



Article Title— **“New Testament? What’s New?”**

Article Category— **Bible History**

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What? Did the Ten Commandments really go away? Here's why I ask: I keep hearing from professional disciples of John Calvin that "We're no longer under the Law; we're under Grace! The law was only for the Jews!" Most of them clearly still have not discovered the critical fact that a very small percentage of Hebrews were/are "Jews." ^ Some of them get really red-faced in response to any sensible challenge to that memorized talking point. Curiously, many of them display those Ten Commandments signs on their front lawns. Okay, so here's the real scoop on why sensible challenges to that ^ claim are not only appropriate, but also much needed:

- ^ Lesson Three in our Online Bible Study Series should answer all or most of your questions about the two extremes of Salvation theology. Lessons Four and Five of that series should clear the air for you on why it is critical that YOU come to understand that, while all Jews are Hebrews/Israelites, very few Hebrews/Israelites were/are Jews. Here's the hotlink to that series: <https://www.link1.info/online-study>. You can learn more about the Bible and Christianity, there, than almost anyone you know!
At Revelation 2:9 and 3:9 you can read Jesus' dire warning to you and me about people who claim to be Jews but are not.

In the Old Testament, God revealed Himself and the unique essence of His nature to people. His message, there, can be boiled down to this: "Here are the boundaries for your thinking and your behavior (the Ten Commandments). Stay within these boundaries to enjoy my blessings and my protection. Step one foot outside and you're on your own. If you do wander outside, step back inside with plans to stay and you can start enjoying my protection and my blessings again."

Here's a another version of that: In the Old Testament, God repeatedly demonstrated what sin is and why it will always yield pain, some short-term but mostly long-term. Lots of fun now and it feels really good, too, but it's going to hurt you and those you love forever! Yes, He's willing to forgive you for sin IF you admit to it and repent of it, but the consequences of it will linger – maybe even for the rest of your life! (That'll be a topic for us to explore together on another day, so stay tuned!)

You can safely conclude that "sin" is not a long list of bad things He'll punish us for doing or thinking. It's just that He knows everything about our human nature (the sin nature): He knows that obeying the Ten Commandments will keep us out of trouble with our friends and our families and our employers—and even with our enemies most of the time. He knows that not obeying them will inevitably cause lots of pain and unnecessary stress for us and for the others with whom we interact. For those who're focused on uncommon personal fulfillment, the Ten Commandments is the best-ever short list of rules for accomplishing that.


That amazing short list of rules is also a valuable gift to civil folk who wish to organize themselves for long-term success in self-government, maximum productivity and relative harmony. By patterning their governments after that model, societies can even manage – and sometimes control – the behavior of those who're determined not to hold themselves accountable to any set of rules.

Did Jesus change any of that with his First-Century message? This should answer that question: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." —Jesus, at Matthew 5:17,18

Here's some of what we enjoy today that DID change with the New Testament:

- 1) We no longer have to sacrifice animals to gain forgiveness for our sinning. That's because Jesus (a.k.a. the perfect Lamb of God) became our forever sacrifice at His crucifixion. Yes, it is still true that "...without shedding of blood is no remission." —Paul, at Hebrews 9:22
- 2) We are no longer required (or permitted) to confess our sins to priests or any other human being in order to gain forgiveness. That's because Jesus became our high priest upon His resurrection. We must go directly to Him with our confessions and our repentances. Sorry: There are no exceptions to that New Testament rule. Additionally, confession and repentance are distinctively different. (We'll explore that topic together soon, too!)
- 3) Jesus serves, today, as our advocate. That's like a defense attorney. Satan is our accuser; i.e.: the prosecutor. When our defense attorney comes to believe that we're truly repentant, He petitions The Father to be merciful to us and to forgive us. That's unmerited favor, also known as grace. (Want to learn why grace is only extended to us *after* we have confessed to and repented of a sin? Study Lesson Three of our Online Bible Study series with your Bible open.)

I was a successful Bible teacher for a LOT of years—big sanctuary classes.
I knew what my denomination believed and that's what I taught.
Yes, I should've checked it out to make sure it was true.

So why didn't I do that? Well, maybe I didn't do that for the same reason that you haven't really checked out what your denomination teaches. 
"In religion and politics, people's beliefs and convictions are in almost every case gotten at second hand, and without examination." —Samuel Clemens



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- 4) Jesus vetoed every one of the hundreds (maybe thousands) of new "laws" that the Old Testament Pharisees and scribes had added. In fact, many of the O.T. Scribes and N.T. Pharisees and priests were not Jews, but imposters. (Those who complete our Online Bible Study series through Lesson Eleven will learn exactly who they were and where they came from.)

No. The Ten Commandments did not go away in the First Century. You've heard those die-hard Calvinist talking points, too. But I'll bet you're smart enough to have figured all this out even before I saw fit to write about it...

—T. C. Newsome 

PS: To participate in sensible Bible discussions about things like this, join us at TC's Friends Club. Here's the hot link:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/136708110091989/>

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