

**“Inquirers’ Class”**  
**(Part 4B: The Christian Life)**

**IV. The Christian Life.**

**B. What is the standard God has given us by which we are to live?**

1. Review.

a. What is the reason we exist?

- (i) To glorify God, “Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God” (1 Cor. 10:31).
- (ii) To enjoy Him forever, “Whom have I in heaven *but You?* And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (Psalm 73:25-26).

b. What is the rule or standard God has given us to live by so that we might honor Him? The Ten Commandments.

- (i) Though it was written down for the first time on Mount Sinai, it had been the moral standard from the very beginning.
- (ii) In the New Covenant, the Lord takes the Law written in stone and writes it on our hearts, “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Heb. 8:10).

2. What does God tell us to do through the Ten Commandments?

a. We are to worship Him alone because He alone is the true God, “You shall have no other gods before Me” (Ex. 20:3).

b. We are to worship Him in the way He commands: “You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments” (Ex. 20:4-6).

- (i) We may not do what He forbids (*e.g.*, the golden calf; Ex. 32).
- (ii) We may not do what He has not forbidden (*e.g.*, Nadab and Abihu; Lev. 10:1-3).
- (iii) We must do what He commands.

c. We must treat God’s name as holy: “You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain” (Ex. 20:7).

- (i) What are some of the ways God’s name can be mistreated?
  - (a) When we use His name as a common swear word.

- (b) When we blaspheme Him, “Now the son of an Israelite woman, whose father was an Egyptian, went out among the sons of Israel; and the Israelite woman's son and a man of Israel struggled with each other in the camp. The son of the Israelite woman blasphemed the Name and cursed. So they brought him to Moses. (Now his mother’s name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan.) They put him in custody so that the command of the LORD might be made clear to them. Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ‘Bring the one who has cursed outside the camp, and let all who heard him lay their hands on his head; then let all the congregation stone him’” (Lev. 24:10-14).
- (c) When we do not keep the oaths and vows we make before God.
- (1) This is more pointedly what the commandment is addressing.
  - (2) When we swear to the truth of something, or promise that we will do something, and call God to bear witness, we had better mean what we say or we are lifting up God’s name to bear witness to a falsehood or taking up His name in vain.
  - (3) “Your vows are *binding* upon me, O God; I will render thank offerings to You” (Psalm 56:12).
  - (4) “Make vows to the LORD your God and fulfill *them*; let all who are around Him bring gifts to Him who is to be feared” (Psalm 76:11).
- (ii) How should we use His name?
- (a) We are to lift up His name in the taking of oaths and vows, “You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him and cling to Him, and you shall swear by His name” (Deu. 10:20).
  - (b) We are also to lift up His name in worship.
    - (1) “Sing to God, sing praises to His name; lift up *a song* for Him who rides through the deserts, whose name is the LORD, and exult before Him” (Psalm 68:4).
    - (2) “I shall lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the LORD. I shall pay my vows to the LORD, oh *may it be* in the presence of all His people” (Psalm 116:13-14).
  - (c) We are to treat His name as holy as it represents Him.
- d. We must keep His day of worship holy: “Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; *in it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy” (Ex. 20:8-11).
- (i) What is the Sabbath day?

- (a) It is a day of rest: the word Sabbath in Hebrew means rest.
  - (b) What are we supposed to rest from on this day?
- (ii) When is the Sabbath day?
- (a) In the Old Covenant, it was on the seventh day of the week, the day on which God rested from His work of Creation, “For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy” (Ex. 20:11).
  - (b) In the New Covenant, it is the first day of the week.
    - (1) “On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul *began* talking to them, intending to leave the next day, and he prolonged his message until midnight” (Acts 20:7).
    - (2) It has been established on the basis of the work of the New Creation – on the rest of Christ, “So there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God. For the one who has entered His rest has himself also rested from his works, as God did from His” (Heb. 4:9-10).
    - (3) In the New Covenant, this day is called the Lord’s Day, “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like *the sound* of a trumpet” (Rev. 1:10).
  - (c) Does this mean that the fourth commandment has changed?
    - (1) No, the commandment gives us the frequency – one day in seven – and the length of time – one day – but it doesn’t tell us when the sequence begins or ends.
    - (2) The beginning of the sequence must be determined by God: in the Old Covenant, the seventh day in the sequence was the seventh day of the week; but in the New Covenant, the seventh day of the sequence is the first day of the week.
- (iii) What are we to remember to do on this day?
- (a) We are to keep the day holy.
  - (b) To keep something holy means to separate it to the Lord.
  - (c) We are to separate the twenty four hours that make up the Christian Sabbath or Lord’s Day to the Lord for His purposes.
- (iv) How are we to keep the day holy?
- (a) We are to separate ourselves from the things of this world – our work and worldly recreations, both doing them and thinking about them – so that we might devote ourselves to the worship of God, “If because of the sabbath, you turn your foot from doing your *own* pleasure on My holy day, and call the sabbath a delight, the holy *day* of the LORD honorable, and honor it, desisting from your *own* ways, from seeking your *own* pleasure and speaking *your own* word, then you will take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the

earth; and I will feed you *with* the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (Isa. 58:13-14).

(b) The only exceptions are works of necessity and mercy:

(1) “And He said to them, ‘What man is there among you who has a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? How much more valuable then is a man than a sheep! So then, it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath’ (Matt. 12:11-12).

(2) “At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath, and His disciples became hungry and began to pick the heads *of grain* and eat. But when the Pharisees saw *this*, they said to Him, ‘Look, Your disciples do what is not lawful to do on a Sabbath.’ But He said to them, ‘Have you not read what David did when he became hungry, he and his companions, how he entered the house of God, and they ate the consecrated bread, which was not lawful for him to eat nor for those with him, but for the priests alone? Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and are innocent?’” (Matt. 12:1-5).

(c) We are also to keep others from working unnecessarily:

(1) “*In it* you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you” (Ex. 20:10).

(2) “In those days I saw in Judah some who were treading wine presses on the sabbath, and bringing in sacks of grain and loading *them* on donkeys, as well as wine, grapes, figs and all kinds of loads, and they brought *them* into Jerusalem on the sabbath day. So I admonished *them* on the day they sold food. Also men of Tyre were living there *who* imported fish and all kinds of merchandise, and sold *them* to the sons of Judah on the sabbath, even in Jerusalem. Then I reprimanded the nobles of Judah and said to them, ‘What is this evil thing you are doing, by profaning the sabbath day?’” (Neh. 13:15).

e. We must honor all authority: “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you” (Ex. 20:12).

(i) We are to honor that authority that exists in the sphere of families.

(a) Wives are to honor and respect their husbands:

(1) “Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything” (Eph. 5:22-24).

(2) “In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any *of them* are disobedient to the word, they may be

won without a word by the behavior of their wives, as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. Your adornment must not be *merely* external -- braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; but *let it be* the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear” (1 Pet. 3:1-6).

- (b) Husbands are to use their authority to nurture their wives.
  - (1) “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church, because we are members of His body” (Eph. 5:25-30).
  - (2) “You husbands in the same way, live with *your wives* in an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered” (1 Pet. 3:7).
- (c) Children are to honor and respect their parents, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), so that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth” (Eph. 6:1-3).
- (d) Parents are to nurture and instruct their children, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (v. 4).

(ii) What other spheres of authority has the Lord ordained and what is our responsibility towards them?

(a) Church.

- (1) “Therefore, I exhort the elders among you, as *your* fellow elder and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and a partaker also of the glory that is to be revealed, shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight not under compulsion, but voluntarily, according to *the will of God*; and not for sordid gain, but with eagerness; nor yet as lording it over those allotted to your charge, but proving to be examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory” (1 Pet. 5:1-4).

(2) “Obey your leaders and submit *to them*, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you” (Heb. 13:17).

(b) State.

(1) “Every person is to be in subjection to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those which exist are established by God. Therefore whoever resists authority has opposed the ordinance of God; and they who have opposed will receive condemnation upon themselves. For rulers are not a cause of fear for good behavior, but for evil. Do you want to have no fear of authority? Do what is good and you will have praise from the same; for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Therefore it is necessary to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience' sake” (Rom. 13:1-5).

(2) “First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity” (1 Tim. 2:1-2).

f. We are to protect life: “You shall not murder” (Ex. 20:13).

(i) This obviously prohibits us from taking life. What about taking away from the quality of someone’s life by injuring them?

(ii) Along the same lines, we are to protect life and improve the quality of life where we can.

(iii) What about war? Is a Christian able to fight, injure and kill in warfare?

(a) In exercising the power of the sword, our government has the right to enlist soldiers and empower them to kill the enemy.

(b) What if the state requires you to fight in an unjust war?

(iv) What about euthanasia?

(a) We are to provide what we can to make those who are dying as comfortable as possible.

(b) But we may not take life to put them out of their misery.

g. We are to honor our marriages: “You shall not commit adultery” (Ex. 20:14).

(i) We are to be faithful to our marriage covenants, “Marriage *is to be held* in honor among all, and the *marriage* bed *is to be* undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge” (Heb. 13:4).

(ii) Before we marry, we are to be chaste in our thoughts and actions: “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?”

May it never be! Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body *with her*? For He says, ‘The two shall become one flesh.’ But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit *with Him*. Flee immorality. Every *other* sin that a man commits is outside the body, but the immoral man sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body” (1 Cor. 6:15-20).

- (iii) Are there any biblical grounds for divorce and remarriage?
  - (a) Abandonment: “But to the rest I say, not the Lord, that if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he must not divorce her. And a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and he consents to live with her, she must not send her husband away. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified through her believing husband; for otherwise your children are unclean, but now they are holy. Yet if the unbelieving one leaves, let him leave; the brother or the sister is not under bondage in such *cases*, but God has called us to peace. For how do you know, O wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, O husband, whether you will save your wife?” (1 Cor. 7:12-16).
  - (b) Adultery: “*Some Pharisees* came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, ‘Is it lawful *for a man* to divorce his wife for any reason at all?’ And He answered and said, ‘Have you not read that He who created *them* from the beginning made them male and female, and said, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh”? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate.’ They said to Him, ‘Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send *her* away?’ He said to them, ‘Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery’” (Matt. 19:3-9).
- h. We are to respect what belongs to others: “You shall not steal” (Ex. 20:15).
  - (i) We are not to take what doesn’t belong to us.
  - (ii) We are to do what we can to protect the possessions of others.
- i. We are to tell the truth about others: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Ex. 20:16).
  - (i) We are to tell the truth in general.
  - (ii) We are especially not to lie in order to injure others.
  - (iii) Is it ever right to lie?

- j. We are to be content with what the Lord has given us: “You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor” (Ex. 20:17).
  - (i) We are not to envy the gifts or possessions of others.
  - (ii) We are to be content with how the Lord has made us and what He has entrusted to us.
  - (iii) Does this mean that we shouldn’t work hard to gain more or to become better?

**C. Where are we to find the strength to live this kind of life?**

1. We may only do so through the grace of Christ.
2. That grace is available to us through the means of grace: the Word of God, prayer, praise, the sacraments, fellowship.