



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

The Law of God, also referred to as the “Moral Law” or “Ten Commandments” are a reflection of God’s holy character. Revelation 15:4; Romans 7:12; Mark 10:18; 1 Timothy 1:8; Genesis 3:1-7; 21; 7:2; 26:5.

“The very righteousness of God is in the law; because the law is but the expression of the will of God, it is only the transcript of his character. And since this is so, it follows in the nature of the case that nobody can see in the law the righteousness of God, nobody can find in the law the righteousness of God, but God himself. And this only emphasizes the mighty truth that all that anybody, whether God or man, can ever see or find in the law is HIS OWN righteousness. On the part of man, this is sin; because it comes short of the righteousness of God. But on the part of God, it is righteousness; because it is the very righteousness of God in all perfection.” A. T. Jones, Advent Review and Sabbath Herald, December 12, 1899

The law given at Sinai and written in stone was ever present from the beginning in heaven and given to Adam and his offspring by oral transmission. **Exodus 20:2-17.** The law, as given to Moses and the children of Israel at Mt. Sinai, was written by God’s own hand and is thus immutable and perpetual, just as His character that the law represents. **Exodus 31:18. His Law is perfect;** that is, it is complete and cannot be made better by adding to or taking away from it. **Psalm 19:7. Sin is transgression of His law, 1 John 3:4, and this law is a mirror that makes us aware of our sin. Romans 7:7-13; 3:19, 20.** The penalty for said sin is death, i.e., eternal death and shows our need for a Saviour. **Romans 6:23. Keeping the law, in and of itself, will save no one. Romans 3:20; Galatians 2:16. Because of Adam’s transgression, man’s nature is at enmity with God, and thus incapable of fulfilling the requirements of God’s law. Romans 5:12. Christ came to fulfill the requirements of God’s law to the utmost, Matthew 5:17-18, and through His life and death, God provided the means by which the penalty of the law was satisfied; and by accepting that substitution of Christ in our place, we may stand justified before God as if we had never broken His law. Romans 3:20; 24-26; Galatians 3:24. The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and unconditional, unreserved surrender to Him, gives us the faith, grace, and power of Jesus Christ to will and do His Law. Ezekiel 36:26, 27; Romans 8:1-11; Philippians 2:13. Upon being converted, the law becomes the standard of our lives whereby instead of**



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

making us aware of sin, now being aware, it keeps us from sin. Deuteronomy 17:19, 20; Joshua 1:7-9. The law of God will be the law by which every man is judged for eternity; for the sinner a law unto death, for the righteous, a law of liberty unto life. Revelation 20:11-15; James 2:12; 4:7.

The law of God is our standard for conduct and behavior. In the natural man, it has no place, for the natural man is carnal and thus is not subject to said law. **Romans 8:6, 7.** But in the spiritual man, it is written upon the heart of flesh provided to us by the Holy Spirit. **Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26; Hebrews 8:10; 10:16.** It demonstrates to us in every sense, what God's character is and what He expects of us in order to live His character in our lives. Please note that keeping the law, in and of itself, is a hopeless cause that cannot be done and which will not save you. We, apart from God, have not the power, strength, or capability of fulfilling God's holy law or living up to its standards. The children of Israel tried and didn't make it very far. **Exodus 32.** Paul tells us in Romans that they failed because they tried to do it apart from faith. **Romans 9:31, 32**

*“Since sin is the transgression of a law, it is evident that to save one from sin, or from the transgression of a law, is the same thing as making and keeping him obedient to law. Therefore the gospel is the revelation of the power of GOD to work righteousness in man—to manifest righteousness in their lives. The gospel, therefore, proclaims GOD'S perfect law, and contemplates nothing less than perfect obedience to it. Let it not be overlooked that it requires no less a power than the power of GOD, to exhibit righteous acts in the lives of men. Man's power is a wholly inadequate. This is easily seen when we recognize what the righteousness is, that is to be revealed in the life. The text says that it is "the righteousness of GOD." The righteousness of God is set forth in His law. **Isaiah 51:6, 7.** Now who can do of the righteousness of GOD? That is, who can do acts that are righteous as those that GOD does?—Evidently only GOD Himself. The law of GOD sets forth GOD'S way. **Psalms 119:1, 2.** But the LORD says, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts." **Isaiah 40:9.** Therefore man's effort to keep the commandments of GOD must fall as far short as the earth is Lord and the heavens.*



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

*Man is fallen; the work of the gospel is to raise him to a place at the right hand of GOD. But can man lift himself from earth to heaven? A man can as easily raise himself from the ground to the sun, by placing his hands under the soles of his feet and lifting, as he can raise himself by his own actions to the height of the requirement of GOD'S commandments. Everyone knows that when a man tries to lift himself by placing his hands under his feet, he is only holding himself down, and that the harder he lives, the more he presses downward. So with all of a man's effort to make himself what GOD'S law demands. He is only adding to his guilt, for "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." **Isaiah 64:6**. That which man does himself is from self; that is, it is selfishness; and selfishness has no place in the plan of salvation. That which is of self is of Satan; it is wholly evil. See **Mark 7:21-23**. The gospel proposes to save man from himself; therefore the man who proposes to do either wholly or in part by himself the work that GOD requires, proposes to do the best he can to thwart GOD'S plan. Many do this ignorantly, but the result is the same. It was because the Jews were ignorant of GOD'S righteousness that they went about to establish their own righteousness. **Romans 10:1-3**. Whoever realizes the infinite depth and height and breadth of the character of GOD, which is summed up in His law, will readily see that nothing short of the power of GOD can produce that character in man. Only GOD Himself can do the works of GOD. For a man to assume that he himself is able to do GOD'S righteous works, is to make himself equal with GOD; and that is the very "mystery of iniquity" itself. **E. J. Waggoner, The Bible Echo, May 1, 1893***

So the law has two purposes; **One**, is to make us aware of sin in our lives, our need for a Saviour and need to repent. Once that process is completed, and we stand justified before God as if we had never sinned, then **Two**, the law serves to keep us from returning to the sin(s) we repented of. Keeping it is then possible for a host of reasons, including **(a)** the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives giving us the power to obey; **(b)** our love for God causing within us a deep desire to keep His law; **(c)** in conjunction with love, our unconditional surrender of our will and our lives to Him wherein He writes the law upon our hearts and, as we develop His character, obeying His law becomes second nature to us.



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

Our example is Jesus. He, and He alone, fulfilled in His life the requirements of the law. **Matthew 5:17-18**. He did this, not in and of Himself as a man or as God, but as a man fully and completely unreservedly surrendered to the will of His Father; complete and utter reliance upon the Father through the indwelling Holy Spirit in every aspect of His life. **Every word He spoke, every move He made, every miracle He performed, every thought He entertained, was of the Father and Him alone.** That is our secret to success. It is no small wonder that Joshua was instructed by the Lord that, “This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein; for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.” **Joshua 1:8**

But under no circumstances can any portion of the law be excluded, omitted, or done away with. That’s why **Revelation 22:18, 19** confirms what David said in **Psalms 19:7** regarding the Law of God as being “perfect,” and attaches a penalty thereto. The word “perfect,” in the Hebrew means to be complete, entire, as good as it can be. Thus, the law can be no better than what it is, as God with His own finger, wrote it. **Just as surely as God’s character cannot be any better than it is, and since the law is a reflection of His Character, no more can the law be any better.** Therefore, whenever it is added to, like what the Pharisees had done in the time of Christ; or taken away from, as is now the case with people deciding the Sabbath commandment is of no effect, e.g., it weakens and impairs the law, making it of little effect in that individual’s life. Yet, you wonder why you have all these so-called “Christians” making a profession of faith but having no change in their lives. The law is meaningless to them and has no power because they have decided it doesn’t make any difference because they are under “grace” and not the law.

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill.” Here Jesus refutes the charge of the Pharisees. His mission to the world is to vindicate the sacred claims of that law which they charge Him with breaking. If the law of God could have been changed or abrogated, then Christ need not have suffered the consequences of our transgression. He came to explain the relation of the law to man, and to illustrate its precepts by His own life of obedience.



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

God has given us His holy precepts, because He loves mankind. To shield us from the results of transgression, He reveals the principles of righteousness. The law is an expression of the thought of God; when received in Christ, it becomes our thought. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin. God desires us to be happy, and He gave us the precepts of the law that in obeying them we might have joy.

When the law was proclaimed from Sinai, God made known to men the holiness of His character, that by contrast they might see the sinfulness of their own. **The law was given to convict them of sin, and reveal their need of a Saviour. It would do this as its principles were applied to the heart by the Holy Spirit.** This work it is still to do. In the life of Christ the principles of the law are made plain; and as the Holy Spirit of God touches the heart, as the light of Christ reveals to men their need of His cleansing blood and His justifying righteousness, the law is still an agent in bringing us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.” **Psalm 19:7.**

“Till heaven and earth pass,” said Jesus, “one jot or one tittle shall in nowise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.” The sun shining in the heavens, the solid earth upon which you dwell, are God’s witnesses that His law is changeless and eternal. Though they may pass away, the divine precepts shall endure. “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.” **Luke 16:17.** The system of types that pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God was to be abolished at His death; but the precepts of the Decalogue are as immutable as the throne of God.

Since “the law of the Lord is perfect,” every variation from it must be evil. Those who disobey the commandments of God, and teach others to do so, are condemned by Christ. The Saviour’s life of obedience maintained the claims of the law; it proved that the law could be kept in humanity, and showed the excellence of character that obedience would develop. All who obey as He did are likewise declaring that the law is “holy, and just, and good.” **Romans 7:12.** On the other hand, all who break God’s commandments are sustaining Satan’s claim that the law is unjust, and cannot be obeyed. Thus they second the deceptions of the great adversary,



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

and cast dishonor upon God. They are the children of the wicked one, who was the first rebel against God's law. To admit them into heaven would again bring in the elements of discord and rebellion, and imperil the well-being of the universe. No man who willfully disregards one principle of the law shall enter the kingdom of heaven." **Ellen G. White, "Desire of Ages," Chapter 31, pg. 307-308**

"Through Jesus, God's mercy was manifested to men; but mercy does not set aside justice. The law reveals the attributes of God's character, and not a jot or tittle of it could be changed to meet man in his fallen condition. God did not change His law, but He sacrificed Himself, in Christ, for man's redemption. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself." **2Corinthians 5:19.** The law requires righteousness,—a righteous life, a perfect character; and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. His life stands for the life of men. Thus they have remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. More than this, Christ imbues men with the attributes of God. He builds up the human character after the similitude of the divine character, a goodly fabric of spiritual strength and beauty. Thus the very righteousness of the law is fulfilled in the believer in Christ. God can "be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." **Romans 3:26 ...** By His life and His death, Christ proved that God's justice did not destroy His mercy, but that sin could be forgiven, and that the law is righteous, and can be perfectly obeyed." **Ellen G. White, Desire of Ages, Chapter 79, pg. 762.**

The law of God is a reflection of His character. Hence the psalmist says, "All Thy commandments are righteousness;" and "through Thy precepts I get understanding." Psalm 119:172, 104. God has revealed Himself to us in His word and in the works of creation. Through the volume of inspiration and the book of nature we are to obtain a knowledge of God. **Ellen G. White, Patriarchs and Prophets, pg. 596**

"The word and spirit of truth, dwelling in our hearts, will separate us from the world. The immutable principles of truth and love will bind heart to heart, and the strength of the union will be according to the measure of



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

grace and truth enjoyed. Well would it be for us each to hold up the mirror, God's royal law, and see in it the reflection of His own character. Let us be careful not to neglect the danger signals and the warnings given in His word. Unless heed is given to these warnings, and defects of character are overcome, these defects will overcome those who possess them, and they will fall into error, apostasy, and open sin. The mind that is not elevated to the highest standard will in time lose its power to retain that which it had once gained. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." **Ellen G. White, Testimonies for the Church, Vol. 5, pg. 537-38.**

"Whatever we do to overcome, establishes the law. All that is enjoined upon us in the Scriptures establishes the law. All that God does to help us overcome shows that the law is in force, and that God's great object in helping us, is to bring us back in obedience to his holy law. If there is no law, as some contend, then there is no room for repentance, faith, baptism, prayer, and the various other duties that we have to perform to obtain help from God, and attain to holiness; then there is no room for the death and intercessions of Christ, and the healing fountain; for there is no need of grace, no occasion for the death and intercessions of Christ, nothing to heal; then Christ should not be our example, and we should not imitate what we have thought to be the loveliest character that ever dwelt among men! Then away with the Christian graces, and the fruit of the Spirit; men may think, act, and speak as they please; they may let their appetites and passions have full sway, and usurp the authority of enlightened reason; they may cherish idleness, effeminacy and uncleanness as virtues, and violate the laws of their beings; they may lavish their best affections on trifles, and keep their weakest affections for their Creator! they may speak of, and address their Maker irreverently, and curse their fellow creatures made in the image of God; in other words, they may with unbounded liberty and congratulation break any or all of God's commandments! Then let all the messengers of the cross hush their voices in silence, on those topics which have engrossed their minds, and led them to labor and suffer in vain, and



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

*give up their commission, confessing their error; let them cease to beseech the sinner with accents of pity to be reconciled to God, and flee from wrath to come; and let all who believe in the gospel of Christ act accordingly; let the Holy Spirit and good angels cease to act their part in the so-called sanctification of men, and return to the courts above, confessing that they have learned a better way; and let Satan and the wicked rejoice; for there is no law, no such a thing as sin, and no necessity for sanctification and salvation.” D. T. Bordeaux, **Sanctification and Living Holiness**, pg. 127-28 (1864)*

“In the Sunday School Times we find, in answer to a question asked by a correspondent, a little story which we think aptly illustrates the heading of this article. The incident is thus related by the Times:-

“A story is told of a New England deacon, who was visited by a committee of the church, in view of his drinking habit. He met the visitors cordially, and said, in substance: ‘I’ve asked the Lord’s help in this thing, and I’ve left the case with Him. I was afraid I was drinking too much; so I prayed that, if I was in any danger of that, the Lord would take away my love for liquor. But my liking for it holds good, and so I know the Lord approves my drinking.’”

We think all will allow that such a prayer was little, if any, less than insult to God. The Bible declares God’s hatred of drinking habits, when it says that no drunkard shall enter the kingdom of Heaven. A drunkard is one who drinks immoderately; and this man was a drunkard, for he was drinking so much that he was getting alarmed at himself. Then why should he pray for wisdom concerning a thing that is plainly revealed? He knew he was doing wrong; he did not want to stop, and so he made conditions for the Lord, and because those conditions were such that the Lord could not comply with them, his conscience was satisfied. He had his mind made up beforehand what he should do, and might better have gone ahead without the mockery of prayer; the prayer was simply a taking of God’s name in vain, and could not be other than an abomination to the Lord.

We think no one will disagree with our conclusion on this matter; and yet there are hundreds, perhaps thousands, who are insulting the



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

Lord in the same manner that the drinking deacon did, yet they cannot see the similarity, because the subject of their prayers is different. We have often heard people say, in substance: “I know that the Ten Commandments are God’s and unchangeable laws, and that the fourth commandment requires the observance of the seventh day, and of no other. I know that the Bible does not sanction the observance of Sunday. There was a time when I was considerably troubled over this matter-whether I ought not to keep the Sabbath instead of Sunday. So I prayed earnestly to the Lord that I might know my duty. I prayed that if it was wrong for me to keep Sunday, the Lord would let me know; and since then my mind has been perfectly at rest. I am in the Lord’s hands; if He wants me to keep the Sabbath, He will let me know.”

The least that we can say is that such a prayer, offered under such circumstances, is an insult to the Lord. It is as though a child, knowing what his father had plainly and expressly commanded him to do, should turn right around and ask for some sign by which he might know that the father meant what he said. In such a case the reader can readily imagine what that “sign” would be. So God has given us explicit commands in His word. That word is all that He has given us for a guide in this life, and it is a sufficient guide, for it is able to make us wise unto salvation. That word is for a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path. Of the law of the Lord it is said that it “is perfect, converting the soul,” **Psalm 19:7**, and that to keep the commandments is “the whole duty of man.” **Ecclesiastes 12:13**. These commandments are very plain, so that any child can understand them, and now for anybody to pray to the Lord to know if it is to his duty to keep them, is an insult to the one who gave them.

The one who offers such a prayer virtually says: “I don’t think the commandments of the Lord are sufficient guide for me; they may do for others, but I require something better.” Or else he says: “I don’t believe the Lord really means what he says.” In either case, he turns away from the law, and treats it with contempt. Now does God hear the prayer of such? Hear what is said: “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination.” **Proverbs 28:9**. Then if the answer to such a prayer comes in the shape of peace to the one who persists in violating the commandment, who has answered it? Not God, for “He cannot



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

deny Himself.” **2Timothy 2:13**. It must be none other it than the great adversary of the truth.

But will the Lord give any “sign” to such ones that He means what He says? Yes; numerous instances of this are given, but we will cite only one. Balaam was expressly told by the Lord not to go with the servants of Balak, to curse Israel. But he wanted to go, and so he asked the Lord if He really meant what He said. As a result, he became satisfied in his own mind that he might go, and he went. As a “sign” that the Lord meant what He said, Balaam was all but slain in the way, being saved only by his faithful beast, and was finally destroyed with the sword. **Numbers 31:8; 2Peter 2:11, 12; Jude 11**.

And so **all who seek for peace in a way contrary to the law of God, shall perish**. “The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.” **Proverbs 21:16**. Paul, speaking of those who deliberately turn away from the only source of truth, and try to find peace in a way that God has not appointed, says that “God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” **2Thessalonians 2:11, 12**. **Reader, do you want Satan, instead of the Lord, to answer your prayers? If not, then pray only in accordance with God’s word**. Pray, as did David, “Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.” **Psalms 119:18**. Such a prayer, offered in sincerity, God will not fail to answer. And when the Spirit makes known to us “the deep things of God,” and we delight in the law of the Lord, we have this precious promise: “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what he will, and it shall be done unto you.” **John 15:7**. “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.” **1John 3:22**. **Let us never in our prayers take God’s name in vain.** E.J. Waggoner “Abominable Prayers” *The Signs of the Times*, October 21, 1886.

For additional information on this subject, see **Bible Readings for the Home Circle, 1914 Edition**, “The Law Of God;” “Perpetuity Of The Law;” “Why The Law Was Given At Sinai;” “Penalty For Transgression;” “The Law Of God In



STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Article VI – The Law of God

The Patriarchal Age;” “The Law Of God In The New Testament;” “The Moral And Ceremonial Laws;” “The Two Covenants;” “What Was Abolished By Christ;” and “The Law And The Gospel.”