



EXODUS - SUMMARY Law & Gospel (Part 2)

Opening prayer

Prayer for the persecuted church:

Prayer for a local church:

This morning we pray for our brother Pastor Rob Murphy and New Song Church in Lake Elsinore.

Closing prayer

Introduction:

- Summary of last week

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.

“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 to gain admittance to heaven. When Paul says we are no longer under the law, it doesn’t mean the 10

Commandments no longer apply to us. It 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 him, to be declared righteous.

5 Common Unbiblical Views of the Law:

#1. Because we're saved by grace, the law no longer applies to us.

Romans 6:14

14 For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

What does it mean to not be under the law? It means the law no longer has the power to condemn us for being law-breakers, because Christ died for all our law-breaking. It means we are no longer under the domain of the law.

What is the power of sin? The law gives sin its power. And the wages of sin is death. Thank God, through our Lord Jesus Christ we have

been delivered from that domain and placed in the dimension of God's kingdom.

Colossians 1:13

¹³ He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son,

Do you believe that you are a citizen of heaven now? That you are in the domain of God's kingdom even though you're here now? Well, I hope you believe that, because that's

what Paul tells us is true of us now if we believe in Christ.

Philippians 3:20

²⁰ But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ,

This is true of us now. But because you are now a citizen of God's kingdom, does that mean you are done with this world now? Of course not. Even though you are not of the

world, you are still in the world, right? Well, the same can be said for the law of God. We are no longer under the law, under the rule of its domain, but that doesn't mean it no longer has a place in our lives.

Matthew 5:18-20

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. ²⁰ For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

So, He's basically saying, "If you want to trust in the law to get to heaven you'll find yourself falling short." He's not saying to throw the law

away. He's saying, "Don't trust in how well you keep the law for your salvation."

"Now then, if the Mosaic law continues to reveal to all people today God's moral perfection and holiness, explaining to them what sin is — an act contrary to the nature of God — then the conclusion is inescapable that the Mosaic law informs us of the divine and universal standard of right and wrong." (Greg Bahnsen)

In other words, the 10 Commandments aren't here only to show us that we're sinners. They are also here as a guide to sanctification. To say they're only useful to show people that they're sinners is to limit their scope. "When, for instance, I read in the Old Testament law, 'Do not accept a bribe' (Ex. 23:8) or 'Do not defraud your neighbor' (Lev. 19:13), God has communicated to me what he requires my behavior to be." To say this only applies to people who don't know Christ to show them they need a Savior, but that it no longer applies to Christians is to create a double-

standard in the Lord. It's also incoherent thinking. Can Christians accept bribes and defraud their neighbors now that they're saved?

#2. The law is about doing, not believing.

The law was given in the context of a covenant of promise - grace. People kept the law only when they believed God. People broke the law when they did not trust God.

Law and belief or faith have always gone hand-in-hand.

Psalm 78:5-8

**⁵ He established a testimony in Jacob
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our fathers
to teach to their children,**

**⁶ that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and arise and tell them to their children,**

**7 so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments;**

**8 and that they should not be like their fathers,
a stubborn and rebellious generation,
a generation whose heart was not steadfast,
whose spirit was not faithful to God.**

**22 because they did not believe in God
and did not trust his saving power.**

#3. In the OT, God offered eternal life to people if they could keep the law.

This is a really common idea about the law of God in the OT: If you kept the law perfectly you could be saved. The reason the law cannot save us is only because we can't keep it perfectly.

It's not a biblical idea on two counts: One, the law cannot impart life. The law can't give you eternal life. It never could.

Galatians 3:21

²¹ Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law.

In other words, salvation would be by the law.

Two, we don't only need forgiveness for breaking the law, we need to be born again. We need new hearts that will now love the revelation of God in the law.

John 3:3

³ Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

- **Bad records & bad hearts**

#4. The law was given and then the gospel was given.

Genesis 15:6

⁶ And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

#5. The law of Christ replaced the law of Moses.

Some have created a false discontinuity between the law and the gospel, between the Old Testament and the New. This viewpoint declares that the law of Moses no longer has binding authority over the Christian. Therefore they create a discontinuity (a hard separation) between Moses and Christ. I won't belabor this point, because it is easily dismissed by the Apostle Paul:

Galatians 3:8

⁸ And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, “In you shall all the nations be blessed.”

So, Paul is saying the Old Testament preached the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, to Abraham, which means instead of discontinuity between the two Testaments there is continuity. Continuity means we cannot simply throw out the law. The question

then becomes how do Christians apply the law in light of the gospel?

- Three types of laws

Let me quote extensively from Martin Luther's introduction to his commentary on Galatians: "When Paul discusses the biblical doctrine of justification by faith he explains that there are several kinds of 'righteousness.' First, there is political or civil righteousness—the nation's public laws—which magistrates and lawyers may defend and teach. Second, there is

cultural righteousness—the standards of our family and social grouping or class—which parents and schools may teach. Third, there is ethical righteousness—the Ten Commandments and law of God—which the church may teach but only in light of Christian righteousness. So all these may be received without danger, as long as we attribute to them no power to satisfy for sin, to please God, or to deserve grace...These kinds of righteousness are gifts of God, like all good things we enjoy... Yet there is another righteousness, far above the others, which

Paul calls 'the righteousness of faith'—Christian righteousness. God imputes it to us apart from our works—in other words, it is passive righteousness, as the others are active. For we do nothing for it, and we give nothing for it. We only receive it. The need for Christian righteousness This 'passive' righteousness is a mystery that the world cannot understand. Indeed, Christians never completely understand it themselves, and thus do not take advantage of it when they are troubled and tempted. So we have to constantly teach it, repeat it, and work it out

in practice. Anyone who does not understand this righteousness or cherish it in the heart and conscience will continually be buffeted by fears and depression. Nothing gives peace like this passive righteousness. For human beings by nature, when they get near either danger or death itself, will of necessity examine their own worthiness. We defend ourselves before all threats by recounting our good deeds and moral efforts. But then the remembrance of sins and flaws inevitably comes to mind, and this tears us apart, and we think, 'How many errors and sins and

wrongs I have done! Please God, let me live so I can fix and amend them.' We become obsessed with our active righteousness and are terrified by its imperfections. But the real evil is that we trust our own power to be righteous and will not lift up our eyes to see what Christ has done for us...So the troubled conscience has no cure for its desperation and feeling of unworthiness unless it takes hold of the forgiveness of sins by grace, offered free of charge in Jesus Christ, which is this passive or Christian righteousness...If I tried to fulfill the law myself, I could not trust

in what I had accomplished, neither could it stand up to the judgment of God. So...I rest only upon the righteousness of Christ...which I do not produce but receive, God the Father freely giving it to us through Jesus Christ.”

1 Corinthians 7:19

¹⁹ Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts.