

The Reason Why Satan Attacks God's Law

Jesus explained why knowledge concerning the importance of the 10 commandments were vital to salvation.

Matthew 22:36-40

“Master, which is the great commandment in the law? (37) Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. (38) This is the first and great commandment. (39) And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (40) **On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.**”

Matthew 19:16-22

“And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? (17) And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. (18) He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, (19) Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (20) The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? (21) Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. (22) But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.”

If the rich man had in fact, kept ALL the commandments from his youth, why wasn't that sufficient to ensure his salvation?

Jesus emphasised that the 10 commandments could be summed up in two commandments – love to God and love to humanity. The underlying principle of love is unselfishness, and the rich man's lack of love for God and his fellowman was demonstrated by his disappointing and selfish response to Christ's invitation.

Christ demonstrated that it was not the keeping of the letter of the law that achieved entrance to heaven, but the possession of the spirit of God – the new mind – the new character of unselfish love. The rich man possessed a legalistic religion – which was based on righteousness by works, not righteousness by faith which works through love (Galatians 5:6).

Christ's conversation with the rich man reveals that any work or action that is not motivated by unselfish love:

- **does not have its origin in love;**
- **cannot be in harmony with the spirit of Jesus;**
- **cannot produce the fruit of the spirit of love ;and**
- **is not in accordance with God's character, law or government**

Is Violence a Fruit of the Spirit of Christ?

Matthew 5:44-48

“But I (Jesus) say unto you, 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; (45) That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. (46) For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? (47) And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? (48) Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Galatians 5:22, 23

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**, longsuffering, **gentleness**, goodness, faith, (23) meekness, temperance: **against such there is no law.**”

Paul infers that there IS a law against the opposites to the fruit of the spirit. The opposite of peace is war, bitterness. The opposite to gentleness is violence. These evil fruits are against the law of God's unselfish love.

Isaiah 53:9 (Prophecy concerning Jesus, the Messiah)

“And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.”

2 Thessalonians 3:16

“Now **the Lord of peace** himself give you peace always by all means....”

John W. Ritenbaugh, in *the Sixth Commandment (part 1)* makes the following comments:

1 Peter 2:21-23

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: (22) Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: (23) Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:”

“This shows shows Christ's example, even when He had the [love](#), wisdom, and discernment to judge righteous judgment and correctly put His enemies in their place. So strong was Jesus' commitment to these principles that, even when His life was on the line, and His enemies reviled Him intensely, He did not respond in kind. He set us an example to do likewise. Perhaps the key statement is He 'committed Himself to Him who judges rightly.' His response was an act of [faith](#) in God's awareness of His situation and God's perfect ability not merely to act but to act in exactly the right way for the good of all. The reality of [God's sovereignty](#) over His creation led to Jesus' minute-by-minute faithful submission. If vengeance belongs to God, then men, especially those who have pledged their lives to be subject to His government, have no right to take it to themselves. Very frequently, it takes real strength of character, bolstered by faith, to help and serve someone who has directly tried to harm us. God's instructions to us are clear: "Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head." Do not be overcome

by evil, but overcome evil with good' ([Romans 12:20-21](#)). 'Enemy' does not mean one we hate, but one who is bitter toward us. If we hate others, we are right back in the spirit of murder. Paul is stating a critical universal principle: Over time, [kindness](#) removes enmity, but seeking revenge increases it. Booker T. Washington said, 'The best way to destroy an enemy is to make him a friend.'" (end quote: **John W. Ritenbaugh**)

Upon their conversion, the disciples and the apostles realised the importance of keeping the spirit of the law, by being filled with the loving, unselfish mind/spirit of Christ.

1 John 4:6-5:3

"We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. (7) Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. (8) He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love. (9) In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. (10) Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. (11) Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another. (12) No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. (13) Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit. (14) And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world. (15) Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. (16) And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. (17) Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. (18) There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love. (19) We love him, because he first loved us. (20) If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? (21) And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also. (5:1) Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. (2) By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. (3) **For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.**"

God empowers His followers with divine, unselfish love. Being unselfish (keeping the commandments), is therefore not difficult (grievous).

1 John 2:3-11

"And hereby **we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments.** (4) He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.¹ (5) But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him. (6) **He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.** (7) Brethren, I write no new commandment unto you, but an old commandment which ye had from the beginning. The old commandment is the word which ye have heard from the beginning. (8) Again, a new commandment I write unto you, **which thing is true in him and in you: because the darkness is past, and the true**

¹ *Jesus testified that Satan is a commandment-breaker. In John 8:44 "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because **there is no truth in him.** When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."*

light now shineth. (9) **He that saith he is in the light, and hateth his brother, is in darkness even until now. (10) He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. (11) But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes."**

Galatians 5:25- 6:2

"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. (26) Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another. (6:1) Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.(6:2) **Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."**

2 Thesalonians 3:14-15

"And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.(15) **Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother."**

1 Peter 3:4, 8-11

"But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.... Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: (9) **Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing;** knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. (10) For he that will love life, and see good days, **let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: (11) Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it."**

Paul also focused on the theme that God's character is pure, unselfish love. The principle of love was manifested by His Son whom He sanctified (John 10:36). How did the Father sanctify His Son? Christ was enabled to keep the 10 commandments perfectly by abiding in His Father's love (John 14:10, 11).

Paul gave his personal testimony as evidence of God's love and its application in his life.

1 Timothy 1:5-15

"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: (6) From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; (7) Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. (8) But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; (9) 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, (10) 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;** (11) According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. (12) And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; (13) Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. (14) And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. (15) This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."

After listing his worst crimes, which he committed 'ignorantly and in unbelief,' Paul states that he is the chief of sinners.

Paul admitted that he had been a blasphemer, a persecutor and that his actions were injurious. In fact, his actions might also include being an accomplice to those who performed the crimes which he expressed earlier – manslaughter and menstealers.

Paul states that these evil acts are 'contrary to sound doctrines.' Sound doctrines are based on unselfish love – demonstrated by the keeping the 10 commandments. And Paul lists the sound doctrines which he identifies as the 10 commandments – for he refers to stealing, adultery, honouring parents, murder,

Paul's previous sinful actions had been performed in ignorance, yet, because they contradicted the law of love spelled out in the 10 commandments, he still identified those actions as sin.

Paul caused many of God's people to be imprisoned and killed, however Paul believed that his horrific actions were in fact, honourable. He believed that he was 'doing God service,' yet, his enthusiastic persecution of the early Christians, was an amazing fulfilment of Jesus' prophecy.

John 16:2

“They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.”

When Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, the proud pharisee's zealous actions were exposed to him as unlawful and hence sinful. Paul was shocked and horrified to find that he, a man of great education and learning, could have been so utterly wrong about a particular religious doctrine. He who taught the law, was himself a lawbreaker.

Paul's interview with Jesus provoked a radical change in his thinking processes. He began to realise the futility of legalism and forcefulness in matters of religion. He perceived that the law of God is founded on the principle of love. Love alone offers freedom of choice. This vital principle of love - “upon which hang all the law and the prophets,” was constantly displayed in Christ's character (Matt 22:40). Christ never compelled anyone to worship Him or to accept Him as the Messiah or Saviour.

As Paul freely consented to 'have the mind of Jesus' (Philippians 2:5), his behaviour became non-violent. The 'fruit' of his character began to resemble the fruit of Jesus' character.

Paul listed Christ's character traits to the Galatians, calling them 'the fruit of the spirit' (of Christ) – love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance (Gal 5:22, 23).

Is it possible, that the ancient Israelites, like Paul, were also wrong in their legalistic perception of righteousness? Did they also ignorantly, believe incorrectly concerning God's character and law?

In his epistle to the Corinthian church members, Paul made a comparison between legalism and faith – between the letter of the law and the spirit of the law of love - as it exists and was seen in Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:7,8). Then he exposed the origin of their sad error.

2 Corinthians 3:14

“But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. (15) But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. (16) Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away.”

Paul revealed that the Jewish leaders had failed to recognise the principle upon which God's law is based, is love. Instead, their perception of God was hindered by an inability to perceive that the spirit of the law is a summary of God's character. The law defines true, unselfish love.

As did Paul, could it be possible that the ancient Israelites also firmly believed that they were 'doing God service' by exterminating (murdering) Canaanite pagans and 'heretics'? It seems to be a logical conclusion in light of Paul's statement about 'a veil being on their hearts' which can only be taken away by Christ.

In many of his writings, Paul continued to repeat his theme that the law of God, which Jesus the Messiah demonstrated, defines His character. It is the character, the spirit, the mind of Christ which holds the key to humanity's salvation – not law-keeping (works) which is motivated by selfishness.

Romans 13:8-10

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. (9) For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (10) Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: **therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.**”

1 Timothy 1:5

“Now **the end of the commandment is charity** out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:”

Colossians 3:14

“And **above all these things put on charity**, which is the bond of perfectness.”

1 Corinthians 13:13

“And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but **the greatest of these is charity.**”

Thoughts to Ponder

God's character – His identity – is expressed in unselfish love in every sphere, every situation, every circumstance. Satan claimed that the principle of unselfish love could not succeed in a sinful world. The attack against the law of God is an attack against God Himself. Jesus proved that the devil's accusations against His Father were false and vindicated His Father's character, His law and His government.

Question

Since Christ proved Satan's accusations to be false, why should Christians set aside Christ's great victory and echo the same satanic accusation against God's character by suggesting that there are some occasions where unselfish love fails; that there are circumstances which require a violent response and even necessitate murder? Why do they claim that God's law can be set aside, 'if God commands it?'

If God put aside His own law – in even only one emergency – He would be admitting that Satan's accusations against His divine character, law and government were valid.

Christ proved that Love conquers all – for God is love and His ways are perfect. Sinful human beings are more than conquerors if they abide by the unselfish, loving principles of His government.

Romans 8:35-39

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (36) As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. (37) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. (38) For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, (39) Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”