



# SBAOC Weekly Update

## NEWS & PRAYER REQUESTS

- *Please pray for the students that will be attending SBFYC (June 17-21) and those who will be teaching throughout the week. We have 223 registered to attend (163 students).*

*If you have any news, prayer requests, or events that you would like to have included in this update, please call us at 785-456-8513 or email the information to [spurgeonassociation@gmail.com](mailto:spurgeonassociation@gmail.com).*

## A MUCH-NEEDED TOOL FOR EVANGELISM

By William Hatfield

Most believers want that old time-religion, that first-century faith that shook the Roman Empire to its very foundations. It's good enough for us! We want to be like that vibrant early church. We want to see our world turned upside down with the Gospel of Christ.

Sadly, although we long for that old-time religion, we seriously deviate from that old-time evangelism. For decades we have omitted an element of it that the Lord Jesus Christ, His apostles, and one of our most esteemed Baptist forefathers deemed important enough to include. This is especially ironic, considering that much of the evangelical church emphasizes praying for worldwide revival.

I am writing to call us back to this powerful implement in soul-winning: the Ten Commandments, which I will refer to as the Law of God, the Decalogue, and the Commandments. Unlike most of modern Christendom, the premier evangelists of all time used the Law in their efforts to reach the lost. This article will, by the grace of God, demonstrate that fact and present a methodology of doing it in today's setting. <sup>1</sup>

### What the Law Cannot Do

To avoid misunderstanding, I must first underscore that the Commandments cannot save from sin. Obeying them will not make one right in the sight of Holy God, for they were designed for no such purpose. Gal. 3:11 declares that the Commandments do not acquit one of the charge of sin: "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident."

If that were not enough, Rom. 3:20 likewise thunders this truth in crystal-clear language: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in

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### PURPOSE STATEMENT:

We unite as an association of Southern Baptist churches in order to manifest the glory of God above all. We purpose to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. We covenant to strengthen and support one another, motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.

*"If there is no church... should you not commence one?" C. H. Spurgeon*

## COMMENTS ON OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT

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*Honest dealing becomes us when we kneel in God's pure presence.—David McIntyre*

*Do not work so hard for Christ that you have no strength to pray, for prayer requires strength.—J. Hudson Taylor*

*Prayer at its best is the expression of the total life, for all things else being equal, our prayers are only as powerful as our lives.—A. W. Tozer*

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his sight."

Anyone who counts on his obedience to the Decalogue to get him to heaven is as doomed as one who defends himself against an enraged grizzly bear with a B-B gun. To trust the Law to make one acceptable to the Lord is an utterly false hope.

### What the Law Can Do

Even so, Holy Scripture asserts that God's Law has three uses. This article is concerned only with the pedagogical (theological) use—its utilization in evangelism.<sup>2</sup> Rom. 3:20 ends by describing this use: "for by the Law is the knowledge of sin."

Although it cannot save him, it can show him that he needs to be saved. It teaches man that he is a hopelessly lost and undone sinner. It performs this wondrous task by teaching him what sin is—the breaking of it (1 John 3:4, which defines sin, literally, as "lawlessness")—and making him realize that his life falls short of what God demands—perfection.<sup>3</sup>

It may come as a great surprise to many Christians, but few lost people know what sin is. They do not have a clue. Western civilization is fast approaching the paganism of the first century, and, except in rural areas, Christian influence upon those outside the church is a thing of the past. Far more pervasive and powerful is the influence of pop culture. Many movies trivialize theft by portraying robbers in a very sympathetic light, even as heroes. The police on TV cop shows are as sexually immoral as the cocaine dealers they pursue. Magazines like *Time* and *Newsweek*, rock and country-western music, TV sitcoms, and even government agencies condition people to view promiscuity and homosexuality as morally neutral or even good.

Consequently, the concept of sin is an empty bucket to most unbelievers—it contains very little meaning. The images it conjures up in their minds, if any, encompass only the most heinous crimes: murder (with an exception for abortion, of course), rape, and child molesting.

Neither do non-Christians have any inkling how terribly evil sin is in the sight of Holy God. They do not consider such matters as coveting or children disobeying parents to be what they are: abominable sins, high-handed treason against the Almighty. Consequently, man needs an objective standard to teach him not only what sin is, but also how bad it is.

Thankfully, the Lord has provided just such a criterion: His holy Law. As the unbeliever compares his life to its demands, he finds that, try as he may, he can never measure up to its strict requirements. If he strives ever more to obey it, he only falls farther short. It is a slave driver who cannot be pleased, for it allows no room for error. The sinner is like a high jumper who runs for the bar and leaps with all his might, only to realize that the bar is five hundred feet above the ground. No matter how hard he tries, he cannot even come close.

It then begins to dawn on the non-Christian that the taskmaster he serves makes a demand that, even at his best, he cannot meet: moral perfection. He begins to despair of ever saving himself. He agonizes, "Is there any hope for me?" The Law has done its job. It has plowed the soil of his heart. It has exposed the evil that he long overlooked, and he is now ready as never before to hear of the love and sacrifice of the Lord Jesus on behalf of sinners. Gal. 3:24 explains: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ,

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## UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

### **Saved By Faith Youth Camp—**

June 17-21, 2019. Webster  
Conference Center, Salina,  
Kansas. Speaker: Dr. Jim Orrick.

*God Is Sovereign.*

[www.sbfyckansas.com](http://www.sbfyckansas.com).

*Registration is closed for this  
event.*

### **Encouraged to Endure**

#### **Conference—July 25-27, 2019.**

Second Baptist Church, West  
Frankfort, IL. Speakers: Joseph  
Mahlaola, Larry McCall, & John  
Snyder. Worship Leader: Tom  
Clay.

### **Reformation Weekend**

#### **Conference—October 25-27.**

Trinity Baptist Church, Wamego,  
KS. The SBAOC annual business  
meeting will be held on  
Saturday, October 26.



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that we might be justified by faith."

The mercy of Christ and the freeness of grace appear wonderfully precious when set against the backdrop of the Law. The Law cannot save the sinner, but it can drive him to despair of attempting to save himself and can direct him to turn to the only one who can. It can be his teacher to bring him to Christ, that he might be justified by faith.<sup>4</sup>

### **Christ Used the Law Evangelistically**

Let us now examine how the premier evangelists of all time used the Law to reach the lost. We will begin by considering how the Son of God employed it in His encounter with the man known as the rich young ruler in Matt. 19:16-22. For years I puzzled over Christ's approach in dealing with this individual. Why, when asked a question that would thrill the heart of any Christian—"What good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"—did He quote from the Decalogue, rather than exhorting him to trust in Him?

The answer is simple. The Lord Jesus was using the Law to show the ruler that he fell short of God's standard of righteousness. In verse 17 our Savior called the man to recognize the unique goodness of God (His holiness). In the next two verses He applied the Law to him in a general manner by walking him through its Second Table (the commandments concerning one's conduct toward his fellow man). When the ruler responded that he had obeyed all these, the Lord narrowed His focus and applied the Law more specifically in verse 21. He preceded His demand for radical discipleship ("come and follow me") by commands to sell all his possessions and to donate the proceeds to the poor.

Christ was not teaching salvation by self-denial, but, rather, was making the ruler aware that he had by no means kept the Commandments. Indeed, he had flagrantly violated the First—his real god was his possessions—and the Tenth—he was quite covetous and materialistic. The sinner was then face to face with his own failure to live up to the Law's demands. In this manner Christ used the Law to show him that he was guilty in the eyes of Holy God.<sup>5</sup>

Now let us turn our attention to Christ's dealing with the Samaritan woman in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of John. Rather than merely asking her, "You know you're a sinner, don't you?," our Savior wisely made her face a Law of God that she had broken repeatedly. In verses 16-18 He instructed her to call her husband, then reminded her that she had had five husbands and was living in adultery with a sixth. In so doing He was making her realize that she had violated the Seventh Commandment and therefore stood condemned before the Lord. When she, unlike the rich young ruler who turned away, showed more interest in the person of Christ, He revealed to her that He was indeed the Messiah (verse 26), the Redeemer of Jew and Samaritan alike. Her subsequent actions indicate that she came into a saving relationship with Him by faith.

The Son of God brilliantly used the Law as a search light to show the lost their sin. This by itself is reason enough for us to do likewise. But He was not the only one in the pages of the New Testament to employ it in this manner.

### **The Apostles Used the Law Evangelistically**

Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-40) contains another prime

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example of the Law employed in soul-winning. This time the audience was a huge one: Jews from all over the Roman Empire. The Apostle charged them with murdering none other than the promised Messiah. In verse 23 he declared, "Him [Jesus of Nazareth] ... ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."

In verse 36 he hit them again with the same accusation: "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." In this terrible act of violence they had transgressed the Sixth Commandment. They stood guilty in the eyes of the Lord, with nowhere to turn. This was a sledgehammer blow that shattered the imagined righteousness of those who knew the Law well. The Decalogue was a vital portion of a message that the Holy Spirit used to call about three thousand souls into the kingdom of God.

Next, notice Paul's soul-winning message in Acts 17:22-31. This time the hearers were people who apparently knew nothing of the true God or His Law: pagan Greek philosophers. The Apostle spent the bulk of his message enlightening them about the nature of their Maker. He declared that God created all that is (verse 24), then verbally slapped their faces with their failure to keep their Creator's Law. Paul made his audience face their violation of God's prohibition against the worship of idols. In verses 25 ("[God] neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything") and 29 ("We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device") he did little more than state and explain a Commandment that is basic to the nature of true religion. The Second Commandment says, "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."

Even though these people probably knew nothing of the God of Israel or His Commandments, for them to break it was sin nevertheless. Their ignorance did not excuse them, and the Almighty demanded that they repent of their wickedness (verse 30). Gloriously, several did just that!<sup>6</sup>

### **Spurgeon Used the Law Evangelistically**

Finally, let us consider the words of a great man who diligently followed the examples of his greater predecessors. Charles H. Spurgeon, one of our most esteemed Baptist forefathers, asserted:

We usually draw a distinction between law-work and gospel-work; but law-work is the work of the Spirit of God, and is so far a true gospel-work that it is a frequent preliminary to the joy and peace of the gospel. The law is the needle, which draws after it the silken thread of blessing, and you cannot get the thread into the stuff without the needle: men do not receive the liberty wherewith Christ makes them free till,

first of all, they have felt bondage within their own spirit driving them to cry for liberty to the great Emancipator.<sup>7</sup>

Spurgeon regarded the Decalogue to be highly effective in evangelism. Modern Baptists and indeed all Christians would do well to heed his admonition.

The Son of God and His apostles used the Decalogue in their efforts to reach the lost. So did one of the greatest soul-winners since their day. If it was good enough for them, it certainly should be for us! I do not believe that we can improve on their methodology.

### **We Should Use the Law Evangelistically**

How do we use the Law in evangelism? Here is a method that I have developed through study of the Scripture and refined through many witnessing encounters. My goal is to make the sinner face the guilt he has incurred before Holy God by using the Law to show him a few specific sins he has committed. I try to do this as humbly, tactfully, and graciously as I can. My desire is that the heavy weight of his sins will become so real to him that, when I then present Christ as his only hope of salvation, he will gladly flee into His loving arms.

Because few non-Christians have any idea that God is holy, that is where I begin:

God is holy (Hab. 1:13, Rev. 15:4). That means He is pure. Sinless. He never does anything wrong. We say, "Nobody's perfect," but that's not true of God. He is perfect! And one day everyone will stand before Him to give account of everything he did on earth.

Then I move to man's sin:

We need to know what this holy God expects of us, and He tells us in the Ten Commandments. Some of these are 'Honor thy father and thy mother,' 'Thou shalt not bear false witness,' and 'Thou shalt not covet.' If you have ever disobeyed your parents, lied, or lusted after something that was not yours, even just one time, you have broken God's Law. Breaking it is what the Bible calls sin (1 John 3:4).

I then ask my friend if he has broken any of them (no one has yet told me that he has kept them all). I am praying that he will begin to see that there is a huge gulf between his righteousness and that of the Lord.

I try to tailor my approach to the individual. The above paragraphs outline witnessing to a child using the commandments he is most likely to break: the Fifth, Ninth, and Tenth. If I am sharing the Gospel with a prison inmate who was convicted of robbery, I emphasize the Eighth-"If you have ever taken something that was not yours ... ", if with someone who thinks he is morally good, the Ninth and Tenth coupled with James 2:10, "For whosoever shall keep

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the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all," and if with a promiscuous person, the Seventh.

I then warn him that he, as well as all people, has offended this holy God and is condemned in His sight. The Almighty is angry with him because of his sins. Even if he somehow could stop sinning, that would not erase the guilt of his past transgressions. Unless something is done to remove them, God will one day judge and sentence him to eternal punishment (Rev. 20:11-15). I stress that God would be perfectly fair to send us to hell, because we are guilty—we have real, actual, genuine guilt. We cannot honestly claim to be innocent.

At this point I try to get him to admit again his own sinfulness. I am praying that he, like the man Christian in *Pilgrim's Progress*, will begin to see the huge load of sins he carries as it is: something that will press him into hell unless removed. Then I share the love and mercy of the Lord Jesus and exhort him to repent of his sins and to trust in Him alone. What I hope to see is the godly sorrow for sins that culminates in heart repentance and faith.<sup>8</sup>

#### **A Tangible Benefit of Using the Law Evangelistically**

What practical effect does using the Decalogue as a witnessing tool have? A concern of mine as a pastor is the large number of supposed converts who show no lasting fruit of salvation. Although they can remember "the day and the hour," their lives are not the slightest bit different from what they were before they professed faith. Their normal way of life has no place for God, His Bible, or His people, and they seem perfectly at home in sin.

Wishing not to increase the ranks of these poor deceived souls, but, rather, to see genuine converts, I have found using the Law in witnessing to be of significant benefit. My experience has been that, although this approach does not eliminate false professions, it greatly reduces them. A much higher percentage of those claiming to be saved under this methodology remain faithful to the Lord over the long haul.

#### **Conclusion**

It is my prayer and fervent hope that Southern Baptists, with our passion for soul-winning, will set the pace for the evangelical community in reviving the use of this powerful instrument. Anyone who seeks to obey Christ's imperative to witness should give it serious consideration. May we once again employ this wonderful, God-ordained method of doing evangelism. Employing the Ten Commandments to lead men to Christ will help us to accomplish the Great Commission in a way that is guaranteed to honor the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Notes:**

1 Although the civil and religious portions of the Mosaic Law passed away with the death and resurrection of Christ, the

Ten Commandments are still in force. Because of the widespread idea that even they have been abrogated, I shall support this contention from Scripture.

Every Commandment is repeated or clearly alluded to with approval in the New Testament Epistles. Following is a list of some of their occurrences in these letters:

The First (Ex. 20:3) in 1 Cor. 8:6,  
The Second (Ex. 20:4) in 1 Cor. 10:7 and 1 John 5:21,  
The Third (Ex. 20:7) in 1 Tim. 1:20,  
The Fourth (Ex. 20:8-11) in Mark 2:27-28,  
The Fifth (Ex. 20:12) in Eph. 6:2-3,  
The Sixth (Ex. 20:13) in Rom. 13:9, James 2:11 and 1 John 3:15,  
The Seventh (Ex. 20:14) in Rom. 13:9, Col. 3:5, Eph. 5:3, and James 2:11,  
The Eighth (Ex. 20:15) in Rom. 13:9 and Eph. 4:28,  
The Ninth (Ex. 20:16) in Rom. 13:9, Eph. 4:25, and Col. 3:9, and  
The Tenth (Ex. 20:17) in Gal. 5:26.

Each of these verses was penned long after Christ rose from the dead. If the Commandments were no longer in force, if God did not care whether people obeyed them, then for Paul, James, and John favorably to quote or to allude to them seems strange indeed. Further, if God had done away with them, then it is not wrong in His eyes for men to worship other gods, to bow down to idols, to take His name in vain, etc. On the other hand, if He is opposed to such behavior, then the Commandments that prohibit it still stand.

Another reason the Commandments are still in force is that the New Testament defines love for one's fellow man in terms of the Second Table of the Decalogue. Romans 13:8-10 explains that a man who loves his neighbor will obey Commandments Five through Ten toward him—if you love your neighbor, you will not murder him, commit adultery with his wife, and so on.

The Fourth Commandment is not reiterated in the Epistles, because the Jewish Sabbath laws were abrogated at the death and resurrection of Christ (Gal. 4:9-10, Col. 2:16-17). The early church began to worship on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7), for on that day Christ rose from the dead. Thus, in this sense the Lord's Day (Sunday) has replaced the Jewish Sabbath (Saturday).

2 The other two uses are the civil and the normative (John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2.7.6-12 in 1:304-309]). My purpose here is not to defend their validity, but merely to explain them.

The civil use of the Law applies to unbelievers. Although it cannot save them, it can at least restrain some of their grosser wickedness. Though they do not love the Lawgiver,

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they do have some fear of His wrath and, therefore, do not give themselves over to the worst of their depravity. 1 Tim. 1:8-10 asserts:

But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.

If basketball star Magic Johnson, for example, had simply obeyed the Seventh Commandment, he would not have made himself the slightest bit better in the eyes of Holy God. But neither would he be HIV positive. Even though the Law cannot save anyone who obeys it will have a better quality of life. He who fears its warnings will enjoy this life more, even if he never comes to faith in Christ.

The lives of many of America's youth are silent testimonies to the fact that the Law has a restraining effect upon sin. The last three decades have witnessed huge increases in the number of teenagers who become pregnant outside marriage, abort their babies, carry guns to school, are killed by guns, contract AIDS, and take their own lives. Relatively few of these tragedies occurred as recently as the early 60s.

Why the big change? Among the reasons is that the Ten Commandments were removed from the public schools. When I was a boy, the Decalogue was posted in classrooms, and students recited them. Children were taught that certain actions and attitudes were wrong in the eyes of God. Although it seems doubtful that more than a minority of those children became Christians, few committed the gross sins so common in today's high and even junior high schools. This is the civil use of the Law.

The normative use of the law applies to Christians. When Christ saves someone, the Holy Spirit writes the Decalogue on his heart. Heb. 10:15-16 reveals: "Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." Note that the Holy Spirit said these things to believers. The Christian simply does not want to do many things that lost people enjoy, because the Commandments are a part of his innermost being. He delights in obeying them, not because he is a legalist, but because he loves his Lord.

3 W. T. Conner, *Christian Doctrine* (Nashville: Broadman, 1937), 136.

4 A fascinating account of the Law doing its work as

schoolmaster appears in the testimony of David Brainerd. God mightily used the Commandments in the conversion of this soul, who, by the plan of providence, became one of the most dedicated missionaries of all time. See Jonathan Edwards, *The Life and Diary of David Brainerd* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1949) 64

5 I am assuming that, had the man faced his sin and despaired of his own righteousness, Christ would then have told him to trust in Him alone. It is especially instructive to realize that the Lord Jesus, who is love incarnate, did not try to pick fruit that was not ripe. He did not chase the ruler down the road and try to talk him into making a quick profession. How many of us pastors and evangelists use His restraint?

6 I have identified six evangelistic sermons in the Book of Acts. Peter preached two to Jewish audiences (2:14-40 and 3:12-26) and one to Gentiles (10:34-43). In contrast, Paul delivered one to Jewish hearers (13:16-41) and two to Gentiles (17:22-31 and 26:2-23, although the latter-his testimony before King Agrippa-may not be a full-fledged sermon). All six sermons contain the same four basic themes, although they do not have the same amount on each point. Paul spent much more time on the nature of God in his message to pagan philosophers (17:22-31) than he did when addressing Jews (13:16-41).

A composite of these messages' themes is as follows:

God: That He is holy, He created everything, He owns us, and He holds everyone responsible for what he does.

Sin: That it is breaking the Decalogue, and everyone breaks it.

Christ: Who He is-the sinless God-man-and what He did-die on behalf of sinners and rise from the dead.

Repentance and faith-a faith that produces obedience to God.

J. I. Packer identified these four as the essence of the Gospel in *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1975), 57-73. Sadly, most modern evangelistic sermons, tracts, and methodologies omit some of these crucial truths. If the Apostles included them, so should we.

7 Charles H. Spurgeon, *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* (Pasadena, TX: Pilgrim Publications, 1973) 30:15-16.

8 A similar example of walking someone through the Law appears in chapter 12 of *Hell's Best Kept Secret* by Ray Comfort (Whitaker House). This chapter is reproduced in the pamphlet "The Law Was Our Schoolmaster" by the same author (Living Waters Pub., P. O. Box 1172, Bellflower, CA 90706). I developed my method independently of Mr. Comfort.

*The Founders Journal*, Spring 1997, [www.founders.org](http://www.founders.org)

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## PRAYER MEETINGS FOR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AND REVIVAL

- Fellowship Baptist Church in Onaga, Kansas—5:00 pm on Sundays
- Trinity Baptist Church in Wamego, Kansas—8:00 pm on Saturdays

*The Spurgeon Baptist Association of Churches is an association of Southern Baptist Churches that are united to manifest the glory of God above all. We set out to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. As an association of churches we are bound in mutual covenant to strengthen and support one another - motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture - by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.*

*We are a non-geographic association seeking to include any like-minded body of believers so that together we might better fulfill the great commission of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our intent is to lean on His instruction and not our imaginations so that He is honored in all that we do. We welcome churches who adhere to the confessions of faith accepted by Southern Baptists throughout their history, including, but not limited to, the Second London Confession (1689) and the Baptist Faith and Message.*



Baptist Association of Churches