

critical reasoning. The Bible says that the mature are those who have trained *by practice* to be able to discern right from wrong (Hebrews 5:14).

- **The law of restoration:** Exertion requires recovery time. For example, a baseball pitcher must rest before he can pitch again, or he risks injury.
- **The law of sowing and reaping:** We reap what we sow. If you want grapes, plant grapes.
- **The law of peace:** Genuine love gives us peace by destroying fear—whether fear of God or death.
- **The law of fear and selfishness:** When we are afraid, the protection of self becomes central even if it means we'll hurt others—for instance, panic buying due to a health scare or trampling people to get away from perceived danger.
- **The law of forgiveness:** When we forgive those who have wronged us, we free ourselves

from bitterness and resentment, and we experience healing of our hearts and minds.

- **The law of truth:** Truth leads to freedom and peace. It dispels lies and frees a person from fear and misunderstanding, ennobling the individual. However, rejecting truth causes confusion, damages the mind, and hardens the heart.
- **The law of revelation:** People reveal through their actions what they truly believe and value. “The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him” (Matthew 12:34, 35).
- **The law of happiness:** Happiness comes from healthiness, and healthiness comes from being in harmony with God's design laws. Break the laws of health and sickness, disease, and suffering—undermining happiness. Many people, instead of pursuing healthiness, pursue pleasure, which often

violates the laws of health (e.g., drugs, alcohol, casual sex, gambling) and causes greater unhappiness.

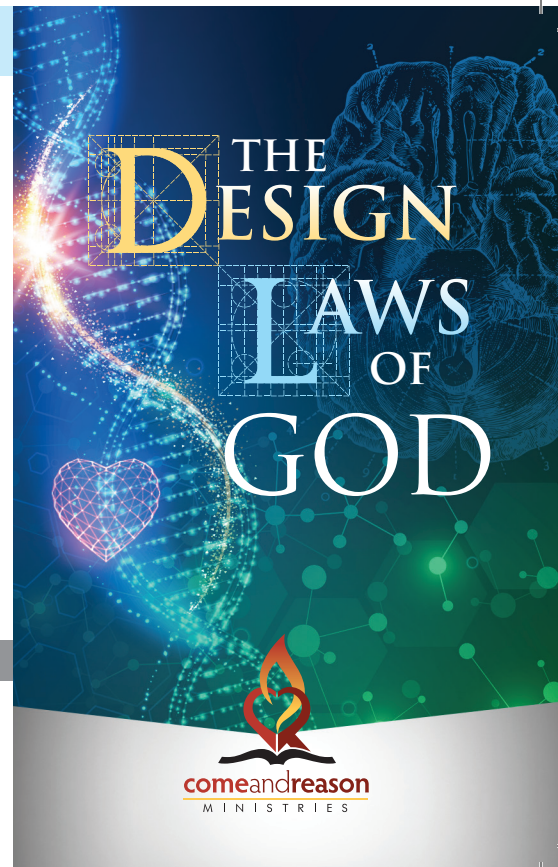
- **The law of sin and death:** Fear-driven selfishness leads to death. Selfishness embraces survival of the fittest and leads the strong to dominate and exploit the weak. Violations of the law of love have predictable results: pain, suffering, and eventually death.

God is our loving Creator; He built all reality to operate in harmony with His character of love. Being out of harmony with God's design is sin—which the Bible says brings its own punishment (James 1:15). God is not seeking to punish you! He is seeking to heal and restore all His children back to His design for life.

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WHAT goes through your mind when you hear the word “law”?

Doubtless, you probably first think about the rules that govern our society—like the laws against theft or going over the speed limit. Maybe you even thought about the Ten Commandments. But perhaps you also thought of the laws that govern our universe, like the laws of gravity and motion.

While the dictionary has many definitions of the word “law,” they all fall into two main categories: *imposed* vs. *designed*.

Imposed laws are rules that require enforcement (e.g., laws against stealing) by a governing authority.

Design laws are the principles upon which our reality is constructed to operate (e.g., laws of physics).

God created space, time, matter, energy, and life to operate according to a set of *design* laws—these laws form the very foundation of our reality; they cannot be changed without destroying life as we know it.

Human beings cannot create design laws; instead, we create *imposed* laws and enforce them primarily through the infliction of punishment. Invariably, violating these laws sometimes goes unpunished.

Unlike humanity’s imposed laws, God’s design laws have reproducible, consistent, and predictable results. The only variable is the damage that results with the various degrees of violating a law. For instance, jump off a 500-foot building and you’ll die; step off a 5-inch curb and you’ll twist an ankle. The law of gravity doesn’t change, so there is always a consequence to violating it.

Design laws have natural consequences; they do not require a governing authority to monitor and punish violations of them.

Interestingly, the early Christian church understood that even God’s moral laws—summarized in the Ten Commandments and Jesus’ two great commandments—to be *design* laws. The law of love is no different than the law of gravity. Break any one of God’s design laws, and pain and suffering will naturally

occur—and God doesn’t need to inflict punishment for you to pay a price.

But sadly, Jesus’ young church was soon infected with the lie that God’s law is *imposed*, meaning that He has to inflict punishment for those who break His laws. But this view contradicts the saving truths that Jesus brought.

WHAT ARE GOD’S DESIGN LAWS?

Along with the law of physics—gravity, motion, nuclear forces, etc.—here are some of the design laws that God created to run our universe. Again, notice that each of these laws has a natural consequence; that is, they do not need a governing authority to punish people for breaking them.

- **The law of love (also known as the law of giving):** Everything that lives, gives. Humans give CO₂ to the plants, and they give oxygen to us. Hoard your CO₂ by putting a bag over your head, and you will pass out and die.

- **The law of liberty:** Love can only exist in the atmosphere of freedom. Violate freedom in relationships and love is damaged, rebellion is instilled, and individuality is eroded.
- **The law of worship:** We are changed to become like what we admire, worship, and spend time watching. Worship an evil god, and you will become like that god. Worship Jesus, and you will become like Jesus.
- **The laws of health:** These principles, including nutrition, exercise, sleep, hydration, and clean air, govern the optimal functioning of living beings. Eat poorly, breathe bad air, don’t get enough sleep and exercise, and your body will pay a price.
- **The law of exertion:** Strength comes from exercise—“use it or lose it”—not just physically, but also neurologically and spiritually. If you want critical reasoning skills, practice