

Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

NOT WRITTEN IN STONE

October 17, 2016

Thirty-five hundred years ago, the children of Israel stood at the precipice of glory. Having been delivered out of Egypt's bondage they were led to Mt Sinai where God had chosen to speak to them. God instructed Moses to tell the people *"...if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation."* Exodus 19:4-6 If this people would simply listen to God's voice they would walk in a covenant of life. They would be a holy nation and they would be a kingdom of priest with each individual having access into the presence of Almighty God. On the third day God came down upon the mountain and spoke to the entire congregation in an audible voice. All the promises God had prepared for them hinged upon whether they would hear and obey his voice. This would not have been the last time God would speak unto them, but, though perhaps not with an audible voice, God would have continually spoken to each of them as he did Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses. When God spoke what we know as the Ten Commandments, the people drew back from the voice of God and pleaded with Moses for God not speak to them again. In doing so they not only rejected God's voice, but also the promise that they would be a holy nation and a kingdom of priests. The words that God spoke that day were intended to be received and "written" in the hearts of those who heard, but because they refused God's voice, the commandments would now be written on tablets of stone.

The apostle Paul is clear that when these commandments were written on stone they became the *“ministration of death.”* He wrote *“But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious...”* II Corinthians 3:7 If these had been written in the hearts of the people, the commandments would have been a description of what the people were, but written in stone, the same words became a witness of what the people were not.

Any commandment written on stone or paper tells you what you ought to be, but a commandment written in your heart is the reason you are what God promised that his people would be. *“Thou shalt not kill”* written on stone warns you of the wrath due the person who takes the life of another, but *“thou shalt not kill”* written in the heart of a person is the reason they cannot even hate the person who has done them wrong. *“Thou shalt not commit adultery”* written on stone may keep some out of the bed of adultery, but *“thou shalt not commit adultery”* written in the heart keeps the adultery and unclean lusts out of the heart of the person in whom it is written. The entire basis on the New Covenant is that God’s law is written in the heart of the believer. The apostle reminds us of God’s promise: *“This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.”*

Hebrews 10:16 No one can ever please God by seeking to obey that which is written on stone, but everything it takes to please God, He writes in the hearts of those who simply and truly trust in Christ. Please do not misunderstand me. I believe the Ten Commandments ought to be on the wall of every building in our nation. Yet we must understand that written on a placard, it is only a witness against sin, but written on the heart of those who trust in Christ it is a testimony that they have been delivered from their sin. Paul wrote *“Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink,*

but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. II Corinthians 3:3

God Bless,
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