

10 commandments - Prelude

John 14:15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

- Jesus' words – Our love for God is shown in keeping His commandments.

2 reactions whenever keeping the commandments of God are brought up:

1. I am under Grace – do not throw me back under the law!
2. Finally! Someone preaching right from wrong. We need someone to teach all these sinners how to behave like Christians!

And both reactions are pretty easy to find supporting Scriptures for. Yet neither is a correct view of the law.

Playground study:

Fences of childhood: Challenging the meaning of playground boundaries in design -Alkistis Pitsikali and Rosie Parnell

Abstract - Scholars have criticized the capacity of playgrounds to support children's participation in public life. Fences of childhood, such as walls, fences, and enclosures, dominate children's "public" spatial experiences in the global north. Challenging well-established critiques of the fenced playground as a space that segregates and controls childhood experiences, this study offers a novel and nuanced perspective, emphasizing the qualities of the playground fence that support play and playful connections, on, through, and around it.

(The study was to learn whether physical fences create mental fences in children)

Children in playgrounds with no fences had low activity, and mostly stayed in a small central area. Parents tended to not interact with the kids and instead stayed on alert.

In playgrounds with fences, children increased activity level significantly, and utilized the entire play area. Parents tended to also engage in activity with the kids, the most popular in this study was the game, the floor is lava.

The more solid the fence, the higher the activity level, the higher the engagement levels.

The less they can see of the world outside, the safer they feel.

Martin Luther

The Law is meant to produce the same effect today which it produced at Mount Sinai long ago. I want to encourage all who fear God, especially those who intend to become ministers of the Gospel, to learn from the Apostle the proper use of the Law. I fear that after our time the right handling of the Law will become a lost art. Even now, although we continually explain the separate functions of the Law and the Gospel, we have those among us who do not understand how the Law should be used. What will it be like when we are dead and gone? – Martin Luther

What the Law is not

1. The law is not for justification

- **Galatians 3:11** But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "*the just shall live by faith.*"
- **Galatians 2:16** knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.
- **Our justification, our salvation can never be from following the law.**
- Our righteousness is a gift from Jesus based on Him paying the penalty for our sin. We cannot earn it. It is a free gift from God.
- We only can receive it, which we do through faith – believing Jesus did what He said He did.

- **Romans 8:2-3** For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God *did* by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

2. We are not under the law as it relates to Mosaic legislation

- **Galatians 5:1** Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.
 - This is in regard to ceremonial aspects and outward signs as regulated under Judaism.
- We no longer observe things that point to Christ, because Christ is here. Those are just a shadow of things to come.
- **Colossians 2:16-17** So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, ¹⁷ which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

3. We are not under the law for sanctification

- **Galatians 5:18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.
 - We do not say no to sin out of obligation, but in response to the Spirit. Our motivation does not come from the law, but the indwelling Spirit.
- **Romans 6:14-18** For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. ¹⁵ What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! ¹⁶ Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin *leading* to death, or of obedience *leading* to righteousness? ¹⁷ But God be thanked that *though* you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. ¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.

- **Grace, the fear of the Lord, and the indwelling Spirit produces sanctification in us. Not adherence to the law.**

With all these ways we are not under the law, what did Jesus mean:

- **Matthew 5:17** "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Jesus means that He is the One that the law is pointing to in every way.

- Concerning the ceremonial laws – they point towards the coming messiah (Passover, circumcision, the Sabbath, Sacrifices)
- Concerning the Civil laws - They were created to define the Jewish nation and to set it apart from other nations with laws on how to treat the dead, settle legal matters, etc... Jesus says that we are now set apart by him.
 - **1 Corinthians 6:11** And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.
 - **1 Peter 1:16** because it is written, "*Be holy, for I am holy.*"
- Concerning the moral law –
 - **Matthew 22:37-40** Jesus said to him, " *'You shall love the LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.'*³⁸ This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ And *the* second is like it: "*You shall love your neighbor as yourself.*"⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."
 - **Romans 10:4** For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.
 - If the purpose of the law is to make one righteous, then having our righteousness in Jesus, the only One able to live according to the law, brings fulfillment to the law.
 - **Romans 4:5** But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness.

How do we know that this is the case? That Jesus really did change things?

- Study the book of Hebrews.
- **The entirety of the book of Hebrews is to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of the law and is superior to the law in every way.**
 - Jesus is a better priest
 - He is a better sacrifice
 - He made a better covenant
 - He is superior to Moses
 - His rest is superior to the Sabbath rest
 - He is a better temple
- But the most important part of Hebrews is where Jesus is shown to come through a new priestly line which necessitates a change of covenants.
- **Hebrews 7:11-13** Therefore, if perfection were through the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need *was there* that another priest should rise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be called according to the order of Aaron? ¹² For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law. ¹³ For He of whom these things are spoken belongs to another tribe, from which no man has officiated at the altar.

Well, if Justification and Sanctification come through faith, and Jesus fulfilled the law – can we ignore it?

- Paul knew you were going to ask that!
- **Romans 3:31** Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law.

Uses of the Law:

1. Civil or Political function.

- The further our country has gotten from the 10 commandments, the worse our country has gotten. We believe that laws bring confinement. But people are more afraid than ever due to crime, people are being cancelled due to beliefs and are afraid to say what they want. On social media platforms people use code and asterisks to avoid getting blocked. Sexual disease is out of control. Poverty is increasing directly related to fatherless upbringing, suicide rates are increasing and are at the highest for people in sexually confused situations.
- We think removing law will bring more freedom, but it actually brings more bondage. (Think Lord of the Flies).

2. The pedagogical function of the law.

- **Galatians 3:23-25** But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.
- How do we know we have sinned if we do not know what is sin?
- The law shows us our need for Christ.
- **Galatians 5:18** But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.
 - The law still teaches by showing us when we are not led by the Spirit.

3. A rule of life for believers

- We learn God's will
- We judge prophecies
- We discern the voice of God (ex – God told me to move in with my boyfriend)
- The moral law is written on our hearts because we are made in the image of God, and God is a moral God who is just and good. When we eschew the moral law we are acting out of a false identity and not according to who we are in Christ. Thus, the moral law is a guide -

perhaps the farthest fencepost defining our lives – that when we cross it shows us just how far we are away from the perfect path of walking in the Spirit.

- **Romans 6:13** And do not present your members *as* instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.

Whether we want to recognize the law or not – Because God established it for eternity it remains active.

- **Romans 2:14-15** for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵ who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*)
- All issues of right or wrong are based on the law of God. If we build our sense of right and wrong on anything else, that is a shaky foundation.

The Law in Practice as Believers

James 1:22-25 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. ²⁵ But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

1 Peter 2:15-16 For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men— ¹⁶ as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God.

There are three ways in which the Law may be abused. First, by the self-righteous hypocrites who fancy that they can be justified by the Law.

Secondly, by those who claim that Christian liberty exempts a Christian from the observance of the Law. "These," says Peter, "use their liberty for a cloak of maliciousness," and bring the name and the Gospel of Christ into ill repute. Thirdly, the Law is abused by those who do not understand that the Law is meant to drive us to Christ. When the Law is properly used its value cannot be too highly appraised. It will take me to Christ every time. – Martin Luther

Psalm 19:7-9 The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple; ⁸ The statutes of the LORD *are* right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD *is* pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹ The fear of the LORD *is* clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD *are* true *and* righteous altogether.