

The Law Of Commandments

According to Paul, Christ *"abolished in the flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances: that he might create in himself of the two one new man, so making peace ..."* (Eph. 2:15). ESTABLISHED: the law of commandments, contained in ordinances was abolished, removed. But, what was this law of commandments contained in ordinances?

There are those who explain the parallel passage in Colossians 2:14 to be the debt we have to sin. The passage reads: *"having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us ..."* We do not hesitate to acknowledge that our sins were nailed to the cross because elsewhere Paul wrote: *"Him who knew no sin, he made to be sin on our behalf ..."* (2 Cor. 5:21). But, was the debt we owe to sin the *"bond which was nailed to the cross"* of which the Colossians writer spoke? That answer must be "no" for several reasons, two of which are cited below. FIRST, Colossians 2:14 and Ephesians 2:15 are parallel passages, dealing with the same subject. Ephesians 2:15 clearly has the law of Moses in mind by the words *"law of commandments contained in ordinances."* The word *"ordinances"* found in both Ephesians 2:15 and Colossians 2:14 is the word "DOGMA" and without dispute has reference to the Law of Moses in Ephesians. Since the passages are parallel, the *"bond ... in ordinances"* of Colossians is the *"law of commandments, contained in ordinances"* as well. SECOND: in the continuing text of Colossians, the writer adds, *"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a Sabbath day:"* (Col 2:16). The word *"therefore"* in this passage shows that the exhortation which follows: *"Let no man judge you,"* is built upon a conclusion reached earlier. The things we are to let no one judge us in are *"meat, drink, feast day, new moon, Sabbath"* -- all ordinances of the Law, and the reason why we are to allow none to judge us in these things is because these ordinances have been blotted out, abolished by Christ.

There are some who recognize the force of this argument but still are not willing to concede that the *"Law of commandments contained in ordinances"* has reference to the whole law, especially to the Ten Commandments. So a distinction in God law to Moses is made: the moral law (Ten Commandments which they say, was not removed) and ceremonial law (circumcision, meats, burnt offerings, etc., which, they say was removed). The distinction between moral law and ceremonial law is wholly that which is improvised by man. No such distinction is recognized by the Holy Spirit. Colossians 2:16 lists five things Christians are to allow no man to judge them in. Were we to grant distinction between "moral and ceremonial law" (which we do not), the Co-

lossian text would still include the Ten Commandments! The apostle insists that we are not to be judged in respect of a "*Sabbath day*." This has reference to the Ten Commandments. The Sabbath was part of the "*bond written in ordinances*" which Christ blotted out. The law, the whole law of Moses, was nailed to the cross. But one objects, "How and in what way could God's law be an 'enmity' and 'against' us?" That is a good question, worthy of consideration. Such will be the subject of the next article.

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