

**THINK ABOUT IT!**

When a farmer stops plowing his land, stops planting seed, and stops harvesting his crops, he has stopped doing those things that identify him as being a farmer. When a Christian stops attending worship services regularly, stops studying, stops giving as he has been prospered, and has stopped working for the Lord, he has stopped being a Christian because he has stopped doing those things that identify him as a Christian. *"By their fruits ye shall know them," (Matthew 7:20).* ♦

**I Am Your Bulletin**

I am not just another piece of paper.  
 I am your weekly church information sheet.  
 I do not come to you easily, or without expense.  
 I cost money, time, thought, and energy.  
 I should not be taken for granted.  
 I can only be as useful and valuable as you allow me to be.  
 I am often abused and overlooked.  
 Sometimes all I get is a fleeting glance.  
 Sometimes all I get is a critical analysis.  
 I want so much for you to read me, study me, appreciate me,  
 and make me useful for your spiritual activity and development.  
 I want to serve you. ♦

**Things That Impress Visitors**

1. Members that day dream or sleep through sermon; talk during observance of the Lord's Supper.
2. Members that open a bottle of pop during services which makes a noise each time it opens.
3. Scribbling in and playing with the hymnals.
4. Members who whisper, talk, write notes, and pass pictures, etc. during services.
5. Members who are privileged to serve during the worship, but are so over medicated that they sound drunk.
6. Persistent late-comers who disturb and distract the worshippers.
7. Members who do not speak to visitors. ♦

**What Must I Do To Be Saved?**

**Hear and Learn** - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3  
**Believe** - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24  
**Repent** - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30  
**Confess the Lord** - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21  
**Be Baptized** - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27  
**Continue in the Apostles' Teaching** - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

**About the Hillcrest church of Christ**

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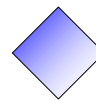


**Schedule of Assembly**

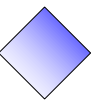
**Bible Study:** Sunday, 9:00am  
**Worship Service:** Sunday, 10:00am  
**Bible Study:** Wednesday, 7:00pm\*

\*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

[www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com](http://www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com)



# The Voice of Truth



May 6, 2012

**Has God Ever Left Any People Without Law?**

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Some teach the doctrine that the Gentiles were not under any law. To prove their teaching, that Gentiles were not under any law, they teach when Paul wrote, *"For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without the law: and as many as have sinned under the law shall be judged by the law" (Romans 2:12).* Or, *"For when the Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having law, are the law unto themselves" (Romans 2:14).* So, it is taught that the Gentiles were totally without law.

**WRONG!** God has never left any people without law. Even in the beginning, in the Garden of Eden, there was law. In fact, there was negative and positive law. *"And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Genesis 2:15-17).* We all know what happens next; both sinned by being disobedient to God **(Genesis 3:6-19)**. *"Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned" (Romans 5:12).* People without law one cannot sin: *"For until the law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Romans 5:13).* From the time of Adam, God dealt with men under the Patriarchal law. When Paul wrote **Romans 2:12**, he obviously meant that many of the gentiles as have sinned without the Law of Moses will perish without it. It is certain that they were not without any kind of law. If that had been the case, they could not have been charged with sin, for Paul wrote, *"Where there is no law, neither is there transgression" (Romans 4:15).* Therefore, where there is transgression, there is law, divine law. Sin is transgression of God's law, *"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).* The Bible says that the sinfulness of the people caused God to destroy the world, all but eight people by the flood

**(Genesis 6).**  
 In the book of **Amos**, the prophet starts off with severe rebukes regarding the nations around Israel. Many transgressions had seen committed by Edom, Moab, Ammom and Tyre **(Amos 1:11-2)**. God would not have wasted time rebuking them if, as some who erroneously teach, the gentiles were not answerable to God. Gentiles were not under any kind of law. Well, broken law demands pay! The nations are to be punished because of their transgressions. What about Jonah and Nineveh? *"And the word of Jehovah came unto Jonah the second time, saying, Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee" (Jonah 3:1-2).* *"Yet forty days Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4).* If Nineveh did not repent they would become as Sodom and Gomorrah. *"And the people of Nineveh believe God" (Jonah 3:5).* Nineveh was a pagan city, nonetheless, they believed God. Jesus declared, *"The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold a greater than Jonah is here" (Matthew 12:41).* *"And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil which he would do unto them; and he did it not" (Jonah 3:10).* When God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way, His marvelous mercy was extended to them. When their faith in God led to repentance and brought forth fruits thereof, their relationship to sin and God's righteousness was altered. If they were not under law, how could they have sinned? *"For through the law (cometh) the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20).* Would God be just in punishing the people of Nineveh if they had no law, could not be doers of the law? The gentiles transgressed divine law. What law? The gentiles violated Patriarchal law, the law which they were amenable.

Question: Was not Balaam a gentile prophet **(Exodus 19:24)**? What about Melchizedek **(Genesis 14:8)**? This

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implies a law of worship and the priest assist the people in obeying that law. **Romans 1:18ff** teaches us that the people have never been without the knowledge of God, "that they may be without excuse" (**Romans 1:20**). The gentiles transgressed divine law. The gentiles were never under the Law of Moses, for that law was given to the Jews only (**Deuteronomy 5:1-3**). However, the gentiles sinned! It

therefore follows that the gentiles transgressed some law, but what law? The gentiles violated the Patriarchal law, the law which they were amenable. The correct conclusion is that the gentiles sinned by violating the law to which they were amenable (Patriarchal law), and the Jews sinned by sinned by violating the law to which they were amenable (Law of Moses). "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God" (**Romans 3:23**). ♦

### "I Samuel 15"

By Jarrod Jacobs

This chapter reveals one of the darkest times in Israel's history. By the end of this chapter, we see Samuel leaving Saul, and looking for a new king in **I Samuel 16**. Most people will remember that King Saul was commanded to utterly (completely) destroy the Amalekites, but he did not do so (**I Sam. 15:3, 8-9, 11**). The result was that he lost his kingdom. He went from being a very inspiring person from humble beginnings, to a tragic figure that, put simply, taught us what "not to do" (**I Sam. 15:17-19**)! Let us study this chapter, and learn some lessons that hopefully will help us in our service to God (**Rom. 15:4**).

#### The Lord Is Our Commander.

When Samuel came to Saul, he wanted him to "hearken unto the words of the Lord" (**v. 1**). It makes no difference what a man, or group of men might tell you to do. What matters is what God has said (**Col. 3:17; I Pet. 4:11**)! The Lord is in control, and He wanted Saul to utterly destroy these enemies who had been fighting God's people since **Exodus 17:8-16**. Once Saul knew what God wanted him to do (**I Sam. 15:3**), it was up to him to obey.

In like manner, the Lord has told us what to do in the New Testament (**Heb. 1:2**), and it is up to us to obey His word if we wish to go to Heaven (**Matt. 7:21-23; Heb. 5:8-9; Rev. 22:14**; etc.)! The Lord is over us, and we are to submit to Him (**Jas. 4:7**).

#### God's Commands Are Easy To Understand.

When Saul was told to utterly destroy the Amalekites, he began correctly (**v. 8**), but he did not complete the job. He saved the king, and the best of the animals (**v. 8-9**). Did he do this because he did not know any better? No, for Saul told Samuel, "I have performed the commandment of the LORD....Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me" (**v. 13, 20**). Thus, he not only understood what God had said at the beginning (**v. 3**), but he then spoke as if he

had obeyed (he lied)! When his lie was exposed (**v. 14**), Saul then blamed the people for saving the best of the animals (**v. 21**). **I Samuel 15** is just one example of a person who knew God's will, and knew what was expected, but did not do it! He could have done it, but he decided he didn't want to! He listened to the people rather than God and suffered the consequences (**v. 23-30**). Yes, God's commands can be understood. Saul could not blame others and be considered guiltless!

The lessons we need to learn include the fact that God does not command us to do something that we cannot do. Two, we can understand God's word (**Eph. 3:4, 5:17**). Third, God knows whether or not we have obeyed Him (**Prov. 15:3; Heb. 4:13**)! Seeing that these things are true, the question is we will obey Him or not? Will we be like Saul? What will we do?

#### Our Sin Hurts Other People, Even Future Generations.

In reading **I Samuel 15**, we see that no sooner had Saul and the people disobeyed God than the word of the Lord came to Samuel, "saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night" (**v. 10-11**). When Saul and the people disobeyed, they did not simply hurt themselves, but they grieved Samuel. They also grieved God in this sinful action. Really, this is the way it is with sin; we hurt others as well as ourselves! Sin affects more than just the guilty one. Even in cases where one might claim, "I am not hurting anyone but myself", do we not have family and friends who love us and want the best for us, and grieve because of our bad decisions? Too, consider the lasting effects of sin, and how it can harm generations yet unborn.

In the case of Saul, the consequences of his sin were felt in the immediate, and for years to come. In addition to

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losing his kingdom, we read in **I Chronicles 4:41-43** that in the days of King Hezekiah, the Simeonites killed Amalekites in their nation. Why was this necessary? It is because Saul was disobedient! Saul's incomplete work meant these people had to risk life and limb in later years! Perhaps the most well-known consequence of Saul's disobedience is recorded in the book of Esther. The enemy who came dangerously close to destroying the Jews was a man named Haman, "the Agagite, the Jews' enemy" (**Est. 3:6, 10**)! Now, how could it be that this man could get so close to destroying the Jews? It is because Saul sinned by failing in his duty long ago! Yes, future generations of Jewish people were affected because of the sin of Saul.

It is no different today. When we sin, we not only hurt ourselves, but we hurt others. Sadly, some sins will affect people in generations to come as well! Friends, our selfishness does this damage! When we decide we want to commit a certain sin (**Jas. 1:14-15**), and nothing will stop us, let us remember that we cannot and do not live in a vacuum (**Rom. 14:7**)! In fact, our sin not only affects folks on earth, but God Himself (**Gen. 39:9b; Isa. 59:1-2**)! If you do not believe this, just look to the cross! Have we forgotten the reason Jesus Christ came to this earth (**Lk. 19:10; Rom. 5:8; I Tim. 1:15**)? Yes, our sins hurt others. Often, we hurt others we never intended, nor imagined we would hurt!

#### When One Does Not Do All God Says, It Is Sin.

There are some who try to justify themselves in their sin by saying, "I am not that bad, I do not kill people or steal things, I think I am O.K." When asked whether or not they have obeyed God, they will say, "I believe in Jesus, and I am a good person. That is enough." Then, when this person is shown the Scriptures concerning salvation (**Mk. 16:16**) and how one sin can keep them from Heaven, and that one sin grieves God, that teacher may be called "legalistic" or a "Bibliolater" (Bible-worshipper).

Is a person "legalistic" to say such things? Let us see what God said about Saul's sin: "It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments" (**v. 11**). Wait! Didn't Saul do MOST of what God said? Didn't he get a "vast majority" of God's will accomplished? Why then doesn't God focus on that? The fact is that by not doing all that God had said, God looked upon

Saul as being disobedient (**v. 19**)! He is said to have rejected God because he did not do all that was commanded (**v. 23, 26**).

Let us make sure we do not have such a cavalier attitude about sin! It is not enough to do "some" or "most" of what God has said. Saul's error is a very real example and reminder to us (**Rom. 15:4**) that God demands COMPLETE obedience from His people (**Rev. 22:14; Jn. 14:15, 15:14; Heb. 5:9**).

#### Blaming Others Does Not Excuse Our Sin.

Saul made excuses concerning his sin by saying, "I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me...But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal" (**v. 20-21**). Though Saul blamed the people for the disobedience, God knew who was responsible! As a result, God rejected Saul from being the King of Israel. Though what Saul said may have been true, listening to the people instead of God was not a sufficient excuse! He knew what to do and did not do it.

We know that listening to others instead of God has been a problem men have had since the beginning. When God confronted Adam in his sin, He said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (**Gen. 3:17-19**). Adam listened to his wife instead of God and suffered for it (and so have we!) just like Saul listened to the people and suffered for it (and so did future generations).

Friends, to whom are we listening? Let us remember that we are responsible for our own sin. Others will not answer to God for the sin we commit (**II Cor. 5:10; Ezek. 18:20**). Since this is true, why are we listening to others instead of listening to God? Let us learn what **I Samuel 15** teaches, and be "living sacrifices", the kind of people who please God! (**Rom. 12:1-2**) Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

Truth is truth even if no one believes it.  
Error is error if everyone believes it.