

In James 2:8-11 James tells us that the Law convicts transgressors of sin. And in I John 3:4 John writes that the one who practices sin is practicing lawlessness, and that sin is lawlessness.

(c) Although the New Testament contains a number of references to the believer's relationship to civil government, it makes no mention of the kinds of civic obligations binding upon citizens of the Old Testament theocracy. This should not surprise us, since Paul clearly teaches that God has temporarily set aside the nation of Israel and turned to the Gentiles (the "nations"); thus the civic laws which were binding on Israel during the theocracy are also in abeyance, at least to the extent that they prescribed penalties for violations of A. A. Hodge's third and fourth classes of divine laws (i.e., those that pertain to temporary relations of human beings, and those of positive enactment, such as pertain to ceremonial, dietary, and other ephemeral regulations.

(d) The New Testament speaks of ceremonies that are in keeping with the change of dispensation (such as water baptism and the Lord's Supper, and at the same time reveals a period of transition during which the Old Testament ceremonies became obsolete, either because they were fulfilled in Christ and therefore superseded, or because they were positive enactment regulations (A. A. Hodge's fourth class of divine laws).

(e) In addition to the many individual verses in which the New Testament alludes to the values and norms of the Ten Commandments, several New Testament passages emphasize the relevance of the Law to the present-day believer, not as Law but in terms of the values and norms embodied in it:

Romans 13:7-10 -- "Pay to all the things which are owed to them: tribute tax to whom tribute tax is owed, customs duties to whom customs duties are owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. Do not owe anyone anything, except to love one another, for the one who is loving the other has fulfilled the law. For this, 'you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet'; and if there is any other commandment, it is summed up in this word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' Love is not doing evil to the neighbor; therefore love is fulfillment of the law."

In connection with this passage, the following points of interest should be noted:

[1] "Paying" is contrasted with "owing" in this passage. Paul says, "do not owe anyone anything"; "pay to all the things owed to them."

[2] This passage is saying, "Do not owe to anyone (i.e., do not refuse to fully pay your debt), except in the matter of loving one another (in which case keep on owing, i.e., refuse to consider your debt as fully paid, and keep on loving).

[3] The payment of this debt is specifically called "fulfillment of the law." (verse 8 -- "the one who is loving the other has fulfilled the law"; verse 10 -- "Love is not doing evil to the neighbor; therefore love is fulfillment of the law.")