

An article on CNN reported on two atheists who wanted to rewrite the Ten Commandments. The article begins with this question: "What if, instead of climbing Mount Sinai to receive the Ten Commandments from God, Moses had turned to the Israelites and asked: Hey, what do you guys think we should do?" That was the idea behind the ["10 'Non-Commandments' Contest,"](#) in which atheists were asked to offer modern alternatives to the famous Decalogue. The contest even offered \$10,000 for the best ideas.

The contest drew more than 2,800 submissions from 18 countries and 27 U.S. states. The article summarized the list of submissions this way:

There's nary a "thou shalt" among them—nothing specifically about murder, stealing, or adultery, although there is a version of the Golden Rule, which presumably would cover those crimes. If they lack faith in the divine, the atheist "non-commandments" display a robust faith in humankind, as if Silicon Valley had replaced Sinai.

Here are the winning "Ten Non-Commandments":

Be open-minded and be willing to alter your beliefs with new evidence.

Strive to understand what is most likely to be true, not to believe what you wish to be true.

The scientific method is the most reliable way of understanding the natural world.

Every person has the right to control of their body.

God is not necessary to be a good person or to live a full and meaningful life.

Be mindful of the consequences of all your actions and recognize that you must take responsibility for them.

Treat others as you would want them to treat you, and can reasonably expect them to want to be treated. Think about their perspective.

We have the responsibility to consider others, including future generations.

There is no one right way to live.

Leave the world a better place than you found it.

This list reminds me of the last verse of the book of Judges. In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Is that not where we are as a nation right now? We have become of very self-centered nation. In that self-centeredness, many are seeing themselves as more important than others. They are in authority of themselves and no one else is.

What are we to do? What I have shared with you is among other things is reason for a movement to have begun a few years ago. It is called "Call2Fall." Every year on the Sunday before 4th of July, churches across the nation bow the knee to pray for our nation. There is the constant, ongoing cry for an awakening to come to our nation. We, perhaps, saw what that might look like back in April with the Youth revival at Langston. For true awakening to happen in America, there is a need for revival in the churches.

With that in mind, I want to go to what I consider the classic passage of the New Testament of what is needed for revival to come to churches. I know that you are thinking 2 Chronicles 7:14. That is the classic passage of OT. In that passage, God is speaking to the

nation of Israel, not the nation of the United States of America. However, I think that passage applies to any nation wishing for God to bless their nation.

The passage I want to use is James 4:7-10.

Read the passage.

Here are 10 commandments God gives to us through James. The commandments are conditions that, when met, results in fulfillment of promises.

After prayer and study, I saw where these commandments call us to make three truths that must be acknowledged. These are truths we must agree with, but more, they must be acted on by obeying the commands. Upon obedience to these commandments, promises made will become realities.

### **Acknowledge the Authority of God**

The first three commandments deal with the Authority of God.

Be submissive to God. Submission is a military term meaning to be aligned under the authority of a superior. In our case, our superior is God. Be submissive to His authority. It is something we must do. To do so requires us to have a fresh vision of God and the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He is Sovereign Lord. He is Lord of Creation. He is Lord of the Church. He is sovereign over nations. Ultimately, He is in control of what happens in the world, not Donald Trump or any other world leader. He is in full-control, not us. He will do what He will do. No human has the authority to tell God what to do. This is the number one commandment. If we do not obey this commandment, nothing else matters.

For me to submit to the authority of God, I must obey the second and third commandment. The second commandment is the negative of the two, while the third is the positive. Resist, oppose, or stand against the devil.” How do you do that? Submit to the authority of God. What will happen? He will flee from you.

As we draw near to God, He will draw near to us.

This year’s Southern Baptist Convention was an interesting for a number of reasons. One of those is the response to VP Mike Pence being in attendance. I am alright with him being VP. I know that he is a God-fearing man. The speech he gave resulted in split reactions of those attending the convention. One response that caught my attention was this. “Our denomination needs to emphasize that the Gospel is the salvation of our nation, not the government.” Acknowledge the Authority of God. Draw near to God.

### **Acknowledge the Rebellious Nature of our Sinful, Human Nature.**

Commandment number four and five deal with this. Cleanse your hands, sinners or sinful. Purify your hearts, you double minded. Sin is anything we think, say, or do that is not pleasing to God. Thinking sin is not doing sin in action. But that alone indicates our actions

are the indicators of the nature of our heart. We are desperately wicked as human beings. Double-minded. That is the second time we see that term in James. We heard a sermon on the double minded man. We learn that he is a doubter and he is a hesitator. But more stinging, we learned that he or she is really a friend of the world and an enemy of God. The double minded person is one who has not completely submitted to the authority of God. You submit to someone's authority. The big lie is that to submit to our own authority is really submitting to the authority of the devil.

Cleanse your hands. Purify your hearts. Only way to truly cleanse the hands is to make pure the heart. It is the way of submitting to the Authority of God. "Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place?" The answer is given, "He who has clean hands and a pure heart."

When you acknowledge God for who He is, you will see yourself as a sinner. Isaiah is an example. Peter is an example.

### **Acknowledge the Need for the Mercy of God**

The obedience of the commandments in verses 9 and 10 are acts of humility that is the result of acknowledging our sinful, human nature.

Be miserable. Be broken with a feeling of wretchedness. A broken and contrite heart is that which the Lord loves.

Mourn. Be deeply grievous of sin. The tax collector beat his breast and said, "Have mercy on me a sinner."

Cry. The action of the previous two. Peter cried when the rooster crowed the second time because he had denied Jesus three times.

Let your laughter be turned to mourning. The laughter is the trivial, flipping your nose at God attitude and is worldly, self-centered, and sensual that comes from pleasures and making light of sinful pleasures.

There is a godly sorrow that is according to the will of God and produces repentance without regret leading to salvation.

Years ago, Dr. Henry Blackaby spoke in chapel at SWBTS. As he was speaking in regard to Fresh Encounter, a woman approached him as he spoke and confessed to him and the chapel audience a sin she had committed. After that, one after another, students did the same. Dr. Blackaby's response was so proper. He didn't say, "That's okay. God will forgive you." He did say, "Go over there, get on your knees and cry for God's mercy to forgive you." That is statement of fear and submission. Cry for God's mercy.

Folks, these are the commands needed to be obeyed for revival to happen. These are the commandments needed to be obeyed by God's people on this day of Call2Fall.

## **Acknowledge Divine Joy and Peace**

This is the promise that comes when these commandments are obeyed. The devil will flee. God will draw near. He will exalt us in salvation, forgiveness, healing, lifting of the weight and fatigue that drains our spirits.

At the age of 35 Christian psychologist and researcher Dr. Jamie Aten was diagnosed with Stage 4 colon cancer that had spread to his pelvis. For the first 6 months, Aten kept asking for a prognosis. The oncologist told him, "I can't tell you that it's going to be okay, Jamie. It's too early to tell. If there's anyone you want to see or anything you want to do, now is the time." Cancer wasn't the first disaster I faced. My family and I had moved to South Mississippi six days before Hurricane Katrina.

But this disaster was different. There was no opportunity to evacuate as I did before Katrina made landfall. This time the disaster was striking within: I was a walking disaster.

Aten learned that the key to both traumatic situations involved what he calls "spiritual surrender." Aten writes:

Spiritual surrender helps us understand what we have control over and what we don't. [In a research study I led after Katrina](#), we found that people who showed higher levels of spiritual surrender tended to do better. This finding didn't make sense to me at the time. It seemed like a passive faith response.

One winter morning, Aten took the trash out to the street curb. In the walk to the curb, Aten prayed for God to heal him. Wondering if God even heard his prayers for healing, he kept praying as he walked back inside my home. Then all of a sudden he dropped to his knees and prayed the most challenging prayer of my life. Instead of continuing to pray for God's healing, I asked that God would take care of my wife and children if I didn't make it. This was the hardest prayer I had ever prayed. For the first time in my life, I truly experienced spiritual surrender. I finally understood. True spiritual surrender is far from passive—it is a willful act of obedience.