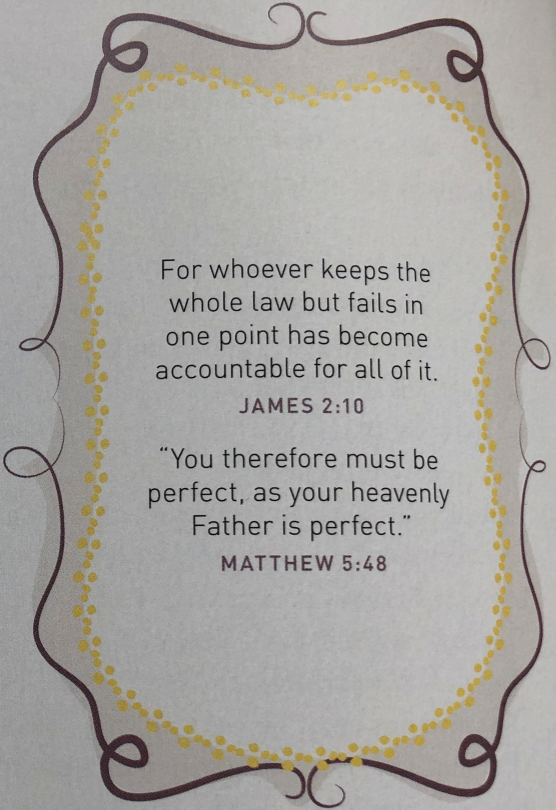


23. Breaking One Law Breaks the Whole Law

The Ten Commandments are not like a set of ten china dishes, where if you chip or break one, you still have nine perfect plates. They are like one flawless plate, which has a border decorated with ten beautiful designs. Each design illustrates the law of love in a different way. Any crack, no matter where it is, ruins the whole plate. Should the plate crack across the words of the fifth commandment—"honor your father and mother"—the whole plate would be ruined.

So it is with the law: any sin breaks the whole law. Sin once and you are a sinner. God doesn't require us to be as good as we can be or to do the best job that we can. The holiness of God demands that we be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect.



For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

JAMES 2:10

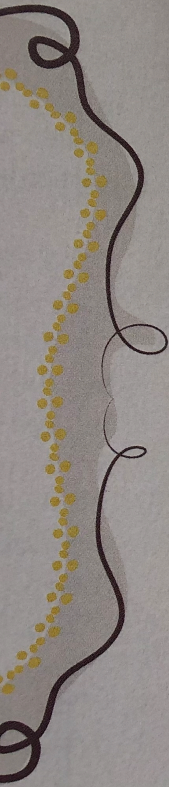
"You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

MATTHEW 5:48

Romans 7:7

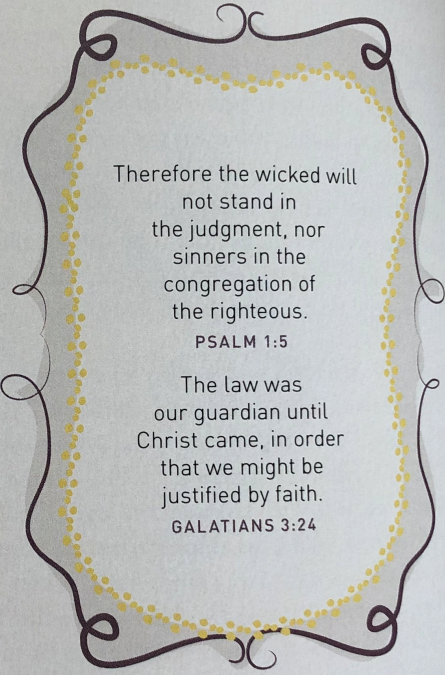


Romans 3:19-20



Some people think that God won't care about their sins because they've tried hard to be good. But what they don't understand is that God's holiness and sin can't be near each other. Just as a lamp gets rid of the darkness in a room at night, so the light of God's holiness sends away anyone who has disobeyed God's law. Sin and God's holiness can't be in the same place at the same time. Sadly, we aren't able to get rid of our sins on our own.

The law does a great job of showing us the right way to live, but it can't change us—it can't take away even one sin. The law just keeps pointing out our faults, like a teacher shaking his finger at a disobedient student. But God always knew that the law couldn't save us. By showing us exactly what it means to love God and love others, the law helps us see how much we need saving and how far short we fall. When Jesus explained the law, he set the bar even higher because he said we must be perfect not only in what we do, but even in what we think! That makes it obvious that we need help from outside ourselves. We need a Savior who can keep the law *and* save us from the death that sin brings. We need Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.



Therefore the wicked will
not stand in
the judgment, nor
sinners in the
congregation of
the righteous.

PSALM 1:5

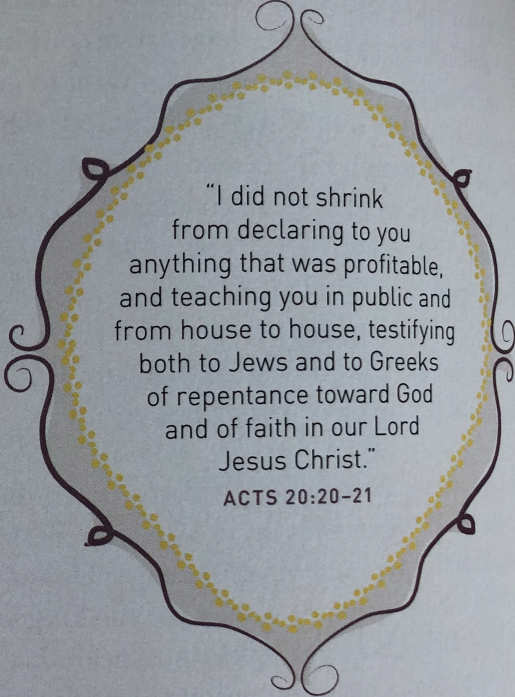
The law was
our guardian until
Christ came, in order
that we might be
justified by faith.

GALATIANS 3:24

42. Faith

A delicious root beer float has only two main ingredients, root beer and vanilla ice cream. These two ingredients combine to form an amazing dessert.

Did you know that faith in Jesus has two ingredients? To become a Christian you need to believe, which means trusting that Jesus is God, died for your sins, and was raised from the dead. And you need to repent, which means you need to turn away from your sin and from going your own way and follow Jesus. This is what the Bible means by faith—believing and turning. Of course, even faith is a gift from God. We don't do anything to earn faith. The first time you turn to Jesus in faith, you become part of God's family. From then on, we have the Holy Spirit so we can keep believing and repenting whenever we sin. That's what it means to follow Jesus. Have you turned toward Jesus and asked him for forgiveness?



"I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, and teaching you in public and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ."

ACTS 20:20-21