



EXODUS - SUMMARY

Law & Gospel (Part 1)

Opening prayer

Prayer for the persecuted church:

Prayer for a local church:

This morning we pray for our brother Daniel Garcia and Emmaus Church San Bernadino.

Closing prayer

Introduction:

Psalm 119:18

**¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may behold
wondrous things out of your law.**

People are afraid of the law of God. All people. Even Christians are afraid of the law of God. When we fear the law it just shows that we have an inadequate view of the gospel.

“It is not the works that are wrong, it is the faith in your works, trusting in your works.” (MLJ)

That’s what it means to be under the law, trusting in your works. So, the law is good. It shows us the beautiful character of God. But trusting in the law to make yourself

acceptable to God will only lead you to feel condemned.

When Paul says we are no longer under the law, he doesn't mean the 10 Commandments no longer apply to us. He means we don't trust in the 10 Commandments or any other commandments as a way to be right with God, as a way to be justified before God, to be declared not guilty.

Two camps: Legalists and the antinomians who are really doing the same thing. "You're

saved by grace, but you better keep the law to be safe.” “You’re saved by grace, but you better stay away from the law to be safe.”

Big Idea: The cross upholds the law.

Romans 3:20

²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

“For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight.” That’s pretty clear I think, but let me put it in very plain language. God will not let you into heaven, because you will never be morally good enough. If you say, “I try to live my life by the 10 Commandments.” I commend you. I think that’s a good thing. But realize God will not accept you, because even as you try to live your life by the 10 Commandments you have admittedly failed at points, right? So, the law condemns you (as Paul says “through the law

comes knowledge of sin”). It makes you aware that you are a sinner, which is just another word for lawbreaker. You brake the laws of God. That’s why God sent His only begotten Son to earth.

1. The cross shows the law is good and right and holy and that we are not.

So, the cross upholds the law. It doesn’t abolish it.

Romans 3:21-23

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—

“But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law.” Paul tells us that we can see the righteousness of God right now without the law. All the righteousness of God’s law can be seen in Jesus Christ, both then and now. But the

manifestation, the reality of this, has been shown to the entire world through the cross of Jesus Christ, the cross that He willingly died upon. Christ who never broke the law of God, put Himself under the penalty of the law by identifying with us sinners.

So, how does the cross uphold the law? The law of God condemns the lawbreakers (that's all of us) and Jesus Christ died on the cross in the place of sinners (lawbreakers) because the wages of sin is death. The cross upholds the holiness of the law. That's how the gospel

upholds the law. The cross says the law is good and holy.

²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction:

This is the passive righteousness Martin Luther refers to in his introduction to Galatians. He explains that there are several kinds of ‘righteousness.’ First, there is civil righteousness—the nation’s public laws. Then, there is ethical righteousness—the Ten

Commandments and law of God—which the church may teach but only in light of Christian righteousness. The Christian righteousness he speaks of is the righteousness referred to in this verse. It's a gifted righteousness based solely upon the perfect life of Christ. The other two are forms of active righteousness. This is a passive righteousness. It's something that is given to us. But how do we know we need this righteousness?

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

2. The cross upholds the holy nature of God by upholding the law.

The cross tells humanity that God's judgment upon our sin (our lawbreaking) is just. The cross upholds the law. And to uphold something that something still has to have validity. Our problem is that we give the law a place for our justification, which is giving it a wrong place. The law cannot justify you. The

law will never say, “Yes, Lord, this one is good enough. This one has really done a great job following me, the law.” The law will always say of you: guilty.

Now, the other mistake that is often made is to now say: “Thank God the 10 Commandments no longer apply to me. I don’t have to think about them anymore because all they do is tell me I’m guilty.” That thinking tells me you are still looking to the 10 commandments for justification. If you know that you’re a guilty sinner because the law

tells you so, then the answer is not to say, “Get me out from under these.” The answer is to look to the One who has fulfilled all the commandments perfectly. Fix your eyes upon Jesus, the One who died for all your law-breaking. That’s why the law can no longer condemn you when you put your faith in Christ. Understand what Christ has done, so you can understand how the rest of the Bible applies to you, even the 10 Commandments.

Romans 3:24-25

²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins... (because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished)

3. The cross confirms that God hates sin.

And the cross can only confirm that God hates sin, because God's law is still in effect. When God's law no longer applies to people, the cross will no longer confirm that God hates sin. The problem has never been with the law, but with our application of the law. When we use the law to justify ourselves we will find ourselves condemned, because we are lawbreakers.

Romans 3:26

²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

4. The cross upholds the law because Christ upheld the law.

He fulfilled every jot of God's law perfectly. So, we don't look to the law for justification. We look to Christ. And when you look to Christ for your justification, you don't fear the law.

- Perfection in this life

Romans 8:22

22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

Exodus 20:3

3 “You shall have no other gods before me.

The reason we're disappointed and frustrated so often is because we're trusting in something other than the Lord Himself.

Psalm 37:4

**4 Delight yourself in the Lord,
and he will give you the desires of your
heart.**

Hebrews 12:2

**2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter
of our faith, who for the joy that was set**

before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

Romans 3:27-28

²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

5. The cross upholds the law because it shows our complete helplessness.

Two misunderstandings of the law (next week we're going to cover 5 Common Unbiblical Views of the Law), but two others are covered right here.

One, using the law to be justified. In other words, to say, "I'm a good moral person because I try to live by the 10 Commandments." If you could do that, which

the Bible says you can't, then you would have room to boast. Again, the law shows you that you are a lawbreaker.

But the other equal but opposite error is to say, "I just ignore the 10 Commandments now because I have faith in Jesus." Did Christ abolish the law? No.

Romans 3:29

29 Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also,

6. The cross upholds the law by showing that the law applies to everyone at all times.

If the law of God no longer applies because of the gospel, then how can we use the 10 Commandments to convict people of being sinners, lawbreakers? How does the law apply to them? Either the law applies to everyone or

it applies to no one, unless you maintain there are two different ways of salvation.

Romans 3:30-31

³⁰ since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

7. Faith in the cross of Christ upholds the law.

So, if the cross upholds the law, how can we ever say the law no longer applies to me?

“It is not the works that are wrong, it is the faith in your works, trusting in your works.” (MLJ)

It is not the law that is wrong, it is your faith in the law, trusting in the law for your salvation.

Matthew 5:18-19

18 For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19 Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

1 Peter 1:15-16

¹⁵ but as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, ¹⁶ since it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy.”

Psalm 119:18

¹⁸ Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.