

JULY 23rd
LAW AND GOSPEL

“You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” **MATTHEW 5:48**

Can you explain the link between the Law and the Gospel? Some words from the past may help us appreciate what God has done for us. Martin Luther once preached these words, “The Law must be laid upon those that are to be justified, that they may be shut up in the prison thereof, until the righteousness of faith come—that, when they are cast down and humbled by the Law, they should fly to Christ. The Lord humbles them, not to their destruction, but to their salvation. For God woundeth, that He may heal again. He killeth that He may quicken again. What might God be teaching us through the Ten Words here in Exodus 20 (and the rest of the Bible)?

Frankly, we are dishonest men. We are dishonest with ourselves. Our culture has created men that put their best foot forward and try to make sure that they earn good favor with others. We don’t like to look honestly in the mirror to see the depth of our sin. Isn’t this why gospel preaching in local churches has declined in the last several decades? What are people mostly looking for? They often want to hear words that will pick them up off the ground and encourage them to live better lives. This is exactly what Paul warns against in 2 Timothy 4. Paul gives Timothy a charge to “preach the Word.” Why would he write these words to Timothy right before his death? Because the temptation for people is to gather teachers that make them feel good about themselves. Here’s the problem—that kind of morality preaching is purpose without power. It’s like plugging in the electric guitar into your amplifier, but the amplifier isn’t plugged into the wall outlet. You can strum those strings as hard as you want, but you won’t get amplified sound. You can play the correct notes even, but there still won’t be amplified sound...because you’re not connected to a power source. Isn’t it the same with us as men? Sure, we want to live lives of victory over sin, but we want the credit. This is where the Gospel meets the Law.

Men, the Law was never meant to make you perfect. That’s impossible and was only achieved by one Person. Instead, the Law points us to that Person who did keep all of the Law. It reminds us that we need to be desperately rescued. Think about it this way...how much joy do you have in your Christian life? Paul writes as he’s in prison, “Rejoice in the Lord always, I will say it again, rejoice!” How can he say this as he sits in a dungeon? Because he never forgot where he came from. He never forgets that he was a dreadful sinner that was rescued by His Savior. Men, your story is no different from Paul’s story. The Law is given to remind us that we can’t make it. It causes us to look away from our so called “righteousness” and look to our great Savior. It magnifies the mercy and grace of God. Why does God even call it gospel...because it’s good news! Good news that must continuously be preached to ourselves. No, we don’t get saved over and over again...but we are renewed in our love for Christ because of what He’s done for us. We are propelled in our obedience because of His great love for us. This is why Paul says this as He nears the end of his letter to Corinth, “*Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand...*”. They didn’t need to get “saved” again...they needed to be reminded of God’s rescue so they could stand for Christ as they lived for Him. How will the gospel’s rescue impact you today?

Spend some time thinking about what God has rescued you from. Ask the Lord to make you more thankful every day for what He done for you because of Jesus’ work.

For Further Reading: Romans 3:9-31

