

Walking with Jesus Through Sinai:
 Seeking Moral Clarity in an Age of Chaos with the 10 Commandments
 CPC Adult Sunday Studies Fall 2024
 2 - Law and Gospel

**Law & Gospel:
 How They Speak Against, With and Through Each Other**

1. Seeing the Differences between Law & Gospel in Scripture

1. The preface to the 10C - *"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery." (Exod. 20.2)*

1. They are already redeemed, and now this is how they are to live.

1. However, Israel has a twofold relationship to the law:

1. Moral requirements, as all humans are born into

2. National requirements, tied to their receipt of the Promised Land, which they ultimately forsake and lose (it's only through the unconditional promise to Abraham that Israel's purpose is fulfilled and they're brought out of exile ultimately in Christ, despite their apostasy and breaking of the Law's conditions)

2. Rom. 3.19-31 - *"Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. 20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. 21 But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it— 22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. 26 It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. 27 Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. 28 For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. 29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of*

Gentiles also, 30 since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. 31 Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.”

3. **Gal. 2.14-21** - *“But when I saw that their conduct was not in step with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, “If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you force the Gentiles to live like Jews?” 15 We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; 16 yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. 17 But if, in our endeavor to be justified in Christ, we too were found to be sinners, is Christ then a servant of sin? Certainly not! 18 For if I rebuild what I tore down, I prove myself to be a transgressor. 19 For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. 20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.*
 1. *v.18, though complex, reveals our whole new relationship to the law - we're not rebuilding the same thing - it's as if it's a whole new law because I'm no longer a transgressor under punishment.*
 1. The Galatians were “going back to the law” as if Christ had not died and transformed our approach to the law.
 2. Rom. 8, however, talks about the “law of the Spirit” which gives life, which is how we’ll be discussing “good works” in this class:
 1. *“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 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.” (Rom. 8.1-4)*

2 - On Justification and Sanctification

- **Justification** “is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.” (WSC 33). Think two things: forgiveness and righteousness
- **Sanctification** “is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.” (WSC 35)
- **How they differ** - “Although sanctification be inseparably joined with justification, yet they differ, in that God in justification **imputes** the righteousness of Christ; in sanctification his Spirit **infuses** grace, and **enables** to the exercise thereof; in the former, sin is pardoned; in the other, it is subdued: the one doth **equally** free all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that perfectly in this life, that they never fall into condemnation; the other is **neither equal** in all, nor in this life perfect in any, but growing up to perfection.” (WLC 77)
 - *How it looks in the Christian life* - “They work to kill sin and they work to live in the Spirit. They have rest in the gospel, but never rest in their battle against the flesh and the devil. The child of God has two great marks about him: **he is known for his inner warfare and his inner peace.**” - Kevin DeYoung, *The Hole in our Holiness* [paraphrasing JC Ryle’s “Holiness”]
- This class will, in effect, be a class on sanctification, though always in light of the truth of our justification. If we confuse the 2, this class will only make things worse!
- The danger, of course, in spending so much time in the 10C is to fall back into legalism. But we don't want to be fear-driven! There's an equal and opposite danger of antinomianism if we never talk about the 10C.

3 - On Good Works

WCF 16.2 - “These good works, done in obedience to God’s commandments, are the **fruits** and **evidences** of a true and lively faith: and by them believers **manifest** their thankfulness, **strengthen** their assurance, **edify** their brethren, **adorn** the profession of the gospel, **stop** the mouths of the adversaries, and

glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto, that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.”

- The gospel working itself out - “Persons who know they are totally accepted already do the right thing out of sheer delight in righteousness for its own sake. Only in the gospel do you obey God for God’s sake, and not for what God will give you. Only in the gospel do you love people for their sake (not yours), do good for its own sake (not yours), and obey God for his sake (not yours). Only the gospel makes ‘doing the right thing’ a joy and delight, not a burden or a means to an end.” - Keller
- Yet we do have to understand, often, which good works are the works we should do. Sometimes, those in the gospel-centered movement make it appear as if we’ll naturally start knowing and doing the right thing, without the work it takes to figure out what that is. The motivation is natural to the gospel (as Keller say), the work itself may not be.

Good works accepted in Christ - 16.6 - “the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him; not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unprovable in God's sight; but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many weaknesses and imperfections.”

Works by non-Christians - 16.7 - “Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands; and of good use both to themselves and others: yet, because they proceed not from an heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner, according to the Word; nor to a right end, the glory of God, they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God: and yet, their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God.”

How do we know what works to do? On the Law of God

WCF 19.1 - “God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience, promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.”

Given to Israel - 19.2 – “This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of

righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two tables: the first four commandments containing our duty towards God; and the other six, our duty to man."

Three parts to the Law

1. *Ceremonial* [19.3] – connected to sacrifices, temple, etc. – now ceased, why?
2. *Civil* [19.4] – connected to Israel as nation-state and body politic – now ceased, but differently from the ceremonial - why?
 1. Church is no longer national or political, but transnational; no longer strictly physical or temporal, but spiritual. For example, 1Cor. 5.13 - Old Testament civil law of execution gets re-applied to the church as excommunication (which is merely verbal). So it's not ceased, but transformed.
 2. Hence, no holy wars in the New Covenant now, our battle is spiritual (Eph.6.10ff).
3. *Moral* – 19.5 – "The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof.....Neither doth Christ, in the gospel, any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation"
 1. *Three uses of the Moral Law* [19.6]
 1. **Enclectic/Pedagogical** - reveals our sin and need for Christ - this is particularly evident in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus teaches us the full force of the Moral Law in order to show just how far away we are from fulfilling it.
 2. **Civil** – curbing evil and injustice in society in general
 3. **Didactic ("third")** – guiding believers in grateful obedience. This is the so-called "third use of the law" that the Reformed tradition is known for, but other traditions certainly teach similar things.

Notice that the law is a form of God's love - He loves us enough to tell us what will destroy us and how to avoid sin and pursue righteousness. It would NOT be love, if He left us without a law.

The Moral Law is summarized in the 10C, the subject of the rest of this class.