

The Law and the Gospel

John Colquhoun (1815)

Chapter 4 (Lesson 6)

Rules for properly understanding the 10 Commandments

Scripture shows us many examples of people who did not rightly understand the 10 Commandments. In fact, the entire religion of the Pharisees was built upon a _____ understanding of the 10 Commandments. It is of vital importance to properly understand the moral law. Here Colquhoun gives us 10 rules to help us come to a right understanding of God's law.

- 1. If the command is telling you what is required, it is at the same time _____ all that is opposed to it (and vice versa).**

“Every command forbids the sin that is opposite to, or inconsistent with, the duty which it requires. The duties required in the law cannot be performed without abstaining from the sins forbidden in it, and the sins forbidden cannot be avoided unless the contrary duties are performed. We must not only cease to do what the commands forbid but do what they require; otherwise, we do not obey them sincerely.”

Example: “Thou shalt not murder” does not only mean don't kill someone but it also means to do the opposite of murder which is seeking after the _____ - _____ of another.

- 2. Where something is required, every similar duty is also _____. And where something is forbidden, all similar things are also forbidden.**

“Where great sins are expressly forbidden, all the lesser sins of that sort are forbidden; and they are prohibited under the names of the grosser sins in order to render them more detestable and horrible in our view and also to show us how abominable even the very least of them is in the sight of an infinitely holy and righteous God.”

Example: “Thou shalt not commit adultery” does not only forbid this specific physical act but also all sort of _____ sins (such as impure thoughts and words).

- 3. What God forbids must never be done, but sometimes what God requires can only be performed as God gives _____.**

A person cannot perform all of the commands of God at _____ but must obey them as opportunity arises.

“What God forbids is sin and is never to be done; what He requires is always our duty, and yet every particular duty is not to be performed at all times.”

Example: “Honor thy Father and Mother” cannot always be practiced in the case of a person what has married and moved away from one's parents.

- 4. We are to practice godly obedience and to strive to _____ those around us to do the same.**

“Whatever sin is forbidden to us also forbids us to partake with others in it, either by example, advice, connivance, or by giving them occasion to commit it.”

“Whatever duty others around us are commanded to perform, we are required, by advice, encouragement, prayer, and other helps, to assist them in performing it.”

Example-The command to remember the Lord's Day-we should not by our bad _____ help others to not observe the Lord's Day. Also, we should strive to encourage others to worship God on the appointed day.

5. All the commands of the Lord are _____, and you cannot break one without breaking them all.

“They are so intimately connected together that if the divine authority is disregarded in any one of them, it is slighted in all.”

Example: *“The first commandment, for example, is so closely connected with all the other precepts that it is obeyed in all our obedience or disobeyed in all our disobedience to any one of them.”*

6. When something is required, all the supporting means are right. Also, where something is forbidden, all the causes _____ to it are also forbidden.

“Where a duty is required, the use of all the means of performing it aright is required; and where a sin is forbidden, every cause, and every occasion of it, are prohibited.”

Example: “Thou shalt not steal” forbids not only stealing but also all the planning and malicious thoughts that come before the actual crime of stealing. For another example—children are called to honor their parents...parents should act in an _____ way so as to make it easy for their children to perform what the Lord requires.

7. You cannot commit one sin for the purpose of _____ a different sin.

“The very least sin ought not, on any account whatever, to be committed. None of the dispensations of adorable providence lays a man under the necessity of sinning.”

Example: You cannot lie to avoid being caught in some other sin.

8. The first table of the law takes _____ over the second when both cannot be performed.

“Our love of our neighbor, for instance, ought to be subjected to our love of God; and we are enjoined to hate—that is, to love in a less degree—father and mother for Christ when our love of them comes at any time in competition with our love for Him.”

Example: God commands us to have no other God’s before Him and anytime we listen to someone else _____ God we sin against this command because we are placing something above God.

9. Our obedience should always have the proper _____ in sight—a desire to perfectly Glory and Honor of God.

“Whatever obedience, He enjoins, He requires that it be absolutely perfect; and whatever obedience we perform, we are bound to aim at perfection in it...The aim of God in each of His commandments is perfection of holiness, of conformity ‘to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.’”

We should not obey half-heartedly because we know we are _____, but we should strive to obey completely.

10. The beginning and the end of all the law is _____.

“The love of God to man is the sum of the gospel; the love of man to God is the sum of the law. Love to God as our God is the sum of what is required in the first table of the law; love to our neighbor is the whole of what is enjoined in the second...The two commandments are so closely connected together that obedience to the one cannot be performed without obedience to the other.”

Augustine reminds us that if our reading and understanding of Scripture is not leading us to greater _____ for God and for others than we are not rightly understanding the Scriptures. Reading a lot of Bible and memorizing a lot of Bible are good but not as good as having a proper _____ of the Bible.