

This document is a question and answer email between Peter and Pat D, concerning the commandments of God and should the believer still obey the commandments of God, also known as the law of God. It is long but important.

Email subject: Should the believer keep the commandments?

IMPORTANT: This is an email thread and you will need to read from the bottom and come to the top.

Hello Pat D,

You are very welcome. I do hope I can enlighten you a bit more. This is so important that I took my time in answering even more in-depth so that I do not miss anything.

Must you keep the commandments to be saved?

To answer the question we will need to enter into waters that have been somewhat muddied by many a theologian. In fact the following references are used to say that Christians do not have to keep the law. I will explain.

Reminder: I showed you earlier that Yeshua linked the keeping of the commandments/law to our love for Him.

Two questions we must ask from scripture:

1. Did the early church understand that the keeping of the commandments was necessary? My answer is Yes.
2. Did some in the early church believe you had to keep the commandments to be saved? My answer is again Yes.

We first go to the Galatians to help guide us to the answer:

The following is one of many verses where Paul says the believer cannot be justified by the works (keeping) of the law. Justification comes by faith in Jesus Christ. On the surface we are told that these first chapters of Galatians is the reason why we need not keep the law. Lets go below the surface and ask this question, If the Galatians were not keeping the law why would Paul have to make the comparison between the works of the law and justification by faith in Christ? Answer: They were keeping the law/commandments but Paul was addressing an issue. **What is the issue?**

(Gal 2:16 [KJV])

Knowing that a man is **not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ**, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, **that we might be justified by the faith of Christ**, and not by the works of the law: for **by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.**

Again, what is the issue?

The issue caused Paul to ask why are they bewitched.

(Gal 3:1 [KJV])

O foolish Galatians, **who hath bewitched you**, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

He then asked if they received the Spirit by the works (the works of the law which they were doing) or by faith (in Christ). Again, why would he have to ask about the works of the law and drawing a comparison with faith if they were not doing it (not keeping the law as some teach)?

(Gal 3:2 [KJV])

This only would I learn of you, **Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**

The answer to the issue is:

The issue was that the Galatians were keeping the law thinking that it would save them. So Paul asked the question (Gal3:2) because he was bringing home the point that justification can only come by faith (faith in Christ). We cannot

be justified/saved by keeping the law. Putting it another way, keeping the law cannot save anyone. The rest of the verses speak to this issue (by the works of the law we are not saved).

The issue can be found again in Acts 15. In fact this is when it first came up. Why? Paul was confronted with the issue and he could not answer. Lets go there.

First you will notice the issue was on one item (circumcision) in the law, and some felt if you did not do it, **you cannot be saved**. [this is the surface]. Now lets go below the surface that is not talked about. Paul and Barnabas could not answer the question. Why? They did not know what the answer was. Devil's advocate: Why are they unsure if they know that the believer does not have to keep the law? Answer: They knew the believer had to keep the law, but they were not clear what this part of the law meant with regards to salvation (to be saved). The answer came later.

(Acts 15:1-2 [KJV])

And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, **Except ye be circumcised** after the manner of Moses, **ye cannot be saved**. 2 When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, **should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question**.

Now look at what happens when Paul and Barnabas presents this issue. There was no immediate answer to keeping the law and being saved by having to keep it as a Gentile (specifically having to be circumcised). Why no answer right away? Because it became a dispute. However, the realization came (by the Spirit of God) and made Peter stand up and say that they (Gentiles) are saved by faith (they were given the gift of the Holy Ghost as evidence after the **purifying of their hearts by faith – in Christ**).

(Acts 15:6-9 [KJV])

And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter. 7 And when there had been **much disputing**, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. 8 And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; 9 And put no difference between us and them, **purifying their hearts by faith**.

At this point they all knew that they (gentiles/us) were saved by faith. But what about the need to be circumcised as written in the law? (We cannot leave this out). Read on later in the chapter.

(Acts 15:24 [KJV])

Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us **have troubled you with words**, subverting your souls, saying, **Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law**: to whom **we gave NO such commandment**:

The commandment for the gentile believer to be circumcised was not given. The second part "and keep the law" is a follow on to: Remember if you offend in one part of the law, you are guilty of the entire law. (James 2:10 [KJV]) For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet **offend in one point (circumcision), he is guilty of all**.

Now lets go to the law of circumcision that our brethren had the dispute over and would have no doubt examined in light of the question. Lets see if it applies to us. Let see what God wrote (by inspiration).

(Gen 17:9-14 [KJV])

And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, **and thy seed** after thee in their generations. 10: This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, **between me and you and thy seed after thee**; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. 11 And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. 12 And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, **he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger**, which is not of thy seed. 13 He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. 14 And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.

Remember what I said earlier: We have to look at the commandment to see if it applies.

- a. The first thing that stands out about this commandment is that as Gentiles we are not direct decedents of Abraham (*and thy seed, he that is born of the house (clan/family), in their generations*)
- b. No Jew (descendent of Abraham) has bought any of us with money so no circumcision for me, Titus or the organ player.

Just a side-note: Even to this day the majority of Jews still keep this commandment (given by God) to be circumcised on the 8th day of birth. When Jews convert to Christianity as older men, there is no need to be circumcised because it was already done as a baby.

To conclude my submission.

Paul, the apostle to the gentiles (us) was again addressing the issue (the need to keep the law to be saved), this time at the church in Rome. You can read the entire chapter to get the full context but the following verses captures the issue he was addressing as seen in Galatians before and now here – works of the law vs faith to be justified.

(Rom 3:20-22 [KJV])

Therefore by the **deeds (works) of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight**: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 But now the **righteousness of God without the law is manifested** (Yeshua), being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 **Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ** unto all and **upon all them that believe (by faith)**: for there is no difference:

Here Paul answers in a way for all to understand in the last verse of the chapter. He ask the question, do we do away with the law? His answer is an emphatic NO (God forbid), then he states **we establish it (the law/commandments)**. This is in keeping with what Yeshua commanded - to do and teach the law, or the prophets. *To continue keeping the law until He returns.*

(Rom 3:31 [KJV])

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

To be really clear, let us now look at the word used by Paul in the Greek for **establish**. Highlighted, it can also be translated “continue”. To be even clearer, it means not to stop what you are doing, but carry on doing it.

G2476 ἵστημι histemi (hiy'-stee-miy) v.

στάω stao (staō') [used in certain tenses]

to stand.

{transitively or intransitively; used in various applications, literally or figuratively}

[a prolonged form of a primary stao stah'-o (of the same meaning, and used for it in certain tenses)]

KJV: abide, appoint, bring, **continue**, covenant, **establish**, hold up, lay, present, set (up), stanch, stand (by, forth, still, up)

My answer to the question first asked.

Must you keep the commandments to be saved?

No, keeping the commandments cannot save anyone. However, as Paul said we are not to do away (void) with the commandments (law) but we are to continue (establish) them.

Someone once said and I like it.

We do not keep the commandments to be saved, but rather we keep the commandments because we are saved.

Me: I Love Yeshua, so I show my love by keeping what He commanded.

Love you all.
I am open to questions.. Until then.

Peter

From: <email suppressed>
Sent: Monday, November 13, 2017 11:58 AM
To: <email suppressed>
Subject: RE: Should the believer keep the commandments?

Thanks Peter.

Your explanation is indeed enlightening and indepth.

Could you give a response to your question.

I await your answer.

Pat D

----- Original message -----
From: <email suppressed>
Date: 11/11/2017 9:01 PM (GMT-05:00)
To: <email suppressed>
Subject: RE: Should the believer keep the commandments?

Dear Pat D,

I am happy that you are searching, may you be blessed.

Yeshua did not give any new commandments when He was asked what was the greatest, our Lord only pointed to what was already written in the law (Deut 6:5 & Lev 19:18). In other words He differentiated these two from the rest saying that they were the greatest when compared to the others. On the other hand if He was asked which were the least of the commandments, He would have listed others. Thank goodness, if He had identified the least of the commandments, people would think it is alright to ignore them.

As you read already, He commanded us to do and teach them (Matt 5:19).

Let us begin.

You wrote:

I have found the 613 commandments in the Old Testament . It seems to me to fulfill all these commandments especially in worship, attire etc is not near possible.

My comment: Always remember what John said, (1 John 5:3) *For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments (from the law): and his commandments are **not grievous**.* To say that the commandments are not possible to follow/keep is to say that the statement that John made is not true. In fact many teach that they are too hard to keep and even discourage discussion. Well I have news for everyone that thinks that way, they are not hard one bit, nor are they grievous, nor are they impossible to keep. So my position is that I agree with scripture (1 John 5:3) 100%.

Let me explain from another perspective.

They are hundreds of laws on the books of Barbados. Do I (you) follow every one of them? No.. Why? Every law does not apply to me or you. Now the ones that apply to me, I do so that I am not locked up or charged etc. What if I break a law that I do not know about? I am still charged because ignorance is no excuse for breaking the law; By the way, it is the same with God's law. So what do you do? First you learn the law and look at what applies to you and do it, that is all you need to do. Easy as 1, 2 and 3. Example: The laws that God gave to the priesthood that require the sacrificing of animals is not for us to do. There is no need to burn animals in the back yard. Why? The Lord did away with the animal burning because He took the place, He became the perfect sacrifice for all our sins. The laws that are for women, I totally ignore them. Why? Guess... I just keep the commandments that apply to me, just as I do the laws in the land of Barbados. That is why I can say, I am a law abiding citizen. In fact I can say I am a law abiding citizen for both the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of Freundel Stuart (smile).

Formula: Know the law of God and look at what applies to you, and like me you will find it as easy as 1, 2, 3. Read all of Psalms 119 and you will see the blessings that come from following God's law/commandments.

You wrote:

I have found 1,050 commands in the New Testament to assist the Christian to fulfill the 2 commandments our Lord and Saviour gave us.

My comment: I checked that number. I think in some instances they may be counting scriptures of guidance along with actual commandments. But yes, Christ and the Holy Spirit gave more commandments to the apostles (and by extension the church) in the New Testament. From someone that knows (me), do not let anyone tell you that they are too hard to remember or follow, the foundation of every one of the commandments are rooted in LOVE. If you Love, you will be fulfilling all the commandments (that apply to you) without even thinking about it.

David loved the commandments and wrote about them in Psalms 119.

When you grow to love the commandments, you grow to Love Christ. The commandments are linked hand in hand with the love for our Lord (Yeshua). Read on.

(John 14:15 [KJV])

If ye love me (Yeshua), keep my commandments.

(John 14:23 [KJV])

Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words (*including His commandments*): and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

(John 15:10 [KJV])

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

Last for now.

If you try to live God's commandments and mixing them in with man's traditions (church teachings and practices not found in scripture – God's word), then you are asking for TROUBLE with a capital "T".

Why? Read...

(Matt 15:8-9 [KJV])

This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. **9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men** (church teachings and practices not found in scripture) .

God does not want any part of man's traditions.

Question:

Must you keep the commandments to be saved?

Love you all and until then.

Peter

From: <email suppressed>
Sent: Saturday, November 11, 2017 7:49 PM
To: <email suppressed>

Subject: RE: Should the believer keep the commandments?

Dear Peter,

You have sent me on a journey to seek and search.

I have found the 613 commandments in the Old Testament . It seems to me to fulfill all these commandments especially in worship, attire etc is not near possible.

I have found 1,050 commands in the New Testament to assist the Christian to fulfill the 2 commandments our Lord and Saviour gave us.

Your comments please

Pat D

----- Original message -----

From: <email suppressed>
Date: 11/10/2017 9:35 AM (GMT-05:00)
To: <email suppressed>
Subject: RE: Should the believer keep the commandments?

Dear Pat D,

Thank you for your response. I will now share some more to clarify what the Word says. I apologize for the length of my answer, but it is indeed very important.

You wrote:

Scripture always confirms itself.

My comment: Yes, I totally agree with your comment, this is why we should always look to scripture for the answer.

You wrote:

Our Lord and Saviour gave us one commandment.

To love God and to love our neighbour.

My comment: Let us go to the text, as you said we will let scripture confirm itself. Our Savior actually shared **two** commandments. Notice, He was responding to a question; the question was, what is the greatest commandment?

You will notice, the question was NOT, “which commandment should we ONLY follow/keep?”. I will also comment between the text for clarity.

(Matt 22:36-40 [KJV])

Master, which is the great commandment in the law? (comment: *notice the speaker mentioned the law – see my note earlier from Matt 5:18. Why? The law contains all the commandments of God*) 37 Jesus said unto him, (No 1) **Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.** 38 This is **the first** and great commandment. 39 And **the second** is like unto it,(No 2) **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.** 40 On these **two commandments** (2 and not 1) hang all the law and the prophets.

My further comment: Yeshua (Jesus) quoted **TWO commandments** from the same law. Unfortunately people are not aware that Yeshua was referring to commandments in the law that are not part of the 10 written on the tablets. When the church teaches about the commandments, people only think or hear about the 10 written on the tablets (sometimes 9 – leaving out the Sabbath); and by doing this they totally ignore the rest.

Here are the TWO greatest commandments (note: they are not found on the tablets). IMPORTANT: Keep in mind this was the answer to a question. Another way the question could have been worded, “out of all the commandments (LAW), which is/are the greatest?” **REMEMBER, YESHUA NEVER SAID TO IGNORE ALL THE OTHERS BECAUSE HE POINTED OUT WHICH ARE THE TWO GREATEST COMMANDMENTS – as most teach.**

Commandment No. 1 from the law:

(Deut 6:5 [KJV])

And **thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.**

Commandment No. 2, again from the same law:

(Lev 19:18 [KJV])

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but **thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself:** I am the LORD.

You wrote:

All the other commandments 600 plus are embodied in this one and we need to be guided by The Holy Spirit as we study The Word of God and be ever mindful this guidance.

My comment: Again, Yeshua mentioned two and not one commandment from the law. But yes, you are partially correct about all the commandments (600 plus) being embodied in the two commandments mentioned.

Before I explain further, go back and read and you will see that our Lord **never taught that we should ignore any commandments; only what was greatest** (the best part of a cake is its icing, does that mean we are not supposed to eat the body). Since Yeshua mentioned the greatest of all the commandments, modern day Christianity has decided to leave out all the rest. By doing this, we have what we have now. What do we have now? A people that have become a law unto themselves. What do I mean? In the absence of the other laws to follow, people have made up their own laws to deal with situations as they arise. This is the main reason why we have so much division in Christianity today. There is no common law to follow (no standard). More can be said, but I stop here for now; we can discuss in another email or in person if you need me to clarify further.

I will use a comparison to show you how the law of God works (also known as the commandments of God in scripture – see Rev 14:12). I will do it in relation to how our own law works.

The law of God can be divided into sub-groups.

Primary law or greatest laws:

1. Love God | 2. Love neighbour (man)

Sub-group – the ten commandments written on stone tablets.

The first 4 are directed to God (Love for God) and the other 6 are directed to your neighbour (Love for your fellow man)

The last group

The rest of the commandments (600+) can be grouped or linked to the first 4 (for God) or the second group of 6 (for Man)

1-4 directed towards God - *thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart,...*

1.

Do not have any other god before God

2.

Do not make yourself an idol

3.

Do not take the Lord's name in vain

4.

Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy

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5-10 directed towards our fellow man (neighbour) - *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself..*

5.

Honour thy Mother and Father.

6.

Do not murder

7.

Do not commit adultery

8.

Do not steal

9.

Do not bear false witness

10.

Do not covet

Last group (specific as to what to do if you transgress God's law)

Now the other commandments that are listed, link back to one of the above. Example, if a man steals, God gave commandment as to what we should do etc. Again, if a man commits murder, God gives us commandments what we should do etc.

THE COMPARISON USING ONE OF OUR OWN LAWS.

This may not be the best example but it is meant to give you an idea how God's laws are grouped.

I will use a traffic law as an example.

Primary law – Thou shalt love thy car / Thou shalt love thy neighbour

Sub-group

Thou shalt not crash your car / Thou shalt not steal (from your neighbour)

Last group (specific as to what to do)

If thou exceed 60 kph you will pay a fine of \$150.00 / (Exod 22:1 [KJV]) If a man shall steal an ox, or a sheep, and kill it, or sell it; he shall restore five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep.

Examine God's law regarding stealing an animal. Notice how if a man steals (from you) under God's law/commandment he has to give you back sevenfold. On the other hand, we examine man's law – If a man steals from you, he gets locked up, and hard luck for you, you have to work to replace your animal. Which law is better – man's or God's law? For me I have found that ALL of God's laws are far superior to what man has. This is why I do and teach them.

I end my sharing with a question (as I usually do) J

First and again, I Peter Clark personally keep the ALL the commandments of God (600 +).

Do you think it is difficult to keep the commandments of God?

Hint from Scripture:

(1John 5:3 [KJV])

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments (*from the law*): and **his commandments are not grievous.**

Until then.

Peter

From: <email suppressed>

Sent: Thursday, November 09, 2017 7:38 PM

To: <email suppressed>

Subject: RE: sharing on heavenly status

Peter,

Thanks very much for sharing your research on this very important topic.

Scripture always confirms itself.

Our Lord and Saviour gave us one commandment

To love God and to love our neighbour.

All the other commandments 600 plus is embodied indeed in this one and we need to be guided by The Holy Spirit as we study The Word of God and be ever mindful this guidance.

God Bless

Pat D

----- Original message -----

From: <email suppressed>

Date: 11/8/2017 10:43 PM (GMT-05:00)

To: <email suppressed>

Subject: sharing on heavenly status

Hello Everyone,

It was a very stimulating session this evening.

I will begin to share my thoughts on key points that we spoke about tonight (is there a heavenly status for a believer). Feel free to call me if you have any questions.

IMPORTANT: I will keep my sharing as short as possible.

Basic rules when studying the word:

1. First we must let scripture speak for itself. When you come to a conclusion/opinion, always have the scripture to support your position.
2. Let us not read into scripture or take out (take a meaning out because we do not agree).
3. Our approach should be to let scripture interpret itself. Always whenever possible look in other areas of scripture to see if the answer can be found.
4. Scripture does not contradict itself. God does not contradict himself.
5. Always be ready to accept that we can be wrong in our conclusion. Leave our minds open to another point of view.

Do people have positions or status in heaven?

Read (listen) to what Yeshua (Jesus) said.

(Matt 5:18 [KJV])

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from **the law**, till all be fulfilled.

(You can read email correspondence on subject)

(Matt 5:19 [KJV])

Whosoever therefore shall break one of these **least commandments**, and shall teach men so, **he shall be called the least “in the kingdom of heaven”**: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same **shall be called great “in the kingdom of heaven”**.

My comments on the text: There are two groups of people that are both described to be in heaven (the words - **in the kingdom of heaven** mentioned twice). One group is called **great**, while the other is called **least**. Our Lord also gives a reason for their status; it involves the commandments. In the preceding verse He mentions **the law**. Why? The commandments make up the law. Conclusion, as a believer if you keep God’s law (His commandments) and teach men to do so you will be called great (in Heaven), on the other hand, if you break them and teach men to do so, you are called least (in the same Heaven). Yes, the text does teach that there is status.

So is it really important to keep the law/commandments?

Let us look at how the saints of God (us) are described in Revelation.

(Rev 14:12 [KJV])

Here is **the patience of the saints**: here are they that keep **the commandments of God**, and the **faith of Jesus**.

My comments: You will notice there are two qualities that mark the saint (you), they keep the (1) **commandments of God** and your (2) **faith is in Jesus**.

Now here is the tie in to all the above:

(Luke 18:21 [KJV])

And he (rich young man) said, **ALL** (commandments) **these have I kept from my youth up**.

(Luke 18:22 [KJV])

Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: **and come, follow me**.

My comments: This is the story about the young man that came to Yeshua. You will notice the two same qualities turn up again that are mentioned in Rev 14:12 – After the question, what must be done to have eternal life. The ruler said he kept **ALL of the commandments** from the time of his youth, and then Yeshua said, he must give away what he had and **follow Him** (he is asked to place his **faith in Christ** as in Rev 14:12)

I end my sharing with a question.

What **ALL** of the commandments represent? 9, 10 or 600 plus?

Peter