

The Law of Christ 1 of 3

by Charles Leiter

The sermon explores the distinction between the Law of Christ and the Law of Moses, emphasizing the personal relationship believers have with God through the new covenant established by Christ.

Duration: 44:14

Scripture: Jeremiah 31:31-34, Matthew 6:33, Romans 13:8-10, 1 Corinthians 9:19, Galatians 5:14, James 2:8, 1 Peter 2:9

Topics: "Christ's Rejection", "God's Plan"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the parable of the vineyard from Matthew 21. He explains that the problem was that the owner of the vineyard sent slaves to collect produce, but they received nothing. This parallels the repeated rejection of God's messengers by Israel. The speaker then highlights that Jesus, as the Son, was also rejected and crucified by those who knew who He was. The sermon emphasizes that throughout history, God has been moving towards the culmination of all things in Christ, starting from the promise made in Genesis 3. The speaker also mentions the law of Moses, which was given to show humanity their sinfulness and need for a Savior, ultimately leading to the reality of Christ.

Transcript

Well, what a privilege it is for me to be here with you this evening and to look into the Word of God with you. We're going to be considering tonight and tomorrow this subject of the Law of Christ. And in one way, it's of tremendous advantage to be talking about the Lord Jesus Christ, because He's such a wonderful subject.

In another way, it's a tremendous disadvantage, because we know we cannot begin to describe and to do justice to Him. His glory is such that we can't do that. And so, we're utterly dependent upon the Holy Spirit to make real to us these things.

Let's turn this evening to 1 Corinthians 9, and we'll begin reading with verse 19. I'm reading from the New American Standard Translation, 1 Corinthians 9, and verse 19. For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win them all.

And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews. To those who are under the law, as under the law, though not being myself under the law, that I might win those who are under the law. To those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God, but under the law of Christ, that I might win those who are without law.

To the weak, I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it.

Let's pray once more. Our Father, we pray that You would do what we cannot do, and that You would make Your truth come forth in power and clarity and revelation to our hearts. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.

I want to ask you some questions this evening as we go along. And the first thing, just to begin with, we've read here in verse 20 and 21 about three groups of people. So I would ask you, who are the three groups in verses 20 and 21? First of all, who does Paul mention? The Jews.

So first of all, the Jews. And then secondly, in verse 21, who does he talk about? The Gentiles, those without the law. And then finally, the third group is Christians, represented by Paul himself.

Now, how does he describe these groups? Well, he speaks of the Jew as being under the law. Now, that's quite a way of saying it, isn't it? Under the law. And he's talking about the law of Moses.

And then he describes the Gentile, and he says they're without law. Now, let me ask you a question here. Are Gentiles completely without law? Do they have any kind of law? They have some kind of law.

What is that law that they have? Excuse me? Conscience. Or we say the law written on the heart. Where does the Bible talk about that? Romans chapter 2. Let's just turn to that.

Keep your place here. In Romans chapter 2, Paul talks about that. In verse 14, he says, For when Gentiles who do not have the law, that is the law of Moses, do instinctively or literally by nature the things of the law, these not having the law are a lot of themselves, in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending themselves.

So, the Gentiles, he says they're without law. He's talking about the law of Moses. They have some kind of law.

They have the work of the law written on the heart. You remember there in the book of Acts, when Paul was bit by that serpent? You remember what they said? They said, this man must have been a murderer, and vengeance or justice has not allowed him to live. Now, where did they get the idea that murder was wrong? And where did they get the idea that there's such a thing as justice? You see, they had that innately without ever being taught the Ten Commandments, the law of Moses, any of those things.

So, men have the work of the law written on the heart, but relatively speaking, Paul says, they are without the law. In other words, we'd say in our day, we could say the man that's never heard the Bible, the man that's never heard the law of Moses or the Ten Commandments. And then there's this third group, the Christian.

Now, this is amazing, isn't it? Here is Paul, who was Saul the Pharisee, and he starts talking about those Jews over there. He says, to those Jews, I became like a Jew. Something tremendous, something miraculous has happened where this Pharisee, this one-time Jew of all Jews, is now standing over here talking about those Jews over there.

And he says, to those Jews, I became as those who are under the law. Now, he says, he's not under the law. He's not under that law.

He says, to the Gentiles, to these people over here that don't have the law, I became as one without law. Now, lest you get the idea that I went wild, he says, no, I still have the law of God. Now, isn't this something? He calls the law of God something different in this case than the law of Moses.

That's incredible. He says, I still have law toward God. He says, I'm under the law of Christ.

Now, for each of us as Christians, we ought to be able to say something about this law of Christ. What does it mean, the law of Christ? This is what I'm under. I'm under the law of Christ.

I'm in a relationship with Christ that has to do, and my rule of duty is this law of Christ. What is it? And so the question that we ought to ask and we ought to be able to answer, we ought to have an understanding, and that's what we want to look at, Lord willing, in these times. What is this law of Christ? And what does all this mean that Paul's talking about here? So, first of all, when we think about the law of Christ, the first thing I want to do is say what the law of Christ isn't.

And we're going to have to go back to some history in the Bible and look at things. But the law of Christ, we know plainly from this verse, the law of Christ cannot be equated with the law of Moses. Very clear here.

He says, to those who are under the law, I became as under the law, but I'm not really, you see. And so the law of Christ is something different than the law of Moses. The New Testament makes it very clear that Christians are not under the law of Moses.

Now, I want to take some time to look up some verses just so we can feel how major this is. Not one little passage we're building this on. This is something that comes up again and again.

So let's consider these. You can turn if you want, or you don't need to. But Romans chapter 6 and verse 14, he says, Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you're not under the law, but under grace.

You're under grace. Again, in Romans chapter 7, a major teaching on this in verses 4 to 6, Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the law through the body of Christ that you might be joined or married to another, to him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

But now we have been released from the law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. Now he talks about being released from the law and having died to the law. Again in Ephesians chapter 2 and verse 14, For he himself is our peace, who hath made both groups into one, that is, Jew and Gentile, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall by abolishing in his flesh the enmity.

Christ abolished the enmity, which is the law of commandments. Now that is pretty strong language, isn't it? He has abolished in his flesh the enmity, which is the law of commandments, contained in ordinances that in himself he might make or create the two into one new man, thus establishing peace. He might reconcile them both, Jew and Gentile, in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

So here it is. And then in Colossians chapter 2, parallel passage here, he says in verse 13, When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, he made you alive together with him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us, and he has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. Amazing words here.

And then one more passage in Galatians. Now there is a lot more than this, and we will be touching on some of them later, but just a sampling. Galatians chapter 2, Paul speaking here in verse 19, For through the law I died to the law that I might live to God.

What an amazing thing that is. I died to the law. This is a Pharisee speaking.

I died to the law that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. In the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and delivered himself up for me.

I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died needlessly. Now, the New Testament teaches clearly we are no longer under that law. We are not under that law.

We have died to that law. We are free from that law. Amazing words.

And in looking at this whole thing, I want us to just consider a little bit of history here. What was this law of Moses that he is talking about? It was not some little thing. Beloved, if you think back, and I am going to build an imaginary blackboard here, right about in here, 1,500 years before Christ, God gave that law through Moses.

And I say it was not a little thing. God came down, you remember, on that mountain, the mountain shaking. It was like a furnace, flames going up into the air.

And such sounds and frightful things that even Moses was exceedingly fearful and trembling. I mean, it was an incredible, mighty thing. And God Himself comes down and writes, and I do not know how He did it, but He writes those Ten Commandments on tablets of stone.

Now, you can see why the Jews, after having experienced that as a people, they thought this is it. And they centered everything around that law. And they had in the law the embodiment of truth and knowledge.

And they put their trust in that law. And they were looking at that thing. And they thought that was as permanent as permanent could be.

But beloved, some 900 years later, now here we are at 1,500, some 900 years later, the prophet Jeremiah said something from the Lord. You remember what it was? Behold, days are coming, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not like that old covenant, because they did not continue in that.

And I am going to make a covenant that they will continue in. And this is what I am going to do in that new covenant. He says, I am going to write my laws on their hearts.

Not on the tablets of stone, I am going to write them on the inside. And they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, for all shall know me from the least to the

greatest of them. Every single Christian knows the Lord.

Now, you could be a good Jew. You could be in the old covenant and not know the Lord. In fact, most of them did not know the Lord.

You just look at what they did. You could be a good Jew. You keep your sacrifices.

You are born a Jew. And you are born in that covenant without knowing the Lord. Now, you see, that is why we do not baptize infants.

People say, well, look, they circumcised infants. Why shouldn't we baptize infants? Well, they circumcised the infant because he really was in the old covenant by birth, by physical birth. Now, we do baptize infants, but they are spiritual infants, you see.

As soon as somebody gets born spiritually, they are in the new covenant. And we baptize that kind of infant. But you see the difference here? We are talking about a covenant in which every single person knows the Lord.

You come to one Christian who does not personally know the Lord. Beloved, do you know God personally? If you do not know Him personally, you are lost. It does not matter if you have come forward.

That is what it means to be in the new covenant. Do you remember what the Lord Jesus says? It is written in the Prophets, they shall all be taught of God. Every single one.

Every man who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me. There is none without exception. There is no exception.

Everybody that has heard and learned directly from God comes to Christ. They will get to Christ. You do not have to worry about that.

And nobody ever becomes a Christian without knowing God personally and having had God teach them personally. That is the new covenant. And what else does He say about the new covenant? He says, there are sins and there are iniquities.

I will remember no more. They are gone forever. The whole category is gone.

I will remember them no more. They are gone. They are taken care of.

Can you imagine what it was like to be a godly Jew and read those words from the Prophet Jeremiah? Days are coming, saith the Lord, when I am going to make a covenant where every single person in that covenant knows Me personally. And every one of them will have their sins wiped out forever. And every one of them will have My law written on the inside.

I think of these Jews looking and saying, when is it coming? When is it coming? One hundred years passes, nothing happens. Two hundred years, three hundred years, four hundred years, five hundred years, six hundred years later, in a little upper room with just a handful of men, Jesus says, this is it. This is My blood of the new covenant.

This cup is My blood of the new covenant. Now, the new covenant in My blood, not the blood of bulls and goats. The blood of Christ, the precious blood of Christ.

This new covenant is sealed with the real thing now. Beloved, we've got to get this thinking out of our heads, the idea, you know, was Christ really a priest? He was the only priest. No other priest ever put away sins by a sacrifice.

There was no other priest but Him. Was Christ a real prophet? There was no other prophet but Him. He is the final Word.

He's God speaking to man. Was He a real king? He's the only king that ever was. Every other king is just a little shadow.

Do you see how all of this stuff that came before is shadows? It's shadows. You're not dealing with substance back there, you're dealing with shadows. When you get up to Christ, then you start seeing what the real stuff is.

You start seeing what real temples are and real sacrifices. You see that? Now, the writer to the Hebrews, he says, look, in that He saith a new covenant, He's made that other one old, obsolete. And that which is obsolete and growing old, it's ready to pass away.

Now, the Jews did not like that. And that's a radical. Well, you can't blame them for not liking it.

I mean, you really can't. You're talking about what God did on Mount Sinai, and He's talking about all that passing away. I mean, we should have some sympathy for guys like Peter.

But think of what he's saying here. He's saying, God said it's a new covenant. That means that one is an old covenant, and it's gone.

You ever think about it? Why do we call this the Old Testament? Why do we call it the Old Covenant? God didn't say back there to Moses, I'm going to make an old covenant with you, Moses. He didn't say, we call that the Old Covenant because there's a new one. And the fact that there's a new one means that's an old one.

And the writer to the Hebrews says in chapter 8, he says, that means that thing's gone. Now, the Jews didn't like that. And they said, look, it's fine to believe on Christ, but you've got to keep that law.

Now, how is Paul going to refute them? He does refute them. In Galatians, for example, he spends the whole book refuting them. How is he going to refute this false teaching? He says, anybody who teaches that, let him be accursed.

It's not just a little error. Anytime you start adding a little bit of works in here, just a little bit, just a tiny bit, that's all it takes to put you in hell forever. Because you've moved from one realm into another realm.

And Paul says, look, if anybody comes saying that, if we are an angel from heaven, he says, if I come back here next week saying that, let him be anathema. If an angel comes down here and says, hey, I want to tell you that you've got to put a little bit of works in here, let him be accursed. He gets rough and ugly in Galatians, doesn't he? He says, I wish they'd even mutilate themselves, these guys that are saying this.

Unbelievable, the language that he uses, because it's heaven or hell. That's why. How is Paul going to refute them? Well, let me ask you a question.

Was there any other covenant besides the covenant through Moses? Let's hear, what was one outstanding one? Covenant with Abraham. Now, this is what Paul does. He says, look, here's the law of Moses here, 1500 BC.

But there was something before that. Come back here. Before the Jewish nation even got started, the father of the faithful, there was a covenant made with Abraham.

And that was 430 years before this covenant made through Moses. And that covenant was a covenant of promise. That's a big word.

It was sheer, flat-out promise. God said to Abraham, He said, go out and look at that sky. Count.

See if you can count them. That's how many seed, that's how many children you're going to have. Period.

It's a promise. It's absolutely certain. Paul goes back to that covenant to show the real place of the law of Moses.

Let's look at it in Galatians chapter 3. Galatians 3 and beginning at verse 15. He says, Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations, even though it's only a man's covenant. Yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it.

Now, the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, and to seeds, as he's referring to many, but rather to one, and to your seed, that is, Christ. What I'm saying is this.

The law which came 430 years later does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God so as to nullify the promise. Now, you see what he says in verse 15? Even in human relations, you don't nullify it. I mean, when my grandfather died, I remember our family got together and my older brother read his will.

And in that will, he said, I want my revolver and my old cap and ball rifle to go to my grandson, Charles. Well, that's the first thing I ever heard of it. I was surprised.

I was included in that will. And what did my brother say? Well, we'd just put a line through that because I kind of wanted to have that revolver. He didn't say that.

You don't do that. You don't come even with a man's covenant and start adding things on. Well, Charles can have that gun if he does such and such.

You see what Paul's saying? He's saying if this thing, if this inheritance is based on performance, it cannot be based on promise because promise is flat out. Now, that's really good when we start finding out what God promised Abraham. Let's read on.

Verse 18, For if the inheritance is based on law, it's no longer based on a promise. But God granted it to Abraham by means of a promise. Why the law then? What's the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions or for the sake of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made.

Now, a mediator is not for one party only, whereas God is only one. Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be. For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

You see, righteousness tied in with life and with law. But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.

Therefore, the law has become our tutor or schoolmaster to lead us to Christ that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under the tutor. Now, he says it again.

We read those verses about not being under the law. Here it says, you're no longer under. This child conductor brought us up to a certain point, and now we're no longer under that anymore.

That's what he said. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

There's neither Jew nor Greek. There's neither slave nor free man. There's neither male nor female.

For you're all one in Christ Jesus, and if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed heirs according to promise. There it is again. Promise.

Now, I want to take the remainder of our time here just to look a little bit at this idea of promise, where all we're doing here is just kind of getting some things stirred up and laying a foundation for what we're going to go on with, Lord willing, tomorrow. What did God promise Abraham? Well, first of all, He promised him a seed. And that seed was Isaac.

Remember that? In Isaac shall your seed be called. He promised him a seed. What else did He promise him? He promised him a nation.

He said, I'll make of you a great nation. And that nation was Israel. And He did.

He kept that promise. And He made of Abraham a great nation. We won't look up all these verses, but I think you know, many of you anyway, hopefully know them.

You can go back there to Genesis 12 and following and see those. He promised Abraham what? He said, get out of this land and this country, and I'm going to take you and what? I'll give you another land. He promised him a land.

And then He promised a blessing. He said, I'll bless you and through you, all the nations of the world will be blessed. And that blessing, riches, protection, old age, all those things He did give him.

And He gave him a land, physical land, the land of Canaan. He gave him a physical nation, the nation of Israel. And He gave him a seed, Isaac.

But beloved, when we read in the New Testament, we find out that promise was a lot deeper and a lot bigger than those physical things. Who was the real seed? Christ. Paul says that.

Just flat out says it. So God's, now think about this, how it's fulfilled. God says to Abraham, you're going to have a seed one day.

Sure enough, where'd the Messiah come from? He came from that lineage. And the Messiah came, the seed came. Now what else did He say? He said, I'm going to make of you a great nation.

You go out and count the stars, so shall your seed be. What did we just read about who the seed are? If you belong to Christ, you're Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. So there is a spiritual nation, and that nation is the church.

Now let me ask you, can you think of a verse that says that? It's nice to think about that. Is there any verses along that line? Alright, 1 Peter. Let's turn to that.

Tremendous portion of Scripture. 1 Peter, chapter 2. Beginning at, well, we won't read the whole section, but let's just read verse 9. But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood. Now see, this kingdom of priests that God talked about, that was not Israel.

The chosen race, that was not physical Israel. He says it right here. They were a picture and a type when God separated them out as a holy nation.

They were a picture and a type of a real holy nation. And they were set apart physically from the other nations as a picture and a type of people that would be set apart in reality from other nations. And that's the church.

You are a chosen race. You're a kingdom of priests. The church is a kingdom of priests offering up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Can you think of another one? How about this? Matthew 21, 43. He says, the kingdom of God is going to be taken away from you and given to a nation.

It's going to be taken away from you and given to a nation that brings forth the fruit thereof. You remember that? Let's turn back to it. We've got plenty of time here tonight.

Matthew chapter 21. What was the problem? Jesus told this parable of this vineyard. And the owner of that vineyard would send slaves to receive produce and got nothing.

That's what happened with Israel repeatedly. Finally, He sends His Son. You know what the Lord is saying here? He's saying, first of all, He's telling who He is.

I'm the Son. He's also saying something about those people that crucified Him. This is the heir.

Come, let us kill Him. And they knew who He was. They knew in their hearts what was going on.

And they crucified Him. And He says in verse 40, Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine growers? And they said to Him, He'll bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vine growers who will pay Him the proceeds at the proper season. Jesus said to them, Did you never read in the Scriptures? The stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief cornerstone.

This came about from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes. Therefore, I say to you, Therefore, I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation, producing the fruit of it. Beloved, the church, I'm not talking about Christendom, but the church produces the fruit of the kingdom.

If what you're looking at is not producing the fruit of the kingdom and giving it back to the Master, you're not looking at the church. That's the whole point of this transfer of the kingdom. He's going to give it to a nation that will bring forth the fruit of it.

What about the land? What about the land? What's the land? He said, I'm going to give you a country. Well, let's look at Hebrews chapter 11. Hebrews 11 and verse 13.

All these died in faith without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For those who say such things make it clear that they are seeking a country of their own. And if indeed they had been mindful, remembering, thinking about that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return.

You want to go back? The way is wide open. If that's what you want. But that's not what they wanted.

If they had been thinking of that country from which they went out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country that is a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them.

Do you know what that means? Abraham was not just looking for the physical land of Canaan. That's what it says. He's desiring a heavenly country.

And this promise of the land has to do with the new heavens and the new earth. Think of it in Romans chapter 4. Paul says this, The promise that he should be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law. You see that? He's going to inherit the world.

There's going to be... What did Jesus say? Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit, there it is again, the earth. And God said to Abraham, He said, You're going to sojourn, and one day you're going to live as a stranger in exile in land. One day you're going to inherit the very land that you're in exile in right now.

Your seed, to your seed I will give the land of their sojournings. Who are His seed? We are. Isn't this amazing? Right now, Christians are crushed and ridiculed and walked on.

True Christians are. But blessed, Jesus said, are the meek, for they're going to inherit the whole thing. Now think about this, beloved.

God says to Abraham, He says, I'm going to give you a seed, and I'm going to make of you a great nation, just like the stars in heaven. It's certain. It has to do with my eternal purpose.

It has to do with my promise. It doesn't have to do with human performance. It has to do with what I'm going to do, what I've said I'm going to do.

It's a promise. It's by grace that it might be by faith, not by anything that we do. And He says, I'm going to give you a land.

What else did He say? I'm going to bless you. What's the blessing? This is a little bit harder. What's the blessing? Let me put it this way.

What's the opposite of blessing? A curse. Now, let's go look at this in Galatians. Galatians chapter 3 and verse, well, He's already said in verse 7, Be sure that those who are of faith are the sons of Abraham.

Look at verse 8. The Scripture foreseeing what? That God would justify the Gentiles by faith. Preach the gospel. That's what it is there.

It's evangelized right there. Preach the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, All the nation, that's the Gentiles, shall be blessed in you. Blessing, beloved, has to do with justification.

Just like the curse has to do with condemnation. Now, let's read on. Verse 9, So then, those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham the believer.

For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse. For it is written, Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law to perform them. Now that no one is justified by the law before God is evident, for the righteous man shall live by faith.

However, the law is not of faith. On the contrary, he who practices them shall live by them. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us.

For it is written, Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree, in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles. And as a result of that justification, we receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Lost men, and Lord willing we'll look at this tomorrow, lost men are walking around under a curse all the time.

It's resting upon them. They're condemned. When you become a Christian, you're justified in the sight of God and blessing comes down upon you and it stays on you all the time.

Blessedness. Blessed. Now what does David say? David describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without work, saying, Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin. Blessedness. Now look at this.

Way back here with Abraham, God says, I'm going to send a seed through you. And I'm going to make of you a great nation. Spiritually speaking, we're talking here about the church.

And He says, all the nations of the earth, Gentiles like us, are going to get justified through, they're going to be blessed through you. You see all this? And one day you're going to inherit the whole world. And your seed will inherit the whole world.

Now, I don't know how much of that Abraham saw, but you remember the Lord Jesus said, He said, they said, you're not yet 50 years old. You seen Abraham? He said, your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day. And he saw it and was glad.

Now look at what we've done here. We've gone to the New Testament. And we have found out a whole lot more meaning than things that we would not have gotten if we started in the Old Testament and imposed it on the New.

We've got to do this thing right. Now, it's true in every area. In a lot of the problems over the Sabbath, people come to the Old Testament, they set up everything that it ought to be in the New Testament, and then they ram that through the New Testament.

That's not the way to do it. Go to the New Testament. Find out how to understand things.

That's the way to interpret the Old. And that's true in every area. Find out what these things really mean and what the fulfillment of these things really is.

We ought to be radically taught by the New Testament. God, who at sundry times and in diverse manner spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, He's spoken now in His Son. You remember what happened on the Mount of Transfiguration? They said, Lord, it's good to be here.

Let's build three tabernacles. The cloud overshadowed them. He said, this is my Son.

This is a different thing entirely here. You're not talking about comparing Him with anybody else. Hear Him.

Have you ever wondered? I mean, here's Paul telling us. Paul's saying, look, the seed was Christ. Where in the world did he get that? And the blessings? Justification.

How did he get that? Well, we know it's by the revelation of the Holy Spirit. But have you ever thought about how, you know, I like to think about how it may have happened in his mind. What was the big stumbling block to the Jew? We preach Christ crucified to the Jews as a stumbling block.

Why was that such a big stumbling block? The idea of a crucified Messiah is a contradiction in terms. Here you come to a Jew and you say, the Messiah has come. I've got good news.

The one we've been waiting for for so long, He's come. They say, where is He? Well, He died on a Roman cross. He died as a condemned criminal under the worst type of judgment that you could have from the Roman government.

And worse than that, you go back to the Bible and you find out that anybody who hangs on a tree is cursed. And worse than that, you find out that they're cursed of God. Now, you try going to a Jew and say, listen, the Messiah has come, the one that's going to deliver us.

And I've got good news for you. He's been cursed of God and died and hung on a tree. Talk about a stumbling block.

Now, something happened to Paul. He's going down the road to Damascus, breathing out threatenings and slaughter, and he met somebody. And he didn't know who it was, but he knew one thing.

It was the Lord. Who art thou, Lord? And everything changed then. And he had a lot of thinking to do.

Now, think of what this must have been. He says, this man, he's the Messiah. He's the Son of God.

I know who He is. How could He have died under the curse of God? And then just like that, it must have happened. Isaiah said that he would die under a curse, but not his curse, my curse.

God put that curse upon him that was mine. That's the explanation. And he said he'd give his life a ransom for many.

That explains it all. And that explains why God said to Abraham, through you all the nations of the earth, the Gentiles will be blessed, because Christ bore the curse. See how everything... I don't know if that's the way it happened or not, but I know that God has all these things right here, doesn't He? It's just right there.

Right there. What a thing this is. What do we learn from all this? And I said we're trying... I'm closing here.

We're trying to lay a foundation. What do we learn? As we look back at these promises and see what they really meant and so on. What do we learn from the spiritual nature of these promises to Abraham? This is what we learn.

We learn that all along, God has been moving history toward the Lord Jesus Christ. That's where He's going, the summing up of all things in Christ. And it goes back even before the covenant with Abraham, it goes back to the promise made there in Genesis 3, you remember? God says to the devil, before He ever pronounced a curse on the woman and on the man, He says to the devil, He says, I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed.

If it hadn't been God putting it in there, it wouldn't have happened. We'd still be in league with the devil. We'd be just like that with him.

God says, I'm going to put enmity between you and her seed, and you're going to bruise His heel, He's going to crush your head. And that was in Genesis 3. And now He begins working His way toward Christ. He raises up the line of Seth after Abel is killed.

And He begins to work His way, and down through Noah, and up here He gets to Abraham. Now He's going to call out a nation. Now, He's calling out that nation, not as something permanent, but in order to get to Christ.

And He gives the law of Moses, you see. Once this nation is established, He gives the law of Moses as a schoolmaster to help get us there. And the law of Moses, what it does, it shows you, number one, how sinful you are and how much you need a Savior.

And it's loaded with types and pictures of the One who's coming that's real. This stuff is shadows, but it's going to give way to reality eventually. You talk about a parenthesis, Israel is the parenthesis.

It's on the way to get to the reality. That's it. God never goes backwards.

He's put His Son up here on the throne, ruling and reigning over the spiritual realms. He's got a spiritual nation of truly holy people, not just set apart by some ritual or ceremony. He's got reality.

There's substance now. There's reality. You see that? The same thing is true of the law of Moses as it is with the nation of Israel.

God gave the law of Moses with a purpose of getting us up to somewhere. And Paul says, now that the work's over, you're no longer undertutor. I like the picture that one brother used of a nurse crop.

And I don't remember on this from my days when I was growing up. We grew up on a little farm, but at least the way they used to do it was that when they planted alfalfa, they wouldn't just plant alfalfa by itself, but you'd plant something with it like oats so that it would have protection the first year. And it doesn't have to go through, you know, the rigors of winter.

But you've got to get something that will die out the next year so that the alfalfa can take over. That's what the nation of Israel is. It's a nurse crop.

The spiritual reality is inside there. And when John the Baptist came, he said, springtime's come. Time for the nurse crop to die out.

Now we're going to go on with reality. I think that's a pretty good picture. That's what the church is.

The church is not a physical thing. The church is a living God. It's not a political power.

The church is a spiritual reality, a spiritual entity. That's what we're a part of. If you truly know the Lord.

Lord willing, we're going to go on tomorrow and consider this subject of what it means to be free from the law. And what the law of Christ is. Amen.

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