

More on God's Promises and God's Law

by Bob Hoekstra

The sermon explores the relationship between God's law and His promises, emphasizing that the law reveals sin while promises provide access to righteousness through faith in Christ.

Scripture: Leviticus 19:2, Romans 3:19-20, Romans 7:7, Galatians 3:19

Topics: "Gods Law", "Divine Promises"

Description

Bob Hoekstra delves into the purpose of God's law, emphasizing that it was added because of transgressions to make people aware of their sinfulness and accountability before God. The law does not replace God's promises but serves to reveal His holiness and the standard of holy living He desires for His people. While the law convicts of sin, the promises of God offer forgiveness and righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ, highlighting the need for reliance on God's grace for salvation.

Transcript

What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions . . . Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Galatians 3:19, 21-22)

In our previous meditation, we saw that God implements His plan of salvation by making and fulfilling promises. His plan is not contingent upon man's ability to perform acceptably before His holy law. To put it another way, the law of God (given hundreds of years after the promises to Abraham) does not replace those promises.

This raises a very important question: "What purpose then does the law serve? " If God's law did not cancel or rearrange His promises to Abraham, then, why was it added? "It was added because of transgressions." God wanted people to know that they had a major problem: sin. Man's sin needed to be clearly defined. "For by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). The extent of sin would never be fully known apart from the law. "I would not have known sin except through the law" (Romans 7:7). Also, God wanted everyone in this world to know that they were accountable to Him for their transgressions. Thus, the law convicts the sinfulness of man, that "all the world may become guilty before God" (Romans 3:19).

This raises another important question. "Is the law then against the promises of God? " The law does not replace God's promises, but does it work against His promises? "Certainly not! " The law of God and the promises of God simply have different purposes (just as it is with law and grace). The law of God reveals the holiness that is inherent to the very character of God. At the same time, it describes the holy life that God wants His people to live. "You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" (Leviticus 19:2). The promises of God become the means by which man deals with his unholiness and accesses God's holiness. This is what true spiritual life is about: forgiveness of sin and a life of righteousness in Christ. This cannot come by law performance. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law." Rather, the promise of life is entered into only by faith. "But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe."

O Holy Lord, I confess that in my own natural resources there is no innate holiness. I can find forgiveness of sin and true righteousness from You alone. Help me to understand the difference between Your law which convicts and Your promises which bring life, through Christ my Lord, Amen.

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