

How Does God Save Humans?

“Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your Law.” “Give me understanding, that I may observe Your Law And keep it with all my heart. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments. Your Law continually, forever and ever.” “I shall delight in Your commandments, which I love.” “So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.” “Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, we establish the Law.” (Psalms 119:18, 34, 35, 44, 45; Romans 7:12; 3:31, NAS)

“If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15). It seems strange to have to admit that within Christendom there exists some uncertainty regarding the keeping of the commandments. In past years the commandments were considered binding by Christians, but today we’re not sure. Why is that? Simply because we have tried to keep them and failed over and over again. Many have looked for a solution in the commandments themselves, concluding they must be suggestions or general guidelines only. We have discovered that the commandments themselves cannot help us. They can only stand there, carved in stone, conveying their awful message to our discouraged minds. “Thou shalt not . . . Where shall we go, what shall we do, to get the approval of that Law, the approval our hearts crave; where can we find that approval in the spirit and not in the letter? May I suggest it is not by diminishing the Law to a set of guidelines? May I suggest that it is very possible to keep the Law in the spirit of the Law, and that instantly—when you know the trick to it? May I suggest that the solution to this riddle is not in the Law but in Christ, the one who gave His life for you upon Calvary’s cross, the One who *can* keep the Law and *did* keep the Law?

Is it correct Biblical interpretation to equate the Law with Christ? Yes. Psalm 119:173 says, “All your commandments (the Law) are righteousness.” And Jeremiah 23:6 declares that “This is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. (See also 1 Cor. 1:30). They are both—the Law and the Savior—righteousness. Where this is the case, that both entities equal the same thing, it reasonably follows that they equal each other. Both entities, in this case, equal righteousness.

The Law Brings Us to Christ.

That Law we are trying to use for a purpose for which it was never intended. The Law is spiritual; we cannot keep it while we are carnal. The Law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ (Galatians 3:24, 25). Only when utilized for that end can it fulfill its purpose. What motivates us to seek to obey, to seek to have His righteousness? Second Corinthians 5:14 says “the love of Christ constraineth [motivates] us.” When at last we see the love of God, it does something in our spirit. We suddenly want all that He has for us. Like Peter we exclaim, “Not my feet only but my hands and my head” (John 13:9). We desire to be what He desires. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). Seeing Him as He is, we want to return that love. This is the everlasting gospel. We have taught it in pieces but have never told the whole story about how to keep the Law. That Law—the two tables of stone written by the finger of God on Sinai—merely state God’s wishes, his wants, how He would behave if He walked among us. (And He did!) *They are for information only.* In your mind’s eye catch a view of those two tables of stone. Now superimpose a picture of Jesus upon it. Gradually fade the view of the tablets. You will have remaining a beautiful picture of the Savior, who is the Power Source, who can keep the Law, two thousand years ago on the hills of Galilee, in the temple at Judea and today in the hearts of people everywhere. He is the living representation of that Law; it is His character. When He comes into our hearts, He does not leave His character behind. No. His character then becomes our character, our righteousness. “Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances [the Law]” (Ezekiel 36:25-27, NAS).

How It Works

Many have wondered how the gospel can work, when Scripture clearly says no one can be punished for another. Each individual takes his own consequences (See Ezekiel 18; Jeremiah 31:29, 30). The punishment is always attached to the crime. How, then, can Jesus die for us? How can the life He lived become ours? We can have His life only as we become one with Him, as He lives His life in us, as we abide in Him. The apostle Paul explains this in the story of the

Two Adams (Romans 5:18, 19). Satan claimed to be god of this world, because the first Adam had obeyed him and henceforth they neither would nor could keep the law of God. Christ, the second Adam, answered Satan's claim by coming into our flesh and keeping the law in it perfectly. Because of Christ's victory, God again has a claim upon the human race. Now anyone who wishes can come to him and be healed of the damage sin wrought through the first Adam. All the requisites of the gospel are met. He didn't die outside of us; we died too—died to this world. He doesn't live outside of us and merely credit His righteousness to our account. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, He comes into our being and becomes one with us, bringing His character with Him. This is the essence of the gospel, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." This is what Christ meant by "eating His flesh," "drinking His blood," and that He is "the Bread of life" (John 6:40-54). As we are what we eat, Christians maintain their spiritual life by feeding on the word. This is how sinful humans keep the Law of God. The Spirit makes it happen. The Holy Spirit applies to our life the victorious life and death of Jesus Christ.

Marriage

God has given a wonderful symbol, marriage, to illustrate this arrangement. Before human law, once the knot is tied, the two are considered one. His sacrifice is wasted on anyone who refuses this intimate relationship. The story of God's love for us is the story of love far transcending any other earthly model. The Song of Solomon, the story of the king's wedding banquet (Matt. 22), the parable of the ten virgins (Matthew 25), the voice of the great multitude in heaven (Rev. 19:6, 7) are just examples, telling how the greatest love culminates in the wedding supper of the Lamb when the bride has made herself ready. This theme of marriage is maintained throughout Scripture. For example, the arrangement is represented as a "wedding garment." "Friend," said the king. "how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment?" (Matthew 22:11-14) The king had given him everything needed to cover him entirely and to serve as his ticket to the banquet. But this guest chose to come without the garment. This parable talks about the Holy Spirit, representative of Christ, and how He covers the surrendered human, coming alongside, coming into him, giving him grace for every moment. As the parable clearly shows, we cannot attend the wedding supper without the wedding garment. Is this experience real to you?

Praise and Thanksgiving

"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you" (1 Thess. 5:18). Many are surprised to hear what a huge role praise and thanksgiving play in the gospel. In fact, in three places Scripture talks about the "sacrifice of praise." (Jeremiah 17:26; 33:11; Hebrews 13:15) How strange it seems to us to hear praise called a "sacrifice," for it does not seem so to us. But could it be that this is the sacrifice of the New Covenant, subordinate only to Christ's sacrifice, attesting that the Holy Spirit lives in us and that we live by faith? When God sees we are thankful, even in those instances which seem not to be for our good, Scripture says He hastens to write it in His book (Mal. 3:16-18), which He has designated for this purpose, because He has joy in His heart that this one has learned to trust in Him. We need to give more attention to praising and thanking our God in everything!

The Sabbath

The Sabbath is the beautiful sign that this relationship exists and is complete in us. "Verily my sabbaths ye shall keep: for it is a sign between me and you throughout your generations: that ye may know that I am the Lord that doth sanctify you." (Ezekiel 31:13). He sanctified the Sabbath when He created it on the seventh day of creation, and now it is the symbol that He has sanctified the believer. It is attached with unbreakable cords to His Law, showing that as long as the Law exists—as long as God exists (Remember, it is His character!)—so long will the Sabbath exist.

The Sabbath towers over time and space, calling men and women to understand and value this united arrangement. It is the only way that God can save us in these modern times. It is the loud voice proclaiming over the world that God is love.

For More Information

- www.4Adventists.com
Two Books Titled: *Light Through the Darkness: A Vindication of God*, 157 pages, and an *Adventist Supplement*, 72 pages.
- www.youtube.com/watch?v=cBZfdggyXw&feature=youtu.be
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A Video Titled: *A New Look At the Character of God*
- www.GodsCharacter.com
A Book Titled: *Servant God: The Cosmic Conflict Over God's Trustworthiness*, 418 pages
- www.TeachServices.com/as-he-is-4th-angel-publications-paperback-1si/
A Book Titled: *As He Is: Issues in the 'Character of God' Controversy*, 334 pages (Contact straub@direct.ca for alternate pricing.)

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