

---

---

# Church in Campbell Weekly News

April 1, 2012

Issue 12- 14

---

---

## LIFE-STUDY OF THE PSALMS

### MESSAGE 40

## CHRIST—THE REALITY OF THE LAW AS THE TESTIMONY AND THE WORD OF GOD

In this message we come to Psalm 119. This psalm does not have a title telling us who wrote it, but it is commonly understood by Bible teachers that this psalm was written by David.

Psalm 119 is one of the alphabetical, or acrostic, psalms. The first letters of each group of eight verses in this psalm follow the order of the Hebrew alphabet. The twenty-two sections of this psalm thus correspond to the twenty-two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Furthermore, all the verses in a particular section begin with the same Hebrew letter. For example, in the Aleph section (vv. 1-8) every verse starts with the Hebrew letter Aleph.

The title of this message is "Christ—the Reality of the Law as the Testimony and the Word of God." In both the Old Testament and the New Testament there is a strong basis for saying that the law in its reality is Christ. If we would see that Christ is the reality of the law, we need to regard the law, as Psalm 119 does, as the testimony of God and as the word of God. This psalm does not contain the word "Christ," but it does contain a number of synonyms of Christ, such as "testimony" and "word," which are also synonyms of "law." We should not consider the law merely as commandments, regulations, and ordinances. Rather, we should consider the law as God's testimony. The law was given on Mount Sinai, but it was put into a little ark called "the ark of the testimony" (Exo. 25:16). The ark was then placed into "the tabernacle of testimony" (38:21). Thus, the law was in the ark of the testimony, and the ark of the testimony was in the tabernacle of testimony.

At this point we need to ask a very particular question: In typology, who is the law? This is a question not about what the law is but about who the law is. We cannot answer the question concerning who the law is by saying that the law is the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are not a person, but they are a portrait of a person. A law is always a picture of the person who makes it. The laws passed by today's legislators are pictures of the legislators. The principle is the same with the law of God. The law of God—the Ten Commandments with the many statutes, ordinances, and judgments—is a portrait of the person of God.

### I. CHRIST BEING THE REALITY OF THE LAW, SIGNIFIED BY:

#### A. The Testimony of God, Signifying Christ as the Living Portrait of What God Is

Christ is the reality of the law as the testimony of God. The testimony of God signifies Christ as the living portrait of what God is (Col. 2:9; 1:19).

The Ten Commandments are brief, but they give us a portrait of God. They show us that God is a jealous God, that He cannot tolerate other gods. In this matter, He is like a husband who is jealous concerning his wife. Also, God is a God of love, light, holiness, and righteousness. Here we have five crucial words—jealous, love, light, holiness, and righteousness.

The Ten Commandments were written on two tablets, with each tablet containing five commandments. In this way, the Ten Commandments were divided into two groups of five. The first three commandments are concerned with God. The first commandment says that the Lord is God and that we should not have any gods before Him (Exo. 20:2-3); the second commandment, that we should not make idols or worship idols (vv. 4-6); and the third commandment, that we should not take the name of God in vain (v. 7). The fourth commandment requires that we keep the Sabbath (vv. 8-11). This commandment indicates that God is love. Because He loves us, He wants us to have a day of rest. The fifth commandment is the commandment to honor our parents (v. 12). This commandment is ranked with the first four commandments, which are related to God. The reason for this ranking involves our source as human beings. In Luke 3 the human generations are traced all the way back to Adam, and then to God. This indicates that when we honor our parents, we honor our source, which, ultimately, is God Himself. When we honor our parents, we recognize the fact that, through them, we can trace our source back to God. Those who do not respect their parents do not respect God.

The five commandments in the second group are all related to humanity. These are the commandments about not killing, not committing adultery, not stealing, not lying, and not coveting. We may use five words to summarize these five commandments: murder, adultery, stealing, lying, and covetousness. Anyone who does not murder, commit fornication, steal, lie, or covet is a perfect person.

We have pointed out that the Ten Commandments portray God as the One who is a God of jealousy, love, light, holiness, and righteousness. The last five commandments are related to God's holiness and righteousness. For example, a person who steals or lies is not righteous.

The God who is jealous, who is love and light, and who is holy and righteous is embodied in Christ. For this reason, Christ is God's testimony. Christ is jealous, loving, and full of light. He is also holy and righteous. He is the reality of the law, which is a portrait of God.

## **B. The Word of God, Signifying Christ as the Living Word of God Breathed Out by Him**

Christ is the reality of the law not only as the testimony of God but also as the word of God, signifying Christ as the living word of God breathed out by Him (Rev. 19:13b; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). John 1:1 says that in the beginning was the Word (Christ), that the Word was with God, and that the Word was God. According to Revelation 19:13b, when Christ comes back to judge, His name will be called "the Word of God." The Ten Commandments, with all their statutes, ordinances, and judgments, are also called the word of God. A literal rendering of the Hebrew translated "ten commandments" in Exodus 34:28 would be "ten words." The Ten Commandments are thus God's words, breathed out by Him.

The word "law" is used twenty-five times in Psalm 119 (vv. 1, 18, etc.). A number of different synonyms for "law" are also used in this psalm, including "testimony" (once, in v. 88), "testimonies" (twenty-two times, in vv. 2, 14, etc.), "word" (thirty-six times, in vv. 9, 11, etc.), "words" (six times, in vv. 57, 103, etc.), "commandment" (once, in v. 96), "commandments" (twenty-one times, in vv. 6, 10, etc.), "statutes" (twenty-two times, in vv. 5, 8, etc.), "ordinances" (seventeen times, in vv. 7, 13, etc.), "judgments" (three times, in vv. 75, 120, 137), and "precepts" (twenty-one times, in vv. 4, 15, etc.). All these terms from "law" to "precepts" consummate in the "way" (four times, in vv. 14, 27, 32, 33) or "ways" (three times, in vv. 3, 15, 37), signifying Christ as the way of God to His people.

Psalm 119 is a psalm of one hundred seventy-six verses describing Christ, who is the reality of the law, the commandments, the ordinances, the statutes, the precepts, and the judgments. In total, He is the Word of God. The words of Psalm 119 are the written words of God, but Christ is the living Word of God. The written words are the letters, but the living Word is the Spirit, who is the reality of the letters.

Now we can see not only what the law is but also who the law is. Who is the law? The law is the person of Christ, and the person of Christ is the Spirit. The Spirit is the reality of whatever God is. Hence, as the Spirit Christ is the reality of the law. Eventually, this law, this person, consummates in the way (John 14:6). When we have Him, we have not only love and light but also the way. This is Christ being the reality of the law as the testimony and the word of God.

## **II. THE TWO ASPECTS OF THE LAW**

There are two aspects of the law—the aspect of the letter and the aspect of the Spirit. In 2 Corinthians 3:6 Paul says that "the letter

kills, but the Spirit gives life." Whether you have a killing law or a life-giving law depends on your attitude. If your attitude in coming to the law is to care only for the commandments in letters and to realize that you cannot fulfill these commandments, then you have the law in the aspect of the letter. However, if you take every part of the law—all the commandments, ordinances, statutes, precepts, and judgments—as the word breathed out by the God whom you love, then you will have the law in the aspect of the Spirit. Then instead of trembling before the law of letters, you will be happy to be fed with every part of the law as the word, the breath, of God.

## **B. The Positive Aspect**

As God's living testimony the law functions to minister the living God to His seekers (Psa. 119:2, 88). If we regard the law only as letters, the law will be very negative to us. However, if we regard the law as God's testimony, as a portrait of God, and if we consider that every word of the law is something breathed out by God, then to us the law will be the living and loving word of God. If this is our attitude toward the Bible today, then whenever we come to the Bible we will have the sense deep within that we are with God. Then as we read the Bible we will touch God, knowing that He is loving and that it is surely worthwhile for us to love Him and to seek Him. This is the positive function of the law as the testimony of God.

As God's living word the law functions to dispense God's life and light into those who love the law (vv. 25, 116, 130). We all should regard the Bible as the living word of God which dispenses God Himself into us as our life and light. Whether or not this is our experience depends upon whether we seek God and love Him. This means that what the Bible is to us depends upon our attitude toward the Bible.

### ***Burdens for Church Prayers***

- Pray for the blending and one accord among the saints
- Pray for the burden how to raise up spiritual children at home
- Pray for YP that they will be companions with one another to pursue the Lord together.
- Pray for the English-speaking testimony and gospel preaching on West Valley College campus.
- For daily exercise in GOW training: prophesying on Lord's day by daily enjoying His word and pursue the truth and attend Lord's day meeting on time.

### ***Announcement***

- Morning Revival: Crystallization study of Psalms Message 19.
- Audio and outlines of the messages from Parents and Children/YP Serving Ones Conference are available at <http://thechurchinsan jose.org/archives>.
- Prayer meeting Tuesday (3/27) 7:30PM at Brother Tai's house, 12137 Kristy lane, Saratoga.
- ITERO Re-speaking: 4-6pm on 4/22, at San Jose meeting hall, 124 S 11th Street, San Jose, CA 95112
- Sister Conference 4/13-14 (\$22+\$6),
- Bible Camp 6/18-22, SST for YP 7/22-27, please sanctify the week.