

Biblical Ethics

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Chapter V

A study of biblical ethics involves consideration of:

- (1) Ethical prescriptions in the Scriptures.
- (2) Violations of ethical prescriptions which are condoned and/or commended.
- (3) The basis of ethical judgments according to the Scriptures.

Ethical Prescriptions

From the very beginning of the Scriptures as they have come down to us, ethical prescriptions play a prominent part. In the earliest chapters (Gen 1-Exod 19) such prescriptions are largely presupposed (e.g., Gen 4:10-11; 6:5-11; 18:25; 39:7-12), and the articulation of specific injunctions is rare (see Gen 1 :28 [?]; 9:5; cf. 26:25).¹

Beginning with Exod 20, however, the situation changes. In the legislation attributed to Moses there is a great deal of specific instruction concerning ethics, together with prescriptions concerning the religious life and civic responsibilities. The Decalogue (Exod 20:2-17; Deut 5:6-21), which in its latter portion is concerned with ethics, is pre-eminent in this Mosaic law. Not only is this evident in the pride of place accorded it both in the Sinaitic and in the Deuteronomic prescriptions, but also in the references to the "Ten Commandments" in Exod 34:28; Deut 4:13; 10:4 (cf. Exod 24:12; 31:18; 32:15; 34:1-4; Deut 9:9-10:3). But ethical injunctions are also prominent in the Covenant Code (Exod 20:22- 23:33), in the Holiness Code (Lev 17-26 or 18-26)², and in the regulations of Deut 12-28.

In the rest of the Old Testament there are sections in which the Law is not specifically mentioned, or only rarely so. This is especially true of the Wisdom literature.³ Nevertheless it has been affirmed that "often the Wisdom writers merely cast into an aphoristic or poetic form what had been part of the apodictic or case laws of the Pentateuch."⁴ And in none of the literature is there any intimation that the law has been abrogated or replaced either in whole or in part. Indeed, there is emphasis from time to time on doing what Moses commanded.⁵ And even when Jeremiah prophesies a new covenant, he does not think of it as implying a change in the law, but rather, "I [the Lord] will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts" (Jer 31 :33; cf. 24:7; 32:39). Likewise Ezekiel represents God as promising Israel a future when "I will give them on heart, and put a new spirit within them. ...so that they may follow my statutes and keep my ordinances and obey them" (11:19-20; cf. 36:27; 37:24).

Old Testament ethics emphasizes the law and conformity thereto.

With respect to New Testament ethics there is much debate. There are those who hold that the law has been abrogated or superseded, at least in the thought of Paul. We submit that such a view is untenable, at least insofar as the ethical prescriptions of the Decalogue are concerned. There are two passages in which the issue, or a closely related one, is specifically addressed, and in both of them the continuing validity of the law is insisted upon.

The first of these passages is Matt 5: 17 -19:

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets: I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. ..Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.⁶

The abiding validity of the law, at least insofar as the ethical prescriptions of the Decalogue are concerned, is clearly a Matthaean emphasis. Nor do the "but I say unto you" statements of Matt 5:21-48 mean that the respective commandments are abrogated. In none of these passages is there an intention to annul the demands of the Law, but only to carry them to their ultimate meaning, to intensify them, or to interpret them in a higher key. This is the true fulfillment of Law, not its destruction.⁷ Indeed, if Matt 5:21-48 means the annulment of any of the respective demands of the law, either it or the preceding passage (5:17- 20) teaches false doctrine.

The other New Testament passage which has direct implications for our study is in Rom 7:7 ff., which begins with, "What then should we say? That the law is sin? By no means!" and concludes with, "So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good."⁸ Moreover, in the immediately succeeding material Paul says, "The law is spiritual" (7:14); it is "the law of God" (7:22, 25); "The just requirement of the law (is to be) fulfilled in us" (8:4; cf. 13:8-10); and, "The mind that is set on the flesh. ..does not submit to God's law" (8:7). It is to be emphasized that what Paul states in this section of Romans is because he is aware that what he has said (in 5:20 perhaps; in 7:4-6 certainly) may be construed as an attack on the law, and he wants to ensure that no such conclusion is drawn. He wants it known that the law continues to be in force and is to be heeded by Christians.⁹

It may be argued that this is not all that Paul has to say about the continuing validity of the law. Agreed. Indeed, at a later point the Epistle to the Galatians will be considered with respect to this Question. At this point it is only noted that in Rom 7-8 it is insisted that at least the moral injunctions of the Mosaic legislation have not been abrogated for Christians, whether Jew or Gentile.¹⁰

But quite apart from the continuing validity of the law's prescriptions concerning moral conduct, there is considerable evidence that rules concerning such conduct were imposed in the New Testament church.

First of all, there are the list of vices against which Christians are warned. Moreover, many of the prohibitions in respect thereto are reminiscent of prohibitions in the Mosaic law. We quote only two of these lists:

Evil intentions. ..fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly (Mark 7:21-22; cf. Matt 15:19).

Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers—none of these will inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 6:9-10). That conduct in clear violation of such standards was taken in full seriousness is evident from the directive that the immoral man of 1 Cor 5 be excommunicated (1 Cor 5:13).

In addition to such lists we have instructions concerning relationships within the household (Eph 5:22-6:9; Col 3:18-4:1; 1 Pet 2:18-3:7), and toward the governing authorities (Mark 12:17; Rom 13:1-7; 1 Pet 2:13-17), as well as with respect to a variety of other matters having to do with moral conduct.

Rules, regulations, commandments and prescriptions concerning moral life and conduct are to be found in every part of the Scriptures, at least by implication. It is not surprising, therefore, that W. D. Davies has stated, "Here is the peculiarity of Christian moral teaching: that it places us ..under the judgment of absolute demands."¹ And if rules, regulations, commandments, and such like, exhausted the evidence concerning biblical ethics, no more would need to be said. But, as Davies points out, more does need to be said, and what follows indicates why.

Violations of the Prescribed Rules

Violation of the prescriptions concerning moral life and conduct articulated or implied in the Scriptures is sometimes condoned, even approved, in those same Scriptures. Some examples follow: .Genesis 22:1-2

"God tested Abraham. ..He said, 'Take your son, your only son Isaac. ..and offer him. ..as a burnt offering. ..'" With a view to testing him God leads Abraham to believe that He desires the sacrifice of his son. Did God really desire the sacrifice of Isaac? The sequel indicates that He did not. But did God lead Abraham to believe that He desired such a sacrifice? Of course He did. In fact He would not have been able to thoroughly test Abraham otherwise. Hence the deception! God is neither an idealist nor a rationalist! Exodus 3:t8

"You and the elders of Israel shall go to the king of Egypt, and say to him, 'The Lord, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us; let us now go a three days' journey into the wilderness, so that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God'" (Cf. 5:1-3; 8:25-26; 10:9-10). God is represented as instructing Moses to give another reason than the real one for desiring permission for his people to leave Egypt.

Another deception is involved. In fact God also said, "I know. .. that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless compelled by a mighty hand. So I will stretch out my hand and strike Egypt with all my wonders that I will perform in it; after that he will let you go"(19-20)

To Pharaoh and the Egyptians the deception was important, because they would have to learn that Yahweh was the Lord (Exod 7:5; 14:4, 17 -18). As such He has control of the universe, and of what takes place within it, including what would happen if Pharaoh rejected the opportunity to let the Israelites depart from Egypt. (Human freedom does not affect His control of human events, whatever some philosophers may think and teach.)

1 Samuel 16:1:2.

"The Lord said to Samuel'. ..Fill your horn with oil, and set out, I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have provided for myself a king among his sons.' Samuel said, 'How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me.' And the Lord said, 'Take a heifer with you, and say, 'I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.'""

Some have argued that Samuel did offer sacrifice at Bethlehem, so that no lie was involved. But a lie is not merely a formal statement of the truth. It is anything that involves the intent to deceive. But was it so urgent that Saul's successor be named and anointed at this early date that a deception was justified? That "the spirit of the Lord came mightily upon David from that day forward" (1 Sam 16:13) may indicate that it should not be delayed and that the deceiving of Saul was there- fore warranted.

1 Kings 22:20-23 (2 Chronicles 18: 19-22)

"The Lord said, 'Who will entice Ahab, so that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?' ...A spirit came forward and stood before the Lord, saying, 'I will entice him. ..I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.' Then the Lord said, 'You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do it.' So you see, the Lord has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these, your prophets. .."²

The Lord led Ahab to judgment by means of the lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets. God's judgments are not in accord with idealist ethics. Cf. Rom 3:5-6, "What should we say? That God is unjust to inflict wrath on us? ...By no means! For then how could God judge the world?"

Imprecatory Psalms and Prophecies (Ps 35,59, 109,137, 140, etc.; cf. Jer 7:16; 11 ;14; 14:11-12; 18:21-23; 20:12)

The most startling of these imprecations include Ps 137:8-9 "Happy shall they be who pay you back what you have done to us! Happy shall they be who take your little ones and dash them against the rock!"; and Ps 140:9-10. "Those who surround me lift up their heads: let the mischief of their lips overwhelm them! Let burning coals fall on them! Let them be flung into pits no more to rise" Cf. Jer 18:21, 23, "Give their children over to famine; hurl them out to the power of the sword. ..Do not forgive their iniquity, do not blot out their sin from your sight. ..Deal with them while you are angry."

Can such expressions be harmonized with Prov 24:17, "Do not rejoice when your enemies fall, and do not let your heart be glad when they stumble"; Prov 25:21, "If your enemies are hungry, give them bread to eat, and if they are thirsty, give them water to drink"; and Matt 5:44-45, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven. ..." (Luke 6:27-28; Rom 12:20). Cf. Jesus' lament over Jerusalem because of its impending destruction (Matt 23:37-38; Luke 13:34-35).

Consider the following comments:

- (1) Most of the imprecatory Psalms are credited to David. If they are by David, they simply show that he was not always free from a spirit of vindictiveness and a desire to get even.
- (2) Imprecatory material is not absent from the New Testament, e.g. Gal 5:12; 2 Tim 4:14; Rev 6:10.
- (3) The harshness of some of the expressions cited are indicative of the great plight in which God's people sometimes find themselves, and of their longing for retribution to be visited on those who are the cause of it.
- (4) Can it be that we must recognize that entire sanctification must await the establishment of God's kingdom in all its fullness? Jeremiah 4:10

"Then I said, 'Ah, Lord God, how utterly you have deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, 'It shall be well with you,' even while the sword is at the throat."

One wonders whether we do not have here reported a situation similar to that of Deut 13, where we are told that God may test people through false prophets who encourage them to trust in what is false, to see whether they would still be loyal to the God who had proved Himself in times past. (cf. Deut 13:5).

Matthew 12:3-5 (cf. Mark 2:25-26; Luke 6:3-4).

"Have you not read what David did, when he and his companions were hungry? He entered the house of God and ate the bread of the Presence, which it was not lawful for him or his companions to eat, but only for the priests. Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and yet are guiltless?"

The point Jesus is making is that David violated the only relevant prescription there was, but was guiltless. Moreover He is making the point that the disciples might be justified in profaning the Sabbath, even though what they had done was not in accord with what had been prescribed.

Jesus is saying that it might be possible to disobey what God's word had prescribed and be guiltless. A lesser law may be infringed in order to fulfill a higher law! One is guiltless who does so.

Matthew 23:15. 17:

"You make the new convert twice as much a child of hell as yourselves. . . You blind fools (moroi kai tuphloi)!" (cf. Matt 23:17; Acts 13: 10; Gal 3: 1). Such statements seemingly contradict Matt 5:22, "If you insult a brother or sister, you will be liable to the council, and if you say, 'You fool (more)!' you will be liable to the hell of fire."

If it be suggested that Matt 5:22 only relates to conduct towards fellow disciples, the exhortation to love our enemies (Matt 5:44) seems to suggest otherwise, to say nothing of Luke 6:28, "Bless those who curse you"; and Rom 12:14, "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them." According to J. L. Houlden, "He [Jesus] hardly maintains this attitude when he confronts the scribes and Pharisees in ch. xxiii; nor, in his picture of final judgment does he show God acting in accord with this principle. . ."³

Galatians 1:20 (cf. Matt 26:63-64; Rom 1:9; 2 Cor 1:23; Heb 6:13-17)

"Before God, I do not lie."

The significance of this statement, and of others like it, is because of Matt 5:34-37, "I say to you. Do not swear at all. . .Let your word be 'Yes, Yes' or 'No, No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one" (cf. Jas 5:12).

The absoluteness of this statement, and of Jas 5: 12, is notable. But evidently neither Paul nor Jesus is an absolutist as the scriptures cited indicate. Both of them recognize that absolute statements may have relative meanings and need to be understood accordingly.
Romans 3:24-25

"Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by blood." This statement is important for us in view of such passages as John 5:20, "The Father loves the Son."

Many writers discuss Christ's sacrificial death in relation to God's love for us and His justice in relation to us, but there is little discussion of Christ's death in relation to God's love for Him and His justice to Him. The plain fact is that sending His Son to die for us was contrary to His love for His Son. Who would justify a human father's sacrifice of his son to rescue a butterfly? How much more difficult to justify the Father's sacrifice of His Son so that He might be the Saviour of the world! It is surely thoughtlessness, if not overweening pride, which keeps us from being aware of the problem. In comparison with the life of His Son the universe, and all that has ever

been in it plus all that will ever be in it, is of infinitesimal value. In view of the centrality of the cross in Christian conviction, the implications for ethics are important, even if rarely explored.¹⁴

Such passages as those we have considered require the conclusion that exceptions to what appear to be absolute rules of conduct are sometimes permitted, even commanded. The rules appear to be absolute, but are not. They express only what is generally and ordinarily required.

The apostle Paul did not consider commandments concerning ethics to be absolute, at least for Christians. According to Rom 7:6, he states, "Now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we are slaves not under the old written code (lit. 'not in [the] oldness of [the] letter') but in the new life (lit. 'newness') of the Spirit." On this verse C. E. B. Cranfield comments:

The believer's service is characterized, not by the lifeless effectness of the mere letter, which is what the legalist is left with by his misunderstanding and misuse of the law. ..That Paul is not opposing the law itself to the Spirit is clear, since only a few verses later he affirms that the law is spiritual (v. 14). He does not use 'letter' as equivalent to 'law' ...[The] presence [of the Spirit] is the true establishment of the law. ..¹⁵

We understand Cranfield to be arguing that Rom 7:6 means that the law continues to be of import for Christians, but that its requirements are not absolutes. We submit that only such an interpretation makes it possible to harmonize Rom 7:6 with what follows in Romans.

With this passage we may compare Gal 3:23-4:7:

Now before faith came, we were imprisoned and guarded under the law until faith would be revealed. Therefore the law was our disciplinarian until Christ came. ..But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian. ..Heirs, as long as they are minors, are no better than slaves. They remain under guardians and trustees. ..So with us; while we were minors, we were enslaved. ..But. .. God sent His Son. ..to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children ...So. ..you are no longer a slave but a child. (Cf. Gal 5:1, "For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.") Gal 3:23-4:7, if taken by itself, seems to imply that the law has no significance for the conduct of Christians. And in his discussion of this passage R. N. Longenecker states, "In Christ the Christian finds. ..the Law as a system of conduct set aside in favor of guidance by reference to his [Christ's] teachings and example and through the direct action of his Spirit."¹⁶ But such an interpretation seems to be untenable in view of the statement a bit later, in Gal 5:14, "The whole law is summed up in a single commandment, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (cf. Gal 5:23; 1 Cor 7:19). The law is to be fulfilled (cf. Rom 13:8-10)! Surely this means that Gal 3:23-4:7 is not to be understood as implying the abrogation, supersession, setting aside, or replacement of the law? Rather, the relationship to the law is to be like the worthy relationship of a freed slave or a matured son to the fine standard previously imposed by a good slave- master or guardian. He does not disregard it, but applies its precepts perceptively and sensitively to practical situations, which means, of course, that he is aware that a rigid application thereof is sometimes inappropriate. The law is respected but the legalistic fulfillment of its commandments is no longer necessary.¹⁷

These passages-Rom 7 and Gal 3-5-seem to suggest that prior to the coming of Christ the legalistic observance of the law was right and proper. But, if so, the Old Testament exceptions we have considered are a problem. Is it possible that in the practical situation he is addressing Paul - in Semitic fashion - uses absolutist language when a relative meaning is intended? Might he not agree that the Old Testament does not require a completely legalistic observance of the law? (A child may have a measure of freedom from doing precisely what he/she is told, but later

be entirely free from such precision.) At any rate, in Paul's mind Christians are free from a legalistic observance of the law.

Before concluding this section we add two considerations which, strictly speaking, may be irrelevant to a study of biblical ethics:

(a) The view that a set of ethical prescriptions has been, or can be devised, which must be adhered to without exception, implies that circumstances have nothing to do with one's decision concerning right and wrong, and this means that history is really meaningless. In this connection it is to be noted that it was precisely because He foresaw the circumstances of human fallen ness and lost ness that it was right for the Father to include in His plan for His Son that He should become an atoning sacrifice. As we have seen, this was not in accord with His love for His Son.

(b) There can be only one absolute in any given universe of discourse. If there are two so-called absolutes, there is really no absolute, because the "absolutes" condition each other, and that which is conditioned is not a absolute. This means that there can be only one ethical absolute, or else that there is ultimately no difference between the various "absolutes. "If, for the sake of argument, we grant that, "You shall not commit adultery" (Exod 20:14), and, "Let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors" (Eph 4:25), are both absolutes, we must also say that ultimately there is no difference between adultery and lying. But such a conclusion will be acceptable to few.

It is because ethical prescriptions, with only one possible exception, do not give expression to absolute requirements, that we can accommodate such Scriptures as we have considered in this section of the paper. And not only can they be accommodated, they are to be expected. "Perfection" not only allows deviation from almost all prescriptions; it positively requires it in some circumstances. God Himself exhibits His perfection, not by functioning according to a formal rule with absolute consistency, but by deviation therefrom in certain situations. As far as the biblical record goes, circumstances due to sin and its curse appear to provide the chief occasion for deviation from ethical rules. Indeed, it was human sin and its curse which occasioned the sending of God's Son to be a sacrifice, which, as we have seen, does not logically fit either His love for His Son or His justice to Him. However, it is not only sin, and/or its curse, which occasioned deviation from what is logical. That God sometimes functions illogically, even when the circumstances of sin, and/or its effects, are not in view, accords with the fact that, though He is essentially infinite, He exists as ~ persons, a finite number! Both logic and that which deviates therefrom characterize Him from all eternity. Conduct in accord with what is logical would have implied that He beget only one Son, or that He beget an infinite number of sons

The Unity of Prescriptions and Exceptions Thereto

Implicit in what we have stated is the understanding that God-given prescriptions with respect to ethics should ordinarily determine conduct. But how does one determine when deviation therefrom is not only permissible, but even required? In other words, when is deviation sin, and when is it commendable?

As already indicated, logic does not help us here. Logic would simply require that what has been prescribed must be adhered to always and absolutely. There is no logic by which one can get from God's love for His Son to the sacrifice of His Son. There is no logic by which one can get from the rule against lying to the divine instruction to Samuel to deceive Saul concerning his travel to Bethlehem. There is no logic by which one can get from the prohibition against the swearing of oaths to Paul's use of an oath in Gal 1:20, or to God's swearing with an oath. Logic

requires the condemnation of Samuel, of Paul, and, yes, of God. (If it is always wrong for a human being to swear an oath, it is always wrong for God to do so. A God who would require of us the kind of moral conduct which He did not abide by might be feared, perhaps even loved, but He could not be respected by a thinking person.)

A hierarchical view may help us sometimes. It would be commonly agreed that the saving of a child from a burning building must have priority over the saving of a pet dog. This accords with Jesus' principle that a person is "of more value than many sparrows" (Matt 10:31; Luke 12:7). But there is no hierarchical principle which justifies the sacrifice of Christ. Indeed, by the principle of hierarchy the Father's sending of the Son to become a sacrifice for us must be condemned as preferring that which is of lesser value to that which is of vastly greater value (the life of the Son of God). Moreover, there is no hierarchical principle to justify David's eating of the bread of the Presence. The attempt to do so would be similar to an attempt to compare apples and oranges. (There is no evidence that the lives of David and his men were in jeopardy, but, even if they were, there is no hierarchical principle by which to judge that human life is more important than the worship of God in the way He has prescribed.) Furthermore, there is no hierarchical principle by which Paul's oath in Gal 1:20 can be justified.¹⁸

It is sometimes affirmed that the "fallenness and degeneration of human society" means that we may have to choose between evils. In such cases it is proper to choose the lesser evil. P. E. Hughes argues for such a view, finding biblical warrant for it in Jos 2; Matt 12:3-4; 14:1-12; 19:3-9.¹⁹ The problems of such a view are the same as those of the hierarchical view. In addition it is assumed that it is only because of the fallenness of man that there are logical problems with respect to ethics. But, as we have shown, the very nature of God includes what is illogical. Moreover, the scandal of particularity is not solely due to the fallenness of human society. The ethical implications, if we are to be like God (Matt 5:45, 48; Eph 5:1; 1 Pet 1:15; etc.) are significant.

The Bible indicates, however, that there is a way by which certain deviations from biblical standards and prescriptions are justified. (No doubt we shall not see how every biblical deviation is justified, but, being finite, let alone being incompletely sanctified, we can hardly expect otherwise.) The following passages are significant in this respect:
Matthew 22:48

"On (en) these two commandments (love to God and love to neighbor) hang (krematai) all the law and the prophets" (cf. Matt 7:12).²⁰

It is to be noted first of all with respect to this verse that love is basically an aesthetic matter. There are those who hold that love is primarily a matter of the will rather than a matter of feeling,²¹ but this view is not based on a careful study of biblical usage.

G. Quell asserts, "Love ('hb) in the OT is basically a spontaneous feeling."²² And with respect to agapē in the Septuagint, V. P. Furnish notes, "lit usually refers to the conjugal love between man and women,"²³ And whatever may be said about the concept being invested with new meaning in the New Testament,²⁴ the connotation is still fundamentally that of "affection." John 3:16 represents God's gift of His Son, not as love, but as the result of love. Likewise Rom 5:8 represents Christ's death for us, not as the love of God, but as the manifestation of that love. Love is not primarily a matter of will or act. As Bauer's Lexicon, Second Edition Revised and Augmented by F. W. Gingrich and F. W. Danker, states, "the primary New Testament meaning is that of 'affection for person.'" Indeed, V. P. Furnish argues that even love (agapate) for enemies (Matt 5:44) may include "something like 'friendship' or 'affection.'"²⁵

The next point to be made is that Matt 22:40 does not imply that the many commandments in the law and the prophets are reduced to, or superseded by, or included in, or can be derived from, the two great commandments.²⁶ The Septuagint occurrences of Kremamai en (2 Sam 18:9; Lam 5:12; Ezek 17:22-23; 27:10) do not permit such a meaning.²⁷ 2 Sam 18:9; LXX, which describes Absalom's head as hanging in an oak tree, suggests some such meaning as that the many commandments are held fast by the two.²⁸ In accord with such a meaning various scholars affirm that "the dual love commandment is viewed. ..as the primary hermeneutical principle for interpreting and applying the law."²⁹ Note concerning this view: (a) The priority of the law if maintained; it is not superseded; it is not replaced; it is not subordinated to love (b) Love is described as a principle of interpretation and application. If this understanding is correct, we have here specified an aesthetic basis for determining how the respective commandment or commandments is (are) to be applied to the particular situation(s) in which one finds oneself.

Romans 13:8-10

Rom 13:8-10 (cf. Gal 5:14) provides support for our contention concerning Matt 22:40:

One who loves another has fulfilled (pepl?rōken) the law. The commandments, "You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet"; and any other commandment, are summed up in (en. ..anakephalaioutai) this word, "Love your neighbor as yourself. Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. In this passage we not only have it stated that love is the fulfilling of the law,³⁰ but the reason why this is so is indicated in vv. 9 (gar) and 10a

V. 9. states that the various commandments of (the) law are anakephalaioutai in the one command, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." What is being said turns on the meaning of anakephalaioutai. Is it being stated that the prescriptions of the law are "summarized" or "epitomized" in the command to love the neighbor, as the above rendering may indicate?³¹ It appears that this interpretation cannot be accepted for the following reasons: (a) How can a feeling summarize or epitomize commandments which are largely injunctions concerning conduct? Indeed, as E. W. Lutzer has pointed out, "There is widespread disagreement as to what actions are loving or unloving."³² (b) In his writings Paul repeatedly includes particular prescriptions concerning conduct. As much as he emphasizes love, he does not think it sufficient to enjoin it.³³ In 1 Cor 7:19 Paul thinks it necessary to say, "Neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but obeying the commandments of God is everything." Apparently Paul never thought of love for neighbor as summarizing or epitomizing the commandments of (the) law.

Anakephalaioomai is a rare word, and even then has more than one connotation in secular Greek.³⁴ Its only other New Testament occurrence is in Eph 1 :10, where we are informed that it is the divine will to anakephalaioomai all things en him" (En is also used with this verb in Rom 13:9). Here it cannot mean that Christ is to become the sum total or epitome of all things, since just a few verses later, in 1 :22, He is spoken of as "head over (kephal?n huper) all things. .." (cf. Eph 4:15-16). What it seems to mean is well stated in NIV, "to bring. ..together under one head," if it is understood that "head" means control and rule, as in Eph 1 :22; 5:22-23.³⁵

If this is more or less the meaning of anakephalaioomai in Rom 13:9, Paul is to be understood as saying therein: Love for the persons involved is to prevail in each situation and is to control the way in which the respective commandments are applied in that situation, mediating between commandments where that may be necessary.³⁶ And, since love of neighbor eventuates in action of this kind, it fulfills the law, whose purpose is to prevent evil being done to others.³⁷ (Paul

perceives that it is the love of neighbor which so interprets and applies the various commandments that this purpose of the law is fulfilled.)

But if this is so, the aesthetic sensitivity which enables those who know the commandments to distinguish right from wrong in particular situations is sensitivity informed by love for the persons involved.³⁸

Philippians 1:9-10

This is my prayer, that your love may overflow more and more, with knowledge and full insight (en epignōsei kai pas? aisth?sei), to help you to determine what is best, so that in the day of Christ you may be pure and blameless, having produced the harvest of righteousness. .. In these verses "love," "knowledge" and "full insight" are set forth as pre-requisites "so that you may determine what is best." Loh and Nida agree that the meaning is, "so that you will be able to choose what is best to do, (or) ...how you should best behave."³⁹

The meaning of love (agap?) has been considered above. Passing over "knowledge" for the moment, the meaning of aisthesis is perhaps best illuminated by what W. Jaeger has to say about its occurrence in a medical text of the Hippocratic school:

The real doctor is recognized by his power to estimate what is appropriate for each individual case. He is the man who has the sure judgment to pick the right quantity for everyone. There is no standard of weight or measure by which one could fix quantities on a general basis. That must be done wholly by feeling (aisth?sis), which is the only thing that can compensate for the lack of such a rational standard.⁴⁰

Note that what makes up for lack of "a rational standard" is "feeling." Moreover, this "is the only thing that can compensate for the lack of such a rational standard."⁴¹

According to G. Delling, the original meaning of aisth?sis is that of "sensual perception," as opposed to intellectual perception, and "in Philo's use of the term. ..in general it is regarded. ..as the cause of passions. ..It is often opposed to nous (mind)."⁴² W. Hendriksen has apparently caught its significance in Phil 1:9 as well as anyone, when he describes it as "the taste and feeling for that which in any concrete situation is spiritually beautiful, the aesthetic sense in the sphere of Christian duty and doctrine."⁴³

With respect to "knowledge," according to R. Bultmann, "We must insist on the difference between aisth?sis as sensual perception and gnōsis which is acquired through ginōskein as knowledge deriving from the nous or logos."⁴⁴ Moreover, Bultmann affirms that "epignōsis in Phil. 1:9 has exactly the same meaning as gnōsis in 1 C. 1:5; R. 15:14."⁴⁵

Having considered the key terms, the relationship of knowledge and aesthetic judgment to love, as indicated by the preposition en in Phil 1:9, must be examined. The relationship seems to be as follows.⁴⁶ Knowledge and all aisth?sis are to accompany love. What leads to this judgment is the occurrence of "All (pas? [i])" before aisth?sei. This adjective does not occur with epignōsei. If love were something other than a matter of aisth?sis, one would not expect this adjective. It appears that the adjective occurs because love is a matter of aesth?sis, but does not exhaust it, and Paul wants to indicate the significance of feeling(s) other than love in making judgments, while maintaining (a) the supremacy of I love, and (b) the unity of the aesthetic sense(s) (hence we do not have aesth?sis in the plural). Finally, it may be that the occurrence of aisth?t?ria (plural!) in Heb 5: 14, which we shall be considering shortly, may be evidence that aesthetic sensitivity cannot be reduced to one simple feeling. It may also be significant that in Gal 5:22 the fruit (karpos) [singular!] of the Spirit is "love, joy, peace" (three!, with love in first place⁴⁷). If

so, Phil 1:9-10 is more comprehensive with respect to the significance of aesthetics in relation to ethics than is the case in Matt 22:40 or Rom 13:8-10.

If this exegesis is sound, both information (of scriptural commandments?) and the aesthetic faculty (or aesthetic faculties) in which love is of supreme moment, are important if one is to "determine what is best," and "be pure and blameless." And we shall see reason to believe that both are in view in Heb 5:14, though without mention of love. It will have been noted, of course, that the importance of aesthetic judgment is always in connection with practical and concrete situations, no doubt because of the particularity which often (always?) characterizes them.⁴⁸ Heb 5:14

According to this verse, "mature" Christians are those "whose faculties (aisthētia) have been trained by practice to distinguish good from evil."

According to the context those for whom Hebrews was written in the first place had been informed concerning "the basic elements of the oracles of God" (though they needed to be taught them again), and that those elementary truths included "repentance from acts that lead to death" (6:1 NIV, so that they must have been more or less familiar with moral prescriptions. (Of course, being converted Jews they would have had some familiarity with the prescriptions of the Mosaic law.)

It is indicated, however, that their aisthētia needed training by practice, if they were to distinguish between good and evil (apparently in practical situations). As we have seen, aisthēsis, a cognate of aisthētion, refers to aesthetic sensibility. Accordingly, the aistheteria constitute the aesthetic faculty (or faculties?).⁴⁹ In this connection, and supportive thereof, is the information that these aisthētia are trained (gegumnasmena) by practice (hexin) to distinguish good from evil." Aesthetic judgment is improved in this way.⁵⁰

That aisthētia is plural accords with the plurality with respect to aesthetics which was noted in the discussion of Phil 1:9. On the other hand, there is no specific reference to love, which is prominent with respect to ethics elsewhere in the New Testament.⁵¹ Apart from this omission, the same two essentials as we saw in Phil 1:9 are necessary if one is to discern what one ought to do (in particular circumstances?).⁵²

Wisdom

Both Old and New Testaments emphasize that God's people need wisdom so that their conduct in practical situations and circumstances may accord with His will and be fully pleasing to him" (cf. Col 1:9-10).

To have this wisdom one must have the knowledge of His word. Indeed, it sometimes appears as if "the wisdom of God" and "the word of God" are used synonymously (e.g., Wisd 9:1; Philo, Leg. Alleg., 1.65; Sir 24:3 compared with Is 55:11). But to be wise requires more than knowledge. G. Fohrer says that wisdom as represented in the Old Testament "can arise out of a feeling for the right thing which is fostered by traditional knowledge, education and personal experience."⁵³

That it "can arise out of a feeling for the right thing" accords with Phil 1:9 and Heb 5:14, where we are informed that aisthēsis and aisthētia enable one to "approve what is excellent" and "distinguish good from evil." That wisdom is fostered by "traditional knowledge" and "education" accords with the emphasis on "knowledge" in Phil 1:9, and on "the first principles of God's word" in Heb 5:12. The emphasis on "experience" accords with the importance of being "trained by practice to distinguish good from evil" (Heb 5:14). And it is to be noted that Phil 1:9-10 is more or less parallel to Col 1:9-10, which speaks of the need to be "filled with the

knowledge of his will in (Gr.: en.; NIV: through) all spiritual wisdom and understanding, to lead a life worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him." "Wisdom" here appears to be the counterpart of *aisth?sei* in Phil 1:9. Fohrer's statement concerning the meaning of wisdom in the Old Testament could also be said of the understanding thereof in Phil 1:9

This means that, when Colossians emphasizes wisdom as necessary for commendable Christian conduct (cf. Rom 16:19; Eph 5:15; Col 1:28; 4:5; Jas 1:5), it is implied that aesthetic sensitivity is one of the necessary components in worthy moral decision-making.

In this section attention has been drawn to New Testament evidence which has made it clear that aesthetic judgment (in which love plays the most important part) is important if one is to perceive how the commandments of God ought to be applied in the practical situations of life.⁵⁴ B. S. Childs has asserted:

At no point within the Bible is there ever spelled out a system or a technique by which one could move from the general imperatives of the law of God, such as [are] found in the Decalogue, to the specific application with- in the concrete situation.⁵⁵

If he had understood the biblical evidence we have examined in this section, Childs would have had to radically modify his statement. A "system" or "technique" is not provided, but what is required to make the move is clearly set forth.

Before concluding this section, we consider the objection that the aesthetic judgments of different people often do not agree. This is not surprising, since the aesthetic sense(s) does (do) not function well as a result of the Fall, as is the case with every other component of man's being. There are, however, the following considerations to be kept in mind:

(a) There is no other way to justify the sacrifice of Christ. Every attempt to justify it otherwise either overlooks an important consideration, or proves inadequate when carefully scrutinized.

(b) To a considerable degree there is agreement as to what is aesthetically pleasing. Almost everyone agrees that a rose is beautiful. Almost everyone also agrees that roadside garbage, or a suppurating ulcer, is repulsive.

(c) Being aware that our aesthetic judgments may be distorted means that we must often (always?) make ethical decisions with fear and trembling, lest we fail to abide by the respective commandment when we ought to do so, or fail to deviate from it when we ought to do that. (According to Phil 2:12, we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Moreover, this is said in relation to willing and doing, therefore in a context which includes ethical decisions and actions.)⁵⁶

(d) The view presented makes prayer and the Holy Spirit important, not only so that we may have the moral fibre we need in order to do what we ought to do, but also so that we may know what we ought to do. So we need to pray for wisdom (Jas 1:5), and to have our minds "set on the Spirit" (Rom 8:6). That the fruit of the Spirit is first of all "love, joy peace" (Gal 5:22) seems to imply that a mind set on the Spirit is a mind informed by the Spirit-inspired aesthetic sense(s). (In the light of Heb 5:14, is it not to be added that, as we walk in the Spirit, our aesthetic sensitivities become more and more reliable?)

In conclusion it may be noted that there are three components involved in worthy decision-making:

(a) Knowledge of the ethical prescriptions of the Holy Scriptures, and of their logical implications.

(b) Familiarity with the peculiarities of the particular circumstances in which one must make moral decisions.

(c) Aesthetic sensitivity whereby one may distinguish those occasions when there should be deviation from the ethical prescriptions set forth in the Bible, love being foremost in informing that sensitivity.

Finally, it is to be noted that the ethical prescriptions of the Holy Scriptures correspond to the Father; the existential considerations to be taken into account correspond to the Son; and aesthetic sensitivity corresponds to the Holy Spirit. Biblical ethics, like biblical apologetics and the biblical conception of truth, may be described as Trinitarian!

ADDENDUM: "FIRST AND GREATEST" COMMANDMENTS

In view of the thesis which has been advanced, what did Jesus mean by calling the love commandments the first and greatest of the commandments (Matt 22:38; Mark 12:29-31)?

Worthy response to this question requires that the relationship between love and justice be considered. There are four possibilities:

(a) Love and justice are ultimately one and the same.⁵⁷ But only pantheism (or some other kind of monism) can accommodate such a view.

(b) Love and justice have equal standing, neither is more basic than the other. But only an ultimate dualism can accommodate such a view, to say nothing of the fact that such a view leaves men nothing but their prejudices to help them decide between love and justice in many practical situations.

(c) Love is more basic than justice.⁵⁸ But this means that rank injustice may be motivated by love. At least some of those responsible for the Inquisition may have been motivated by love.

(d) Justice is more basic than love.⁵⁹ This is the view of such New Testament writers as have made their position clear. As R. Mohrlang has asserted, "Matthew's formulation of the golden rule and the two great commandments roots love in law (7:12; 22:34-40; cf. 19:19b): here the expression of charity and compassion is both shaped by and interpreted within the framework of the law and the most basic demand for *dikaion*?."⁶⁰ In this connection he states,

The essence of the Sermon [on the Mount] is not love but *dikaion*? (Matt 5:6, 10, 20; 6:1, 33; cf. 3:15; 21:32) of which love is but one aspect (albeit a very important one) ...Submission and radical obedience to the will of God (as expressed in the law and the teachings of Jesus) ...lie at the real heart of the Sermon, not love.⁶¹

Moreover, as various authors have pointed out, there are sayings of Jesus, especially in Matt 23 and 25, which are not consistent with the idea that love is supreme over every other consideration in the field of ethics.⁶² Unless Jesus was radically inconsistent, or Matthew misrepresented Him, love is conditioned. Indeed, Matt 25, with its consignment of certain people to eternal punishment, suggests that love is conditioned by justice.

Paul apparently thinks likewise. In Rom 3:26 we are told that what God did with respect to justifying the ungodly was so done that "He might justify righteously, without compromising His own righteousness."⁶³ C. E. B. Cranfield argues, "The Greek is very awkward, if it is meant to express the double purpose that God might be righteous and that He might justify. ...; but it is a quite natural way of expressing the meaning 'that God might be righteous even in justifying.'"⁶⁴ In other words, God's righteousness is more fundamental than His love. Likewise, Paul holds

that, because agap? "does no wrong to a neighbor," i.e., it is not unjust to a neighbor, it can be the fulfilling of the law (Rom 13:10). Again Paul implies that justice is more basic than love, as important as love is. And R. Mohrlang has drawn attention to a good deal of evidence, particularly in Gal and 2 Cor, that "in Paul's own life . . .the expression of love is conditioned by certain theological and moral considerations of even greater importance than love itself."⁶⁵

But if love is not unconditioned, what did Jesus mean when He stated that the love commandments were the first and greatest of the commandments? It may be thought, of course, that He is simply inconsistent, or was using hyperbole. But, if our interpretation of Matt 22:40 is correct, Jesus described the love commandments as He did because they provide guidance needed for the worthy application of those commandments which prescribe the way in which God's people are to conduct themselves. As Rom 13: 10 states, love ensures that the purpose of the law ("no wrong to a neighbor") is fulfilled. And 1 Cor 13:1-3 emphasizes that the finest activities and achievements are ultimately worthless without love.

1. Cf. Rom 5:13-14; 2:14-15
2. See G. J. Wehham, *The Book of Leviticus*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 7, 240-41, with respect to the question whether Lev 17 is to be included in the Holiness Code.
3. But see Prov 28:4, 7, 9; 29: 18; cf. 30:6.
4. W. C. Kaiser, Jr., *Toward Old Testament Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983) 43. W. D. Davies, *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984) 332 n 22, points out that "the influence of the covenant tradition with its Law on the prophets has become clear." Cf. W. Gutbrod. TDN7;- 4,.1040
5. See, for example, Deut 4:1-2; 12:32,. Jos 1:7; Ps 119:166; Neh 9:13-29. Note also A. Alt, *Essays on Old Testament History and Religion*. trans. R. A. Wilson (Garden City; N. Y: Doubleday 1967) 103
6. According to R. Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 9, "The point of (this) passage. . .can only be that the entire law remains valid and demands strict obedience from the Christian community. " Emphasis his. With Matt 5;17-19. compare Luke 16:17; Matt 19:1Z-19 (Mark 10:17- 19; Luke 18:18-20). Unless otherwise specified, biblical quotations are according to the Revised Standard Version.
7. D. Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972) 120; cf. B. S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus* (Philadelphia: Westminster; 1974) 29. According to J. T Sanders, *Ethics in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) 41, "Matthew does not present Jesus as the giver of a new law, but as the true interpreter of the already existent law." Emphases his. Per contra, T F. Glasson, *Moses in the Fourth Gospel*, (London, SCM, 1963), 92. "In the Sermon on the Mount the contrast with the law of Moses is brought out repeatedly"; cf. J. P. Meier; *Law and History of Matthew's Gospel* (Rome: Biblical Institute, 1976) 157-61; M. D. Goulder; *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (London: S. P. C. K., 1974) 261-62.
8. Is it significant that in this connection Paul quotes from the second table of the Decalogue?
9. According to Davies, *Jewish and Pauline Studies*, 94, "So far from being an attack on the law, Rom. 7 may be even a defense of it"; cf. J. W. Drane, *Paul: Libertine or leGalist?* (London: S. P. C. K., 1975) 65, "In 1 Cor 7:19 Paul takes an ethical position. . .not much different from the legalism he had so much depreciated in Galatians" (Drane holds that with respect to the law Paul's writings are not consistent with one another). Cf. J. L. Houlden, *Ethics and the New Testament* (London: Mowbrays, 1975) 27- 28. On pp. 106-7 Houlden declares that it is only "for Matthew, and probably James, that the whole law

remains binding for Christians." For Mark, Luke, John and Paul, "the law is not merely interpreted but rivaled and supplanted." We contend that the evidence indicates otherwise. Concerning Luke see S. D. Wilson, *Luke and the Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1983); for John see R. Schnackenburg, *Ib.e: Gospel according to St. John* (New York: Crossroad, 1982) 217; B. Lindars, *The GosDel of John* (London: Oliphants, 1972) 97-98; J. Jeremias, *TDN7*; 4:872-73.

10. See the preceding note for evidence of the conviction that for various New Testament authors the Old Testament law is no longer in force.
11. *Jewish and Pauline Studies*, 298.
12. Cf. 1 Sam 16:14; 18:10., Ezek 14:9.
13. *Ethics and the New Testament*, 118; Cf. R. Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 100, "When all is said and done, there remains a basic inconsistency in Matthew's presentation between 5:43ff. and the attitude shown in the Gospel to the Pharisees. "
14. According to G. L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* (Nutley, N. J.: Craig, 1977) 306, God determines "Good and evil. " If so, God cannot be responsibly described as good or evil, and the good things He does are not because He is good.
15. *Romans: A Shorter Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985) 152. On the "oldness of the letter'M. Black, *Romans* (London: Oliphants, 1973) 100, comments "Not, of course, the written torah, but the 'letter of the Law; i.e., its strait-laced interpretation':. ct: C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Halper & Row; 1957) 138. Per contra, W Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, Second Edition (New York: Scribner's, n.d.) 176.
16. "The Pedagogical Nature of the Law in Galatians 3: 19-4: 7. " *JETS* 25 (Mar. 1982) 61. He says the Christian also finds "God's law as standard preeminently expressed." How these statements, both of them in the same sentence, are to be harmonized, I do not know. If it is a standard, how can it be set aside? Moreover; on the preceding page he speaks of the "Law as having reached its zenith in the teachings and example of Jesus Christ. " But, if so, how can the Law be set aside in favour of Christ's teachings and example? Supplemented and interpreted, perhaps, but not set aside. It is of interest to note that Longenecker never considers Gal 5: 13 or Rom 13:8-10 in this article.
17. Lutzer; *The Morality Gap*, 106, insists, "If exceptions are made to moral laws, these exceptions must have scriptural authority." His ethics is an ethics for children and slaves.
18. Lutzer; *The Morality Gap*, 102, rightly states, "Heirarchicalism cannot answer the question of how the hierarchy of values is to be determined" (cf. p. 99).
19. *Christian Ethics in Secular Society* (Grand Rapids: Baker; 1983) 196ff.; cf. Lutzer; *The Morality Gap*, 108.
20. In the Old testament, and, indeed in Matt 19:18-19 (cf. Matt 5:21-48), love of neighbor is represented as simply one among other ethical prescriptions. In Mark 12:30-31 (cf. Luke 10:27) it and the commandment to love God are said to be the greatest of the commandments. To the parallel in Matt 17:37-39, however; the statement of v. 40 is added, a significant addition indeed.
21. According to E. Stauffer; *TDN7*; 1:38, "The love of God for Israel (Dr. 11:13) is not impulse but will; the love for God and neighbour demanded of the Israelites (Dr. 6:5; Lv; 19:18) is not intoxication but act." But love can be a feeling without impulse or intoxication being involved.

22. TDN7; 1 :22, cf. G. Wallis, TDO7; 1: 102; A. A. Anderson, *The Book of Psalms* (Greenwood, S.C.: Attic, 1972) 1:822. Gen 29:30; Song of Sol Passim: etc., make this clear.
23. *The Love Command in the New Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon 1972) 221. See Song of Sol. Passim. Religious usage occurs, however; in Wisd 3;9; Ps Sol. 18:3; ct: Wisd 6:18.
24. Furnish, Love command, 221.
25. Ibid., 49-50; see also pp. 219-31.
26. R. Schnackenburg, *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament* trans. J. Holland-Smith and W J. O'Hara (New York: Seabury, 1971) 93, says that it means that they can be "derived" from the two great commandments.
27. Matt 22:40 is the only New Testament occurrence of the phrase.
28. The other Septuagintal occurrences do not appear to be relevant.
29. R. Mohrloang, *Matthew and Paul*, 95, Cf. B. Gerhardsson, "The Hermeneutic Program n Matthew 22:37-40," in *Jews, Greeks and Christians*, ed. R. Hamerton-Kelly and R. Scroggs (Leiden: Brill, 1976) 134, "in these verses is nothingness than the...principles for interpretation and application of the inherited holy scriptures. ...an instrument for evaluation, selection, and radical interpretation. "See also Furnish, Love Command. 34; J. T. Sanders, *Ethics in the New Testament*, 42; J. Pipet; *Love your enemies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979) 152. Per contra. C. E. Carlson, "The Things that Defile (Mark VII. 14) and the Law in Matthew and Mark," *NTS* 15 (1968) 82 n 2; C. Spicq, *Agap? in the New Testament*, trans. M. A. MacNamara and M. A. Richter (St. Louis: Herdel; 1963-66) 1:30-31; Schnackenburg, *Moral Teaching*, 93.
30. In view of v. 10b, the perfect tense of $\text{pl}^{\text{?}}\text{ro}\ddot{\text{o}}$ in v. 8 must be the perfect "of a general truth" (M. Black, *Romans* [London: Oliphants, 1973] 162), or a present perfect. i.e. having "wholly the sense of a present" as in Luke 4:21 (cf. F. Blass and A. Debrunner; *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Trans, & Rev. R. W. Funk [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961] #341, p. 176).
31. Cf. Furnish, Love Command, 97; E. Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM, 1969) 199. According to G. L. Bahnsen, *Theonomy in Christian Ethics* (Nutley, N. J.: Craig, 1977) 243, Rom 13:9 means that God's law is summarized in love," and "Love enforces the full details of God's law " (Emphasis his.) According to Sanders, *EIbiQ§.*, 42, Rom 13:9 means that "the Torah may be dispensed with in view of the all-inclusive command to love."
32. *The Morality Gap*, 23.
33. Cf. Käsemann, *Questions*, 199, "Rom 13:1-7....cannot be directly associated. ..with the epitomizing demand for love in 13:8-10. "
34. See H. Schlier; TDN7; 3:681-82.
35. See the discussions in Schlier; TDN7; 3:681-82; and in M. Barth, *Ephesians* (Garden City, N. J): Doubleday, 1974) 1:89-92. In *ibid.*, 2:446, Barth speaks of Christ's headship as his "monarchy. "
36. It cannot mean rule or control in the sense of having priority over; or superiority to. Rom. 13:8, 10, make this clear.

37. Apparently the idea that the law was intended to prevent evil being done to others was a common understanding, at least in Jewish circles. Hillel is credited with saying, "What is hateful to you, do not to your neighbor: that is the whole Torah, while the rest is the commentary thereof" (bSchab. 31a; cf. Tobit 4:15).
38. According to H. D. Betz, Galatians (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979) 275, Gal 5: 14 implies that Christians are not required to observe each of the law's "individual prescriptions and prohibitions," but that fulfilling of the law is required of them. Cf. J. W. Drane, "Paul: Libertine or Legalist? (London: S.P.C.K., 1975) 134, As he expounds the principle of love fulfilling the Law, Paul enunciates an ethical system which is not free from moral rules and directives, but which manages to combine these with the freedom of the Christian to act in accordance with the directives of the Holy Spirit in his own life"
39. A Translator's Handbook on Paul's Letter to the Philippians (Stuttgart: United Bible Societies, 1977) 17.
40. Paideia: The Ideals of Greek Culture, trans. G. Highet (New York: Oxford University Press, 1939-44) 3:18.
41. In commenting on this statement, V. P. Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968) 236-37, asserts that Paul does not have any "rational standard" to propose by which the demands of love (God's will) can be ascertained in particular instances. That is finally a matter for the Christian himself to discern and decide, a matter of 'insight' into the given situation." In his view, however; the translation of *aisth?sis* in Phil 1:9 as "feeling" 'perhaps subjectivizes the concept to a greater degree than Paul would have himself allowed" (ibid., 237 n 66). He prefers the rendering "insight". But, beyond emphasizing the help of the Christian community; to say nothing of the fallibility of that community; one must often rely on feeling. Of course as Phil 1:9 may intimate, knowledge of the respective biblical prescriptions should be given full consideration in making a moral decision. However; as we shall see, Heb 5:14 makes it clear that one's sensitivities need to be "trained by practice to distinguish good from evil."
42. TDNT 1:187; cf. H. Conzelmann, TDN7; 7:888.
43. New Testament Commentary: Exposition of Philippians (Grand Rapids: Baker 1962) 60. Emphasis his. Käsemann, Questions, 214, speaks of *aisth?sis* as "the feeling for the actual situation at the time."

Aisthanomai, *aisth?sis*, and *aisth?t?rion* are rare in the New Testament (only three occurrences), but are found some 42 times in the Septuagint, more than half of which are in Proverbs. An aesthetic connotation is required in Ep.Jer. 23; Sir 22:19; 4 Macc 8:4; etc.. Moreover; the usage is often in a wisdom context, which is not surprising, since wisdom requires more than information and what may be logically deduced therefrom; it also requires sensitivity to the respective situation, i.e., aesthetic judgment in relation thereto.

When they occur in the Septuagint, *aisthanomai* and its cognates commonly; if not always, translates *yādah* or one of its derivatives. R. Bultmann, TDN7; 1:697, states that in some of the cases when *yādah* is rendered by *ginōskein* in LXX, e.g., 1 Sam 14:12; Isa 47:8; 53:3; Jer 16:21; Ezek 25: 14, "aisthanesthai would be better Greek. " He also states that in the Old Testament "knowledge is not thought of in terms of information ...Knowledge has an element of acknowledgment. But it also has an element of emotion, or better of movement of will, so that ignorance means guilt as well as error" (ibid.,) 1:698). His introduction of "movement of will, " and what he says about it, is due to existentialist influence. There is no guilt without the exercise of the will, but guilty exercise of the will is due, at least in part, to unworthy feeling.

44. TDNT 1 :690. He does warn, however; against too sharp a distinction.

45. Ibid., 1:707.
46. The other elements of the fruit of the Spirit listed in Gal 5:22-23 are not a matter of feeling but of will and conduct. They are motivated by the aesthetic elements (cf. Neh 8:10; John 3:16; etc.)
47. See Loh and Nida, *Philippians*, 16, for other suggestions.
48. In Col 1:9-10 we have a similar emphasis, as we shall see.
49. Our reference to the meaning of *aisth?sis* in the writings of Philo may be especially significant for the meaning of *aisth?t?ria* in Heb 5:14, since many scholars are convinced that the author of Hebrews was influenced by the thought of Philo, if not by his writings.
50. In spite of what is commonly believed, experience can only prove that some propositions are untrue, or are partly untrue. It may lend support to some propositions, but cannot prove that they are true. There is really no such thing as inductive reasoning.
51. *Agap?* and its cognates occur only five times in Hebrews, two of which are in Old Testament quotations, and one when the author addresses his readers as "beloved." *Philadelphia* occurs in 13:1, and *philoxenia* in 13:2. It is intimated that love is, or ought to be, the supreme characteristic of Christians, but there is no indication that it is significant either for the interpretation of moral injunctions, or for the perception of what one ought to do in practical situations.
52. *Apeiros logou dikaiosun?s* (Heb 5:13) is to be understood in the light of Heb 5:14b because of the contrast of the two verses. TEV catches the import: "without any experience in the matter of right and wrong."
53. TDNT; 7:476-77; cf. B. S. Easton in ISBE, 5:3089, "Predominantly the 'wisdom' thought of is that which comes through experience."
54. The Old Testament emphasis on the need for wisdom in practical decision-making implies that the importance of aesthetic judgment was recognized under the old covenant.
55. *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster; 1970) 129.
56. If one merely had to follow rules, he would have no reason for fear and trembling. All he would need to do would be to follow the rules, and where there were no rules that he could find, he would not be responsible for his actions, so that, again there would be no need for fear and trembling.
57. S. C. Mott, *Biblical Ethics and Social Change* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982) 62, opposes "the idea that love and justice are distinct in principle."
58. Cf. J. L. Houlden, *Ethics and the New Testament*, 17-19; Sanders, *Ethics*, 45. 59. Kaiser, *OT Ethics*, 147.
60. *Matthew and Paul*, 99; cf, 108.
61. Ibid., 98-99; cf. Sanders, *Ethics*, 44-45; Furnish, *Love Command*, 30-34.
62. Cf. Houlden, *Ethics*, 118.

63. C. E. B. Crantfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh; T. & T. Clark, 1975, 1979) 1:213; cf G. Schrenk, *TDNT*, 2:188, "R. 3:26 expresses the fact that the justice of the One who is absolutely righteous is demonstrated in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus." Some scholars interpret otherwise, eg Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 90.91
64. *Romans*, 1:213
65. *Matthew and Paul* 105-6