

Love's Handbook

By Matthew Day

I hope I didn't scare you with my last article. My last article may have given you the impression that I have become legalistic, but I have not. I ask that you will at least consider my opinion as I attempt to show you how this is not just a set of rules. But before I go into the purpose of the law, I want to make something clear, again. Faith is how we are saved. Faith in Jesus is our foundation.

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Romans 3:31

Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.

Romans 7:12

My dad is reading a book entitled "Restoration" by D. Thomas Lancaster. It talks about this very subject. In it there is a story about a Gentile who wanted to know God, but didn't want to take the time to learn the Torah. So, he found a rabbi with a builder's cubit and asked the rabbi to teach him the Torah in a few minutes. The rabbi laughed and drove the Gentile away with his builder's cubit. Next the Gentile went to another kinder rabbi. This rabbi said "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor. That is the whole Torah. The rest is the commentary on it. Now go and study the rest."

The book compares this love to a cubit. A cubit is the length of a man's arm. Of course, everyone has a different size arm. So, everyone has a different interpretation of what love means. The builder's cubit was created to provide a set length for the cubit, so that there would not be problems. The rest of the law is like the builder's cubit. It tells us how to show love. Every commandment was created with love as its foundation. You cannot truly keep any commandment unless you do it with love.

Do not continue to owe no one, nothing, except to love one another. For the *one* loving the other has fulfilled the Law. For, "Do not commit adultery," "do not murder," "do not steal," do not bear false witness, "do not lust," *Ex. 20:13-15, 17* and if *there is* any other commandment, in this word it is summed up, in the *words*, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." *Lev. 19:18*

[Romans 13:8-9](#)

Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

[Matthew 22:36-40](#)

The law is just a book of God's instructions on how to show love to others and to God. Here is another analogy (this one I made up): Evolution says that we all came from a bunch of chemicals all mashed together. Obviously, this is wrong. Without structure, the big pot of chemicals, is just that, a big pot of chemicals. But when organized, they form part of God's lovely creation. Also, order doesn't do any good without substance.

Love is like that. Without the torah, you just have a big pot of unapplied mush. Yes, there is a lot of potential there, but potential doesn't get you anywhere until it is applied. The law, torah, tells us how to do this. In the same way, you can't have the law without love. It's like trying to organize nothing. It has no good results. You must use

it **only** to apply love.

Before salvation, the law is condemning; after salvation, it is love's handbook.

The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver.
Psalms 119:72

"But, on the whole, tho' I never arrived at the perfection I had been so ambitious of obtaining, but fell far short of it, yet I was, by the endeavour, a better and a happier man than I otherwise should have been if I had not attempted it; as those who aim at perfect writing by imitating the engraved copies, tho' they never reach the wish'd-for excellence of those copies, their hand is mended by the endeavour, and is tolerable while it continues fair and legible."

-from The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin

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