

THE LAW AND THE NEW TESTAMENT

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4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, **This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.**

Matthew 17:4, 5

1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,

2 **Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,** whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

4 Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

Hebrews 1:1-4

19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;

20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you:

21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.

22 For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; **him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.**

23 And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.

24 Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of these days.

Acts 3rd 19-24

Recently, I have been asked more than a few times to comment on the use of the Law in the New Testament. I am happy to do so, and I thought for expediency's sake I ought to write a short study and commentary on the subject.

I was asked by a friend at dinner as to my thoughts as to how or which part of the Law we obey in the New Testament. I was quick to say, that, *as believer, none*. This at first seems odd and many are taken aback at the statement, even though it is true.

For some reason there is this weird teaching that people embrace that we as Christians ought to hold to the Ten Commandments or some such thing.

This fellow, in his personal reading or hearing, had assumed there are divisions of the Mosaic Law – Moral, Civil, and Religious – an old idea, and that some apply and some don't, and that we as believers in Christ should at least observe the *Moral part* of the Law.

First, I commented that the Bible does not make that distinction in the Law, and that there is no scripture that supports an idea that New Testament believers ought to observe the Moral part only; and that any one who tries to divide the Law in these sections is taking a liberty as to what *he thinks* is civil, moral, or religious. The Bible does not define that. In fact, James said:

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.
James 2:10

One cannot “pick and choose” what parts he likes to obey.

Allow me to say also, that when I commented that Jesus gave us commandments that we ought to obey instead, he looked at me with some disbelief, thinking Jesus just gave us good examples to follow.

One can see how this reasoning can become common, because once you start down this path splitting hairs or straining gnats as to what part of Moses we should follow and what part we should not; that will tend to take precedence over what Jesus taught, and eventually replace it. This was the same issue the Jerusalem church settled in Acts 15, and it is the same issue our brother Paul extensively put to rest in the Epistle to the Galatians.

- Briefly, First, I can say Jesus fulfilled the Law and the Prophets.
- Secondly, we follow Jesus' commandments, not the Law of Moses.
- Thirdly, Jesus is the source of all our Moral, Civil, and Religious doctrine – not Moses.

I will comment in detail on these later.

Our Saviour's Doctrine (what he did and taught, his commandments) defines for us what is the *Moral* requirements he expects, and he elevated these expectations way above what the Law gave. Jesus way is a way of liberty and life, not simply a hard list of do's and don'ts. The Law is limited and *limits* sin: ***Jesus' way is open-ended to do good***, and not evil (Romans 8:4).

Jesus taught us how to behave ourselves in a greater kingdom than that of the Nation of Israel. That greater kingdom being the Kingdom of God. Jesus taught that we ought to seek that kingdom first and God's righteousness (Matthew 6:33). This New Testament *Civil Law* of the kingdom is described in the Sermon on the Mount and elsewhere. Furthermore, though we read in Romans 13:1-8 that we are to “be subject unto the higher powers” – these human governments ordained of God – we still submit first and foremost to Jesus Christ our *King of kings*. We say as the apostles did when commanded not to preach – “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29).

Then from a *Religious* perspective, he is our Righteousness, and the Gospel is the power of God unto Salvation (Romans 1:16). He is the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. When Jesus said, *It is finished... it was finished.*

One can say then, if you are a believer in Jesus, the Mosaic Law is superseded with Jesus' Doctrine. For believers, the *Old Testament* is replaced with the *New Testament*. As believers, we are delivered from the Law (Romans 7:6; 13:10).

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.
Romans 10:4

Do not, however, think that God has done away with the Law. That is not accurate. The Law still stands and is alive and well. Paul said,

12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.
13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.
14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.
Romans 7:12-14

Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: **for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**
Romans 3:20

(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.
Romans 5:13

If God did away with the law, there would be no knowledge of sin:

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for **sin is the transgression of the law.**
1 John 3:4

(For until the law sin was in the world: but **sin is not imputed when there is no law.**
Romans 5:13

Basically, there are only two choices: Be under the law or be under grace. (The third choice, without law, is not a subject of this paper, not is it a desirable state – Romans 2:12.) For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ (John 1:17).

Those under the law shall be judged by the law as sinners, and have the just recompense of damnation. Those under grace have their sins atoned for, and will be judged by the grace of our Lord. For one to say, *I am obligated to keep the law*, he is saying he will be judged by that law.

The Law in the New Testament

So, how does God apply the law in the New Testament? Very simple. The law is to show the world they are sinners and that they cannot obtain righteousness by the law. The law shows sinners their need for Jesus Christ and his salvation.

5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:

6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;

7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.

8 But we know that the law is good, **if a man use it lawfully;**

9 Knowing this, that **the law is not made for a righteous man**, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

11 According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

1 Timothy 5-10

We, as believers, are made righteous by Jesus Christ:

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be **justified by the faith of Christ**, and **not by the works of the law**: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Galatians 2:16

I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

Galatians 2:21

We are redeemed from the curse of the law:

11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

12 And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.

13 **Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law**, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Galatians 3:11-14

The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ:

19 Wherefore then serveth the law? **It was added because of transgressions**, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one.

21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.

22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, **we were kept under the law**, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

24 Wherefore **the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ**, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after that faith is come, **we are no longer under a schoolmaster.**

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:19-26

We who are saved are not under the law:

But if ye be led of the Spirit, **ye are not under the law.**

Galatians 5:18

My concluding verse is what we ought to ask Jesus in every instance: Jesus, what do you say?

Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: **but what sayest thou?**

John 8:5

A Brief Comparison of the Law (Limited) with New Testament Doctrine of Christ (Greater)

EXODUS 20 TEN COMMANDMENTS	NEW TESTAMENT JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES
1 And God spake all these words, saying, 2 I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. 3 Thou shalt have no other gods before me.	1 John 5:12 He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.
	John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.
	John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
	1 John 2:23 Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father: (but) he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also.

<p>4 Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth:</p> <p>5 Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;</p> <p>6 And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 10:14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.</p> <p>Colossians 3:5 Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry:</p> <p>1 John 5:21 Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.</p>
<p>7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.</p>	<p>Luke 11:2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.</p> <p>1 Timothy 6:1 Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed.</p>
<p>8 Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.</p> <p>9 Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:</p> <p>10 But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates:</p> <p>11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.</p>	<p>Matthew 11:29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.</p> <p>1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.</p> <p>Matthew 12:8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.</p> <p>Colossians 2:16 Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:</p> <p>17 Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.</p>
<p>12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.</p>	<p>Mark 7:11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.</p> <p>Luke 2:49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?</p>

	<p>Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.</p> <p>2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)</p> <p>3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.</p> <p>4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.</p>
13 Thou shalt not kill.	<p>Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:</p>
	<p>1 John 3:15 Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.</p>
	<p>Matthew 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;</p>
14 Thou shalt not commit adultery.	<p>Matthew 5:28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.</p>
	<p>Matthew 19:9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.</p>
15 Thou shalt not steal.	<p>Ephesians 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.</p>
	<p>Luke 6:38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.</p>
16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.	<p>John 17:17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.</p>
	<p>1 Corinthians 13:6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth;</p>

	Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:
	Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;
	1 John 1:8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.
17 Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's.	<p>Mark 7:18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him;</p> <p>19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?</p> <p>20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.</p> <p>21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,</p> <p>22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness:</p> <p>23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.</p>
	Luke 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.
	1 Corinthians 6:10 Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.
	Ephesians 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;
	Hebrews 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.