

The Law of Christ 2 of 3

by Charles Leiter

The Christian is free from the law, not because they can sin and get away with it, but because they are no longer under the curse and condemnation of the law, and are free to live a life of righteousness and blessedness.

Duration: 58:12

Scripture: Deuteronomy 22:9, Matthew 5:17, 1 Corinthians 9:6, 1 Corinthians 9:19

Topics: "Christian Freedom", "Gods Grace"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses three key principles. Firstly, he addresses the misconception surrounding the term 'law of Moses,' emphasizing that it refers to the law given by God through Moses. He highlights the importance of using scriptural terminology. Secondly, he emphasizes the foundation of the Christian faith, which is God's grace and the indwelling life of Christ. He encourages believers to rely on what God has already done for them rather than striving in their own efforts. Thirdly, he emphasizes that the key to understanding the Bible is through the lens of Jesus Christ. He explains that throughout the Scriptures, God's plan was leading to the culmination in Christ. The speaker concludes by affirming that as Christians, we are no longer under the law but are freed from it and have eternal life through faith in Jesus.

Transcript

1 Corinthians chapter 9 and verse 19, and I'm using the New American Standard translation. Verse 19, For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win them all. 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.

I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it. Let's pray once again. Our Father, we are so thankful for this privilege to be able to gather together and look into Your Word.

To sit at the feet of the Lord Jesus and listen to what He would have to say to us this morning. Father, we think of this Word there again. It is written in the Prophets, they shall all, all be taught of God.

And we confess, Lord, this morning, that if You don't teach us, there will be no teaching done. Lord, we confess that we can't teach anything. We can't learn anything.

It's only by the power of Your Holy Spirit. And we ask You that You do that, that the things that are said might be right and the things that are heard might be right. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.

We began last evening to consider this great subject of the law of Christ. And we saw three great principles in the message last night. The first one is, we saw something concerning the real purpose of the law of Moses.

Now, I appreciate this because one of the brothers talked to me this morning about this phrase, law of Moses. Where does the Bible say the law of Moses? And that's good. That's very good because we need to have scriptural terminology.

And if you say the law of Moses, you get to thinking, well, it was just Moses' law. God didn't give that. It's just the law of Moses.

Well, it was the law that God gave through Moses. When we say the law of Moses, we've got to be careful. But nevertheless, even the Lord Jesus said things like this.

You remember in John chapter 5, He says, who is the one that accuses you? It's even Moses, in whom you have put your hope. And so there is terminology like this in the Bible, and we're not far off. We could just say Moses.

That would be the most scriptural. You could just say the law of Christ as opposed to Moses. But I think, I trust you'll get the idea when we talk about the law of Moses.

It wasn't Moses' law. God gave it. And it was absolutely perfect for what God gave it for.

Now, when you come to the New Testament, there is a certain strain of teaching that talks about the inferiority of the law. And Paul talks about these weak and worthless, beggarly elements and so on that you desire to be in bondage to and so on. There is an aspect in which the law was inferior, not because of anything wrong with the law, but because it didn't take care of the real problem we've got.

And it was a type and shadow in many ways of what was coming. On the other hand, you have another strain of teaching in the New Testament that talks about the law as holy and just and good and spiritual. And that's talking about the essence and the heart of the law, and that never changes, beloved.

That has to do with the very nature of God. And we'll see, Lord willing, today that this law that God gave, the very essence and heart of that law, has never changed, never will change. And that is the reality that is brought out in the very person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

So there's two sides to that thing. On the one hand, we've entered into the realities of which the Mosaic law, the Mosaic covenant was just a type and shadow. On the other hand, we've entered into the heart of what was the center of the law of Moses.

You see, the two things are both there. Well, what was the real purpose of the law of Moses? The law of Moses was not given ever for the purpose of adding conditions to the promises made to Abraham. We saw that yesterday.

That was never the purpose. The purpose for which it was given was to be a schoolmaster, a tutor, a child conductor to lead us up to Christ, to teach us about Christ. And it teaches us about Christ and leads us to Christ in many, many ways.

And particularly, historically, the Jewish nation, it conducted them up to the time when the Messiah would come. And then after that, Paul says, we're no longer under that schoolmaster. So we saw something of the real purpose of the law of Moses.

And secondly, we saw that even though many of the Old Testament promises appear to be physical in nature, and if all we had was the Old Testament, we might read them as just physical in nature. Nevertheless, when we get to the New Testament, we find out that their real meaning is spiritual. And in the case of Abraham, for example, we found out that God promised him a seed.

And that seed was really Christ. He promised him a nation. That nation was the church, the true holy nation, the true people of God.

He promised him a land, and that land is the new heavens and the new earth. We will inherit the world. If we're Christians, the meek shall inherit the earth.

And then he promised him a blessing. And we saw that the blessing is much deeper than anything physical. It didn't just have to do with having more cattle and so on.

The blessing has to do with the fact that instead of the curse being upon us, we're justified and blessed in the sight of God. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. All of those things were deeper spiritual meanings of promises that seem to be physical.

Now that is something that we find repeatedly in the New Testament. You remember in Psalm 89, God made a covenant with David. And He said that He would establish David's seed forever, and that his seed would reign on his throne, and that the throne of David, He says, is going to be like the sun forever before me.

Like the moon and like the sun before me. Like the days of heaven, it actually says. Now what's that mean? What's He talking about? Well, we get to the New Testament.

We find out the Lord Jesus Christ in Luke chapter 1. He sits on the throne of His father David, and of His kingdom there will be no end. And He'll reign on that kingdom forever. See, that's a spiritual reality.

Several passages that we could look at like that. So that's the second thing we saw. These promises, though they were physical in the Old, we find out the real fulfillment is spiritual in the New.

And we use the New Testament to try to understand the meaning of the Old Testament. Not the other way around. You don't take a candle to try to look at the sun.

You take the sun to look at the candle. And that's the reality that we have here. And then thirdly, we saw that the key to understanding the Bible is the Lord Jesus Christ.

You go anywhere in the Scriptures, and you remember after the resurrection He did that. He took them through the Scriptures and showed them all the things. And I mean, throughout the Old Testament, throughout the whole Bible, the center, the culmination of everything is Christ.

God was moving toward the Lord Jesus Christ. He was summing up all things in Christ. So with that little review and introduction, we saw yesterday that the Christian, according to the New Testament, the Christian is not under the law.

He says that. We're freed from the law. We're released from the law.

We're dead to the law. All of those terms are used. Now, the question is, what does it mean that I am released from the law? What does it mean that I'm freed from the law? It cannot mean that now it's OK to commit adultery and steal and kill and murder.

See, that's not what it means. But what does it mean when it says I'm free from the law? Well, it's very wonderful what it does mean. And I want to look at that today.

First of all, and all of this is introductory to this thing of the law of Christ. What does it mean that we're free from the law? Well, first of all, the Christian is no longer under the curse and condemnation of the law. We're free from the law in that sense.

We're no longer under its curse and condemnation. You see, every lost person lives his life under a curse. Galatians 3.10, as many as are of the works of the law are under this curse.

They're cursed. And the lost man is walking around all the time with a curse resting upon him. All the time.

Now, even when everything seems to be going well, when his garden is perfect and he's got a lot of money in the bank, he is resting under a curse all the time. Beloved, you don't want to be in that spot. It doesn't matter how good everything looks on the outside.

He's under a curse. The wrath of God is abiding upon him. And sometimes as Christians, we forget what it's like to be back under that curse.

Free from the law, oh happy condition. Jesus has died and bled. There's remission, you see.

So, this freedom from the law, first of all, freedom from the curse. Are you a Christian? If you're a Christian, there is therefore now no condemnation. There's not one little speck against you in the eyes of God's law.

If there were one little speck, if you had to pay for one thought, one wrong thought, you'd be in hell forever. There's not the slightest bit of condemnation upon you in the eyes of God's law. You're free from the law, the curse of the law.

It's been paid for you. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us. One of the reasons that a Christian can rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory is that his sins are gone forever.

He is in a position where God no longer imputes sin to him. Now, this is an amazing thing. Let me try to illustrate it.

Suppose I get up this morning, and I'm a little bit unkind to my wife. I don't think I was, where is she? And I don't even realize it. I don't even think about it.

You know, I don't even realize that I've been unkind. I sin. And I go off to work or whatever, and a little bit later I begin thinking about it.

Boy, I really, I sin. And I ask the Lord to forgive me. Oh, Father, forgive me.

And I call my wife and ask her to forgive me. Now, think about this. I committed a sin.

It was a real sin? Yeah, it was a sin. I didn't realize it at the time fully, but I did later. Now, between there and here where I confess it, suppose I died in between there.

Would I have gone to hell? No. You know what that means? That sin was not imputed to me. Even though I had not yet even recognized it or confessed it.

Now, let's make it a little harder. I get up in the morning, and I'm a little unkind to my wife, and I know I'm unkind to her. I know I committed a sin, and I go out the door.

And boy, that's bothering me. I'm not going to be able to go on like this. That's struggling around, and after a while you can't take it any longer, and you call your wife and say, would you forgive me? I'm so sorry for what I did.

Now, suppose I'd died and gone to hell in between there. I knew it was a sin. Would I have died and gone to hell? No, I wouldn't have gone to hell.

You know what that means? And I can prove that to you. Why was it bothering me all the time? Because I'm a Christian. Because I'm a child of God.

And whenever you get ready to confess it, you say, oh, Father, forgive me. That means you're a child of God, you see. Now you say, well, you're talking about, you mean even when you know you've committed a sin, it's not imputed to you? It's not laid to your account? That's what I'm talking about.

There are sins and there are iniquities I will remember no more. Well, aren't you afraid that you're going to give liberty and license to sin? Not if you're dealing with Christians, because Christians already sin more than they want to. Isn't that true? Now, suppose I get up in the morning and I yell at my wife and I go off.

It doesn't bother me and I do that every morning. Well, if I die, will I go to hell? You better believe it because you're not a Christian. That's the problem.

That's what real regeneration is, you see. What a blessed thing. There is therefore now no condemnation to anybody that's in Christ Jesus because every bit of the curse of your sins has been paid for in full.

And it's not that those sins are hanging out there somewhere and God said, I'm just going to sweep it under the rug and not think about it. That's not it. That sin came down and was paid for by the Lord Jesus Christ.

Free from the law. There's no curse hanging upon me anymore, you see. What a blessed freedom that most basic, simple thing is.

But there's a lot more than that to this freedom from the law. How else are we free from the law? Well, we're free from the law as a means of obtaining righteousness and life. We're free from the law as a means of obtaining righteousness and life.

Now, you know the principle of the law. Do this and you'll live. That's the principle of law.

Do this and you'll live. Now, if all God did when you become a Christian is He just forgives you and wipes out the slate, you're at point zero now. Now you've got to do this and you'll get life now.

That's not the way it is. Let me just read the principle to you in Galatians 3. Paul speaks of this righteousness that comes through the law and he says this, However, the law is not a faith. On the contrary, he who practices or does those things shall live by them.

Now, I used to think this is what it meant. I thought, he who does those things shall really live by them. You know, get in there and really live by them.

That's not what he's saying. He's saying if you'll do those things, you'll live. You'll gain life.

There is a way to get life by keeping the law perfectly and meriting perfect righteousness under the law and meriting life. The law promised that. There's one man who did that.

The Lord Jesus Christ. He's the only one. But there is this principle.

Do this and you'll live. Now, the lost man, he's under this bondage of the law because the law all the time bearing down on him this curse. We talked about that in point 1. But not only that, he's all the time having to try to somehow merit righteousness and life.

He's got to try to fulfill something in order to have life. Now, beloved, if you're a Christian, you're no longer in that condition. You don't have to fulfill anything in order to have life.

It's been given to you. You don't have to fulfill anything in order to work out righteousness and merit. In the eyes of the law, that's been given to you.

The perfect righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a thing this is. When I was a college student, I worked hard to try to get an A at the end of the course.

And everybody else did. Or a lot of them did. But I had one class that was different.

My senior year, I went into that class. It was an upper level chemistry class. I got to take it because when you get into upper level chemistry, it's basically physics.

And that's what I was studying. And we came in there. There was only 3 or 4 guys in that class.

And all of us had been studying this stuff for years. And the teacher sat down with us. And he said, fellows, the first thing I want to say, you all have an A. So you don't have to worry about what your grades are going to be.

And he said, now we can just enjoy the material. That's what happens when you become a Christian. God says, I'm giving you an A right now.

You don't have to worry about that anymore. Now you can just enjoy the material. That's what it is.

To be free from the law. I don't have to earn anymore. I don't have to earn my sonship.

I'm a son. I got up this morning. I was a son of God.

And I'm a son, not because of my righteousness, but because of His righteousness. He's fulfilled the law for me. It's been laid to my account.

To put it another way, the way the Lord Jesus did it. He says, you have eternal life. If you behold the Son, believe on Him, He has eternal life.

You don't come into condemnation. It's not that I hope I will have eternal life. If you believe on the Son, you have eternal life.

Isn't this amazing? It's your possession. You have eternal life. I remember one time way back when I was there in Germany.

Many years ago, my co-pastor and I now, we were there in Germany. We had a little coffee house thing and I was cleaning the floor. We used to mop that floor every now and then.

And I was there working and all of a sudden it dawned on me, I've got eternal life. I've got eternal life. I'm free from that bondage to have to perform to become a son.

His smile is upon me. To put it another way, just like this lost man is walking around with a curse on him all the time, a Christian is walking around with a blessing on him all the time. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

Now that means when your tomato plants are wilted, and the lost man's tomato plants are blooming and everything's great, you're in a far better position. I mean, even you might be lying in prison with somebody beating you and rats crawling around on you. You're a blessed man.

Blessed, blessed, blessed is the man who has eternal life. He's in a state of blessedness. And even when God has to chasten you, you know what He's chastening you? He's chastening you because He loves you, because you are a son.

Far better to have a spanking from your Heavenly Father than to be a criminal out here under the wrath of an angry judge. You see, punishment, strictly speaking, that has to do with satisfaction of justice. Chastening is suffering inflicted not for satisfaction of justice, but for the good of the offender.

That has to do with love. God chastens us because He loves us. And all the way to the woodshed, you know, He's holding your hand.

And all the way back, He's holding your hand. Isn't that something? Isn't it amazing that King David could write Scripture? After the affair with Bathsheba, he could write Scripture? How could he lift up his head again? Because he's a son. Blessed is the man to whom God will not impute sin.

So the Christian, he's free from the law. He's free from the curse. He's also free from this work in trying to gain the favor of God, trying to gain life.

He's in a blessed position. He gets up in the morning, blessing upon him. Blessing, blessing everywhere.

If he starts to go astray, isn't this blessed? That there'd be someone there that would bring him back, even if he has to use a rod? What a blessed thing! What a blessed thing! If you've got any evidence in your life that God won't let you go on in sin, what a blessed thing it is. Whenever He leaves a man, oh, what a thing. When He leaves a man to go down a path of wickedness and sin and nothing calls him back, what a

fearful thing that is.

Number three, we're free from the law in this sense. We're free from the law as an external rule on the outside that contradicts our real nature and desires. And you've got to realize the lost man is in a condition where he is in bondage to this thing.

It's on the outside of him. And it's constantly hemming him in and condemning him and slapping his hand. He wants to commit adultery and he reaches out and the law says you shall not do that.

He wants to steal. The law says don't do that. He is bound up and hemmed in under the law because it contradicts the things that he really wants and loves, you see.

That's a bondage. The law constrains him and restrains him with fear and with threats. And the lost man hates the law of God.

But the Bible says the carnal mind is enmity against God. It's not subject to the law of God and neither indeed can be, so those that are in the flesh cannot please God. So he's bound up under this thing that's cursing him and demanding his obedience and he actually hates it at the same time.

That's a bondage. Paul says you've been freed from that. How have you been freed? The law has been put on the inside of you now.

Isn't this amazing? God writes His law on the heart. The lost man, every time he wants to do something, the law contradicts him. There's a bumper sticker or a sign of some kind, I don't remember, I've seen it and maybe you've seen this.

It says everything I like is either immoral, illegal or fattening. Now that's quite a confession, isn't it? That's the lost man talking there. He likes things and he can't do them because he's restrained and restricted and constrained by this external law that he hates.

Not so with the Christian. He's got the law put on the inside. He's not under law really at all.

He's in law and the law is in him. And that verse there in 1 Corinthians 9, he's actually in law to Christ. Inimicos Christu.

He's in law to Christ. He's got the law inside of him. Now let's look at this.

Paul talks about this in Galatians 5 and verse 18. If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now, see I'm not just making this up when I make this third point.

I'm talking about something the Bible tells us is one aspect of our not being under the law. What is it? If you're led by the Spirit, you're not under the law. Now he goes into the deeds of the flesh and what they are.

And he says that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But verse 22, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Look at this.

Against such things there's no law. In other words, you just be who you really are as a Christian. You walk in the Spirit.

You will never once run into anything that says thou shalt not. Isn't that something? What does Paul say in 1 Timothy? Is it 1 Timothy 1 or 2 Timothy 1? He says the law was not made for a righteous man. No need for it.

It's for murderers and so on. Remember that? I'm not quoting it very well. Let me give it to you.

This is incredible. 2 Timothy. Somebody help me.

1 Timothy 1. 1 Timothy 1 and verse 8. We know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully. You've got to do that. Realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious Gospel.

You know, I don't see any signs in here that say shoplifters will be prosecuted. You know, hopefully, now some churches you might need that. But when you're dealing with saints, it's irrelevant.

You know, pigs like to wallow in the mire, but sheep don't find such an attraction to that mud hole, you know. They have signs up here, no wallowing in the mire. That's irrelevant.

You're free from that. Now, you want to get a feel for it? Think of what heaven is like. You think there will be signs up, thou shalt not commit murder? All you've got to do is just rejoice in God, you're free! Be who you are, walk in who you are, and you'll never run into anything that contradicts you or shuts you down or says, don't go there.

We're talking about liberty. That's the word Paul used. He says, stand fast in the liberty.

Liberty from what? Liberty from the curse. Liberty from the demands to try to merit life. Liberty from this thing that restricts you and confines you and threatens you all the time.

You don't have that because the law has been put inside of you. Walk in the Spirit, you're not under the law. What else does it mean that we're not under the law and we're dead to the law? Well, we're dead to the law in this sense, that we have moved out of this whole realm of demand and we've moved into the realm of supply, or as the Scripture calls it, grace.

Now, listen to the way Paul says it. Romans chapter 6 and verse 14, For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you're not under the law. You're not over in this realm of demand.

You're not under the law. You're under grace. There's two realms.

Over here is the realm of the flesh. You're not in the flesh. It says that.

You say, well, I kind of got in the flesh. We know what that means, but the Christian doesn't live in that realm. That's not where he lives anymore.

He lives over here in the realm of the Spirit. Over here is the realm of law. Over here is the realm of grace.

Paul says, I died to the law and I might live to God. He's passed into a new realm, you see. This is the realm of sin.

Sin reigns over here. This man's living his relationship to God as one of law and as one of condemnation. And he's walking in the flesh and sin is reigning and death is reigning.

This guy over here, he's got a new relationship to God. He's living in the realm of grace. He's in the Spirit.

And instead of sin reigning, righteousness is reigning and life is taking place. Now look at how Paul says it in Romans 5. He says, As the law entered, that the offense, the sin, might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Now get this. That as sin hath reigned in death... Here's sin sitting on the throne. It's riding on your back and it's reigning and it's beating and it's going to... How effectual is it? It's effectual.

It puts you right down into hell and kill you. That as sin has reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life. Grace over here is reigning.

Now don't you like to have grace reigning on you? I mean, sitting on your back. Grace reigns. It's the realm of supply instead of the realm of demand.

We're in this covenant Brother Mack talked about last night. God says, I'm going to do this. I'll actually work in you to will and do of My good pleasure.

He says there in Jeremiah, He says, I will not turn away from them to do them good. That's wonderful. But Lord, that's not the real problem.

You never did turn away from Me. What does He say? And I will put the fear of Me inside them so that they won't turn away from Me. This new covenant you see that we're in, I'm talking about the realm of supply.

It's when God sees all your sins ahead of time. He knew about that. Sometimes you commit things, even as a Christian, you do something and you get a little glimpse of how wicked you are in yourself apart from the working of the Lord Jesus Christ and it shocks you.

I'll tell you what, it didn't shock Him. He knew all about that before He chose you and He chose you with the purpose not of you performing good enough to make it, but with the purpose of changing you and making you like His Son. You see, grace is going to reign until it gets that thing out of you.

He knew all about it before He ever chose you. Think of Peter there. He looks at him and says, You're Simon.

I know exactly who you are. You're Simon. Now I'm going to call you Peter.

I'm going to call you The Rock. That's a miracle, isn't it? A whole new person, you see. And He says, I'm going to work in you until you are a rock.

We talk about guys like George Whitefield. I don't know of anybody that had three or four thousand converted in one sermon except Peter. And George Whitefield didn't raise the dead as far as I know, but Peter did.

Isn't that incredible? Think of the glory God got out of that fisherman Peter turning him into, I mean, Simon turning him into a Peter. It's incredible. Grace reigns, safe in thy sanctifying grace.

That's what Brother Mack talked about last night. Safe in thy sanctifying grace, almighty to restore. That grace is almighty to restore.

Born onward, carried onward, sin and death behind, and love and life before. Oh, let my soul abound in hope and praise Thee more and more. Grace is reigning.

What's it mean to be free from the law? Paul says you're in a different realm now. You're in a different realm. You've moved out of that.

You're in grace now. Sin shall not have dominion over you for you're not under the law anymore. You're over here.

You're in the realm of grace. Grace is reigning over here. And grace is going to ensure that you one day will be just like the Lord Jesus Christ.

Isn't that a blessed thing? You're going to be just like Him. God is determined. He's intent on it.

He says, I will, in this new covenant, I will be their God. Aren't you thankful He's determined to be your God? He says, I'll cleanse you from all your filthiness and all your idols. I might let other people worship idols, but I'm not going to let you.

You're going to worship Me. I'm going to be your God. I'm going to rule over you.

And every Christian says, Hallelujah, Lord, I want You to rule over me. I want You to tear all those idols out. I want You to make me holy.

I want You to make me pure. I want You to be my God. I want You to be the one that I worship and only You.

Free from the law. Why? Free from the realm of demand and living in the realm of grace. Living in the realm of supply.

In this realm, ultimately, nothing ultimately depends upon man. Ultimately, it depends upon God and the faithfulness of God. Grace is reigning.

I got to thinking a few weeks ago. How in the world can I grow as a Christian? And I went back to those words of the Lord Jesus. He said, I'm the vine.

You're the branches. If that means anything, it means that we've got His very life flowing through us. That's what it means.

His life is in us. You know, people teach this thing. They say, if you just walk close to God, you get really close to Him, He'll give you more of the Holy Spirit.

You know what that's saying? The fruit of love and joy and peace is the Holy Spirit. You have more love, more joy and more peace, you'll have the Holy Spirit. That's not what it says.

The fruit of the Spirit is love and joy and peace. When the channels are clean and open, and there's no sticks blocking the channel and that water's flowing through, there's life, there's fruit. He that abides in me and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.

It's not talking about attaining something. It's talking about realizing where you are and staying there. That's what the word abide means.

It's just remain where you are. The Puritans were a very godly group of men, and I profited a lot from them. But one thing they went wrong in.

One of their statements was this. Moses sends us to Christ in order to be justified. Now that's true.

But then they said Christ sends us back to Moses in order to be sanctified. Christ doesn't have to send you back to anybody. The way to grow, beloved, is not reading a 10,000 page book on the Ten Commandments.

It's that thick. And concentrate on how sinful you are. Concentrate on your duty.

Now there's duty. Brother Mac's going to be talking about it. But the foundation of it all, I love the way he did that.

He went to the foundation of it all first, and that is God working in you. Grace, this life of Christ flowing through you. Otherwise, you're going to struggle around.

I've done it. I've fought the bad fight of unbelief. You know, struggling, striving, trying to produce something that He already told you He's the one that produces in you.

Fight the good fight of faith. Realize what He's already done for you. Count upon the fact of what He's done for you.

That's what the word reckon means. It doesn't mean pretend. It means count upon this.

Decide, deduct it. The way of holiness is not law. Even New Testament law.

That's not the way of holiness. The way of holiness is looking to Christ and dwelling in Him and being occupied with Him. What does Paul say? He says, we with unveiled face behold Him as in a mirror, the glory of the Lord.

Just behold Him. What happens when you behold Him? You get changed. You're being changed.

I can hear ten sermons on law and all I do is get worse. I get one glimpse of Christ and all that stuff goes out the window just like that. The heart of this thing is love for a person.

It's not doing a list of rules. We're talking about a principle of life flowing out. That's what grace is.

That's the realm of grace. Well, number five. The Christian is no longer under the law as a covenant rule of duty.

This is the last one in case you're starting to get worried. The Christian is no longer under the law as a covenant rule of duty. Now, that means we're free from all those countless rules and regulations and all of that stuff.

If we go even further, we're not under the Ten Commandments as a covenant rule of duty. We're not under any of the covenant that God made through Moses. None of it.

The rule of duty for a Christian is not the Ten Commandments. The rule of duty for the Christian is the law of Christ. And the law of Christ is a much higher and clearer and more glorious and beautiful thing than the law of Moses.

You remember what Moses said? He says, there's a day coming when God's going to raise up a prophet like unto me from among your brethren. You give heed to everything He says to you. And you remember in the book of Acts, that's quoted concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.

He's the one who has come now. And you listen to everything He says to you. And anybody that doesn't listen to what He says is going to be cut off.

This is my beloved Son. Hear Him. There's not three tabernacles.

Not one for the law and one for the prophets and one for Christ. There's one for Christ. We talked yesterday.

Was He a true prophet? Yes, He was the only true prophet. He's the only one who has spoken the very words of God. He whom God has sent speaks the very words of God.

For He gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him. He spoke every word He said. You know, any human teacher, merely human teacher, has got wrong emphasis and lopsided here and there.

And you know, it's a wonder anybody ever gets anything. But everything He said, everything, was perfect. He that has seen me has seen the Father.

This is what's so blasphemous about actors trying to act like Christ. You can't even hold a towel the way Jesus held a towel. You can't do it.

I know that because I've seen a little bit of Christ in some of my brethren, and it's something so wonderful you can't begin to imitate it. I can't make my face right now look the way my face looks when the Holy Spirit of God has poured out in my heart. There's a glow, there's a radiance.

You can't imitate it. If you've even tasted a little bit of it, you know, well, what must it have been like for Christ? What must His face have looked like? I don't know what it looked like, but I know it didn't look like what you think it looked like, thanks to all of Hollywood and everything else. The beauty of His person.

The fullness of deity in bodily form. What must it have been to look at Him? What must it have been to see Him wash their feet? You remember the law came with glory. That mountain was shaking.

It was like a furnace. This whole mountain was just like one little stove pouring out flames and smoke, and everything was shaking. What a thing it was.

Paul says that glory is nothing whatsoever compared to the glory that we're a part of. Nothing. I would have loved to have been there, I guess, the day the law was given on Mount Sinai.

I mean, just to see the sight. But I'd a lot rather have been on that mountain where the Son of God Himself sat down and said, You have heard but I say unto you. You have heard but I say unto you.

What a thing must it have been. What's happening there? Well, He's not throwing away and trashing the law of Moses. It was perfect for what it was intended for.

What's happening there? Well, He's getting down. He is the King Himself. The kings come on the scene.

And He's giving the laws of His kingdom. And He's giving laws that are designed for a spiritual nation of 100% regenerate people. That would have never worked in a physical nation of mostly unregenerate Jews.

That wouldn't have worked. I was talking to one of the brothers yesterday about this thing. What did God say? If somebody tries to lead you astray, even if it's the wife of your bosom, even if it's your best friend, you don't pity them.

Your eye shall not spare them. You get them out there. Your hand will be the first to stone them to death.

Do you remember that? That was God's commandment under the Old Covenant. You didn't come into the prayer meeting and say, Pray for my husband. He's become a Jehovah's Witness.

That wasn't it. Why was God so strict? Why was He so mean, apparently? Well, it was this strict schoolmaster holding in place this unruly nation of mostly unregenerate people, physical nation, so that they wouldn't apostatize and totally destroy themselves before the Messiah could come. You see? They needed that strict schoolmaster.

They needed a fence around them. But now, in the Sermon on the Mount, what's He doing? He's laying out spiritual laws for His spiritual kingdom. He's not coming with a whole new code.

That's not what we're talking about. We talk about the law of Christ in a sense. All He did was just give a few pointers here and there about the reality of it all.

He's coming with the essence and heart of everything. And He's giving us some pointers. But you see, now He's living inside of us.

He doesn't have to give us some codified thing that covers every situation imaginable. We've got a Teacher living inside of us. You have heard you shall not commit adultery.

I can take it a lot deeper than that. You not even look at a woman to lust after her. You have heard you shall not commit murder.

Well, He says what I'm talking about is you don't harbor that hatred or bitterness in your heart. The child of God doesn't hate people. We know that we've passed from death to life because we love the brethren.

He that hates his brother is a murderer. You know no murderer is a Christian. No murderer has eternal life.

I've heard pastors stand up and say, you know, we Christians ought not to hate each other the way we do. That's not what a Christian is. That's how you know you're a Christian.

We know that we've passed from death to life because we love the brethren. That's how you know. You see, the one is the law of the tutor, the strict schoolmaster, keeping these slaves in line until they reach sonship.

The other is the law of the full-grown son. Much greater liberty. Much more responsibility.

Now, you think about this. My son now is, I think, 22, and he's married and gone. But when he was still living under my roof, when he was two or three or four or five years old, I told him when to brush his teeth.

I told him when to go to bed. I told him when to get up. Every single thing.

You see, but if your kid's 21 and you've got to tell him to brush his teeth and put his socks on, there's something wrong. We're living in the realm of full-grown sons. I mean, we don't have 613 commandments.

We've got the spiritual reality and principles of sonship and maturity. The law of Christ surpasses the law of Moses as much as sonship surpasses servanthood. Not because the law of Moses was bad in any way.

It was perfect for what God intended it for. But we're living in a new realm now. We're living in a spiritual kingdom.

Now, in closing, here comes a question. What do we do with this Old Testament? I pick out here that much in my Bible. That's quite a bit compared to that.

What do we do with this Old Testament? Just throw it out? Is that the thing we do? Now think about this. We call this first part of our Bible the Old Testament or Old Covenant. But this is not the Old Testament.

This thing that comes in the first part of our Bibles contains the Old Covenant. See, that was part of it. The Old Covenant.

We are not under the Old Covenant anymore. See that? But this thing is still the Word of God to us. It's still the revelation of God to us.

Now, what did Paul say to Timothy? He says, all Scripture says, God breathed. It's profitable for doctrine and reproof and correction and instruction and righteousness that the man of God might be perfect, mature, fully equipped. The New Testament hadn't been written yet when he said that.

It was just being written. He's talking about the Old Testament. It's profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction.

It's God breathed. It's a revelation of God to us. We're not under the Old Covenant.

But every bit of this Word here is God's Word to us. Now, let's look at it in Matthew chapter 5. Really, we have so much. There's so many areas that we won't get to it all.

But we've got to see this before I close here. I've got plenty of time yet. They gave me a bunch of time.

Matthew chapter 5 and verse 17. Do not think that I came to abolish the law or the prophets. Now, what's he talking about? He's talking about this Old Testament revelation, the Scriptures.

I didn't come to abolish those things, but to fulfill. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the law until all is accomplished. Not the smallest letter or stroke.

Don't get any idea that he came to throw away the Old Testament. In fact, lots of it hasn't been fulfilled yet. It hasn't taken place.

He says it's easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for that to happen. Until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the law until all is accomplished. God has not changed in the least between the Old and New Testaments.

And the heart and essence of what pleases God has not changed in the least. It comes right in the New. Lord willing, we'll see that in the next message.

It will remain forever the same because God hasn't changed. He'll remain forever the same. So, here he says here, the law and the prophets, not one stroke of one letter will pass away.

Now, that's all fine. The problem is, you've got to read the next verse. And that's when it gets hard.

Verse 19, Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and so teaches others, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven. He's talking about Christians. Whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

Now, what in the world does he mean? He's talking about the law. And he says, you've got to keep even the least of these commandments. What were some of the least commandments? Let's turn back to Deuteronomy 22.

Deuteronomy 22 and verse 9. You shall not sow your vineyard with two kinds of seed, lest all the produce of the seed which you have sown and the increase of the vineyard become defiled. You shall not plow with an ox and a donkey together. You shall not wear a material mixed of wool and linen together.

Now, surely those are some of the least commandments. Jesus said, if you annul one of the least of these commandments, and teach others so, you'll be least in the kingdom of heaven. Now, I don't know.

In Romania, when I have a translator at this point, I usually look over and check out what kind of material his shirt's made out of. Because you can't have mixed materials in your clothing. I'd say almost all of us have broken one of the least of these commandments this morning.

Is that what he's talking about? How do we keep the least of these commandments? Well, beloved, we have the answer right here, don't we? You remember? You shall not plow with an ox and an ass together. What's Paul say? Be not unequally yoked together with unbelievers. What's he referring to? He's referring to this least commandment.

And he's saying what this really means is, don't be linked up with unbelievers. Now, you see, Christians keep this commandment, not to plow with an ox and an ass together. They keep it in a much deeper way than any Jew ever kept it.

You see that? He's talking about our attitude towards God's revelation to us, that He's given to us. And our attitude is one of desiring to submit ourselves to the entire revelation of God from one end to the other. And we can go back here and we see all kinds of things about Christ and about our life in Christ.

That's the approach we take. Are Christians under the Old Covenant? Not one bit of it as far as the Old Covenant is concerned. Even the Ten Commandments, we're not under that anymore as the Old Covenant as such.

But as far as God's revelation to us, we're under the entire thing, even the least of these commandments, you see. Because it's the Word of God to us and we submit to it. Now, it's a blessed thing.

What's another one of those least commandments? You shall not muzzle the ox while he treads the corn. Now, you remember how Paul dealt with that. Let's just look at that before we close here.

Right back in this chapter in 1 Corinthians 9. 1 Corinthians 9 and verse 6. Or do only Barnabas and I not have a right to refrain from working? Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the fruit of it? Or who tends a flock and does not use the milk of the flock? I'm not speaking these things according to human judgment or according to man, am I? Or does not the law also say these things? He appeals to that as authoritative, you see. But not just straightforward authoritative, no. Authoritative as viewed through the eyes of Christ as a Christian.

Interpreted from the New Testament, you see. You see that? It's all ours. It's all profitable.

But you've got to approach it as a spiritual man. And it's no longer given to us as a bondage and a bunch of rules we've got to work out and try to keep. It's given to us as a light shining to us.

Showing us. Helping us, you see. Now, Paul says, look, the law also says this.

For it is written in the law of Moses, you shall not muzzle the ox while he is threshing. God is not concerned about oxen, is He? Or is He speaking altogether for our sake? Yes, for our sake it was written because the plowman ought to plow in hope. And the thresher to thresh in hope of sharing the crops.

Now, does God care about oxen? Yes, He does care about oxen. I mean, God doesn't. He doesn't want us to mistreat even animals.

But Paul says, compared to the spiritual application, it doesn't amount to anything. The big thing, he's saying. The big thing is, he was talking about the way we treat ministers of the gospel.

You see, it's viewing this Old Testament revelation as a Christian. And along with the guidelines. Now, look, this has to do with everything from A to Z. Every one of these commandments.

And the stuff that I'm teaching here doesn't necessarily tell you right off the bat. For example, how does the Sabbath apply? And if there's differences among us on that, we don't have to split up about that. Because that has to do with trying to understand what God was saying to us, you see, in the Old Testament.

And we go to the apostles and try to see how did they interpret these things. That's the way you approach it. The big thing is this.

We don't make our interpretation of the Old Testament as an authoritative, binding rule on other Christians. Unless the apostles did it. You see? This gives us an approach to this whole thing.

Well, we still haven't gotten to the law of Christ. We haven't talked about that. Lord willing, we will do that in the next session.

Amen.

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