

Chapter 5

The Law Is Dead

One of the first doctrines I learned when I was a young Christian was that The Law of God had been put away and we were living in a dispensation of grace. Within the next 2-3 years I had read the Scriptures from Genesis to Revelation and when I read about The Law I could see that it made sense that we could no longer be under The Law. At least that's what I thought at the time. I came to learn decades later that The Law being abolished didn't make any sense at all. I would also like to point out that many Judeo-Christians I have spoken with believe that using logic and reason is not an acceptable way to approach Scripture and they always point to the verse that says,

Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.
Prov. 3:5.

Of course they ignore the Scripture that says,

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Isa. 1:18.

A Christian man who used a great deal of reason, logic and common sense was Francis Schaeffer. Mr. Schaeffer came on the scene during the 1970's and he was readily received by churches across America. I was fortunate enough to attend one of his lectures at the Oakland coliseum in California. I had read Mr. Schaeffer's trilogy prior to hearing him speak and was somewhat familiar with his logic and Scriptural bias. I find it amazing to this day that churches all across the land welcomed him and encouraged and supported his message but failed to understand what he was saying. The greatest gem I gleaned from Schaeffer's writings was the idea that, you cannot have morals if there are no absolutes. He convinced me that the concept of morals is meaningless if you don't believe in absolutes. I was so intrigued by what he said that I acquired every book I could find that he had written. One of the last books he wrote was about the absolutes of God, the Ten Commandments. It would be years before I would fully grasp the implications of his teachings. Today we have nothing more than situational ethics, even in the churches.

Having become quite familiar with how our laws in the United States work, I was able to get a clearer picture of what Moses had done at Mt. Sinai. If Christians could understand how the laws given to Moses were structured, they would have more clarity and understanding of references to them in the New Testament. But the real problem is that Christians don't read or study the laws of God because they believe they were in a former dispensation and have been

done away in this “dispensation of grace.” This lack of scholarship flies in the face of the advice of Scripture itself since we have been told that,

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 2 Ti. 3:16.

Studying The Law is not only profitable in all of the areas mentioned, but it is also many times prophetic.

Our founding fathers wrote our Constitution and declared it to be the Supreme Law of the land. In creating a legislative body, it was their intention that no laws could be made by that body which violated any part of the Supreme Law. It can be further shown that laws have no effect on anyone until they are implemented by regulations.

...Neither the statute nor the regulations are complete without the other, and only together do they have any force. In effect, therefore, the construction of one necessarily involves the construction of the other. *United States v. Mersky* 361 US 431 (1959)

This court ruling and others like it illustrate the point that there is a separation between the law and the regulations, but they work together. This understanding throws light onto the laws which Moses gave after receiving the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments are like our Constitution and the regulations which implement our laws are like the statutes which Moses made. Although the parallel is not perfect, because our legislative body can make laws whereas Moses could not, the emphasis is on understanding the difference between the laws and the statutes/regulations which implement them. The Statutes given by Moses were not The Law but were given to implement The Law into their society and the Statutes can never exceed The Law. When the Pharisees started creating their “traditions,” they exceeded The Law and made it a burden on people.

When I refer to The Law, it is in reference to The Ten Commandments and not the statutes and judgments which came later. Rousas J. Rushdoony was a Presbyterian theologian and in his “*Institutes of Biblical Law*,” Volume I, (1973) he shows how God’s Ten Commandments could easily be implemented into our society and culture today. I say easily, although his book is quite exhaustive at almost 900 pages in length, but well worth the time taken to read it. If we were to implement The Law of God into our society just as Moses did, we would have a moral base instead of the civil law we now have based on majority rule and Congressional whim.

Every statute and judgment given by God to Moses can be traced back to one of the Ten Commandments. Therein lies the difference between our civil law and the Mosaic law; God gave the statutes to implement The Law to Israel whereas our Constitution gave the right to create further laws to our Congress. I believe that was a big mistake, but that’s another story. The point is that the statutes and judgments given by God were the way in which His Law was implemented and most of those statutes would not apply today. However, their principles are

there for our learning and we are therefore without excuse for not implementing God's Law into our culture.

God also gave His people health laws and agricultural laws and although these laws are not moral in nature, they were given as commandments and should likewise be observed. He also gave commandments concerning His Feast Days and every Feast Day celebration is prophetic. The spring feasts had their fulfillment when Jesus came to earth as a man and He became the wave sheaf offering, the Passover lamb, the firstfruits and He sent us His Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. We now look forward to the fulfilling of the fall feasts, trumpets, atonement and tabernacles. Without realizing that these feast days have spiritual meanings, how can one properly understand prophecy? The spring feasts speak of Christ's first coming, the fall feasts speak of His second coming. The fact that most Judeo-Christians don't study the Biblical laws or the feast days is why they have little to no understanding of atonement and tabernacles. Without studying these feasts, you cannot understand the significance of God's plan for the ages.

And finally, God gave His people the ordinances which were the religious rituals of sacrifice and atonement for sin. These ordinances were also related to the moral law and were commanded by God to be done regularly as part of the worship of God and the right to approach Him.

This then is the way in which The Law should be understood in order to properly determine what is said about The Law (The Ten Commandments) in the New Testament. Unless you understand the differences between the moral laws and the other commandments, you will forever be confused concerning this issue of The Law. Most Christians lump all of the statutes, judgments, feast days, religious rituals, etc., into one common term as "The Law," and therein lies the confusion. There were times when Paul used this all inclusive concept but there were also times when he was referring only to the moral laws. Understanding the difference is the only way to see what his statements and the statements of Jesus were referring to. Most people do not read Scripture and consider the context of what is being said. In the first 8 chapters of the book of Romans, Paul is speaking about justification and if you don't see that or understand it, you will misinterpret what he is saying. Paul taught that we are not justified by the things of The Law, we are justified before God by faith in Jesus Christ. It is after this that Paul begins talking about sanctification and if you don't see or understand the difference, you will be misled. In Matthew Jesus said,

For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Matt. 5:18

Was Jesus referring to all the laws of Moses or was He referring to the moral law, the Ten Commandments? I contend He was talking about the moral law only because of the prophetic nature of the Ten Commandments. As an example, the commandment which says, "Thou shalt not steal," is prophetic in that there will be a day when we have put on the mind of Christ and are in our glorified state that we shall not steal. When we have been perfected by God, we will do His commandments as a matter of our renewed nature and not as obedience to The Law. We shall not kill, we shall not commit adultery, we shall not bear false witness, etc. At that time there shall no longer be any need for The Law because we shall do it as a matter of life. That is the "fulfillment" Jesus was referring to. Until that time, there is a need for a moral

guide, a set of absolutes by which men are guided and to which they must adhere both individually and corporately.

Further proof that He was referring only to the moral law is that we know that the ceremonial laws were abolished after the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord and this was definitely in the plan of God to do so. Jesus became the ceremonial sacrifice for sin. Jesus did not say, “For verily I say unto you, till I be lifted up, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from The Law, till I be glorified,” although He could have easily made such a statement if that had been His plan. That which was put away after the work of Christ had been accomplished was the ceremonial law, the ordinances.

Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross; Col. 2:14.

All things were not fulfilled at that time. The book of Revelation is proof that all had not been fulfilled in addition to the future fulfillment of the fall feasts. In Ephesians Paul writes,

Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace. Eph. 2:15.

Christ abolished only the ordinances. Paul nowhere says that The Law has been done away or put away. On the contrary, he was very emphatic that such a thought was too incredible to ascertain;

Do we then make **void** the law through faith, **God forbid**: yea, we establish the law. Rom. 3:31.

The word, void, which Paul used means to make useless, done away, of no effect. To paraphrase him, “Do we then make the law done away with, useless, of no effect, **GOD FORBID**:” And we know that Paul was not referring to the ceremonial laws because he condemns those who want to continue with the sacrifices and ordinances. Paul was referring to the moral laws, the Ten Commandments, when he said,

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. Rom. 6:14,

He was talking about the way in which we are justified to God. Being “under the law” was an expression which referred to being justified before God and the requirement was that one had to keep The Law perfectly in order to be justified. Paul was teaching that our faith in Christ had become our justification and not the keeping of The Law.

[3]For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. [4]Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you is **justified by the law**; ye are fallen from grace. Gal. 5:3,4.

There are only two ways to be justified before God; be under The Law and keep it perfectly or be justified by faith in Jesus Christ. Paul never implied that because of this that The Law had been put away. GOD FORBID!

Man is totally insufficient in himself to establish what is right and what is wrong in a moral sense. Francis Schaeffer adequately demonstrated that only God could provide the necessary moral basis for our conduct and this He did when He gave us the Ten Commandments. Now the church has come along and tells us that The Law has been put away. John rightly stated that,

Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. 1 Jn. 3:4.

Is it even rational to believe that John would have made this statement if Jesus had put away The Law? Was John so ignorant as to misunderstand so significant a principle? On the contrary, John gives us the only meaningful definition of sin; one which is emphasized throughout Scripture. All of the requirements for the sacrificial offerings in the Old Testament were based upon the transgression of The Law. If The Law has been put away, then God has no basis for the judgment of anyone.

“Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression.”
Rom. 4:15.

Judeo-Christian ministers and theologians have tried to define sin (transgression) as everything from dancing to cussing and their definitions are why we have so many denominations. One denomination says smoking is a sin, another says short skirts are sinful, and still another says worshiping on Sunday is a sin. This is exactly what happens when men try to define sin apart from God’s Law. Scripture says that SIN is the **TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW**. Is it any wonder that our society has eroded into debauchery and grows worse every day when the very cauldrons of morality, our churches, have destroyed the only set of moral absolutes we have ever had? By teaching that The Law has been put away, we leave no moral basis for our culture and our nation.

The only thing that was put away with the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord were the ordinances and religious rituals. The vision which Peter had of the sheet being let down from heaven with all manner of unclean beasts wherein he was told to kill and eat is used by most to justify their belief that the food laws have been eliminated. I find this interpretation difficult to accept for several reasons. Peter himself was puzzled as to the meaning of the vision and I truly believe he was puzzled because he knew that God could not be doing away with His food laws. Putting them away or abolishing them would have meant they were unnecessary from the beginning and just some sort of exercise in obedience. Peter pondered on this vision until he was called to go to the house of Cornelius and it was there that Peter realized the significance and meaning of the vision and I rely on the Scriptural explanation of the vision as opposed to the interpretations given by men. Scripture itself tells us the meaning of the vision, that the gospel was to be preached to the Gentiles as well as the Jews and that we should call nothing unclean which God has made clean, to wit, all men are equal in the sight of God and He is no respecter of persons. When Scripture defines and explains itself, we should not add to it or give it a different meaning and in this instance that is exactly what has been done. The Jews had carried the

concept of things clean and unclean to include even men. Peter also held to this belief and this was the belief that God was telling Peter was heresy.

The food laws, although not moral in nature, were given for our health and well-being. If God said that pigs are unclean, they don't miraculously change at the death of Christ and become clean. Peter knew this and that's why he was confused about the vision. The animals which God forbade us to eat were in some instances so reprehensible that He referred to them as abominations.

Which remain among the graves, and lodge in the monuments, which eat swine's flesh, and broth of abominable things in their vessels; Isa. 65:4

Could that which was abominable to one generation be blessed and acceptable in another? Another Scripture used to justify the elimination of the food laws is found in Romans.

I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus Christ, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean." Rom 14:14

Paul is here referring to meat offered to idols, not doing away with the admonition of clean and unclean meats. Dr. Stephen Jones has just finished writing a lengthy commentary on the book of Romans and he agrees that the food laws have not been put away. He contends that Paul was speaking of the spiritual content of the food laws and not the scientific implications. It is obvious that the food laws are scientifically sound as a means of good health and there would be no reason for changing them or abandoning them. We don't eat certain fowl because they are scavengers and keep rotting carrion from causing disease or plague. We don't eat fish without fins and scales because crabs and shrimp keep the oceans and rivers clean and are also bottom feeders. Part of the reason many of our waters are becoming polluted is because we ignore these laws. Animals having padded feet such as wolves, coyotes and bears do the same thing in our forests. Swine are also scavengers and all of these animals were created in such a way as to digest the filthy food they eat and to keep the environment clean. To give them a diet of grain or allow them to be raised in a clean environment, does not change their constitution. They are not fit for our bodies and they are necessary for our planet to remain healthy and clean. I recommend you go to the following web address and read what Dr. Jones says about Romans.

<http://www.gods-kingdom-ministries.org/weblog/WebPosting.cfm?LogID=2467> .

God also gave us agricultural laws which we have violated and in so doing we have become dependent on chemicals and pesticides to grow our food crops. These chemicals are polluting the land to such an extent that there may soon come a day when we will not be able to raise enough food to feed ourselves. We're supposed to have a land Sabbath every 7 years and if we did this, it would eliminate the need for pesticides and artificial fertilizers.

God gave us laws on warfare and how to treat our enemies. He gave us economic laws and governmental principles. There is no aspect of our relationship with God or our fellow man that God did not address, yet I was led to believe that all of this was done away and we now only have to live under grace.

Many Christians have commented to me and others that The Law was a burden and too hard to keep. In contrast, this was what Jesus said,

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light. Matt. 11:30.

A yoke is used throughout Scripture to refer to a set of laws or demands and is a restraint. David also stated on several occasions that he delighted in the law of God.

Their heart is as fat as grease; but I delight in thy law. Psa. 119:70; I will delight myself in thy statutes: I will not forget thy word. Psa. 119:16; Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. Psa.119:54; I have longed for thy salvation, O LORD; and thy law is my delight. Psa. 119:174.

Was David aware of something that we are not? There are also Christians who say The Law was condensed into two statutes by Jesus when he answered a lawyer who was trying to trap him;

[36]Master, which is the great commandment in the law? [37]Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. [38]This is the first and great commandment. [39]And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Matt. 22:36-39.

The people who summarize the law with these words don't realize that Jesus was quoting the Old Testament. This demonstrates that the two great commandments Jesus was referring to were not something new. Deuteronomy states,

And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. Deut. 6:5

And in Leviticus it is said,

Thou shalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge against the children of thy people, but thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself: I am the LORD. Lev. 19:18.

God had already summarized The Law in the Old Testament and it did not nullify his commandments, statutes and judgments.

How many times did Jesus say that if you love Him, keep His commandments? Solomon put it quite succinctly when he said,

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments: for **this is the whole duty of man.** Eccl. 12:13.

People think we're living in a different "dispensation" from Solomon and that his words do not apply. What foolishness! Was Jesus referring to a different set of commandments than those given at Sinai?

And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is, God: **but if thou wilt enter into life, keep THE commandments.** Matt. 19:17. And again, He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me :..... John 14:21.

Was Jesus talking about a new set of commandments? Of course not, He is the one who gave Moses the Ten Commandments.

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love;..... John 15:10.

Paul understood that Jesus was referring to the Ten Commandments. In his first epistle to the Corinthians he says,

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the **commandments of God**. 1 Cor. 7:19.

He also understood that Jesus was God in the flesh and when he referred to His commandments, he was referring to the commandments of God. John understood the same thing as Paul.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 1 Jn. 2:3. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 1 Jn. 2:4. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. 1 Jn. 5:2.

And then John tells us that God's commandments are not grievous;

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. 1 Jn. 5:3.

But I thought it was grievous to keep the commandments of God. How does a Christian show his love toward God? It's fine to have feelings of love toward God, I certainly do. But agape love is keeping His commandments.

And this is love, that we keep his commandments..... 2 Jn. 1:6.

Finally John tells us in the Revelation,

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, **AND** have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Rev. 12:17.

John further states,

Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, **AND** the faith of Jesus. Rev. 14:12.

Can he make it any clearer that we are to have faith in Jesus Christ but we are also to keep the commandments of God?

Some very clever men have taken a few isolated verses of Scripture and distorted their meaning to promulgate the fiction that God's Laws have been put away in contradistinction to so many other Scriptures that say otherwise. Not understanding or having the intellect to comprehend what Paul said about justification, they teach for doctrine the traditions of men.

A very skilled and well educated scholar wrote a book about this antinomian (against law) mind set. In his writings, he refers to over 2,000 verses of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation which indicate, imply and illustrate that The Law has not been put away. He was a Presbyterian theologian by the name of Greg Bahnsen and his book is called, "Theonomy In Christian Ethics." I have never read any other book that so completely establishes the apologetic of God's Law. To fail to read this work is to fail to understand or espouse any argument for or against The Law having been put away. I would encourage every Christian who truly wants to know and understand Scripture and particularly this subject of God's Law, to read this finely comprised and exhaustive treatise on this matter. Pay close attention to the following quotes, especially if you are a Judeo-Christian in either a fundamentalist church or believe in dispensationalism. C.I. Scofield not only helped formulate the dispensational doctrines but was also extremely critical of the abiding validity of God's Law. The quotes are extensive but the information contained in them is absolutely necessary if you are to understand the importance of ridding our society of this cursed concept. All of the quotes are from Bahnsen's book mentioned above.

Clearly then, dispensationalism is as antagonistic as modern Protestantism and Romanism, though for different reasons, to the law of God. Ironically, for all its endeavor to distance itself from legalism, Fundamentalism introduced a form of legalism all its own: the pious ; 'do not's' of man—a moral code as arbitrary as it was anachronistic. Pg. 21

Therefore, with its continued dismissal of the law of God in ethics, Fundamentalism expressed both a 'spiritualized' form of situation ethics and 'Christianly submissive' statism.

Pg. 22

The law of God is the standard of Christian love, so that one who does not follow the law can never be said to love. According to Scripture the criterion of love to the brethren is observance of God's commandments, just as loving God means keeping His law. Pg. 242

To hold that an inner moral disposition or the emotion of love is the compass of ethics has affinity with the philosophy of Hume or Ayer, not with the theology of Jesus and Paul. The law of God is the guide of love; the Bible knows no other understanding of love. Pg. 244

Any 'love' which is based on inner disposition or which leads to the destruction of, or indifference to, godly morality is a monstrous and fraudulent substitute for Christian love which, in emulation of our Lord Jesus Christ, operates according to God's commandments.

Pg. 246

Therefore, to call the law of God into question under the guise of grace or faith or love is nothing short of **SPIRITUAL DECEPTION**. Pg. 247 (emphasis mine)

Doctor Bahnsen clearly shows how The Law of God declares His character, defines sin, exposes infractions, condemns transgression, drives us to Christ, restrains evil and is our only guide to sanctification. Yet, he strongly condemns any who would claim that we are **justified** by God's Law.

Both the Old Covenant and New Covenant had The Law as their foundation. God foretold of the New Covenant through His prophet, Jeremiah;

[31] Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a **new covenant** with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: [33] But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put **my law** in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Jer. 31:31, 33.

In the eighth chapter of Hebrews, Paul quotes these verses and points out that the new covenant has come. The Old Covenant was based on The Law and the New Covenant was based on The Law. So, what's all this nonsense about dispensationalism? God's Law was essential to both covenants and it is absurd to say it has been put away. Those who teach this concocted doctrine will be **called least in the kingdom of heaven**. See Matt. 5, inclusive.

It is not for you or the Church to decide what is moral. God has already decided and He alone is sufficient to do this.

There is one lawgiver, who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another? Jas. 4:12

In conclusion, let me say that those who believe that God's Law has been made void or set aside and substantiate their claims with 4 or 5 misinterpreted verses from the New Testament are not only being untrue to themselves from their glaring lack of study and prayer but are also undermining our nation and society. And more importantly, they are maligning God and His standards for morality and behavior.

I find it incredible that Christians "raise a stink" when some governmental agency removes a plaque of The Ten Commandments from a public place when Christians are the ones who have spearheaded the concept that God's Law has been put away. The government is simply responding in kind and putting away God's Law.

Christians have the power of the Holy Spirit behind them and the promises and blessings of God and if every single Christian family had removed their children from public schools when the Supreme Court handed down its decisions in the early 1960's and in 1971, either the court would have had to reassess their position or end the public school system. There are between 60 to 70 million Christian families in this nation and they could turn this country around by implementing God's Law but they are mostly complacent about the condition of our land. When God's people repent of their blasphemies and heresies, God will hear from heaven and heal our land.

Many non-Christians feel that a theocracy would result in a lot of religious fanatics judging everyone and hold to a false piety. What they don't realize is that our country did quite well before the 1930s and our law system was, the common-law. The American common-law was our only system of government for over 400 years during which we became a prosperous nation and gained prominence throughout the world. The common-law goes right back to Mt. Sinai and the Ten Commandments. I certainly would rather live under the common-law than our present legislative democracy.

Suggested Reading, Video and Audio:

Francis Schaeffer's Trilogy: "He is There and He is not Silent," "The God Who Is There" and "Escape From Reason"

Rousas J. Rushdoony: "The Institutes of Biblical Law"

Greg Bahnsen: "Theonomy in Christian Ethics"