

The Purpose of the Law

There seems to be two catch-cries of our modern era: *if it feels good, do it* and *it's OK if it doesn't hurt anyone*. What does our society use to determine its moral standards? How do we as Christians know what is right and wrong?

8. How does Paul say we can know what is wrong (or sin) according to Romans 7:7?
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The Moral Law (Ten Commandments) shows us what God's standards are. We are now left without question as to what God thinks is right and wrong.

9. Just because Christianity has moral laws, does this mean it is not a religion of love or grace? Discuss.
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We have all broken God's law. The fact that we stand condemned with what Charles Spurgeon described as "*ten great canons of God's law loaded and aimed at us*" forces us to realise that we have all sinned and can not save ourselves. This is why we need a Saviour!

10. We are not saved by keeping the law. It serves to show us that we have sinned. What should all sinners do? (Acts 2:38; Romans 10:13)
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Amen.

LIVING DIFFERENTLY

Part Three

This study series on the Beatitudes is designed to show us how Christ expects us to live. Nicky Gumble has written on the Beatitudes in his book "Challenging Lifestyles". He refers to them as the most challenging pursuit any person can engage in. He makes mention of the incredibly high standard that they set. As we study these, let's remind ourselves that we can not possibly attain to these standards without God's help (Gal. 2:20).

THE VALUE OF LAW

Read Matthew 5:17-20

Some people thought that Jesus was starting a new religion. They thought that He would abolish the laws of Moses and institute some new laws. But Jesus said that He didn't want people to think like this. He was not coming to interrupt the plan of God, He was coming to continue it. As such, the laws of Moses (the Ten Commandments) are a part of Christ's Kingdom.

Yet there is some confusion among Christians today about the difference between *Law* and *Legalism*. Jesus upheld God's Law, but He was against legalism.

Laws provide boundaries that are like walls. When we live within these boundaries, we are secure because those same boundaries protect and safeguard us. We are not trapped by these law-boundaries, rather we are given new freedom. Jesus endorsed the Law of God, but condemned legalism.

The Essence of the Law

(Mat 23:23 NKJV) "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone."

What is the difference between the Old and New Testaments? Marcion, who lived during the second century AD, said that Christianity was a religion of love not law. He rejected the Old Testament as being irrelevant to the Christian, and carefully filtered out much of the New Testament's references to Law. Eventually the church rejected Marcion as a heretic in 144 AD. How should we respond to Marcion's arguments that Christianity is a religion of love not law?

1. Jesus wants us to minister His Word, but not in a legalistic way. Why is this according to 2Cor. 3:6?

The Pharisees had invented thousands of extra laws to keep people from breaking God's laws. They never really understood the essence of God's Law.

2. How did Jesus sum up the essence of the Law? (Mat. 22:36-40)

Nicky Gumble says that many Christians believe like the little boy who referred to the Old Testament as the time before God became a Christian!

3. According to Malachi 3:6a and Hebrews 13:8, has God changed?

The Old Testament contains four types of Law.

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| 1. Food laws | 3. Civil laws |
| 2. Ceremonial laws | 4. Moral laws |

4. Three of these categories of law are no longer binding. Based on these references, which laws are not binding?
 Acts 10:10-16 _____
 Heb. 7:26-28 _____
 Titus 3:1 _____

The civil laws that governed Israel are not binding on the Christian, but the Bible tells us that we should obey the laws of *our* land.

5. According to Colossians 2:14 what did Christ do to these laws when He died on the Cross? (Note Col. 2:16-17)

6. Match the following laws from the Old to the New Testaments:

Old Testament

New Testament

Ex. 20:3

Heb. 10:25; Mk. 2:27-28

Ex 20:4-6

1Cor. 6:9; 10:7

Ex 20:7

1Cor. 8:6; Rev. 22:9

Ex 20:8-11

Eph. 6:2

Ex 20:12

Col. 3:8; 1Tim. 1:20;

Ex 20:13

Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:19

Ex 20:14

Rom. 2:21; Eph 4:28

Ex 20:15

James 2:11

Ex 20:16

Romans 7:7; 13:9

Ex. 20:17

Col. 3:9

7. Is it correct to say that Christianity is a just a religion of love without any laws?
