

## E. IDENTIFICATION OF A BIBLICAL STANDARD OF MORAL CONDUCT

1. What about the Mosaic Law? Does it have any relevance today? Does it provide a standard of moral conduct?

a. The problem of the Law

(1) Statement of the problem

Generally stated, the problem is this: Does the Mosaic Law bind the conscience of the New Testament believer in any sense?

Specifically stated, the problem is this: Is the moral aspect of the Mosaic Law binding upon the New Testament believer? Is the civil aspect binding? Is the ceremonial aspect binding? This problem may be sharpened by stating it in terms of the moral aspect of the Mosaic Law only: Do the principles of right and wrong conduct expressed in the Ten Commandments bind the conscience of the New Testament believer?

(2) Some responses to the problem

The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 19 ("Of the Law of God") states:

I. God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it; and endued him with power and ability to keep it.

II. This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon mount Sinai in ten commandments, and written in two tables; the first four commandments containing our duty towards God, and the other six our duty to man.

III. Beside this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a Church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly holding forth divers instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated under the New Testament.

IV. To them also, as a body politic, he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people, not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require.

V. The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it. Neither doth Christ in the gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation.

VI. Although true believers be not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned; yet is it of great use to them, as well as to others; in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; discovering also the sinful