

Lords Day 2

3. Q. From where do you know your sins and misery?

A. From the law of God.

Much confusion exists today when trying to understand:

- What the law is
- What the Ten Commandments are
- And the relationship of the law between the Old and New Covenant

Questions to Consider:

- What is the law
- Where did law begin?
- What is the purpose of the law?
- What is its threefold usage?
- What is the Mosaic law?
 - What are the threefold categories of the Mosaic Law?
 - Are all three categories to be followed today under the New Covenant?
- What is the different between the law written on tablets of stone vs the law written on the hearts of humanity?
- Are the Ten Commandments just for Israel or also for the church today?
- What does it mean that we are no longer under the law?
 - Or that Christ was the end of the law?
- Can a person ever enter into such a state of holiness where the Holy Spirit takes over and willfully stop sinning?

If someone were to ask you the difference is between law and gospel, what would you say?

- Think about that for a moment:
 - How would you define the law to someone?
 - How would you define the Gospel?
 - Then – articulate how they work together
 - Or do they work together?
- Simply Put:
 - Law – is what we *do*
 - Gospel – is what Christ has *done*
 - The law and the Gospel do not oppose each other
 - The law contains the Gospel
 - The Gospel contains law
 - Both the law and the Gospel together form the “perfect rule of righteousness”
 - As it is stated in the Westminster Confession of Faith 19:7 –

- Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the gospel, but do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely and cheerfully which the will of God revealed in the law requireth to be done

When Did the Law Begin?

- The answer is not Exodus 20 with the Ten Commandments
- The correct answer is during creation
 - as seen in the Garden of Eden
 - God told Adam and Eve what they could and could not do
 - They obeyed God's law perfectly
 - The Gospel was not yet needed
 - Because they had not yet sinned
 - They was no need of salvation at this point
 - The Gospel did not come into existence until after the fall
 - Genesis 3:15 – where we have the promise of the Messiah crushing the head of the Serpent
- But before the fall - Adam and Even entered into a probationary period with God
 - What we refer to as the “Covenant of Works”
- Since they were still in their perfected state:
 - They were able to keep the law perfectly
 - Unless they chose not to
- And this is exactly what sin is:
 - The lack of conformity to or the breaking of the law of God

Common Misconception of the Law

The Most Common Misunderstanding of the Law

- Obedience to the law can save you
 - This is false
 - The law was never intended to save anybody
 - Breaking it only can result in judgment
 - It cannot save you – even if it is perfectly obeyed
 - Because we still have original sin from Adam
 - Salvation or appeasing God by works is known as “legalism”
 - The law is to be obeyed through our relationship with God by faith
 - Not by works trying to earn or merit God's favor
 - The purpose of the law is to grow in grace / faith / and obedience
 - Not to earn our justification by way of merit
- Roman Catholicism
 - Also teaches that a person is saved by grace through faith at baptism
 - It is here where the person receives what is called “sanctified grace”

- But in order to keep your salvation
 - You need to continually obey the law
 - Otherwise - your salvation / sanctified grace can be forfeited by committing mortal sin
- Why is this so ingrained within our human nature?
 - To try and please God by our works?
 - Adam fell in the Garden under the Covenant of Works
 - Fallen humanity is still operating under the principle of works
 - Our human nature is always trying to please God and make up for our sins
 - Adam – in the Garden – was sinless / He was able to keep the law perfectly
 - This is no longer possible
 - All of Adam’s posterity sinned with him and fell with him
 - We are no longer capable of pleasing God by our actions
 - Because of the indwelling sin within us
 - But those who are not in the Covenant of Grace:
 - Meaning – those who are not saved by faith
 - Are still under the Covenant of Works and continue to try and please God by their works

How Does the Law of Moses Fit In?

The Law of Moses – Exodus 20

- The Ten Commandments are the moral law of God in written form
- In no way do they change or contradict the will of God revealed up to this point
- Rather – they amplify it greater detail
 - Natural law – is what we learn about God from the created order and human nature
 - Moral law is the morality God has already placed within our hearts from the start
 - **Romans 2:14-15** - ¹⁴ *For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law.* ¹⁵ *They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them*
 - Our sin nature has distorted this within us
 - The Ten Commandments are detailed account giving us insight and clarity
 - It is a written format of the moral law
 - The moral law did not start in Exodus 20 with the Ten Commandments
 - It was part of the created order from the beginning
 - The source of the moral law being the very character of God Himself
- In every era of biblical history, God has been in relationship with His people
 - He blesses His people
 - The people then respond out of obedience and submission

- Under the Mosaic Economy - there were two other categories of law that were created
 - Civil laws and Ceremonial laws
 - The civil and ceremonial aspects of the law were fulfilled in Christ
 - They are no longer practiced today
 - Example of Civil law –
 - We no longer stone someone to death for committing adultery
 - Because we are no longer living under the Theocratic Kingdom of Israel
 - Example of Ceremonial law -
 - Keeping the Passover meal from Exodus 14
 - Christ is now our Passover Lamb
 - The Levitical Priesthood is no more
 - The ceremonial laws - religious regulations / feasts / have come to an end
 - The book of Hebrews explains how Christ is superior to the Levitical Priesthood and Moses
 - Therefore – the civil and ceremonial laws are no longer in place today
 - They were a type of the Messiah to come
 - They foreshadowed Christ who fulfilled the law
 - But – the moral aspect of the law is for all people at all times
 - We are all created to worship God correctly
 - Stealing / murdering / coveting / have always been sins
 - The Sabbath Day observance was inaugurated at the time of creation and continues till this day

Confusion Over the Law

Are the Ten Commandments for the New Testament church today?

- The Ten Commandments were given under the Mosaic Economy
 - This being the case – Is the church still under the law today?
- Many Christians today say no – we are no longer under the Ten Commandments or the Old Testament
 - Rather – we are under grace = the New Covenant
 - Since Christ has abolished the law:
 - We are no longer under the law but under grace?
 - Meaning – the Ten Commandments were for Israel and not the Church?

Is this true?

Many Christians today would say yes based upon the verses below

- Here is the proof that Christians are no longer under the law:

- **Romans 7:6** – *But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code*
- **Galatians 3:25-26** ²⁵ *But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith*
- **Romans 6:14** – *For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace*
- **Romans 7:4** – *Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ...*
- **Romans 10:4** - *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes*
- **Ephesians 2:15** – *(Christ) by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace*
- **2 Corinthians 3:11** – *For if what was being brought to an end came with glory, much more will what is permanent have glory*
 - If the Ten Commandments are still for today, how do you reconcile these verses?
- The answer:
 - Yes - a believer is still required to follow the Ten Commandments today
 - Not the *civil* and *ceremonial* aspects of the Mosaic Covenant - OT
 - Those become obsolete
 - But the moral law has been around since creation
 - The Ten Commandments are a detailed description of God’s moral law
 - This means they are still valid for the church today
 - As **Romans 3:31** states:
 - *Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law*
 - Faith doesn’t replace the law
 - Faith fulfills the law for us
 - Because it trusts in Christ’s fulfillment of the law
 - And because of the grace we receive through faith:
 - We continue to uphold the law
 - Paul is not telling the Christian they no longer under the Ten Commandments
 - He is telling the Christian they are not justified by the law
 - As **Romans 3:28** tells us - *For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law*
 - It is not that we are no longer under the Ten Commandments
 - Rather – we are not justified by the Ten Commandments
 - The Ten Commandments could never justify to begin with
 - The law can only condiment
 - We are justified only by the righteousness of Christ
- What about Romans 10:4?

- For Christ is the ***end of the law*** for righteousness to everyone who believes
 - What does Christ being “the end of the law” mean?
- It can be understood in one of two ways:
 - 1 – Christ terminated the law – meaning we are no longer under it
 - Which would mean we are no longer under the Ten Commandments
 - 2 – Christ is the goal / fulfillment of the law – fulfilling its righteous requirement
 - Which would mean we are still under the Ten Commandments
- The Greek word for “end” is *telos*
 - The BDAG lexicon defines *telos* as meaning:
 - 1 - a point of time marking the end of a duration, *end, termination, cessation*
 - 2 - the goal toward which a movement is being directed, *end, goal, outcome*
 - The question is – which definition fits the context of Romans 10:4?
 - As with any series study of a text:
 - CONTEXT IS KEY
- Romans 10:4 finds itself in the middle of Romans 9:30 - 10:13
 - It has to be understood in the context where the verse is found
 - It cannot be taken out and interpreted on its own
 - We choose the correct definition of *telos* by the context its in
 - The context of Romans 9:30 – 10:13 is contrasting two ways for a person to obtain righteousness with God
 - 1 - By works of the law
 - 2 - By faith in the Gospel
 - Israel attempted to attain their salvation by works
 - And they failed
 - The Gentiles attained salvation by faith in the Gospel
 - And were successful
 - The object of faith in both the Old and New Testaments was the same
 - Faith in the Messiah
 - Not works
 - This means - Christ being “the end of the law” is referring to Jesus completing the righteous requirement of the law
 - This is what the Jews failed in doing
 - The text is not saying Jesus has now abolished the Ten Commandments
 - As Romans 8:3-4 states:
 - **Romans 8:3-4** – ³ *For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he*

*condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that **the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us**, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit*

- Jesus did for us what we could not do
 - He lived a perfect life according to the law
 - He fulfilled every aspect of it
- This is why Paul could say:
 - **Romans 8:1** - *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*
 - Jesus took our guilt
 - We took His righteousness
- Now - Going back to the context of Romans 9:30 - 10:13
 - We see Romans 10:4, in its context, referring to the end of the law as the righteous requirement of Christ fulfilling the demands of the law
 - In the very next verse, **Romans 10:5** - we read:
 - *For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them*
 - In context: Paul is warning us not to be like the Israelites who tried to earn their salvation by keeping the law
 - He is encouraging us to believe in what Christ has done
 - Christ fulfilled (telos) the law for us
 - We receive justification by believing in the finished work of Christ
 - Not by the works of the law
- Now – go back to the beginning of this lesson and re-read those verses that seemed to indicate that we no longer are under the law
 - What they are referring to is the “righteous requirement of the law” has been completed in Christ
 - We are no longer under the curse of the law
 - Those verses are not saying the law is obsolete and no longer valid for Christians today
 - Or that the law was for the OT and grace is for the NT
 - Grace and law are found in both Testaments
- Always keep Romans 3:31 in mind when this gets confusing:
 - **Romans 3:31** - *Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law*
 - The law has been with us since the beginning of creation
 - Salvation has always been by grace through faith
 - Grace and law work together in forming the perfect rule of righteousness

4. Q. What does God’s law require of us?

A. Christ teaches us this in a summary in Matthew 22: Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

The Law as Devotion

John 14:15 - *If you love me, you will keep my commandments*

Two of the most important questions anyone can ask in life are:

- 1 – Who is God?
- 2 – What does He require of me?
 - We turn a blind eye to this because we choose to pursue our own lifestyle instead
 - But we cannot escape the reality that we will all stand before God someday and give an account
 - He is real
 - He is the judge
 - He requires us to live according to His law

The Two Responses to the Law of God

- To the unregenerate heart –
 - The law of God can only take 2 forms:
 - 1 - Legalism
 - 2 - Rebellion
- Legalism – we try to keep the law the best we can in order for God to be pleased with us
 - This is a misuse of the law
 - The only reason God is pleased with us is because of what Christ has already done for us
 - Not because we try to be a good person
- Rebellion – we go the other way and sin against the law
 - Without any fear / reverence / or respect for God in our hearts
 - We live how we please
 - We reject it entirely –
 - Unless it benefits us for some purpose

Understanding the Fear of the Lord

- The Fear of the Lord simply put is -
 - The proper and holy response to God and His law
 - When we continue to match our affections and desires to it
 - When we submit more and more to God and imitate His moral character
- We demonstrate a lifestyle of fearing God in four ways:
 - 1 - Through faith and trust
 - Faith is the necessary requirement for true obedience

- **Hebrews 11:6** - *And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists (is) and that he rewards those who seek him*
 - Its not just having the knowledge of the law
 - It is not just being in agreement with the law
 - It is trusting in the law through saving faith in Christ
 - Saving faith is what produces the relationship between us and God
- **2 - Moral alignment to God's own character**
 - Our wills begin to reflect who God is more and more
 - Our wills conform His
 - We are to pray – “your kingdom come, your will be done”
 - We conduct ourselves as Christ would conduct Himself
 - We love God as we should
 - We love our neighbor as ourselves
 - **Psalm 18:24** - *So the Lord has rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his sight*
- **3 – Being in Constant Awe for God**
 - To show respect and honor because of His holy character and supreme essence
 - The awe of God is how a person would react if they saw God for themselves
 - **Revelation 1:17** - *When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last”*
 - Do we approach God with this kind of awe in our prayers every day?
- **4 - Reverence for God**
 - Be an imitator of Him
 - Every kid mimics their favorite sports hero
 - Musicians pattern their style after other musicians
 - We are to do the same with Christ
 - To perfectly reflect His moral character in everything we do
 - **Leviticus 19:2** - *“Speak to all the congregation of the people of Israel and say to them, You shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy*

The Law as God's Grace to Us

- Normally when we think of the law we think of strict legalism
- We think of a God who is angry with us when we break it
- But the law is actually an extension of God's grace to us
 - We normally do not see it this way
 - We see it the opposite way
 - Like Eve did in the Garden
 - By thinking God is holding something back from us

- Something good that we can delight in
- But God is telling us how to live a meaningful life
 - We actually have a copy of what God desires from us
 - We have a copy of how God wants us to live
- God is telling us this because He knows what is best for us
 - He is not holding us back
 - His law is not meant to be cold and stoic
 - Rather – it is God lovingly telling us how to live a life of meaning and purpose

The Threefold Use of the Law

- 1 - Civil restraint of sin
 - God's common grace given to the fallen world at large
 - Brought about through the knowledge of God's law already written upon the human heart
 - The law is not used as a means of grace here
 - It is to restrain sin and keep peace in society
 - It is the role of civil government to accurately administer justice accordingly
 - **Romans 13:1-2** - *Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment.*
- 2 - Teaching and leading a person to Christ
 - The law brings a person under the conviction of their sins
 - It makes a person conscious and aware of their behavior
 - It creates awareness within a person that they have failed and not lived up to God's standards
 - The law is like a teacher and is used as a means by which God draws a person to Himself
 - **Galatians 3:23-26** - ²³ *Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴ So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith*
- 3 - Relationally and devotionally in sanctification
 - This use is for the believers only as they grow in Christ
 - It is used to better reflect the image of God in our daily lives
 - It reminds the Christian of their daily duties and responsibilities
 - This is not meant to be followed in a legalistic manner
 - By becoming impersonal and burdensome
 - But rather it is to be followed relationally through the indwelling Holy Spirit
 - **Psalm 19:7** – *the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul*

2.5 Q. Can you keep all this perfectly?

A. No, I am inclined by nature to hate God and my neighbor

The Scriptures are clear – all human beings sin

- **Rom 3:10** – *None is righteous, no, not one;*
- **1 Jn 1:8** – *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*
- **Psalm 51:5** - *Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*

Question to Consider:

- Is it possible for a believer to reach a point in their spiritual growth where they no longer sin?
- There were Christian movements in the past that believed a Christian could actually attain a state of sinless perfection

Perfectionism / Wesleyan Perfectionism / The Holiness Movement / Methodist Perfectionism – Phoebe Palmer / Charles Finney / The Keswick Movement (1875 – 1920)

These movements began in the late 19th century and continued into the 20th century

- Found in Evangelical and Pentecostal circles
- They paved the way for Billy Sunday / D.L. Moody / and Billy Graham
- There was a shift in theology from Reformed to Arminian Free will theology during this time in American Christianity

These movements taught that a Christian can achieve a state of sinlessness in their lives

These movements differed slightly from each other in some ways

Here is a summary of what they believed

- There were always two steps: first you get saved, and then you get serious.
 - Too many Christians were saved but not serious
 - A second Baptism of the Spirit is needed in order for one to reach the state of being perfect – not sinning
- Without this many Christians are “carnal” not “spiritual.”
 - They experienced the first blessing but still needed the second blessing.
 - Jesus was their Savior, but he still wasn’t their Lord
 - Salvation is broken down into two stages:
 - 1 - The Carnal Christian has accepted Jesus as Savior but not Lord
 - 2 - The Spiritual Christian has accepted Jesus as both Savior and Lord
 - It is at this second baptism where the person becomes Spirit filled
 - When they accept Him as Lord

- They are now able to willfully stop sinning at this point
- Famous sayings from this movement:
 - “I was saved when I was eight years old, and I surrendered to Christ when I was twelve.”
 - “I accepted Christ as my Savior when I was eight years old, and I accepted Christ as my Lord when I was twelve.”
- This is what is known as the “Lordship Salvation Controversy”
 - The history of this debate goes back 150 years
 - We see it in 1919 between Lewis Sperry Chafer and Warfield
 - It repeated itself in the 1950s with Steven Barabas (Keswick) and John Murray (Reformed)
 - And again in the 1980s and 90s with Charles Ryrie (Chaferian) and John F. MacArthur Jr. (Reformed)
- Billy Graham would preach this:
 - Make Christ your Lord if you had only accepted Him as Savior
 - This theology separates justification from the start of one’s sanctification
- The main supporter and teacher of this today is Dallas Theological Seminary
- It was the blending of Wesleyan Perfectionism and American revivalism that brought about the Holiness Movement
 - The belief that a state of Christian perfection can exist within a believer
 - The perfection of the will is available to every Christian after conversion
 - This comes by way of a second regeneration – a second baptism in the Spirit
 - The path to sinless perfection
 - It does not mean they cannot sin
 - It means they choose not sin

What does the Bible teach?

- The Bible teaches one Spirit Baptism that takes place during conversion
 - **1 Corinthians 12:13** - *For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body*
 - The Keswick / Holiness crowd would agree
 - But...
 - **Ephesians 4:5** - *one Lord, one faith, one baptism*
 - There is one Spirit Baptism
 - It takes place at conversion
 - There are not two separate Spirit baptisms
- Sanctification - starts the moment a person believes
 - When Christ unites a person to Himself at conversion
 - The Holy Spirit works saving faith within a person’s heart
 - This Faith results in accepting Jesus as both Savior and Lord at conversion
 - Remember – salvation is God’s work
 - It is not the work of man
 - Our salvation is not broken down based upon our understanding of Jesus as Savior and Jesus as Lord

- When God gives us saving faith - He gives us both
- Our sanctification grows over time after a person has been saved
 - It is gradual process
 - The power of sin is broken but the presence remains
 - For the rest of our lives - we grow in our grace and knowledge
 - Dying more and more to sin and living unto righteousness