neither _____, nor _____, neither shall there be any more _____: for the former things are passed away.” They shall “inherit all things” (Revelation 21:7). The gates, walls, and foundations of this place are precious stones, pearls, and gold, of incredible beauty and glory (Revelation 21:12-21); even “the street of the city [is] pure gold, as it were transparent glass” (Revelation 21:21)! Furthermore, “the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the _____ of _____ did lighten it, and the _____ [Jesus Christ, John 1:29, 36] is the _____ thereof” (Revelation 21:22-23). In that wonderful place, “there shall be no more _____: but the _____ of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his _____ shall _____ him: and they shall _____ his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and _____ shall _____ for ever and ever” (Revelation 22:3-5). This is the eternal happiness of those who belong to God.

However, if God sees any sin in you at all, you are under His curse. Deuteronomy 27:26 reads, “Cursed *be* he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.” Galatians 3:10 states, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that _____ not in _____ things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” The Law pronounces damnation for everything less than perfect obedience. Deuteronomy 28:15-68 lists the terrible judgments that Jehovah promised to bring upon Israel if the nation did not perfectly obey all that He commanded them. “Cursed *shalt* thou *be* in the city, and cursed *shalt* thou *be* in the field. Cursed *shall be* thy basket and thy store. Cursed *shall be* the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

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Cursed *shalt* thou *be* when thou comest in, and cursed *shalt* thou *be* when thou goest out” (Deuteronomy 28:16-20). Romans 6:23 tells us that “the _____ of _____ is _____; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” If you have a job, and put in your hours, you deserve your paycheck, your “wages.” Romans 6:23 tells us that what you have earned for your sin is death. Notice that God does not say that the wages of a few really big sins is death but the rest are not that bad, or the wages of lots and lots of sins is death. God says “sin,” not “sins”; the word is singular, not plural. If you have ever broken God’s Law in any way, He says that you deserve death, and the penalty must be paid. You are in a state of spiritual death; Ephesians 2:5 speaks of being “_____ in sins.” Spiritual death is separation from God because of your sin. Physical death is also a result of sin. Before sin entered the world, there was no physical death (Romans 5:12-19), but now God tells mankind that “dust thou *art*, and unto dust shalt thou return” (Genesis 3:19). Physical death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body (Genesis 35:18; Acts 7:59-60, etc.). Those that die physically while in a state of spiritual death will face “the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the _____ death.” (Revelation 21:8; cf. Revelation 2:11, 20:14). The second death is separation from God forever in a state of conscious and unbearable fiery torment.⁴

If you have not fully and perfectly fulfilled God’s Law, you face a future more terrible than anything you can imagine. As soon as you die physically (Luke 16:22-23; cf. Hebrews 9:27), you will be “cast into _____: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:47-48). You will stay in this “place of torment” (Luke 16:28) without any hope of escape, for between you and the righteous there will be a “great gulf fixed” so that you cannot “come from thence” (Luke 16:26)—the Bible does not teach a “purgatory” where people who die worthy of punishment have their sins purged away until they are clean enough to enter heaven. You will suffer in “unquenchable fire” (Matthew 3:12), and will “dwell with the devouring fire . . . with everlasting burnings” (Isaiah 33:14; Matthew 25:31; Jude 7). Every sin deserves eternal punishment, so you will, from day to day, week to week, year to year, century to century, millennium to millennium, and for all eternity, be continually paying for your sins, but you will never pay the debt. God also describes the place of your eternal torment as “outer _____: there shall be _____

⁴ Some people deny the everlasting conscious torment of the wicked. They take certain verses from the Bible out of their context to support their view, and ignore other verses. If you have questions about the Biblical teaching that the lost face eternal torment, contact us, and we will help you understand what God has said about it.

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and _____ of teeth.” (Matthew 8:12; cf. Matthew 22:13, 25:30). You will be in total darkness, and feel pain so intense that you will weep and “gnash” or grind your teeth in agony. You will “remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things . . . but now . . . art tormented” (Luke 16:25). You will vividly and bitterly recollect all the good things you had in this life, which you will have no more forever. You will remember your material things, which “shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire” (James 5:3). You will remember warnings to get right with God, and your refusal to do so. Every good thing God gave you in this life will bring you a greater eternal curse (Luke 12:45-48). When the Lord Jesus Christ raises the righteous dead and catches up His people that are still alive from the earth, you will remain in hell. If Christ returns before your physical death, you will be left behind on earth to face the terrible judgments of the seven year period described in Revelation 4-19, such as locust-like creatures that will “not kill [men], but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man. And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them” (Revelation 9:5-6), and “[the sea] bec[oming] as the blood of a dead *man*: and every living soul d[ying] in the sea” (Revelation 16:3), and supernatural “horses . . . and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions; and out of their mouth issued fire and smoke and brimstone. By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths. For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt” (Revelation 9:17-19). Even worse than all these plagues, if you miss the time when the righteous are caught up to be with the Lord, “God shall send [you] strong delusion, that [you] should believe a lie . . . [and] be damned” (2 Thessalonians 2:8-12); you will follow Satan and the Antichrist, and will either die during the seven years of judgment or will die at the end when Jesus Christ returns with His people to establish His kingdom on the earth (Matthew 5:5) and slaughters all the wicked who are left. You will remain in hell for the entire course of His glorious thousand-year reign (Revelation 20:5). You will then be raised to face your final condemnation, along with all the rest of the spiritually dead, as described in Revelation 20:11-15: “And I saw a great white throne, and him [Jesus Christ] that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the _____, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were

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_____ out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their _____. And death and hell were cast into the _____ of _____. This is the _____ death. And _____ was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” In terror before Jesus Christ, you will feel like those who “said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Revelation 6:15-17). You will have no place to flee—and you will not be able to stand, because everything that does not conform to God’s standard of perfect holiness and sinlessness, all your sin, will be judged, and you will be condemned. Your judgment after Christ’s thousand year earthly reign will not determine if you finally escape hell and enter heaven, for none in hell ever escape, and besides, you are “condemned already” (John 3:18), already under God’s curse for your sins; your condemnation will not come wait until then—it is upon you today. Now, at this very moment, the infinite anger of the holy God of heaven burns against you, and you are already condemned for your sins! This judgment will simply show to all creation the Lord’s glorious justice in your damnation. After your final doom is pronounced, you will be cast into the lake of fire, where you will be tormented forever and ever. Revelation 14:10-11 states, “The same shall drink of the wine of the _____ of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be _____ with _____ and _____ in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up _____ and _____: and they have _____ day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name [note that only a particular group of lost people are warned in this passage, but the pronounced punishment is something all the lost will experience, Psalm 11:5-6].” Romans 9:22 states that on the “vessels of wrath fitted to destruction,” all lost people, God is “willing to _____ his wrath, and to make his power _____.” Just as God has determined to show the greatness of His goodness, mercy, and love upon those that are with Him forever, He has purposed to show to all the infinite weight of His unrestrained wrath, fury, and fierceness upon the damned, whom He hates (Psalm 5:5; 11:5). You will know “the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Revelation 19:15)—what He who created the universe out of nothing can do when He uses His power against you, when He “will

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rejoice over you to destroy you” (Deuteronomy 28:63). In that day God will say, “I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you” (Proverbs 1:26-27). Each and every sin that you commit deserves, by itself, this eternal punishment. We have seen that God promises His blessing and eternal life for sinless obedience to His Law, and His curse and the lake of fire for any disobedience to it.

God’s Law:

How Come I Don’t Match Up?

When you compare yourself to God’s Law, it is obvious that you simply do not match up to His standard. This was Christ’s point when, in the Matthew 19:16-22 passage quoted earlier, He said to the man who had asked Him what he could do to inherit eternal life that “there is none good but one, *that is, God.*” The Bible says in Romans 3:23 that “all have _____, and come short of the glory of God.” 1 John 1:8 states, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” Why is this the case—why is it that no one obeys God’s Law perfectly, and so earns eternal life?

The Bible tells us that God created everything “very good” (Genesis 1:31). After creating the rest of the universe, God made the first man, Adam, from the dust of the ground (Genesis 2:7; cf. Genesis 1:1-2:25), then made his wife Eve (Genesis 2:21-25). The whole human race came from Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:20; 1 Corinthians 15:45). When the Lord created Adam, He “took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it [that is, to care for it]” (Genesis 2:15). In this garden, “the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou _____ eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely _____” (Genesis 2:16-17). God had provided a rich abundance for Adam and Eve, which they could “freely eat” from, but He tested their obedience through requiring that they not eat from one tree out of all those in the garden. The first man and woman, since God created them good, had the ability to obey this command of God. However, they disobeyed, ate of the fruit of that forbidden tree, and plunged the human race into sin (Genesis 3:1-6).

Read Romans 5:12-19. Verse twelve tells us that “by one man _____ entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death _____ upon _____ men, for that all have sinned.” Adam

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was the father of the entire human race, and we all have a certain union with him (cf. Hebrews 7:9-10; Abraham lived hundreds of years before his descendent Levi, yet Levi was in a mysterious way “in the loins of his father”). When Adam sinned, we all sinned, and became worthy of condemnation. Through “the offence of one [Adam] many be dead [the whole human race]” (Romans 5:15). When Adam sinned, “the judgment was by one to condemnation” (Romans 5:16). “[B]y one man’s offence death reigned by one” (Romans 5:17) and “by the offence of one *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation” (Romans 5:18). As Romans 5:19 states, “by one man’s disobedience _____ were _____ sinners.” 1 Corinthians 15:22 tells us that “in Adam all die.” We not only sinned in our father Adam, but also now begin life with a sinful nature. Psalm 51:5 states, “Behold, I was shapen in _____; and in _____ did my mother _____ me.” From the moment we begin our existence at conception, we are sinners and have a sin nature. Jeremiah 17:9 reads, “The heart is _____ above all *things*, and _____: who can know it?” By nature, “every imagination of the thoughts of [a man’s] heart [is] only evil continually” (Genesis 6:5). We begin life “dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1), separated from God. Everyone starts out, as Ephesians 2:2-3 states, walking “according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air [Satan], the _____ that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we _____ had our conversation in times past in the _____ of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the _____ and of the _____; and were by _____ the children of _____, even as others.” We are naturally of our “father the devil” and follow his lusts (John 8:44). Our sinful nature leads us to commit all kinds of sin (Matthew 15:19). Just like a fig tree naturally produces figs, not apples or some other fruit, and a grape vine produces only grapes, not blackberries or watermelons, so our sinful nature leads us to commit all kinds of sin (Luke 6:43-45); it is unable to do any good. Our sin in Adam, our sinful nature, and the sinful actions that come from it, make it so that in the entire human race “There is _____ righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:10). Nobody has any goodness in himself before God. In fact, Romans 3:11 tells us “There is none that understandeth, there is none that _____ after God.” The sinful nature is so corrupt that nobody, left to himself, would ever even truly desire to seek for God! This is why the Lord Jesus said in John 6:44, “No man _____ to me, except the Father which hath sent me _____ him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” 1 Corinthians 2:14 tells us, “the natural [lost] man _____ the things of

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because they are also sinners—their own damnation would be just, as would his own! The conclusion is inescapable that God would be just to condemn every person in the whole world—including you—to hell. You sinned in your father Adam, you have a sinful nature, which you cannot change, just as a man cannot change his skin color or a leopard its spots (Jeremiah 13:23), and you have committed countless sins in your thoughts, words, and actions, each of which deserves eternal death. As a sinner, at this very moment the “wrath of God abideth” on you (John 3:36). He is “angry *with the wicked every day*” (Psalm 7:11), and prepares to destroy them (Psalm 7:12-13). Consider that there are people who are in hell today who have sinned less than you have—God is more angry with you than with many who already are in torment! His wrath is like flood waters continually rising higher and higher behind a dam, which will soon burst and fall upon you. Your life is nothing but sin, you are under the curse of God, and as you continually keep on sinning Divine justice cries out more and more for your condemnation—yet the only One who keeps you out of hell one moment is the very God you are sinning against! The Lord Jesus Christ said to some lost men in His day, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, ___ ___ ___ can ye escape the ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ of hell?” (Matthew 23:33). This is a question that you must seriously consider!

God’s Law:

Man's attempts to escape its curse

The fact that you have sinned, but God’s Law pronounces that all sinners deserve damnation, leaves you in deep trouble. Through the years, men have tried to escape what God’s Law says about sin in a number of different ways:

- Some have simply said that God’s threats of eternity in the lake of fire just did not seem possible, so they rejected them. However, Proverbs 14:12 states, “There is a way which ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ unto a man, but the ___ ___ ___ thereof *are* the ways of ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ death.” What we think about God’s judgment on sinners, or His demand for sinless perfection, does not change the facts at all. If we reject what He says, or we ignore it, or we sincerely believe something else, nothing changes. The only thing that we get by going a way that seems good to us, but is not in the Bible, is hell fire.

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- Others are simply not willing to admit that they deserve to go to hell. They deny what Romans 3:8-12 and many other passages of God’s Word teach. It is a fearful thing to reject what the Bible teaches; Proverbs 13:13 tells us that “whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed.” Fundamentally, to say that one does not deserve hell is pride. Proverbs 16:5 reads, “Every one *that is* _____ in heart is an _____ to the LORD: *though* hand *join* in hand, he shall not be _____.” If you are too proud to agree with God when He tells you in His Word that you are a wicked sinner who has earned hell many times over, you have a big problem. You will, without any doubt, burn there forever unless you humble yourself. You are also guilty of idolatry. You do not put God first place in your life, since you reject what He says about your sin and its penalty; you are breaking the first commandment. You have a false view of who God is, because you think that somehow He will just overlook your sin; you are breaking the second commandment. You are breaking these two commandments just like someone who worships trees or rocks or openly worships the devil—and “idolaters . . . shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone” (Revelation 21:8). Furthermore, someone who denies that he deserves hell rejects Jesus Christ, since the Savior said in Luke 5:31-32, “They that are _____ [healthy] need not a physician; but they that are _____. I _____ to call the _____, but _____ to repentance.” People do not make appointments to see a doctor when they are feeling fine; they go when they know they are sick. In the same way, Jesus Christ said that He came to save those who know they are sinners, not those who think they are righteous (although they are not, Romans 3:10). If you do not think you need to be saved from your sin and its penalty, you do not understand your need for Jesus Christ, the Savior (Galatians 3:24; 1 John 4:14). You deserve hell for your sins. God has said so—it is true, whether or not you think it is fair, have objections, or do not think you are bad enough to deserve everlasting punishment.
- Many people think that religious acts like baptism, communion, prayer, church attendance, confessing sin, giving money, learning the Bible, helping the poor, or attempting to stay faithful will help them to merit heaven and escape the punishment of the Law for their disobedience. However, none of these things can take away even one sin. The Law demands perfect

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obedience (Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:12), and promises sinners nothing but judgment. The most religious people during the earthly life of Jesus Christ were the scribes and the Pharisees, but the Lord said “except your righteousness shall _____ *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall _____ enter into the kingdom of heaven.” God has clearly stated only those whom He sees as absolutely sinless will be with Him forever (Revelation 21:27; Matthew 5:48). There are levels of punishment in hell (Matthew 11:24; Mark 6:12; Luke 12:47-48), and those who disobey more will face worse torment, so attempts to obey are better than outright rejection of God’s commandments. However, trying to be religious will never take care of your sin.

- Reformation of life will not get rid of your sin. Even if you stopped sinning right now and perfectly obeyed the rest of your life (which you cannot do), got rid of your sin nature (which you cannot do), and somehow got out of the fact that you sinned in Adam (which you cannot do), you would still deserve damnation for all the sins you have already committed. God’s Law demands that “every transgression and disobedience receiv[e] a just recompense of reward” (Hebrews 2:2); “he that despised Moses’ law died without mercy” (Hebrews 10:28). Imagine that a mass murderer, who had been found guilty and condemned to die, started to try to be nice to people while he waited for the day of his execution. Suppose that, the day before he was to die, he sent a letter to his judge, and said, “Your honor, I know that I killed all those people and was given the death penalty. But since I have been condemned to die, I have turned my life around. I have been nice to everybody. I have not killed anyone else. Can I go free?” Obviously no judge in his right mind would let a man like this go; he had been sentenced, and needed to pay the penalty. In the same way, you may attempt to reform your life, but it will not take care of your sin. Besides, God deserves perfect obedience, so you would not be able to balance out your sins through doing better anyway. In Luke 17:10 (compare 17:7-9), the Lord Jesus Christ said, “[W]hen ye shall have done _____ those things which are commanded you, say, We are _____ servants: we have done that which was our _____ to do.” Trying to change your life cannot take away even one sin. Romans 3:20 states, “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall _____ be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.”

The fact of the matter is that every attempt of man to take care of his disobedience to God's Law completely fails.

The Conclusion:

God's Law eternally curses all sin

We have learned in study #3 that God is going to judge mankind, and His standard of judgment is His Law. We found that God has commanded us to be perfectly holy like Him. We looked at the ten commandments, along with a few other commandments in the Bible. We learned that the Law offers eternal life and heaven to those that perfectly obey it, but it promises eternal damnation in hell for all who disobey it, since every sin deserves the second death. However, we saw that nobody has perfectly obeyed God's Law, because the whole human race sinned in Adam, has a sinful nature, and has transgressed the Law in many ways. In fact, we learned that we are by nature so wicked that we would never even choose to seek for God, and, unless this sinful nature and our sins are somehow taken care of, absolutely nothing we do truly pleases God. We learned that mankind is spiritually dead, is headed for physical death, and deserves the second death, the lake of fire. Finally, we saw that man's attempts to escape what God's Law says fail; one can deny that judgment is coming, or think he is not bad enough to be condemned, or be very religious, or attempt to reform one's life, but none of these things will save anyone from hell.

The simple fact is that God's Law demands your eternal condemnation, and unless all your sins are taken care of and God sees you as righteous as He is, you are certainly lost. When a realization similar to this came to the Lord Jesus' disciples in Matthew 19:25, "they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?" The Lord answered them, "With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible" (Matthew 19:26). God has made a way that the penalty of the Law can be satisfied, and sinners can be delivered from hell—a way that He can be merciful, while not in any way compromising the demands of His holiness and justice. "How," you may ask, "can this be?" This is the subject of the next Bible study—*How Can God Save Sinners?*

Review Quiz For Bible Study #3

1.) As long as we sincerely try to follow God’s law and confess our sins, we will go to heaven.	TRUE	FALSE
2.) The greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind, and the second greatest is to love our neighbor as ourself.	TRUE	FALSE
3.) One sin makes a person deserve eternity in hell.	TRUE	FALSE
4.) When we are born, we are neither good nor evil, and our actions later in life make us either good or bad at heart.	TRUE	FALSE
5.) When Christ returns, He will catch up His people that are alive on earth to be with Him in heaven, but those that are lost will be left behind to face His judgment.	TRUE	FALSE
6.) Some people deserve to go to heaven rather than hell.	TRUE	FALSE
7.) God’s Law demands that we be as holy as He is, so anything less than perfect sinlessness deserves His curse.	TRUE	FALSE

Request for Study #4

___ I have returned the third Bible study to you with the blanks filled in and answered the review quiz questions. Please send me the next Bible study, *How Can God Save Sinners?*

___ I would like to understand more about God's judgment and the need for salvation. Please send me a free copy of Jonathan Edwards' *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, the most famous sermon ever preached in America.

___ I would like to meet with or talk to someone in person. I have put information in the spaces below (phone number, times available, etc.) to contact me.

Please use the spaces below to write down any other questions that you have. You can also write down any changes of address. Please also put down the names and addresses of people you know who might also like to do this Bible study.

