

Ambassador College

CORRESPONDENCE COURSE



War, Suffering, Fear — Results of Broken Laws!

LESSON 17

an open letter from**THE EDITOR**

STATISTICS show, and businessmen admit, that it is virtually *impossible* for **HONEST** men to *succeed* in business. Especially in these increasingly foreboding days. But do you have to be dishonest, cheat and lie, to be able to adequately provide for *your* family?—you who are learning more and more about God and His ways each day?

Here is the **PLAIN TRUTH** about financial security for **YOU**, written in *human experience*.

It was late in 1933—the very depth of the great depression. Ed Smith was a well driller by profession, but nobody seemed able to afford to have wells drilled.

Ed and his wife, Emma, attended services I was then holding in a one-room country school-house twelve miles west of Eugene, Oregon. Ed made no profession of Christianity until later. But he attended services, and went up and down the countryside discussing Bible doctrines with his professing Christian neighbors.

“You’ve got to pay tithes and obey God,” he insisted. “The Bible says so. It’s *plain!*”

One of his neighbors became irritated.

“Look here, Ed,” the neighbor exploded, “why do you come around here trying to talk me into these things, when you don’t obey the Bible and pay tithes yourself?”

“Because,” came Ed’s quick and ready answer, “I don’t profess to be a Christian, and you do. Besides,” he added, “I can’t afford to tithe, anyway.”

There are thousands who, like Ed Smith, reason in their own minds that they can’t afford to tithe, even though, like Ed Smith, they realize the Bible commands it.

I heard about the above conversation, and preached a sermon on the question of whether the *unconverted* should obey the Ten Commandments and pay tithes, or whether, as Ed had reasoned, these things were only for Christians. I pointed out that God’s law was put in motion for *man’s good*—it is **THE WAY** of life that brings peace, happiness, prosperity, the full, abundant, interesting life; success, joy, *here and now*, as well as eternal life through Christ for the saved.

I showed that it **PAYS**, and is the only sensible way of life, entirely apart from the matter of salvation. I pointed out God’s promises to *prosper* the tithepayer, and that this is a definite **LAW** God has set in motion, which operates in-

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**AMBASSADOR COLLEGE
CORRESPONDENCE COURSE**

LESSON 17

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About Our Cover . . .

South Vietnamese women cower in rice paddy during Vietnamese war. In any war, the whole population suffers. And wars have raged since mankind was created because man has refused to obey God and love his fellowman. Wars will never cease until the world begins to live by God’s Ten Commandments!

Wide World Photo

IS OBEDIENCE TO THE TEN COMMANDMENTS NECESSARY TODAY?

WOULD you like to be given eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God?—and have ETERNAL LIFE so you could *claim* this inheritance?

“Yes, but what must I *do*,” you might ask, “to receive eternal life?”

When the young rich man asked Jesus Christ: “Master, what good thing shall I *do*, that I may have eternal life?”—Jesus replied, “If thou wilt enter into life, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS” (Mat. 19:16-17).

What?

Keep the commandments? That’s what Jesus said!! Does that *surprise* you?

False Concepts Today

You’ve probably heard that obedience to the Ten Commandments is *not necessary* today. That God’s law was *abolished*—“nailed to the cross” by Jesus Christ!

But is this assumption really true?

This is no mere irrelevant theological or religious question. This is the very *essence* of your life—your home life, your social life, your business life.

It’s the very CRUX QUESTION behind *all* world troubles today!

Strange as it may seem, the Ten Commandments did not begin at Sinai. They have been in full force and effect since human life *first existed* on this earth! DISOBEDIENCE to the Ten Commandments has produced all the wars, *suffering* and DEATH the world has experienced since Adam!

The common *false* teaching of modern Christianity holds that the old covenant *was* the Ten Commandment law. That Jesus Christ came to establish a *new* covenant containing only grace and promises—liberty to do *whatever you please*, but certainly NO LAW! “Grace *alone* is what saves you now,” they say. “No *commandment keeping* is necessary today.”

This diabolical teaching would lead you to believe that the law of God is harsh, *cruel*, ENSLAVING—that the fault of the old covenant was with the law, and since God gave the law, the fault must have been *His*!

Then there are those who believe the Ten Commandments are either the *same* as, or *part* of, the RITUALISTIC LAW of Moses. That the Ten Commandments didn’t exist until Moses and that they lasted only *until* Christ.

What *misunderstanding*! What DISTORTION of the plain truth about God’s law!

Do you realize that those who believe and teach these false concepts are actually worshipping God IN VAIN—worshipping Him *without* any prospect of receiving eternal inheritance in the Kingdom of God?

Listen to what Jesus Christ says to them: “Howbeit *in vain* do ye worship me, teaching for doctrines the *commandments of men*. For laying aside the *commandment of God*, ye hold the tradition of men . . . [and now note the following especially] . . . Full well ye REJECT the Commandment of God, that ye may keep your OWN TRADITION” (Mark 7:7-9).

Jesus plainly taught *obedience* to the Father’s law: “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that *DOETH* the WILL of my Father which is in heaven”! (Mat. 7:21.)

Back to the Faith Once Delivered

God warns us in the book of Jude: “Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the *common salvation*, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was *once delivered* unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares . . . ungodly men, turning the *grace* of our God into *lasciviousness*, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 3-4).

Even before the New Testament was completely written, ungodly men had crept into the Church in an attempt to corrupt it by turning *grace* into *lasciviousness*.

And what is “lasciviousness”? It means “license”—unrestrained liberty—abuse of privilege. In other words, license to do what seems *right* in your *own* eyes—according to *human conscience*—though it disobeys God’s law!

That is exactly what those ungodly men in

the first century were beginning to do—turning God's *grace* into unrestrained privilege to DISOBEY His law! Turning to *human* conscience as a guide! We find this very *same attitude* permeating modern professing Christianity today!

This present age is desperately lawless! Everywhere the spirit of disobedience is sweeping society. From the pulpits you hear that Jesus Christ abolished His Father's Law—that it is not necessary to obey God today.

But your Bible says no one can be born into God's Kingdom unless that individual recognizes and *submits* to the authority and rule of God in his life! Arguing with God or using human reasoning to evade the plain commands of Scripture will get us nowhere!

God is Supreme Creator and Supreme Law-giver. He knows what is *best* for us. He has perfect wisdom and understanding and has given us His perfect law. We can therefore place *absolute confidence* in Him and rely on His judgment which He has committed to us in writing—in the Holy Bible.

Yes, it's time we look into the Bible to see what it really says about God's law!

Why Bad News Today?

The natural tendency is to use human reasoning to sidestep that which seems of lesser importance to *us*. It's so easy for us to say: "I don't see why God would want me to obey His law. It *seems so impractical* in this modern age. Now here is the way I see it."

The overwhelming truth is that God's laws are AS PRACTICAL today as they were in the *beginning* when He originally gave them!

Have you noticed that the news today is nearly *all bad*?

There's a *reason* why!

Not only do we have war, fear of war, and strife between *nations*, but we also have strife and competition in *business*. We have quarrels leading to divorce *in the home*. We have a nervous younger generation blowing off steam and getting into all sorts of troubles.

What's the matter with us anyway? Are we *afraid* to stop and look at things as they really are? Do we dare recognize the fact that *we* are bringing all this fear and worry, this heart-ache, suffering and frustrating emptiness *on ourselves*?

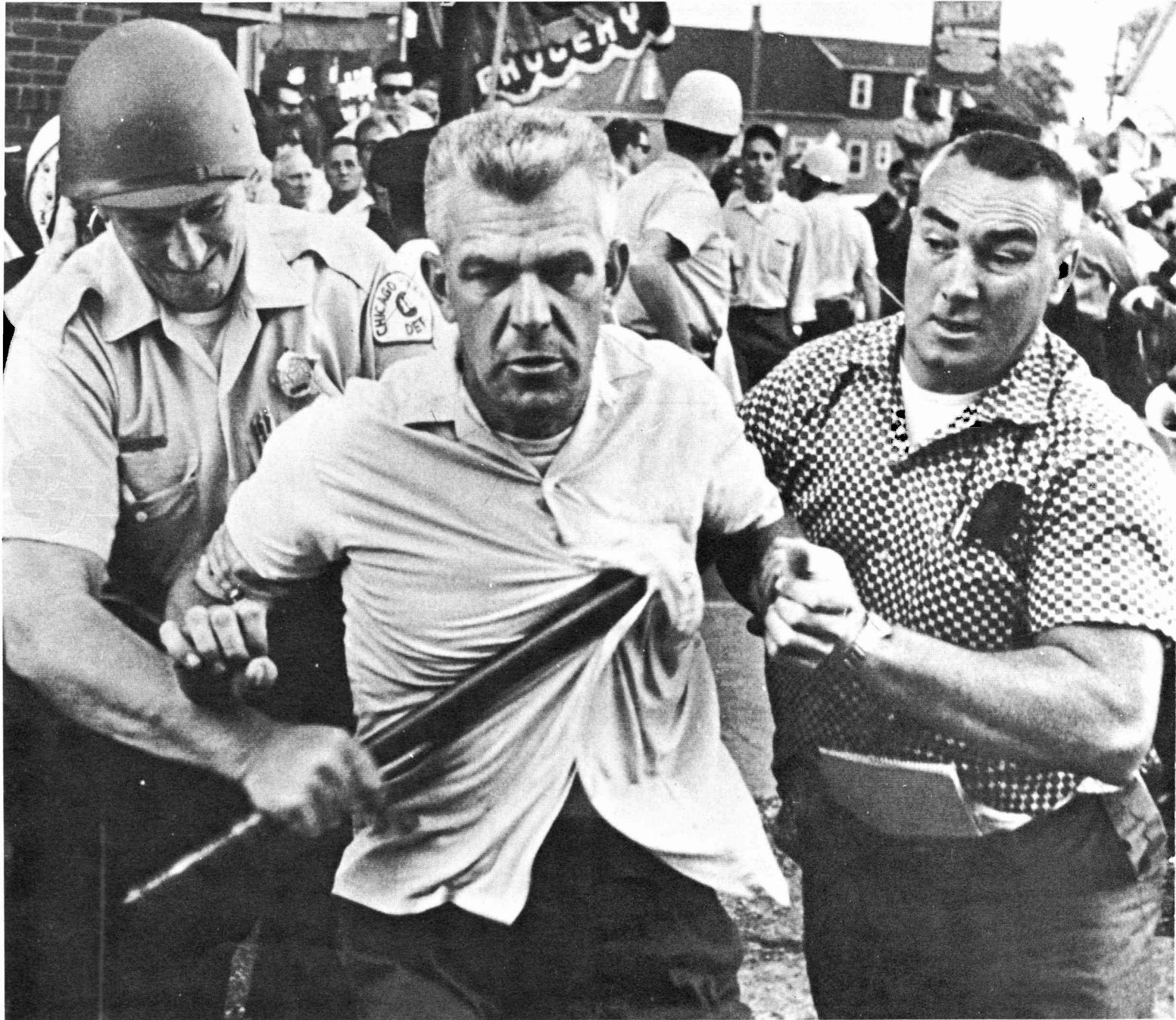
There is a reason for it all. But are you *will-ing* to hear it? Will you *deny* the *true* reason? Or will you *accept* the *truth of God*?

The Basis of Life

If you were told that God ALMIGHTY, the Creator, set in motion invisible, SPIRITUAL LAWS



Violence and Rebellion— Tragic Consequences of Broken Laws!



Wide World Photo

We live in a desperately lawless age! Crimes of violence and rebellion against authority are increasing at an alarming rate. And no wonder. Mankind refuses to live by the Ten Commandments which, if obeyed, would bring all the happiness and material blessings this frustrated world longs for. Today's chaotic world conditions are prophesied to get worse until Jesus Christ steps in and enforces God's Ten Commandments!



Wide World Photo

Left to right, Linus Pauling, Robert Hutchins and Paul Tillich attend a Global Peace Conference. Many world leaders realize we must have world government in order to achieve lasting peace. But they don't realize we can't have world peace until God's government is set up on earth and His Laws are enforced on all mankind!

for our happiness and for our good, and that all our woes and our troubles are the *direct result* of our *rejection* and TRANSGRESSION of those laws, you'd probably say, "But I've been taught that those laws were abolished by Christ!" Or, "Why, that's a religious and theological question that I know nothing about. It has *nothing* to do with my practical, down-to-earth, everyday life anyway."

You're WRONG!

It has **EVERYTHING** to do with your everyday life. It has *everything* to do with all the bad news you hear and read about every day. It has everything to do with the fact that most people today are restless, discontented and not as happy as they would like to be.

It has everything to do with today's chaotic

world conditions, with social unrest and with the troubles most people are having in their own homes!

It is the *transgression* of God's law of LOVE that has caused all the mental anguish and suffering in the world today!

God's Law of LOVE

God has ordained a law—the supreme eternal *spiritual* law which is *love*. God and Love are inseparable, "for God is love"! (I John 4:8.) Love is the *basic characteristic* of God's nature!

God lives completely in accordance with His law of love at all times! And God has ordained that we all must *learn to live* by His law of love if we are to inherit the gift of eternal life. "For

this is the love of God, that we *keep his commandments*: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3).

Love toward God and love toward fellow man—that is the very *essence* of God's spiritual law (Mat. 22:36-40). The first four of the Ten Commandments teach us love toward God. And the last six teach us love toward our fellow man.

These ten *spiritual* laws are summed up in the one word "LOVE." They compose the Royal Law that James expounded—the Royal Law of Love! (James 2:8, 10.)

But man is *carnal*—UNspiritual by nature. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7).

We, of ourselves, do not have the *spiritual love* necessary to keep God's *spiritual* law. This love comes from God "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts *by the Holy Spirit*" (Rom. 5:5). With this love we *can fulfill* the law, for "love is the *fulfilling* of the law" (Rom. 13:10).

God will give us His Holy Spirit as a *free* gift—if we REPENT of our sins, are *baptized* and sincerely *strive* to obey Him (Acts 2:38; 5:32). Notice the "fruits," or Godly characteristics, which will be manifested in our lives if we have the Holy Spirit. "Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. 5:22, 23).

These attributes of God's Holy Spirit are what enable us to *obey* the various points of His *spiritual* law of love. And these are the "fruits" we must show forth in our lives to be born of God at the resurrection!

So the Ten Commandments constitute a *spiritual law* that is inexorable and eternal. A law that is love and the *fulfilling* of which is love—a law that was set in motion for our happiness to produce everything good which we have foolishly denied ourselves.

The Ten Commandments are obviously entirely *different* and SEPARATE from the *ritualistic* "Law of Moses" which was just a code of *physical* laws—not spiritual laws.

Jesus Kept the Law!

Jesus tells us that our *obedience* to the Ten Commandments is an absolute *prerequisite* to receiving God's gift of eternal life (Mat. 19:16-17).

But did Jesus really *practice* what He preached? Or does He expect us to perform the impossible?

Witness Christ's absolutely *sinless* life (Heb. 4:15). Had Jesus sinned in the *slightest point* of God's spiritual law, He could not have become our Saviour!

Since Jesus was composed of human flesh with human nature, the same as we all have (Heb. 2:14), then *how* was He able to obey God? The answer is that He was BEGOTTEN by the Holy Spirit just as *you* can be—if you repent, believe and are baptized! Jesus had the POWER of the Holy Spirit working within Him!

Jesus Christ admitted He wasn't able to keep God's law by His own *human* power. Notice what He said:

"I can of mine *own self* do NOTHING" (John 5:30). "The Father that *dwelleth in me*, He doeth the works" (John 14:10). The Father dwelt in Jesus by the Holy Spirit. And this power enabled Jesus to keep God's commandments perfectly!

In this lesson we need to ask and answer the following questions:

Just what *is* sin anyway? Does God *define* it in the Bible? And did Jesus Christ *do away* with the Father's spiritual law of love—the Ten Commandments? Do we find the apostle Paul and the New Testament Church *teaching obedience* to God's law?

Were the Ten Commandments *first given* to Moses at Mount Sinai, and *only* for the "Jews" to keep from that time forward? Are the Ten Commandments the same as, or part of, the *ritualistic law* of Moses?

Did God withhold His spiritual law from the world during the time between Adam and Moses? Or did He *first reveal* this way to supreme happiness to Adam and Eve in Eden?

Let's learn the truth about God's law from the Bible! But first, read these important instructions!

Before You Begin

This lesson is intended to direct you to the *Bible*—to help you learn the truth of God's Word. Here is the method of study.

Is your Bible in front of you? If not, *get* your Bible—or Bibles, if you have more than one translation—*before you do another thing!* Have a good dictionary, a concordance if you own one, and your notepaper all placed in front of you on a desk or table.

Remember—you must open your Bible to *every passage*. Never say to yourself, "Oh, I think I know what this scripture is referring to"—and then pass over it. You need to "*keep your nose in the Bible*," so to speak. You must read and re-read and think out each passage. *Meditate* on this new knowledge in your leisure time, especially during the following twenty-four hours, and in your time of prayer—*so you won't forget it!*

Make God's Word a *PART of you!* Don't forget, this is a *Bible Study Course*—not just a study of these words we send you.

Here is the method of taking effective notes: Write down neatly (or print) the title of this lesson. Underneath that write down the lesson number. As you come to each question section, write down its heading. Then, at the left-hand margin of your paper, number each question and write down the scriptural answer to each, together with any pertinent ideas that come to your mind.

Be SURE to *write out* the scripture which an-

swers each question. If you have not done so before, *begin to do it now!* Writing down every word of each Bible passage, and any comments you wish to make as you go along, will help you greatly in *reviewing* and *remembering*.

This lesson, like all others, is extremely important to you. Have you *prayed* to God for understanding? If not, then go to a private place, kneel down, and ask God for *spiritual understanding* and wisdom. Ask Him to *help* you grasp and apply in your own life the knowledge this lesson will reveal to you in the Bible.

And now for the lesson itself!

LESSON 17

What Sin IS

People have numerous ideas about what constitutes "sin." Many think that sin is something to be *desired*. To illustrate, several years ago in Hollywood—the movie capital of America—there was sold in newsstands a book titled *How to Sin in Hollywood*. Visitors from all over the world who came to Hollywood would buy that book.

Actually, the book was quite harmless, merely giving names of restaurants and similar places. Most of them were eating places *without* any entertainment.

But the point is that sin always *seems* to be the "forbidden fruit" that is most glamorous and that would be most desirable if some unfair God had *not* denied it to us. That seems to be what human beings think of sin.

But that *isn't what God thinks* about sin!

1. What is God's definition of *sin*? Is it the *transgression* of the *law*? I John 3:4.

2. Is God's law being spoken of in the previous scripture?—didn't Paul state that the *law* says, "Thou shalt not covet"? Rom. 7:7.

COMMENT: The *law* that said, "Thou shalt not covet," *taught* the apostle Paul what constitutes sin. And one cardinal point of that law is the TENTH COMMANDMENT! (Ex. 20:17.)

So the law against coveting is *one* of God's *Ten Commandments*! God reveals that the *violation* of His commandments and their principles constitutes *sin*!

3. Does sin—the *violation* of the Ten Commandments and their principles—work *against* our own best interests? Rom. 6:23.

COMMENT: "The *wages* of sin"—the "reward" you *earn* by sinning against God's law—the thing you *bring* upon yourself—is DEATH! A shorter and unhappier life here, and ETERNAL OBLIVION in the hereafter—unless you *repent* of all your sins, have them *wiped away* by

Christ's blood and begin OBEYING God's *Commandments*!

Way to Happiness Must Be REVEALED!

You want to be *happy* above all things, don't you? Everyone does!

You would like to lead a life that is just full and abundant and *interesting*—as a matter of fact, a little bit exciting all the way along, wouldn't you? And you want a life where everything is pleasant, where there is no pain or suffering.

You don't want a life of boredom. You don't want a life of sorrow. You want a *happy* life, and you would love to feel well, jolly and joyful—happy all the time.

You *could* have a life like that. Everyone could. This *entire world* could be like that—if we only UNDERSTOOD THE WAY! That way has to be *revealed*!

God reveals that way in His Guidebook for mankind—the Holy Bible! God Almighty in His great *love* for humanity, reveals that He set a *law* in motion. That law was designed to *produce* just that kind of happy life in you!

God is Creator not only of matter—solid matter, liquid matter and gaseous matter, as we know it—but God is also Creator of *force*, *energy* and of *every power* and *law*. The laws of physics, the laws of chemistry—every law that is in motion and is energized.

Do you realize that God Almighty also created a *spiritual law*? That spiritual law is what *regulates* your happiness!

But most people are *not* living that way. They're breaking that law, and it has been breaking them for a long time, because that's precisely what happens when you *break* God's *spiritual law*!

That law is simply *love*. It's the *way* of love. It's the way that love should be *expressed*—love toward God and love toward neighbor.

1. Did Paul say he would *not have known*

what sin is except the *law* had pointed it out to him? Rom. 7:7.

COMMENT: We don't know what is right and what is wrong unless God *reveals* it. Even the apostle Paul would not have known what sin is if God's law had not told him.

Human nature will not teach you because human nature is *basically evil* (Jer. 17:9). As Paul says, "I had not known lust." That is, he would not have known that lust was wrong or evil; *he didn't have such instinctive knowledge*—"except the *law had said*, thou shalt not covet."

Do you realize that when you were born you *didn't know anything*? You *weren't* even born with instinct as animals are.

Animals don't have to be taught a law to know what to do or not to do; they don't have to learn about a law that will show them *how* to be happy, and how to *avoid* suffering. Animals are just dumb brutes which God has equipped with *instinct*. They respond *automatically* to this instinct God built into their simple brains when He originally created them.

But you and I are vastly different. We are made *after God's image*. Our minds possess, to a very limited degree, divine characteristics. We were put here as free moral agents for the purpose of *producing character*—holy, righteous, spiritual character. If we submit to God and follow His law of love, He will be creating His spiritual character within us.

2. Did the apostle Paul say that the law—the Ten Commandments and their principles—is *spiritual*? Rom. 7:14.

COMMENT: But Paul said he was *carnal*. He was fleshly and material. So are we all.

The law is a *spiritual principle*, and it **REGULATES YOUR HAPPINESS**—a *spiritual* matter. God's law directs and guides you as to what you *should* do so you can be happy.

3. Did Paul say God's law is sin? Rom. 7:7. Or did he say the law is *holy*, and the commandment is *holy*, just and good? Rom. 7:12.

COMMENT: That isn't what we are taught today, is it? Many people have been reared in the belief that the law is *unholy*, harsh and cruel and *altogether wrong*! That it's bad for us, and therefore Christ had to *do away* with it!

What a paradox!

People think God's law—the very thing that points the *way* to true happiness—is **WRONG**! God reveals it is the very thing which shows us *how* to **AVOID** unhappiness!

May God help you to *see* and **ACT** on this marvelous truth!

Commandments in Force From Adam

God *first revealed* the Ten Commandments to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Why? So that they and their progeny could know what sin *is* and **AVOID** it!

Every one of the Ten Commandments was then in full force and effect. And it was a *sin* to break any one of them between the time of Adam and Moses, just as it is *today*! Let's understand the truth.

1. Didn't Paul plainly state that sin is *not imputed* where there is *no law*? Rom. 5:13.

COMMENT: God reveals that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). But where there is *no law*, there obviously could be *no lawbreaking* and therefore *no penalty* could be imposed!

2. But do we find death *did* reign—that the death penalty was *imputed* because of sin—beginning with the very time of Adam? Rom. 5:12, 14. Then didn't there obviously have to be a *law* in existence from the time of Adam?

COMMENT: Adam *sinned*! But he could not have sinned had there been *no law*. How plain that God's law existed then and that it *still* is in existence to this day; for God says: "all have sinned"! (Verse 12.)

The law of God existed *from the beginning*. God instructed Adam and Eve in His law and revealed that living by His laws would net them true happiness and material abundance. He revealed all this to them on the very *next day* after their creation—on the **SABBATH**—the *seventh* day of the week!

3. Doesn't all this plainly show that God's law was first given far *earlier* than is generally assumed—much earlier than the time of Moses? Rom. 5:14. Note the words "Adam to Moses." Didn't Adam *precede* Moses? Same verse.

COMMENT: Obviously those who believe that God's spiritual law was not given *until* the time of Moses are absolutely **WRONG**!

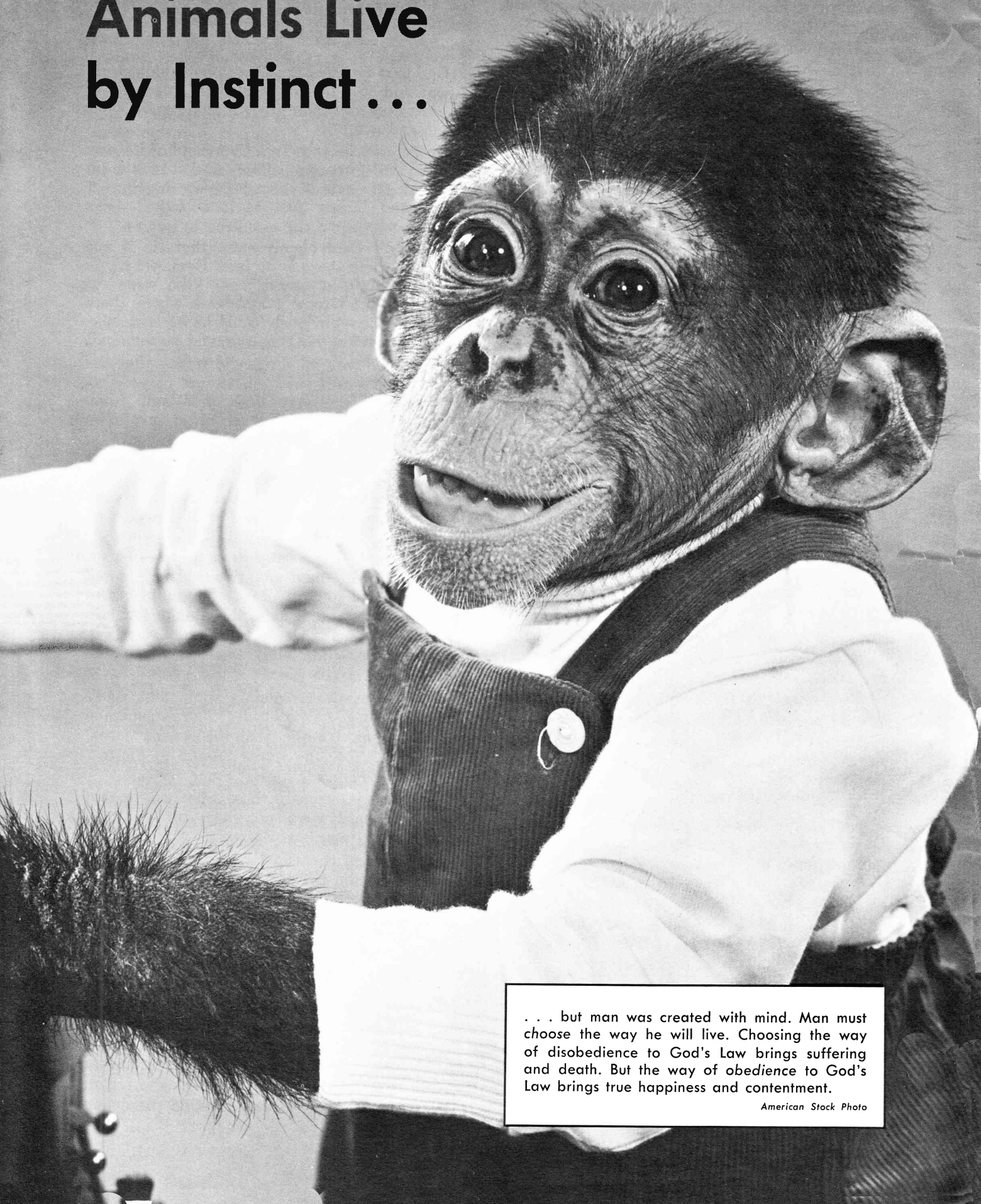
Every one of the Ten Commandments was in existence during the time of Adam. It was *sin* to break any one of them *before* they were *re-stated* to Moses and the people at Mount Sinai!

Man Must Choose

God ordained from the beginning that He would *not force* His way to supreme happiness—His spiritual law—upon mankind. He determined man would have to *choose* whether or not he would obey.

1. After creating Adam, did God place him

Animals Live by Instinct...



... but man was created with mind. Man must choose the way he will live. Choosing the way of disobedience to God's Law brings suffering and death. But the way of obedience to God's Law brings true happiness and contentment.

American Stock Photo

in the Garden of Eden? Gen. 2:8. Then what did God give him *permission* to do? Verse 16.

2. Now notice God's *warning* immediately afterward. Gen. 2:17. Is it indulging in a *mixture* of good and evil actions that God warns us against? Same verse.

COMMENT: Here we see that God is Supreme Ruler. God is giving the orders and is teaching. The man *didn't know* he shouldn't partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He had to be told. He had to be *taught* and *instructed*.

3. What is the *penalty*—what can be expected when one "eats," or partakes of a *mixture* of good and evil? Gen. 2:17.

COMMENT: God warned man that disobedience—*SIN*—to His command would end in *death*, for "the wages of sin is death"! (Rom. 6:23.)

But notice that the very fact God said "In the day that *thou* eatest thereof..." shows that man was *allowed* to do it, that the man was a **FREE MORAL AGENT**—that the man himself had to *make the choice*!

God designed that you and I must *choose* whether we will obey His law or not.

Animals don't make a choice. Animals have instinct. And animals are usually contented. We have our "contented cows." But we don't have many contented people. Do you know *why*?

Cows don't make any choice. God simply ordained from their creation that they would *automatically* live contented lives. But God *ordained* that you and I *must make a choice*. And if we *choose* the **RIGHT WAY** to live—according to that law which God set in motion to produce happiness and contentment and a full, thrilling, enjoyable life—**WE CAN HAVE IT!** (Deut. 30:15-19.)

But if we *choose* to live the **OTHER WAY**, we're going to have suffering, *sorrows* and *curses*—that's what the world has elected to do!

The First Sins

1. God, the Creator, lovingly warned man that if he committed sin, he would *surely die* (Gen. 2:17). But what did the Devil say? Gen. 3:1-4. Note especially verse 4.

COMMENT: "You shall *not* surely die" is the *first lie* of which we have any historical record. It was not told by a man, but by the *devil*.

"You will *not* surely die. You're an **IMMORTAL SOUL**." Or "You have an immortal soul that won't die." That's what the devil was *really* saying.

2. What else did the devil say? Gen. 3:5. Note especially the words, "For God *doth know*."

COMMENT: In other words, the devil said

"God knows better; God's been *lying* to you!" That's what he wanted the woman to believe.

3. And then what did Eve do? Gen. 3:6. Did her husband also partake of the fruit? Same verse. Here was the *first* human sin!

COMMENT: Analyze exactly what happened. God is the One we are to *obey*. Do you realize that's one of the definitions of God? Whoever or whatever you obey is your god. It might be your slavishness to your automobile. Maybe it's an actual idol. Whatever it is, *that's* your god.

Adam and Eve had another god *in place* of the true God—they broke the first commandment, "Thou shalt have *no other gods before Me*" (Ex. 20:3). They also broke the *fifth* by dishonoring their only Parent. How? The genealogy of Christ goes back to Adam who was the "*son of God*," because God *created* him. Adam was the son of God by a *direct creation*, not by begetting or birth.

Adam not only dishonored his Parent, but he also broke the *tenth* commandment. There was *lust* when the woman saw that the fruit was good for food and to make one wise—vanity, egotism and pride entered into her heart.

Lust is what causes a person's inordinate desire to have something that is not legal. Lust causes one to *steal* and Adam and Eve broke the *eighth* commandment by *stealing* what was not theirs.

Four of the Ten Commandments were broken in the original sin. And in other ways, **ALL** of the Ten Commandments were actually broken in the very first sin!

4. What were the names of Adam and Eve's first two children? Gen. 4:1-2. What did Cain do? Verse 3. And what did Abel do? Verse 4. Was Cain's offering—Cain's act—*acceptable* to God? Verse 5 and I John 3:12.

5. If one does well—does the things God wishes—aren't his deeds acceptable to God? Gen. 4:7, first nine words. But if one does that which is *not acceptable* to God, what "*lies*" at his door—*sin*? Same verse.

6. Did Cain **MURDER** Abel out of jealousy? Verse 8. Did God therefore punish Cain? Verses 9-12.

COMMENT: Murder was a sin *from the very beginning*! And when God asked Cain, "Where is Abel thy brother?" Cain replied, "I know not" (Verse 9). But Cain *did know*. He knew his brother was dead. Therefore he **LIED** and broke another commandment. That, too, was *sin*!

Cain broke the *sixth* and *ninth* commandments. *Every one* of these commandments was known from creation because God had *revealed them to Adam*. He thus revealed them to man-

kind at that time. But humanity as a whole has *rejected* them ever since!

7. Was literal idolatry committed *before* the time of Abraham? Josh. 24:2.

COMMENT: Here were people before Abraham's time — *long before Moses' time* — worshipping idols, committing a *sin* — a transgression of God's *law*. No wonder we are told in the Bible that "death" — the *penalty of sin* — "REIGNED from Adam to Moses" (Rom. 5:14), for the law was in existence *all during that time!*

8. Was the sin of *idolatry* also committed in the generations *after* Abraham? Gen. 35:2.

COMMENT: Jacob was Abraham's *grandson*.

9. Did Jacob command those of his household who worshipped idols, to *put away* their strange gods? Same verse. What was *done* with these idols? Verse 4.

COMMENT: Even back then, long *before* Moses, it was a *sin* to *worship* these idols they possessed!

The Third and Fourth Commandments Broken

1. What is the *third* commandment? Ex. 20:7.

COMMENT: To take God's name *in vain* is profanity. It is *profaning* the name of God.

2. Did God tell Moses and the rest of the Israelites that the heathen who possessed the promised land in generations *previous* to Moses' time had been doing *many abominations*? Lev. 18:1, 27. What was one of these abominations? Verse 21, last half. Did God say these heathen nations had *defiled* themselves and the land because of such abominations? Verses 24 and 27. Then taking the name of God in vain was a sin at that time, wasn't it?

COMMENT: The third commandment of the law was being violated here. Therefore, profanity — taking the name of God in vain — was a *sin before Moses' time!*

3. What is the *fourth* commandment? Ex. 20:8-11. Is it the day on which everyone should *rest* from all his labors? Verse 10. Did God *rest* on that day after He had finished creating the earth and all life upon it? Gen. 2:2.

4. Did God tell Moses to have all the people *keep*—rest on—the Sabbath? Ex. 16:23. Did God command Israel to keep the Sabbath to *prove* whether they would walk in—OBEY—His *law* or not? Ex. 16:4. Note the word "law."

COMMENT: Here is God's law *already in effect* at that very time! God wanted to see whether the people would obey its fourth cardinal point — WEEKS BEFORE *they came to* Mount Sinai where the Ten Commandments were



Leiden Museum of Antiquities Photo

Idol discovered in Palestine. It dates back to time of the Judges. Idolatry was also prevalent before the time of Moses — and was labeled as SIN by God in the Bible. Positive proof that God's Ten Commandments were in force before Moses!

restated (Ex. 20) and, months later the *physical ritualistic* “law of Moses” was FIRST GIVEN!

5. Did some disregard God’s command to pick up a double portion of manna on the sixth day—did they decide in advance to go out and *work* at gathering manna on this seventh day—the *Sabbath* day—on which God had commanded them to *rest*? Verse 27.

6. What did God say about this act of disobedience? Ex. 16:28. Notice this in particular—did God just confine his rebuke to those refusing to keep this one command, or did He call attention to ALL HIS COMMANDMENTS and LAWS they had been breaking? Same verse.

COMMENT: This conversation was going on *weeks before* God restated His spiritual laws to Moses and the people at Sinai. And it was *months before* God gave the SEPARATE *ritualistic law* of sacrifices and ablutions which was to be in force *only UNTIL* Christ’s death!

So the Sabbath was *already* the law of God at that time, as well as the other commands and laws God referred to in verse 28!

The Fifth, Seventh and Eighth Commandments

1. What is the *fifth* commandment? Ex. 20:12. Do we find a retribution—a curse—falling on one who broke this law *long before* the time of Sinai? Let’s examine.

2. Did Noah become drunk? Gen. 9:20-23. Did he realize a *sin* had been committed against him? Verse 24. What *curse* fell upon Canaan as a result of this sin against Noah, his *grandparent*? Verse 25.

3. What is the *seventh* commandment? Ex. 20:14. Was it also in effect and known *long before* God reiterated His spiritual law to Moses and the people at Mount Sinai? Let’s consider.

4. When Joseph was in Egypt serving the Egyptians (Gen. 39:1-2), what *improper* advances did Potiphar’s wife make toward him? Gen. 39:7. Did Joseph refuse? Verse 8. Why? Did Joseph say it would have been a *sin* to follow her wishes? Verse 9.

COMMENT: Remember, where there is no law, sin is *not imputed*. But here we see that Joseph *knew* God’s law and he knew that sin *would* be imputed if he broke that law! *Adultery* was a sin hundreds of years *before* Moses!

5. What is the *eighth* commandment? Ex. 20:15. Did Jacob, who lived *long before* the Ten Commandments were repeated at Sinai, use the word “stolen”? Gen. 30:33.

COMMENT: Jacob knew and understood the meaning of the word “steal.” Stealing was a *sin* in those days the *same as it is today*!

The Ninth and Tenth Commandments

1. Does God forbid the bearing of false witness—*lying*—in His *ninth* commandment? Ex. 20:16. But even *righteous* Abraham, who lived *long before* Mount Sinai, was not always able to keep this command perfectly. *Who* did Abraham say his wife was when they passed through King Abimelech’s country? Gen. 20:2.

COMMENT: Abraham *was lying*! Of course, Sarah, his wife, was his *half-sister*; nevertheless, the intent was all wrong! It was a lie. Abraham *broke* the ninth commandment!

2. Did God prevent King Abimelech from marrying Abraham’s wife, thus preventing him from *unknowingly* committing adultery with her? Gen. 20:3, and first part of verse 4. Did God say that had Abimelech committed adultery, it would have been a *SIN*? Verse 6.

COMMENT: How plain it is that God’s law was in existence from Adam.

3. What about *coveting*—is it the last of the Ten Commandments? Ex. 20:17. Were the people *before* the flood breaking this commandment? Gen. 6:1-3, 5. Does God say, through the inspired Psalms, that the *wicked* are those who *forsake His law*? Psa. 119:53. Then weren’t these people forsaking God’s *law*? Gen. 6:5. Note the word “wickedness.”

COMMENT: The “sons of God”—in the sense that God is the *Creator-Father* of human beings because He formed man of the dust of the ground—were lusting after, *coveting*, and taking wives that were not good for them.

They were in this way striving *against* God. God classified them among the wicked of those days—among those who were breaking the law He had revealed to Adam and Eve at the very beginning. They were breaking the *tenth commandment* against covetousness. And it was this *sin* that He was denouncing.

4. Now here comes the CLINCHER! Did Abraham, who lived *between* the time of Adam and Moses, have a *thorough knowledge* of God’s COMMANDMENTS? Gen. 26:5. And God’s STATUTES? Same verse. And God’s LAWS? Same verse. How did Abraham *learn* all these things? Note the word “voice.”

COMMENT: The people before the time of Moses were *much better informed* about the law of God than is generally admitted today!

Obedience Necessary Today!

The Ten Commandments constitute a *spiritual law* that is eternal and inexorable. It is a law showing the way of *love* and the *fulfilling*

of which is love. It is a law that God set in motion for man's *happiness* to produce *everything good* which man foolishly denies himself.

Obedience to God's law was *just as necessary* for the well-being and happiness of the world *before* the time of Moses and *afterward*, AS IT IS TODAY! That is why we have just seen that every one of the Ten Commandments *existed from creation*. It has been a *sin* to break any one of them from the beginning!

God created man a creature of *choice*. And so God decreed that man *must choose* WHETHER or not he will obey God's law. The world as a whole has *chosen* NOT to obey and you see the *results* of sin all around you!

Yes, the *choice is yours*. But the actual fulfilling of God's royal law of love does not lie within *your own* power. It is *only* possible through the *POWER* of God's Spirit!

But there are *prior conditions* to receiving God's Holy Spirit. First you must *REPENT* of your past sins—come to recognize and *utterly abhor* your past disobedience to God's laws

and *QUIT SINNING*! Then you must acknowledge Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour Who shed His blood to blot out your sins and reconcile you to the Father. Finally, God commands *water baptism* as a symbol of your sincere repentance.

Once you have fulfilled these requirements, God promises to give you His Holy Spirit as a *free gift*! (Acts 2:38.) Only then will you be able to keep His *spiritual* law in its true spiritual intent.

Do you begin to realize how *desperately* you need to have God's spiritual law of love—the Ten Commandments—being *fulfilled* in you? It is the *only way* to achieve the true happiness and material and *spiritual* blessings you really desire!

What are you going to do about it?

(Be sure to write for the astounding free booklet "The Ten Commandments." It covers in detail, from the Bible, each of the ten cardinal points of God's spiritual law and their principles.)

an open letter from

THE EDITOR

(Continued from page 2)

exorably and automatically on the just and the unjust alike.

Ed began to obey the Bible. At the very next service—we were holding services at this little schoolhouse three times a week, and three other nights a week in a hall in downtown Eugene at the time—Mrs. Smith smilingly handed me a one dollar bill.

"That's Ed's first tithe," she said triumphantly. "We are now down to \$10, and Ed decided to start tithing with what we have on hand."

The very next service she came to me with another happy smile.

"Here's a five dollar bill," she said. "The very next day after Ed gave God's Work a tenth of all he had, a customer who had owed him \$50 for a year came and paid up. So here's the tithe of that \$50. After paying the total \$6 tithe, we now have \$54 on hand instead of the \$10 we had the other day."

It was beginning to *pay*! But only *beginning*! By the next service, as I remember it, Ed had received his first order in one or two years to drill a new well, for which he received cash payment. Before he finished that job, another was contracted. Soon he had three or four jobs coming in at once, and was forced to begin employing men to work for him.

Ed Smith was only one of *many* I have known who learned *by experience* that one cannot afford *not* to pay God the tithe that *BELONGS TO GOD*! I remember Ed Smith did encounter some troubles of a different nature later, and his wife and son were sent to the state tuberculosis hospital, and he finally broke down in real repentance, accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour. He came to me, according to the command of James 5:14, and both his wife and son were completely healed and returned home.

This is a true story, and the name is not fictitious. Ed Smith died several years ago, but I'm happy to remember these incidents in his life in the hope they may start many others on the right and profitable, as well as the Christian way of life.

Why did God ordain tithing? Was it to place increased burden and taxation upon us? Let us not misunderstand God's love and wisdom!

It isn't that God really *needs* your first tenth. He could have established some different system for carrying on His Work. But to have done so would have robbed *us* of the blessing that flows back to us if we are faithful in *tithes and offerings*!

The tither is invariably a prosperous man. I do not mean *wealthy*—but one whose actual needs are always supplied. Tithers, if faithful and obedient to the Eternal, are not often found in want. "Not because I desire a gift; but I desire fruit *that may abound to YOUR account*" (Phil. 4:17).

God promises His children shall always have

something to give (Deut. 16:16,17). It is only when they withhold and misappropriate the tithe and offerings that He fails to prosper them. For through John He tells us "I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health" (III John 2).

"Honor the Eternal with thy substance, and with the *firstfruits* of all thine increase: *so shall thy barns be filled with plenty*, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Prov. 3:9-10). "*Prove me now herewith*," challenges the Eternal to us, in a prophecy for *our* day (Mal. 3:10), "if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it"—financial blessings!

John D. Rockefeller, it is said, accepted at eight years of age God's challenge to prosper the individual who pays God His tenth. Did he prosper? He certainly did!

Mr. Colgate, the great soap manufacturer, left home when a very small boy. He soon met a prosperous old sea captain. He asked the boy what he could do, and the boy replied he knew only how to make soap and candles.

"Yield yourself to God," advised the old sea captain, "and pay Him a tenth of your income. Some day there is going to be a man at the head of the great soap industries in New York, and there is no reason why you should not be the man." The boy took the advice, got a job, earned a dollar and paid a dime.

Very soon he earned two dollars and paid twenty cents. Soon he got a job in a soap factory and he continued to pay a tenth and to prosper. He rose from the common laborer to foreman. Later to manager, and then to president of the company, and finally he owned the entire establishment. As he continued to prosper, Colgate paid two tenths. He prospered still more and paid three tenths. Still he prospered, and he paid four. His prosperity kept increasing and he decided to give HALF of all his income. *And still he prospered!*

I know a man who started a small grocery business in a small city in the state of Oregon. This was during the great depression. He had practically no capital, had the poorest location in town, and refused to sell tobacco. Others said he could never succeed. Thus handicapped, starting in the beginning of the worst depression the world ever knew, not many would have dared pay a whole tenth.

This man decided he would be a faithful steward, take God into partnership, and trust the Lord with his business. He prospered from the start and was the only grocer in his town who weathered the storm of depression successfully.

When God receives His portion of all your income, God becomes your partner, sharing in your profits. He causes His partners to prosper,

and if you are in debt, take God into partnership *first*, and watch Him prosper you until finally you are out of debt! Remember the debt you owe God comes FIRST.

Yet so many say: "I don't think it would be right for me to tithe while I'm in debt." Yes, it is right, and not to tithe is WRONG. "There is a way that seemeth right to a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12). God's Word tells us what is RIGHT, and God tells us to pay His Work the *firstfruits* of all our income. Regarding our material and financial needs, even debts, God says "Seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Mat. 6:33).

The tithe is the debt that you owe God. This debt is FIRST in time and principle. Pay your debts to God, make Him your PARTNER in your finances, and receive His blessing in temporal affairs. This will enable you to pay your debts, or to get a job, or to have your needs supplied more quickly than if you evade His debt.

Remember your ALL belongs to Him, not to you (Deut. 10:14). You are in the position of steward handling that which *belongs to another*. God is your silent partner, and the first tenth, *in addition to* OFFERINGS, is His share. The rest He gives freely to you. But if you appropriate for yourself His share, God says *you are stealing*, and *ROBBING GOD* (Mal. 3:8). Would you pay your debts with money another man had left in your trust? If a man working in a bank does that, *we call it embezzlement!*

The only *sure way* to know you have God as partner and that He is taking care of your interests is to obey Him in tithing. Think what happened in San Francisco in 1906. People who did not have God as their Partner had no divine protection when terrible earthquakes struck.

God has graciously blessed you as you have *yielded* to Him according to the light He has revealed to you, from His Word! While you have the light, WALK in it, lest darkness come upon you! (John 12:35, 36.) "*Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord . . .*" (II Pet. 3:18). See also Romans 11:22.

Seek ye FIRST the Kingdom, and your material needs shall be ADDED. Try it! Take God at His Word! *PROVE HIM!* (Mal. 3:10.) *See how you begin to prosper!* Be a faithful steward; make God your PARTNER and receive His BLESSING!

If every professing Christian would accept this plain instruction from God, honoring HIM instead of themselves with their substance, Christ's true gospel would go forth with such mighty power that the world would be *shaken to its foundations!*

What our STUDENTS SAY

Conformed, or Flunked Out!

"I am writing you out of the fullness of my heart. I have completed 17 lessons and have gotten much more from them than I ever got out of courses in the theological school. There I was working for grades and had to either conform or flunk out. The farther I get along, the easier everything falls in place. I can't begin to tell you of changes that have taken place in my understanding."

—Man, St. Louis, Missouri

Facts Awe-inspiring

"Thank you for your most interesting Correspondence Course. The Bible has never been such a real book before. The facts you've uncovered for me are so awe-inspiring as to fill you with a love of God and an honest desire to follow His way completely. . . . God has never been so real to me before, but after studying the Bible with your help, God is a real being. I have always believed in God, but now I feel His presence and know He is watching me always. I am beginning to understand why the world is in such a mess, what God's plan is and why He demands complete obedience to His laws."

—Mrs. Richard P., Oak Harbor, Ohio

Obedience Pays

"We have found that tithing pays. My husband got the mail-carrying job where he works which means \$25.00 a month more and a move up in responsibility, which should mean a raise in pay. I'm sure God must be helping him. When the plant changed management and started cutting down on employees he should have been the first to go because he is the newest employee. Now, thanks to God, he still has a job and a raise too."

—Claudia D., Modesto, California

- *God can become your PARTNER on the job too!*

Learned His Lesson

"I'm one of those who robbed God time and time again and the last time I stopped tithing, God really lowered the boom, or I should say, lowered the beam on me, because that is exactly what happened. I was hurt on the job. I had a 5,800 pound steel beam drop on my right hand. It was smashed terribly — I spent fourteen days in the hospital but I still have my hand and the use of it. I truly and sincerely thank God for saving my hand. This is really learning the hard

way. I could go on with other things that have happened to me prior to this accident, but I won't — I have learned my lesson . . . Enclosed is ten percent of all I have. I am starting again; God help me to be faithful from now on."

—William C. B., La Puente, California

Other Studies Boring

"I am enjoying your radio programs about evolution very much. I had read various books about the theory up to about two years ago. I then requested *The PLAIN TRUTH*, and listened to *The WORLD TOMORROW*. I have been enrolled in the Correspondence Course for about the same length of time. I find the Correspondence Course more interesting as time goes by, instead of getting 'boresome' as other kinds of study do."

"There are no words that I can say to fully express my gratitude for the understanding of the Bible that I have found through your work. I have gone to church for about a year now, but I see that where I go, they do not teach what I find to be the truth. My lesson this last month was about the True Church of God."

—U. T. W., Leeds, Alabama

"May I say how very much I appreciate *The PLAIN TRUTH*, books and articles I have received from you, and most especially the Correspondence Course! My eyes have been opened, and I am seeing God's will for the first time. How beautifully simple, and how simply beautiful it is."

—Edward L., San Francisco, California

Like Dressmaking

"I would like to say 'thanks' for the Correspondence Course and tell you it reminds me of dressmaking — just a maze of pattern pieces until they are all fitted together to form a whole dress. So it is with the Holy Bible — all sixty-six books remain a complete mystery until they are correlated to form a whole story, which informs us why we were born, how we should live, and what is promised after death if we choose to follow the laws of God."

—Mr. & Mrs. B. L., Carter, Montana

Saves Time

"I find the Ambassador College Correspondence Course time-saving to say the least. It saves the Bible student time because it is concise — an outline of the essentials of a logical study of the Bible to guide the student, dispensing with lengthy commentary or speculation. When I begin on my own to study the Bible, much time is wasted in merely getting to the heart of one particular question or subject matter. Time should not be wasted in such an essential and pertinent study."

—David C., Weatherford, Texas