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The Law and Love

From the very beginning of the great controversy [war between Christ and Satan] in heaven, Satan has tried very hard to get rid of the law of God.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Great Controversy*, p. 582.

Why? It is because the law is the foundation of God’s government. It shows God’s perfect character (who God is) throughout the universe. To upset that law would be to upset the balance of God’s righteous (holy) rule over the creation itself.

Think about it. If there had been no God or life, then there would have been no sense of right or wrong in the universe.

But God lives, and humans do too. We have been created as people with a conscience and the ability to give and to receive love. For this love to work well, the people must have righteous freedom. This is because love is an idea that could not arise in a lifeless universe with only rocks and cold space.

Morality¹ means the ability to choose right or wrong. But the universe also would need laws to show what is right and wrong. In this way, people could become moral (righteous) by choosing what is right over what is wrong.

And, of course, the universe does have such a law.

“What should we say then? That the law is sin? Not at all! I wouldn’t [would not] have known what sin was unless the law had told me. The law said, ‘Do not want [desire] what belongs to other people’ ” (Romans 7:7, NIV).

Is it sinful to have red hair? Why not? Because God’s law does not say “No!” to having red hair. If it did, then having red hair would be a sin. But it cannot be sin if God’s law does not describe it as a sin.

Morality without law is as impossible as is thinking a thought without a mind. Our universe is moral because God created free people answerable to His law. If there

1. morality—knowing the difference between right and wrong.

were no law against coveting,² there would be no sin of covetousness. Without a law against having red hair, there would be no sin against people with red hair.

God created humans as people who can love. But love cannot survive without the freedom to choose right or wrong. And moral freedom cannot continue without law, moral law. Love depends on freedom, and freedom depends on law. So, the basis of God's government of love has to be His law. That is why Ellen G. White wrote about Satan's desire "to get rid of the law of God." The attack on the law is both an attack on Christ's character and on the moral order (set-up) of the creation itself.

So, that is the reason for our quarter's study on Christ and His law. We will study the law. We also will study why so many Christians misunderstand the relationship between law and grace.³ We will find out why they have fallen into the trap of denying the Ten Commandments. In this way, they unknowingly help Satan's plan to "get rid of" God's law.

But the Bible is clear: "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments" (1 John 5:3, NKJV). The connection between our loving God and the keeping of His commandments is stronger than we understand. We can love God because we live in a universe where love can rule. And love can rule because the universe is moral. That morality is based on God's moral law. This is the subject that we will study this quarter.

The connection between our loving God and the keeping of His commandments is stronger than we understand.

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2. coveting—wanting something that belongs to someone else.

3. grace—God's gift of forgiveness and mercy that He freely gives us to take away our sins.