

REVISITING THE BELIEVER'S POSITIONAL RICHES IN CHRIST

Part VII: Applying The Truth That Believers Are Free From The Law

I. Introduction

- A. Many questions exist about the believer's relationship to the Mosaic Law: (1) those in Judaism teach the Law is necessary for salvation, Romans 9:31-32. (2) Seventh-day Adventists claim we are today justified by grace through faith in Christ, but that we must heed the Ten Commandments as Christians (Seventh-day Adventists Believe..., 1989, p. 232-246). (3) Others hold the Mosaic Law establishes principles of human conduct (like circumcision et al. according to Bill Gothard) that Christians must follow for God's blessing. (4) Still others cite Malachi 3:10, claiming we must give ten percent of our gross income to God as required under the Law.
- B. One of the positional truths every believer in Christ possesses the moment he is justified by God is freedom from the Mosaic Law, and we view that truth with application to these issues with use of Lewis Sperry Chafer's Systematic Theology, vol. III "Soteriology," p. 240-241 (as follows):

II. Applying The Truth That Believers Are Free From The Law.

- A. When Christ died on the cross, He substitutionally died for the believer to the jurisdiction of the Mosaic Law, and thus to its resulting condemnation of the believer for his violations of it, Romans 7:2-6.
- B. The alleged "parts" of the Mosaic Law to which Christ died include not only the "ceremonial" but also the Ten Commandments and **every other conceivable** part of the Mosaic Law, Colossians 2:14-17 (as follows):
 1. Paul taught that Christ's substitutionary death for the believer on the cross ended the Mosaic Law's jurisdiction over him so that he is not to let anyone judge him regarding ceremonial aspects of the Law, including dietary restrictions or the observing of various holy days, Colossians 2:14-16b.
 2. Paul also listed **Sabbaths** as those days believers were to let no man judge them, and the keeping of the **Sabbath Day** is one of the **Ten Commandments**, Colossians 2:16c with Exodus 20:9-11.
 3. Thus, the believer is free from all parts of the Mosaic Law, including circumcision, Galatians 5:1-3.
 4. Indeed, were a believer to try to keep any part of the Mosaic Law, he would obligate himself to keep the entire Law by way of the command in Deuteronomy 27:26. (cf. Galatians 3:10)
- C. Though nine of the Ten Commandments are taught as obligatory deeds for Christians, the believer today is to observe them **not** because he is under the rule of the Mosaic Law itself, but because these commands fit a life of righteousness by the Holy Spirit's power in the current dispensation of the Church, Romans 8:3-4.
- D. On the issue of tithing, Christians are to give the amount they choose to give, 2 Corinthians 9:6-7. Tithing was prescribed for Israel under the Mosaic Law and was also practiced by Abraham in Genesis 14:20 before the Law prescribed it, but tithing is not required for believers in the Church era! In a practical sense, giving ten percent of one's income can act as a good guideline on giving, but it is not a mandatory amount!

Lesson: (1) *In Christ, the believer is so positioned through being co-crucified with and co-dead with Christ on the cross that he is dead to the Mosaic Law's jurisdiction over him as well as to the Law's condemnation of him so that he is no longer obliged to keep any part of that Law.* (2) *Thus, he is to live righteously in the current dispensation of the Church in subjection to apostolic teaching in the New Testament.* (3) *Such living may overlap the dictates of the Law, but where that overlap occurs, the believer heeds the directives because they come from the apostles.*

Application: (1) *One is not justified by keeping the Mosaic Law as Judaism implies: he is justified by faith apart from the works of the Law, Romans 3:20-24.* (2) *One is not saved by grace only to be required to live under the jurisdiction of the Ten Commandments of the Mosaic Law as Seven-day Adventists teach, for he is dead to the jurisdiction of the entire Law. Besides, the alleged parts of the Law actually stand or fall together as to their jurisdiction over a person, for bringing one's self under any part of the Mosaic Law indebts him to observe the entire Law according to Deuteronomy 27:26 as explained in Galatians 3:10.* (3) *Regarding nine of the Ten Commandments that are repeated in apostolic Scriptures for Christians today, the believer is to observe these nine requirements NOT because they are found in the Ten Commandments, but because apostolic writings of Scripture require them.* (4) *On the issue of tithing, believers are not obligated to give ten percent of their income to the Lord, for tithing was a requirement of the Law where believers today give freewill offerings, selecting the amount they themselves desire to give. One may use the ten percent tithing level as a practical guideline on choosing the amount to give, but he is free to give less or more as he so chooses.* (5) *Circumcision has no inherent spiritual value for believers today since believers are not under the Law, but it has hygienic value according to physicians. Thus, circumcision should not be practiced for spiritual reasons, but it may be used for one's health.*