

Salt and Light for the King

Review of Christian Ethics Basics

Mt 22:37-40 And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

#1 What is Christian ethics?

Christian ethics = "any study that answers the question, "What does the whole Bible teach us about which acts, attitudes, and personal character traits receive God's approval, and which do not? Grudem, *Christian Ethics*, 37"

- Morality: the _____ of right and wrong (moral knowledge)
- Ethics: the _____ of determining right/wrong (moral reasoning)
- Relation of Christian ethics to other ethical systems:
 - (1) Deontological: _____ for right and wrong [human reason & intuition]
 - (2) Teleological: seeking the best _____ [utilitarianism; ethical egoism]
 - (3) Virtue ethics: emphasize moral _____
 - (4) Relativism: no _____ right/wrong, only relative [cultural; individual; situation ethics]

#2 What is the ultimate basis of ethics?

- The _____ of God (Ps 119:68)
- God gives us the _____ to follow (Eph 5:1-2)
- God conforms us to his _____ (Gen 1:27; Col 3:9-10; Eph 4:22-24; 1 Jn 3:2-3)
- Biblical ethical standards are applicable at _____ times for _____ societies (Gen 18:25; Acts 17:24, 31;)

#3 What is the source of moral standards?

- The _____ (Ps 1:1-2; Ps 119:1-6, 9, 105; 2 Tim 3:16-17)
- What truths about (the doctrine of) Scripture impact Christian ethics?
 1. _____: The very words of the sovereign Lord (2 Tim 3:16-17)
 2. _____: God gave us a Bible we can understand (Ps 19:7; 2 Tim 3:14-17)
 3. _____: We need it to know the gospel of salvation and God's will for how we live (Deut 29:29)
 4. _____: Contains all that is needed for salvation and life with God (2 Tm 3:15-17; 1 Pet 1:23)

When we study the Bible and understand it rightly, we can be confident ethical decision-makers

#4 What is the goal of Christian ethics?

- What is the chief end of man?
 - (1) _____ (Eph 1:12; 1 Cor 10:31)
 - (2) _____ God forever (Ps 16:11)
- How is God glorified?
 - (1) _____: conformity to the image of Christ (Rom 8:29)
 - Put _____ vice (Gal 5:19-21; Rom 1:29-32)
 - Put _____ virtue (Rom 5:3; 12:13; 1 Cor 13:13; 2 Cor 5:6-8; 6:6; 9:11; Gal 5:22-23; Eph 4:2, 25, 32; Php 4:5, 11; Col 3:12; 1 Th 5:18; 1 Tim 3:2-23; 6:11, 18; 1 Pet 1:15-16; 3:8; Jam 3:17)
 - (2) _____: Bear fruit (John 15)
 - (3) _____: Obedience (Jn 14:15 ; 1 Jn 5:3) through relationship with God (Jn 15:5; Gal 2:20)

#5 What about obedience and disobedience?

- What are the joys and blessings of obedience?
- What are the consequences of sin?

#6 How can you know the will of God?

- Dimensions of every action:

1. _____: whose heart is...
 1. _____: worldview beliefs
 2. _____: desires, affections, and fears
 3. _____: orientation of allegiance

2. _____:
 1. Morally right or wrong (deontological)
 2. Produces a _____ (teleological)

- Sources of information and guidance (objective & subjective):

1. _____
2. _____ (Lk 14:28-32)
3. _____ of self (Rom 12:3)
4. _____ from others (Prov 11:14)
5. Changing _____
6. _____: internal sense of what is right/wrong
7. _____ / _____ (Ps 37:4)
8. _____ _____ (Rom 8:14; Gal 5:16, 18, 25)

Wisdom = the skill of understanding and rightly applying the Bible to each situation

#7 Are there ethical conflicts between the commands of God?

- What are the Christian perspectives on ethical conflict?

	Nonconflicting Absolutism	Conflicting Absolutism	Graded Absolutism (hierarchicalism)
Genuine conflict between absolute commands?	No; absolutes are not without qualifications or exceptions	Yes, <i>genuine</i> moral conflicts between two absolute commands	Yes, <i>genuine</i> moral conflicts between two absolute commands
Obey command A	Always an option to obey God	Obedience, “lesser of two evils”	Greater good b/c there are hierarchies
Disobey command B	Not forced to commit “lesser sin”	Sin	Exempted/justified to disobey, not sin

- Does God want us to prioritize his commands or obey all of them?

H₁: *Prioritize* general duties (fidelity; gratitude; kindness; justice; do no harm) (Mt 5:18-19; 23:23-24)

H₂: Scripture asserts and expects that we obey ***all*** of God’s commands (Ps 119:1-3; Mt 28:20; James 2:10)

- **Basis?** God’s moral character has no conflict or contradiction
- **Source?** God communicates standards in the Bible, which don’t contradict.

#8 How should Christians use the OT?

- God's law throughout redemptive history:
 - 'Creation ordinances' (Gen 1-2) get reissued to different people in different eras
 - Adam & Eve, Noah, Patriarchs, Mosaic/OT Law to Israel, New Covenant to the Church
 - Mosaic Covenant with Israel
 - 10 Commandments in Exodus 20; Deut 5
 - "apodictic" law / "categorical imperatives"
 - absolute norms given in *situational context*
 - "casuistic" / "_____ law"
 - situational; if/then; Set a precedent (serve as a model) based upon a principle
- Errors to avoid when using the OT & Mosaic Law *today*:
 - (1) Carry over _____
 - (2) Carry over _____
 - (3) If the NT does not cancel it, then it's still in effect
 - (4) Only what the NT _____
- When Christ came...
 - (1) The Old Covenant ended and the New Covenant began at the death of Jesus Christ
 - (2) **How:** Under the New Covenant, the standard is _____ in Chris
 1. New "ceremonial" system
 - (1) New temple (John 1:14; Heb 9:11-12; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16)
 - (2) New priesthood (Heb 4:4; 7:1-28; 1 Pet 2:9)
 - (3) New sacrifices (Heb 10:10; 8:1-10:18; Rom 12:1; Heb 13:15-16; 1 Pet 2:4, 9)
 2. New "nation" or "household" (Mt 21:41-43; Eph 2:14; 1 Peter 2:4, 9-10)
 3. New "land" = the whole earth (Gen 12:3; Mt 28:18-20; Rev 7:9)

- **What:** The standard is _____ (Mt 22:40)
 - The 10 Commandments *summarize* love (Exod 20:1-17 Deut 5:6-21; Rom 13:8-10)

- **Where:** The standard is recorded on the _____ (Jer 31:33-34; 2 Cor 3:3)
 - Emphasis on _____ (Gal 5:22-23; Eph 4:31-32; Php 4:8-9; Col 3:12-17; 1 Thess 5:14-18; Rom 12:1-2, 9-21; 13:1-14; 1 Cor 10:31...)

- How can we use the OT & Mosaic Law *today*?
 1. Creation ordinances have always been in effect

 2. All Scripture is _____ (2 Tim 3:16)

 3. OT was for our _____ (Rom 15:4; 1 Cor 10:11)

 4. _____ literature for all time (Prov 3:11-12 ~ Heb 12:5-6)

 5. Jesus fulfilled and yet also _____ the Mosaic Law
 - *What* laws were given, *when* (time) and *where* (place), under what *circumstances*, and to *whom*, for what *purpose*?

 - Apply the “_____” of the Law to current situational norms, as now transformed in Christ