

## Christ and The Law

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Our faith in Christ has nothing to do with law. Law cannot help us. This does not mean that we should not have law in our societies. It means that law cannot change our inner man. No matter what religious laws we maintain, none of them can change our inner nature. None of them deal with the real issue, i.e. what comes out of our heart.

But in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men...Hear and understand: Not that which goes into a mouth that defiles a man; but that which comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man. (Matt 15:9-11).

Jesus spoke of the real issue, saying that it is what comes from within that defiles us. This means what comes out of our heart: fears, lusts, hate, self-centeredness, bad moods, anger and the like. It is our moods and self-centred behaviour that damage the lives of those around us. This is what Jesus came to change. No religion we keep will compensate for this.

We will only get genuine love where Jesus by the gospel changes our heart. Legalism is a substitute for real change. To avoid what is really going on inside us, we make rules to live by. We fall back into law by choice, because we do not want to face who we really are. Law becomes our "security blanket". This type of religion is totally vain. The fruit of love, joy and peace come from Jesus within our heart.

The gospel of Jesus Christ has nothing to do with law. Law does not change our nature. We can keep 1,000 laws and none of them will change who we are inside. So God made a way for Jesus Christ to live in us, to change our nature and to live His life in and through us by grace. "I will give you a new heart" is God's way (Ezek 36:26). God's way is nature change.

The problem is not the devil, our flesh, or the things of this world outside of us, but sin within. Laws such as "touch not, handle not" therefore do not address our need, but they do the opposite and make religious monsters. The "purpose of the commandment is love, a pure conscience and un-pretended faith." (1 Tim 1:5). Jesus' nature gets to our core and sets us free from sin and from vain religion. We must preach this.

### Why God Gave the Law

In Galatians 3 Paul goes into a brief discussion on why God gave the Law of Moses. When we refer to the law here we mean the entire Law of Moses, whether the ceremonial, civil or moral law. The *ceremonial law* means laws to do with the tabernacle, priesthood and sacrifices. The *civil law* means laws to do with social life. The *moral law* means laws concerning right and wrong in moral issues.

In Galatians 3 Paul addressed the reason why God gave the law as a whole. He begins by pointing out that God gave eternal life to Abraham by promise, without conditions. Paul pointed out that the law came 430 years after the promise was made. If God had given eternal life on the basis of promise, then why did He add conditions in the law afterwards?

Paul used a human contract as an example. When two people make a contract, say to buy or sell an item, when both parties have agreed on a price and signed, one party cannot afterwards change the conditions of sale. So Paul's question is, if God made a promise to Abraham, why was the law added some 430 years later?

Brethren, I speak after the manner of men: Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuls or adds to it. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He said not seeds, as of many; but as of one and to your seed, which is Christ.

And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made...(Gal 3:15-19).

This means that the law was not given to set conditions for salvation. It was not given to save. This disproves the whole Dispensationalist theology. God never saved anyone by the law, not in any dispensation. Salvation has been by promise since the Garden of Eden and it always will be by promise. So if the law was not given to save Israel or mankind in general, why was it given? Paul said:

1. Because of sin.
2. Until the seed (Christ) should come.

### Because of Sin

Paul explains this further in Galatians. Under the Old Covenant the people were not born again. They did not have a heart after God. They did not know God from the heart. They did not know His ways. They could not do naturally from the heart the things that would be pleasing to God. He said they were like immature children.

Once again Paul compared this with a human custom. A child may be the heir of a rich man, but if the father dies the child cannot be allowed to live fully in the inheritance, but must be under a guardian. So Paul said that the law was like a guardian to protect fallen man while he lived under sin. The law was a tutor to guide and protect the immature or sinful man.

Paul compared coming into mature age as being born of the Spirit. He called this "the coming of faith." (Gal 3:25). This means that faith comes within the heart by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. They did not have this in the Old Covenant. The Spirit of God came upon them, but faith did not permanently dwell within them.

Paul highlights the difference between the Old and New Covenants. Under the Old we were sinners. Under the New we have the promised Spirit. And this is why the law was given, to protect and guide those who did not have the Spirit within, who did not have the nature of God, until Christ came. Now that Christ has come we have the baptism in the Spirit. Paul explains:

Now I say, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differs nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the

father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world (Law of Moses):

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (Gal 4:10-7).

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up to the faith which should afterward be revealed. (Gal 3:23).

So law came before and until mature sonship came. Mature sonship means to receive the Spirit through the gospel of Jesus Christ in the New Covenant. It means nature change by receiving inner faith, the baptism in the Spirit.

#### In Lieu of Relationship

The law could never bring people into a relationship with God. From the beginning God wanted relationship. That is why He did not ask David to build a temple. He did not want the temple. He wanted to live within His people and have relationship personally. The law was given because relationship did not exist.

O that there were such a heart in them, that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always, that it might be well with them and their children forever. (Deut 5:29).

We see here first that they did not have this heart under the Old Covenant. Second we see the purpose of the law. God did not give the law for the law's sake, but for man's sake, "That it might be well with them.". He did not give it to be hard, not because He loves rules, but to guide, help and protect. He gave it because He loves people.

#### To Lead us to Christ

He also gave the law to lead us to Christ. This means two things:

1. To give us the knowledge of sin.
2. To point us to Christ.

The law does both of these things. First, it shows sin. In Romans 7 Paul said he was alive until the law came. Then the law showed him his sin. When that happened sin was magnified and took even more control over his life. Paul did not know he was covetous until the law said "you shall not covet". This condemned him and brought him more fully under the power of sin.

Paul did not mean that he was alive before he met the law. It meant that in his own estimation he was alive. But when he saw the law he was able, by the help of the Holy Spirit, to see and admit his true state. The law is very important for this purpose. It causes us to call out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" (Rom 7:24). This leads us to Christ.

But the law also points us to Christ for the answer. It not only shows us our sin, but also shows us the answer. The law contains the lesson of *substitution*. The tabernacle sacrifices, the Day of Atonement and other offerings, all pointed to Christ in whom they had fulfilment. The washings, the purification and food laws, all pointed to Christ who makes us clean.

So the same law that has condemned us also points to our salvation by speaking of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Under the Old Covenant these offerings covered the people's sin when they transgressed the law. Under the New Covenant the blood of Christ takes away our sin.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (Gal 3:24).

### Early Quakers

Edward Burrough (17<sup>th</sup> Century) gave a different meaning to *the law leading us to Christ*. He claimed the *light of Christ within every man* leads him to Christ, not to freely justify by Christ's atonement, but to walk in and fulfil the law himself (John 1:9). This interpretation of *the law leading us to Christ* means we are redeemed by Christ as we keep the law.

Burrough claimed that because the law is still active in leading, it is not fulfilled in the sense of taken away by the cross. He claimed that we are not justified apart from keeping the law. This could be interpreted in a Gnostic, Arminian, Universalist or humanist sense, whereby everyone is given grace to repent (even those who have not heard the gospel) and salvation is in keeping the law within.

Some early Quakers claimed that because every man has *the light*, every man has the ability to repent and that their repentance is ultimately their own choice. This teaching makes the cross of Christ redundant, simply a gesture of kindness on the part of Christ, rather than a purchase of depraved man from sin.

Charles Finney taught a similar view of new birth and salvation, to the point where he denied the substitutionary work of the cross and denied that righteousness is imputed to us without us keeping the law. He claimed that one could gain or lose salvation often, according to their commitment to the moral law. This "law" was in relation to behaviour such as smoking, drinking tea, entertainment or foods.

Some believe this today. They believe that their right relationship with God depends on how they stand at any time in relation to the law, whatever law they deem important. Therefore, if they sin and have not had a chance to repent before dying, they go to hell. This is measuring their salvation against the law. This is not the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The *law leading us to Christ* does not mean we are redeemed by Christ as we keep the law. We are redeemed by the cross. When we are born again Christ is in us and we have a new nature. We walk by faith which works through love. So then, this is the commandment of the New Covenant, "That you believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another." (1 John 3:23).

Redemption through the cross means it is without the law:

But now the righteousness of God *without the law* is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets: Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ to all and upon all them that believe...(Rom 3:21-22).

Early Quakers accused other Non-Conformists, such as John Bunyan (author of *Pilgrim's Progress*) of preaching a Christ who did His redemptive work only *outside* of us, on the cross and in heaven, while the Quakers focused on redemption through Christ *in us*. They put the emphasis on the life of Christ within. They said the *Evangelical Faith* often claimed forgiveness without change of life.

Their emphasis was partly correct. It is the cross applied to our nature through the presence of Christ within that sets us free from sin. The early Quakers claimed that those who had a faith in merely a past cross had only a nominal faith. They said those people believed they were forgiven by the cross, while their lives were not changed.

This is what some called *Evangelical Imputation*, where Christ's righteousness is imputed to us without a change of life, and Finney also rightly rejected it. But in rejecting it they also rejected historic Christian faith. They were correct in citing James, "A man is not justified by faith without works", but wrong in seeing the works as the source of that justification. James was talking about pretended faith.

*Imputation of righteousness* is without the law, on the basis of Christ's atonement alone. Then Christ comes within the believer through the faith He gives. When it is genuinely of the Holy Spirit it changes our nature and life style. This fulfils the law, not by us walking in reference to the law, but in reference to the person of Christ within, through His love and faith.

The early Quaker William Penn wrote *The Sandy Foundation Shaken*, against many facets of historical Christian faith, including against one God existing in three distinct and separate persons; against the necessity of plenary satisfaction (atonement) for the pardoning of sinners; and against the justification of impure persons by an imputative righteousness. Finney followed this. This is decidedly unchristian.

Penn worked for freedom of religious conscience in a period of English oppression and his policies in Pennsylvania (U.S.A.) were humane. Penn's idealism (unconditional human love, public vs. church based education, diplomacy and advocating a European Union for world peace) contributed to a secularization of society, which has bad consequences in our time.

The early Quakers believed strongly in liberty for all genders, classes and races, humaneness and godliness, much to their credit. We are indebted to them for their contribution towards modern civil liberty, or liberal democracy. Liberal democracy in Western society is not a heritage from the Greeks or from the Renaissance, but it grew out of Christian principles and movements to protect the poor.

The early Quaker's stance on Christ within as opposed to "evangelical believism" and their insistence that the Word is the person and not the letter of scripture and that through Christ the law is established rather than set aside, go to the core of the Christian gospel and should be strongly preached.

Yet, their insistence that "the light that lights every man" leads to salvation when obeyed denies total depravity and is a doctrine of works (John 1:9). It can lead to universalism, secularism and Neo-Orthodoxy. The *light* in John 1:9 gives each man existence and an inner witness that God exists and a conscience. Because of sin, man holds this light (*general grace*) in a state of spiritual death until he is regenerated by grace through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### Without Law

Do you not know...that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives? For the woman that has a husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he lives,

but if the husband is dead she is loosed from the law of her husband. If while her husband lives she is married to another she shall be called an adulteress, but if her husband is dead she is free from the law, so that she is not an adulteress if she is married to another.

Therefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that you should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, *that we should bring forth fruit to God.* (Rom 7:1-4).

This passage tells us that we were once married to the law. We were in debt to it, to keep our obligations to it. It then says that we were put to death in Christ, so that we are no longer married to or under the law. This means that we do not live in any reference to any part of the law. This includes the Ten Commandments. Our death to the law is complete and total. We are not partially dead. In putting us to death, Jesus Christ has taken us from the law, to make us His.

We are now married to another, i.e. Christ. Now, we cannot be married to two, to be both in Christ and also under all or some part of the law. That would be polygamy or adultery. Neither are we free to please ourselves. We are not a bachelor or spinster. We are married to, and so obliged to, please the other - Christ. We are not our own. We are to bring forth fruit to God.

We live not by the law, but by the Spirit, bringing faith and love to our heart, to move us to good works which He has prepared for us. As Christ lives in us we thus fulfil the law, but not in reference to the letter. Christ is Lord of our lives, not the law. We still have a Lord. We are not free. But we live by the law of Christ, meaning "Your will be done" and this is not a burden to us, for we want to please Him who gave Himself for us.

So for us to go back to the law would be adultery against Him who died for us.

### Through the Law

We continue in Galatians, following Paul's argument from the law.

For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me...(Gal 2:19-20).

What good news this brings! "I through the law am dead to the law." What does this mean: "Through the law"? It means that the law of God has made provision (allowance) for me to die with Christ. The law of God said that if Christ would die in my stead, then I would die with Him. Christ's death on my behalf was lawful.

The whole sacrifice system under the law was given as a provision for substitution for our sin. On this basis, Isaiah prophesied in chapter 53 about the substitution of Jesus Christ for our sin. If my Substitute died, I died with Him.

Paul's skill of argument is brilliant in these passages. He picks apart the law of God revealing its treasure. When we study law in general, such as statute law or common law, we understand what Paul is doing here. He is arguing from the law, just as a barrister would in a court room. He is not arguing against God, but against the claims of sin and death.

### The Law of Sin and Death

Paul sees condemnation in the Law of Moses, i.e. *the law of sin and death*:

And the law is not of faith: but, the man that does them shall live by them. (Gal 3:12).

Here Paul quoted from Lev 18:5. It says that if any desires life by the law, then he must fulfil the whole law. If any seeks justification by the law, he must not transgress any single part of the law, even in his past or in his heart. This therefore has condemned all men to death, for that all have sinned.

And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be to death. (Rom 7:10).

It is not the law that is bad, but sin working in the unregenerate, "sons of disobedience". The law is not the problem, but sin. The law shows us our sin and pronounces God's judgement against us.

What shall I say then? Is the law sin? God forbid, no. I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law said, You shall not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, worked in me all manner of evil desire.

For without the law sin was dead (not seen by me). For I was alive (so I thought) without the law. But when the commandment came (when I saw the law), sin revived and I died. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment deceived me and by it slew me. (Rom 7:7-11).

This shows how the sin nature uses the law to bring us into bondage. After seeing our condemnation, the self-will rebels and provokes us against all the law. Lost in hopelessness, we set out to please only ourselves. Only Christ can deliver us from this.

Was then that which is good (the law) made death to me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good. (Rom 7:13).

The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. (1 Cor 15:56).

The law brings the knowledge of sin, which condemns and enslaves the man and brings him under the power of death. Man loses hope, blames and hates God and finds his sin nature deepening. When our sin is highlighted its power grows. The *Message Bible* (paraphrased) puts Rom 7:8-10 like this:

Don't you remember how it was? I do, perfectly well. The law code started out as an excellent piece of work. What happened, though, was that sin found a way to pervert the command into a temptation, making a piece of "forbidden fruit" out of it. The law code, instead of being used to guide me, was used to seduce me.

Without all the paraphernalia of the law code, sin looked pretty dull and lifeless, and I went along without paying much attention to it. But once sin got its hands on the law code and decked itself out in all that finery, I was fooled, and fell for it. The very command that was supposed to guide me into life was cleverly used to trip me up, throwing me headlong.

The *Phillips Bible* (paraphrased) likewise states:

But the sin in me, finding in the commandment an opportunity to express itself, stimulated all my desires. For sin, in the absence of the Laws has no life of its own. As long, then as I was without the Law I was alive. But when the commandment arrived, sin sprang to life and I "died". The commandment, which was meant to be a direction to life, I found was a sentence to death.

Sin brings death or separation from God by the law and death brings us more under the power of sin. We look at the answer to this in other chapters, especially the chapter on sanctification.

### Substitution

Continuing in Galatians, Paul looks further into the Law of Moses and finds this:

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, cursed is everyone who hangs upon a tree. (Gal 3:13).

Here Paul quoted Deut 21:23. Moses said that if any is executed by being hung on a tree, then the body must be taken down before nightfall, so that the land is not polluted in God's sight. The body is defiled by sin.

Paul said that according to this law, whoever hangs on a tree bears sin. Jesus was hung upon a tree, so He also bore sin. Because Jesus had no sin, God could impute to Him our sin. He bore the sin of those He died for. Because He had no sin, His death could be used to bear our sin.

So we died in His body on that tree. We were guilty and should have been on that tree, but He took our place. By type, He was the animals God slew to clothe Adam and Eve. By type He was the ram whose horns were caught in the thickets, to substitute for Isaac (all of us) on the mountain (Gen 22:13). "Caught in thickets" by love, "Not My will, but Your will."

### The Law of the Spirit of Life

We look at this in other portions of this book, so only mention it briefly here. This is the end of the legal process Paul looks at. We live under a different law. Not the letter of the law that kills, but the law of faith, meaning the law of grace. Paul calls it a law, because in grace it takes charge in our life, but it does not function in the sense of a legal obligation, but from love and the power of the resurrection.

Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith. (Rom 3:27).

The law of the spirit of life is not a legal principle that we harness and put into operation as we would natural laws like *lift* and *thrust*. Some have turned this into another works project by saying we can work these laws of the Spirit by doing *this and that*. It is not a legal right that we have and use as we will. It works by grace and love. Christ uses His life and power to condemn sin in our flesh and live out His purposes through us by His faith in us.

### The Law's Jurisdiction

If we are a citizen of a nation then we are under that nation's legal jurisdiction. By two counts then the Law of Moses does not apply to Christians. Firstly, we are not part of the Old Covenant for which the law was made. This applies to both Jews and Gentiles today. No one today is under that covenant. It is finished.

Secondly, we are crucified with Christ and so are dead. If we are dead then the law no longer speaks to us. You cannot take a policeman to a cemetery to arrest a dead man. He is no longer within the legal jurisdiction of that nation. The law cannot condemn a dead man.

And also you cannot take a prostitute to the cemetery to tempt a dead man, not even a truck load of prostitutes. The dead man will not even “struggle”. We are dead by Christ’s death, which works in us by His faith.

### The Whole Law

If we live by one law then we must fulfil the whole law. We cannot choose the laws we like and leave the rest. Legalism focuses on a few laws and brings people into bondage to those laws, but neglects other laws. For example, if we say that we should not eat this or that food, or take this meat because it has blood in it, then we must also not worship in any place but the city of Jerusalem. That is what the law says.

Take heed that you do not offer your burnt offerings (worship) in every place, but in the place which the Lord shall choose...(Jerusalem)...(Deut 12:13-14).

So, if we say we must keep the law then we must go to Jerusalem, otherwise we are not keeping the law. We must come under the whole Old Covenant. If we preach one law, we must come under the whole law.

For I testify again to every man that is circumcised (*to keep the law*), that he is a debtor to do the whole law. (Gal 5:3).

Those who say that we must tithe, because of the book of Malachi, must keep the whole law. The law of tithing says that they who receive the tithe, the Levites, must not own any property, but the Lord is their inheritance.

And the Lord spoke to Aaron, You shall have no inheritance in their land, neither shall you have any part among them (the other tribes): I am your part and your inheritance among the children of Israel. (Num 18:20)

This was to avoid corruption among those who take the tithe, so they do not take it for themselves and so they do not serve for profit. So, if today we receive tithes by the law, we must divest ourselves of all personal assets, in keeping with the law that we preach. If we preach the law, we must also live by the law.

Those who tithe *in Christ* do so not because of the law, but because Christ lives in them. They give because they love Christ’s body and are committed to the life of Christ in His body. They give because they have life and life overflows and they have a heart to reach others with the gospel. They give because Christ gave His life. We give because we have a new heart and we do not live for ourselves.

### Christ Fulfils the Whole Law

He fulfils the washings, the dietary laws and the purification laws. These laws all spoke of the sanctification of the blood of Christ and taught men to discern between good and evil: not meats, which pass into the belly and out again.

And He said to them. Are you so without understanding also? Do you not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entering into a man, it cannot defile him; Because it enters not into his heart, but into his belly and goes out into the draught, purging all meats? And he said, That which comes out of the man, that defiles him. (Mk 7:18-20).

By this Jesus claimed that food does not defile before God. Jesus fulfilled and removed the whole ceremonial law of the Old Covenant. Food and blood laws depicted and prefigured the work of Christ. His blood cleanses us. These laws were teaching instruments. They had no value in themselves. Some of them had value in hygiene and health, but none of them commend us to God now we have the Spirit.

The Old Covenant ceremonial laws had the purpose of teaching mankind to discern and to discriminate between clean and unclean, meaning between moral and immoral, right and wrong. The law taught us that two different things do not go together:

You shall not sow your vineyard with different seeds...You shall not plough with an ox and an ass together. You shall not wear a garment of different sorts, as of woollen and linen together. (Deut 22:9-11).

This is a rudimentary principle, a beginning principle, a picture that carries a lesson, a pre-school object lesson. The lesson is that Christ has no fellowship with Belial: that we should come out of Babylon and be separate and that light has no fellowship with darkness (2 Cor 6:15). Now that Christ has fulfilled the law we leave the rudimentary principles and go onto perfection, meaning we embrace Christ.

Wherefore if you are dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why as though living in the world are you subject to ordinances. (Col 2:20).

We embrace the mature intent of the law. We live in Christ separate from sin.

### The Law is Good

What we are saying is:

1. The law is good.
2. It cannot give life.

The principles within the law are good. They are perfect. God's law is good. The only problem is that we cannot live by the law because it cannot impart the power to fulfil it. "The law is weak through the flesh." (Rom 8:3). Only Christ imparts power by His grace.

Wherefore the law is holy and the commandment holy and just and good... For we know that the law is spiritual (*meaning good and right*). (Rom 7:12, 14).

Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness should have been by the law. (Gal 3:21).

The law is not against the purposes of God. The law is good. It is sin that is the problem. Christ in us is the answer to sin. Since the law is good and since we cannot derive life from it, does the law then have any purpose for the believer today? Yes, it can teach us. We do not live by the law, but we can learn from it.

## Reveal His Nature

In the next few sections we are looking at how we interpret the law. We look at its uses for Christians today. The law is good, but what does that mean for Christians? We are looking at the correct verses incorrect uses of God's law. Returning first to Galatians, we see that Paul shows the value of the law for today. It reveals God's love:

For all the law is fulfilled in one commandment, even in this, you shall love your neighbour as yourself. (Gal 5:14).

There is only one way we can know the nature of the Father and that is for Christ to be in us. Pentecost is the only way to know God. Jesus said, "If you have seen Me you have seen the Father." (John 14:9). The disciples could not see that till they were born again (John 14:19). When we are born of God we can also see His nature within His law. The law shows the born again person two things:

1. The love of God.
2. The person of Christ.

If all the law is fulfilled by the one word *love*, then the whole law reflects the love of God. This means that the purpose of the law was to care for the people of Israel. The law also has judgment because love judges or maintains a standard to protect others. Where there is no judgement there is no love.

## Christ in the Law

"In the volume of the book it is written of Me." (Heb 10:7). This *book* is the law and the prophets. Throughout the Old Testament we see that it speaks of Christ. In the book of Leviticus, for example, we can see the many ways in which Christ has cleansed us and the many feasts Christ has fulfilled for us. It opens our understanding of His finished work.

And he shall put his hand upon the head of the burnt offering and it shall be accepted for him to make atonement for him. (Lev 1:4).

This is just one example. His sins were not imparted into the animal, but it was just a symbol, a type. Our sins were carried in the body of Jesus in the sense that God allowed His sufferings to be our punishment. This is what is meant by, "He was made to be sin for us." (2 Cor 5:21). He did not become a sinner. He suffered for and thereby carried and put away our sin. He was legally reckoned to be a sinner to suffer for us. Now that He has done this, to make an animal sacrifice would be to deny Christ.

Years ago Oral Roberts preached a sermon entitled *The Fourth Man*, referring to the Fourth man in the fiery furnace in the book of Daniel. He asked, "Who is this fourth man?". Then he started:

In Genesis He is the Seed of the Woman. In Exodus He is the Passover Lamb. In Leviticus He is our High Priest. In Numbers He is the Pillar of Cloud by day and the Pillar of Fire by night. In Deuteronomy He is the Prophet like unto Moses. In Joshua He is the Captain of our Salvation. In Judges He is our Judge and Lawgiver. In Ruth He is our Kinsman Redeemer. In I and II Samuel He is our Trusted Prophet. In Kings and Chronicles He is our Reigning King.

In Ezra He is our Faithful Scribe. In Nehemiah He is the Re-builder of the Broken Down Walls of our human life. In Esther He is our Mordecai. In Job He is our Dayspring from on high and our Ever-Living Redeemer. In Psalms He is the Lord our

Shepherd. In Proverbs and Ecclesiastes He is our Wisdom. In the Song of Solomon He is our Lover and the bridegroom. In Isaiah He is the Prince of Peace. In Jeremiah He is the Righteous Branch.

In Lamentations He is the Weeping Prophet. In Ezekiel He is the Wonderful Four-Faced Man. In Daniel He is the Fourth Man in the burning fiery furnace. In Hosea He is the Faithful Husband, forever married to the backslider. In Joel He is the Baptizer with the Holy Ghost and Fire. In Amos He is our Burden-Bearer. In Obadiah He is the Mighty to Save. In Jonah He is our Great Foreign Missionary. In Micah He is the Messenger of Beautiful Feet carrying the Gospel.

In Nahum He is the Avenger of God's Elect. In Habakkuk He is God's Evangelist, crying, "Revive thy work in the midst of the years.". In Zephaniah He is the Savior. In Haggai He is the Restorer of God's Lost Heritage. In Zechariah He is the Fountain Opened in the House of David for sin and uncleanness. And in Malachi He is the Sun of Righteousness, rising with healing in His wings.

He continued through the New Testament books. You can see the whole sermon on the Internet and listen to an audio the sermon preached by Oral at [www.earstohear.net/Kingdom/fourthman.html](http://www.earstohear.net/Kingdom/fourthman.html)

David also explains the use of the law:

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the law are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever: the judgements of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

More to be desired are they than gold, yes, than much fine gold: sweeter also than the honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them Your servant is warned: and in keeping of them there is much reward. (Ps 19:7-11).

Here David knew the pastor heart of God. He saw the law not as restrictive, but as good, caring and protective. He saw that God gave it not in legalism to condemn, but to warn and save from trouble. David said the law converts the soul (Ps 19:7). It cannot convert a sinner, but it renews the mind. It can teach, but it can only teach through Christ. In Christ the veil is lifted, so that we see Him in the law and prophets.

But their minds were blinded: for until this day remains the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament: which veil is done away in Christ. (2 Cor 3:14).

The Holy Spirit can teach us from the law by opening to us the intent and principles and revealing in it the work, person and love of Christ. It points us to Christ, not to itself. We do not live by this law, but by the person it points us to. The law, when used by the Spirit of God, points us to its Author, Jesus Christ. When Christ is in us the law comes to life (fulfilment) in Him. He does not do away with the law, but He fulfils it in us.

#### Intent of the Law

When we read the law as Christians we are not reading it for legalism and condemnation (to keep its letter), but reading it to see its intent and learn of the nature of God behind it. We are looking at the *spirit or intent of the law* and interpreting its *principles* into daily life. This is how God always intended the law to be used. But because people were not born again they could not do so.

Any time courts today interpret a statute they are supposed to look at the purpose of the statute, not just the letter. The judge asks, "Why was this law legislated? What was the background or situation it was trying to correct? What was the need? What was the government of the day trying to achieve?". This is contextualization. He is supposed to judge by the intention of the government and not use the law to achieve his own purpose.

### Not Comprehensive

The Old Testament law was not comprehensive. It did not cover every possible issue that could arise in life. It gave principles and then a few cases in which these principles were applied. These cases were teaching instruments. But there were many cases that would arise in civil life that were not covered in the law, which Israel had to judge for itself, applying the principles contained in the law.

God wants us to apply His truth, not just serve Him blindly by rote. He wants us to participate in His fellowship and life. The law was not meant to be taken by the letter, but by its intent or principles and then applied to situations that arise. God intended that Spirit filled people should judge on matters of the law, guided by its principles.

God intended regenerated man to live as *elohim*: judges, rulers and magistrates. His intention is that being born again, we would have the nature to make good judgement for family and society. In this sense we are *gods*. Here we see the humanist influence of the Renaissance coming in by the Quakers, but here it is correct: God liberating the individual and making him a joint heir, a son, not a servant. But it is His will that is always in focus.

When Christ leads us His leading will never violate His principles in the law. But He judges the principles. The early Quakers correctly taught this, saying that we are led by Him by faith, not by the letter of scripture and that He never violates scripture, but as He judges it and not as human tradition judges Christ. This is the truth, but some twist it by being unaccountable.

The Pharisees misjudged God's principles and so does religious man today. He judges God's principles naturally, outwardly, by a human code of behaviour. He thinks that by hearing, accepting and believing scripture he is justified. He then follows the laws in the New Testament to maintain that justification. But this cannot bring life. The source of life is always a person and His faith.

### Establish the Law

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yes, we establish the law.  
(Rom 3:31).

This means that because Christ fulfilled the law, as we are in Him we have also fulfilled it. It means that because Christ leads us in the faith that works through love, our lives establish the spirit, intent and principles that are written in the law.

Since the law contains the values of God and was authored by God, those who live in opposition to the values contained within the law are not in Christ and Christ is not in them. They are in lawlessness.

Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin. Whosoever abides in Him sins not: whosoever sins hath not seen Him, neither known Him.

Little children, let no man deceive you: he that does righteousness is righteous, even as He is righteous. He that commits sin is of the devil; for the devil sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God does not commit sin; for His seed remains in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.

In this the children of God are manifest and the children of the devil: whosoever does not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loves not his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. (1 John 3:4-11).

### James

Even so faith, if it has not works, is dead, being alone. Yes, a man may say, You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without your works and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is only one God; you do well: the devils also believe and tremble.

But will you know, vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? See how faith wrought with his works and by works was his faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which said, Abraham believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness...

You see then how by works a man is justified and not by faith only. Likewise was not Rahab the harlot justified by works when she had received the messengers and had sent them out another way? (James 2:17-25).

Works prove and vindicate the faith that God gave you. Without these works there is no evidence of faith. So the evidence of faith is not *tongues*, prophecies or words, but the life of fruit. These works spring from faith and do not bring forth or make faith. Faith is a gift. The fruit comes from the tree. We do not try to bear fruit. Christ in us bears it. We just have to be grafted into the tree. Jesus said good trees bear good fruit.

God brings forth the works He is pleased with. These are not dead works of the flesh. These are God's works in us. "He works in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." (Phil 2:13). "You are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which He preordained." (Eph 2:10).

No man judges the works. No man judged Abraham's works, or Rahab's. They were works of the faith within, obeying God's will and command. Most men would have looked past them. What most men would count as good works God would not. This is why Jesus was rejected.

Certainly, he who says he has faith and has not godliness, love and integrity is self-deceived. Works vindicate and prove the faith, making it complete.

James did not mean that we are made righteous by works. We are justified by faith without works. God's faith bears fruit in us that justify the faith it in the sense that they show that the faith is real. God's faith is justified by Him and that is why the works come forth from it. Every believer that has God's faith also has its works, springing not from self, but from Him within.

These are works of faith, not works of law: works *from* faith, not works to get faith.

### Given to Heal

The law was not given to apply legalistically, to condemn others. The law was made for man, not man for the law.

And He said to them, The Sabbath was made for man and not man made for the Sabbath. (Mk 2:27).

Jesus said this when He healed a man on the Sabbath day. The Pharisees were angry because Jesus broke the Sabbath. Jesus answered by asking whether it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath. This shows that the Pharisees had no concept of the mind of God.

Another time Jesus showed them that God requires mercy and judgement and not sacrifice. He does not want a religious legalistic observance of the law (Matt 23:23). He wants it used and applied in such a way that it heals and patches up past sins and hurts.

### Knowledge of God

When preachers say we should sow money so that God can bless us they are transgressing the Old Testament prophets. God said He wants mercy, justice and knowledge, not sacrifice. So if someone says that we should make a sacrifice to get God to act then they are contrary to the prophets.

Instead of teaching people about sacrifice and letting their lives grow worse, we should be teaching them the knowledge of God so that their lives can grow better and they can be healed by getting their lives in order.

For I desired mercy and not sacrifice and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings. (Hos 6:6).

We met a man who was saved in a church and stayed there for three years winning souls and working in a company and he was happy. He had promotions and was doing well. Then he turned on Christian television and was told that if he would give he would receive a blessing and a ministry. So he believed he received a worldwide ministry and went to America and received more "revelations".

When the ministry did not come forth he felt he had failed God. He was told he was responsible to meditate in the scripture to bring forth his ministry. When the ministry did not happen he thought he must not have confessed the word enough. He was told he was being attacked by demons because of his calling. Then he could not sleep at night. He was condemned and thought that he had demons.

He was confused and came for help. He needed to get all those false, ego-inflating ideas out of his head and come back to simple life in Christ. Many are messed up by being "spiritual" in this way. It has brought many into oppression. This type of teaching is wrong. It manipulates people and then leaves them in ruin. We are happy when people function in big ministries, but not when they are bound by false teaching.

### Understanding

David demonstrated a right understanding of the law when he was running from Saul. He was hungry and ate the showbread from the tabernacle. This was unlawful for David as he was not a priest. David did not go against the intent of the law. He was not assuming priestly duties to himself, or disrespecting the presence of God.

The Pharisees would not have understood this. David needed to eat and the Lord was quite happy that he received nourishment, despite the law concerning the showbread. God is not interested in the letter of the law. He is looking at our motive and what drives us: why we do what we do. God is interested in the heart.

### Restitution

This is why doctrines of restitution are wrong. These doctrines hold that when we are saved we must seek and restore everything we did wrong before we were saved. Some apply this to marriage, saying they must leave their current wife or husband and go back to their first. If their first has since married another, then that other marriage must also be dissolved.

Doctrines of restitution can be damaging to people's lives. If we have something that belongs to someone else then we should give it back. But what God really wants is a change of life. "Let him who stole steal no more, but rather let him labour with his hands that he might have to share with those in need." (Eph 4:28).

This is a change of heart orientation. Instead of self-centeredness there is responsibility and caring for others. This is what God is looking for, a change on the inside. He is not looking for a patch up of our past with reference to laws. There is no way we could do this well enough to justify our self.

Do not break up marriages and try to restore older ones. This is legalism and it destroys families. Once we lived in selfishness and lust, now we love our wife or husband. We stop living the way we once did and our heart is changed. When people are saved and their family life needs attention we seek to "strengthen what remains". We do not try to dig up the past and "fix" it.

Some say that we have curses from our past mistakes. This is not true. Christ died for that. God never asked us to fix anything. He does the fixing. We are not able to fix anything. This is His salvation. He came to change our heart. That is all God wants to do. The problems come from the heart. A changed heart changes our future. The law cannot help fix the past. With changed hearts the Lord makes us part of the solution in family, church and society.

It is not about law at all. It should never be used to legalistically rearrange lives. This is worship of the law. It is people that matter. God loves people and that is what the law is for. Paul said he was in debt to all men, for his former life when he persecuted the church. He paid that debt by preaching the gospel to all men and by being a servant to Christ (Rom 1:14-15, 1 Cor 15:9-10).

Paul did not go looking for people he offended or hurt before, to make it up to them, so he could put things right with God. Christ put his life right with God. Paul is our best example in this matter. He fulfilled his debt in Christ, by being a servant to all through the gospel. Those who are bitter and do not accept the gospel or that God has forgiven our past, make that choice for themselves.

### Idolatry

We have seen Christian people on television saying that when they kept the Sabbath day God blessed them financially. They say that they kept the feasts of the Old Testament and therefore God blessed them with cars and boats. They say this to lure people into their trap.

They say we must keep these Old Covenant feasts days, not by going to Jerusalem as the Old Testament demanded, but by giving offerings instead. They claim that each feast day we are to give offerings to the ministries. Not only is this falsely preaching the law, but it is done to gain money. These are doctrines of covetousness, *idolatry*.

And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgement now for a long time lingers not and their damnation slumbers not. (2 Pet 2:3).

There are many who have followed Balaam, who prophesy and invent doctrines for reward: "Woe to them, for they...ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward..." (Jude 11).

Let no man judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which things are a shadow of the things to come; but the body (substance) is of Christ. (Col 2:16-17).

Holding the shadow and not the person of Christ is adultery. We have met sabbatarians who hold the shadow, who hold the law and they are deceived by the enemy and are in adultery against Christ, in who dwells the fullness of the Godhead. They are in bondage to the Sabbaths and to rejecting of foods, but do not keep all the law and so are under a curse.

Many others invent doctrines to get money out of people and then for a fee they go around the world using those teachings to raise money for other ministries. The television has plenty of this today. Most of what they preach is using scripture out of context.

#### Doctrines of Demons

The Pharisees put heavy burdens of legalism on people. Some today put heavy conditions on people, or lists of requirements that they must fulfil to be Christians, or the many prayers, fastings and offerings that they must give to be free from the enemy. God hates His people being abused like this, by false pastors.

For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. (Matt 23:4).

This is the wrong use of the law. This is the unlawful use of the law. If we put superstitions upon God's people, seeing a false "vision" and saying that they are going to die unless they pray or fast or give money, then we are an enemy of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

#### The Law Used Lawfully

Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart and of a good conscience and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, or whereof they affirm. But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully. (1 Tim 1:4-8).

See what *the end* of the commandment is! This means *the purpose of the law*. Its purpose is not found in the letter, but in love, a pure heart and a good conscience. This is what God wants in us, not law.

### Established with Grace

Paul said the law is good, *if used lawfully*. This is the whole problem. The law is good, but the way people use it is often not good. Paul said the legalists who use the law do not understand the law. They do not know God.

Be not carried about with diverse and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats (food laws), which have not profited them that have been occupied therein. (Heb 13:9).

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: (1 Tim 4:2-4).

Legalistic doctrines are doctrines of demons. We have liberty in Christ and must stand fast in that liberty (Gal 5:1), but not liberty to indulge the flesh and please ourselves, but to serve one another in joy. (Gal 5:13).

### False Ministers

Those who teach that a pastor should not make love with his wife the night before he preaches, or that husband and wife should separate sexually for some other reason, or a lady during her period should not enter the church, or that we should not eat this particular type of food, or any doctrines like this, are preaching doctrines of demons.

Laws against pork, or any similar food laws, are doctrines of demons (Acts 10:15). We may not eat certain things for health reasons and that is fine. We may choose our food for medical reasons, but this has nothing to do with righteousness.

It is against God's word for us to instruct a man and wife to abstain from relations for prayer and fasting. None of the apostles instructed people in the churches to do so. Rituals and fastings to cast out demons are also not of God. Those who practice such things or instruct them are not speaking for God.

Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving head to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry and commanding to abstain from meats...(1 Tim 4:1-3).

### Marriage

Marriage problems are one area where the letter of the law can harm. The law is not a formula we apply legalistically to every case that arises. In some regions polygamists are saved. It is wrong to tell them that they must drive away their wives. The Holy Spirit will guide in each situation to work out what is best, in time. Each case must be treated in love on the basis of its own particular details.

Divorce and remarriage is rampant in some regions. Paul said in 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 7 that if the unbelieving partner departs let them depart. This means the other partner is free to remarry, but it should be clear to all that the "innocent person" is innocent. Paul then referred to Jesus (our Lord),

who said that if we marry we should not leave our partner, but if we do leave, we should not remarry (1 Cor 7:10-11).

For this reason Paul said that if a man puts away his wife and marries another then he is not fit for leadership in ministry. This is what Paul meant in 1 Tim 3:2 by "husband of one wife". The Greek and Jewish cultures of that time did not practice polygamy. The *exeget* Gordon Fee admits that the Greek term used in 1 Tim 3:2 refers to divorce and remarriage, not to polygamy.

If a man cannot take care of his own household, how can he take care of the household of God (1 Tim 3:5)? A leader is to be an example in family, for others to follow. When leadership compromises an issue once, the members of the church will compromise the same issue many times. Divorce and remarriage in the church multiplies when leadership does it.

In 1<sup>st</sup> Timothy 3 Paul is not applying law to leadership in the church. He is applying godly values and common sense. There is right behaviour and wrong behaviour. Grace does not change that. Some have said that Paul was making suggestions to Timothy, that we should not be legalistic about. We are not speaking of legalism, but the effect our example has on others.

If a woman is being beaten by her husband and if the husband is a drunkard and is not caring for the family and if the lives of the wife and children are in danger, or if the husband is sexually unfaithful, then that man is a covenant breaker and has departed from the marriage, even though he may be boarding in the house.

In such cases the wife may in time remarry in the Lord. If the first husband later be saved, then he must move on in the grace of God and not go back to the first marriage. This principle is even in the law (Deut 24:1-4). He cannot go back to the first marriage if the woman has remarried.

Marriage is a very crucial matter. Do not marry someone who confesses Christ, but someone who has the real Spirit of Christ shown by fruit. Know the person well before you agree to marry them. Once you make your bed you must lie in it. With patience build your house!

### Interpreting the Law

We will now go through some passages in Moses' Law to see how it should be interpreted. First, we start with dress.

The woman shall not wear that which pertains to a man, neither shall man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are an abomination to the Lord their God. (Deut 22:5).

This verse is not about whether women may wear trousers. There are certain types of clothing that are acceptable in one culture but not in another. Rebelling against what the culture deems to be decent and godly shows a bad attitude.

This scripture is about issues of sexuality. A man should not dress as though he were a woman, nor a woman as a man. It means homosexuality, transvestite and sex changes are an abomination to the Lord. It means sexual perversion is an abomination to the Lord.

## Dress

Continuing the theme on dress, the way a person dresses shows their attitude. A woman who dresses provocatively shows the type of person she is. A man who dresses sloppily or over casually also shows his character.

People should not dress on the edge of social acceptability, but with respect for others. People often claim Christian liberty in the way that they dress, but this is not Christian liberty, but self-centeredness. It is not what suits you that counts as a good behaviour, but what is respectable towards others.

Similarly, dressing expensively is not good as a Christian. Peter tells the woman not to let her beauty consist of expensive clothing. This means expensive fashion and brand names. Prosperity preachers speak of having expensive suits, when other suits are very decent but cost much less. 1 Pet 3:2-4 applies equally to the men.

## Eco Sustainability

According to Deut 22:6, if the people of Israel met a bird's nest, they could take the eggs or the adult bird, but not both. If they took both there would be no birds for tomorrow. This verse is not in favour of the "Greens" who say that we should use neither the eggs nor the bird.

It is not in favour of unproven science (*global warming* theories), that say we should not develop. It means that we should develop our nation in a way that limits the damage to our natural environment. There is responsible management of our environment. This does not mean that we should be opposed to economic growth.

## Civic Responsibility

Deut 22:8 speaks of putting a protective barrier around our roof, when people sit on the roof, as they did in Israel, to help prevent people accidentally falling off. This puts some burden of responsibility on the owner to take due care for the wellbeing of others and to avoid their harm.

This does not mean that the property owner is responsible for the foolish behaviour of others. It is not meant to be an opportunity for a litigious society of corrupt lawyers and greedy people seeking to take money from others.

Thieves who went outside the law to steal private property would to some extent, but not entirely, lose the protection of the law. The owner of the property had rights to protect the property. Ex 22:1-3 said if the thief is killed at night the house owner is not blamed. Here there is a balance between the right to protect oneself and the responsibility not to take extreme measures against others.

In so many different laws, regarding slaves, property, marriage and many other civil issues, there is the balance between rights and responsibilities. These are the guiding principles for our societies today. The scripture is beyond equal in the principles it furnishes for modern nations to build upon.

Regarding slavery, the Law of Moses did not outlaw it but accommodated it as a fact of the society of fallen man, due to the hardness of their heart. It is right that in Christian society we do not have slavery. The Christians (such as William Wilberforce) who finally won over the selfish business interests of Britain and outlawed slavery were possibly the first in human history to achieve this.

But Moses' Law protected the interests of slaves. Slaves were often temporary economic slaves, because they owed a debt. They had rights. This system, with *cities of refuge*, the Year of Jubilee and capital punishment for serious crimes, can sometimes be favourably compared with modern systems of crowded prisons and increasing crime rates.

### False Report

Ex 23:1 speaks of integrity, not bearing false witness or lying. Lying includes giving a false impression, even if someone has not technically lied. Their words still paint a false picture. Others give only partial truth, reporting the bad behaviour of other people, but not reporting the part that they played themselves.

When we give witness in our courts of law, we swear to "tell the truth, the full truth and nothing but the truth". This is how we should live all the time, without the need to swear or promise. It is the normal speech of a believer: truth!

Exodus 23 is an example of a chapter that covers several different matters related to common life. It is useful to read through such passages and glean principles that relate to our social lives today.

### Common Law

The *Common Law* of the English was built largely upon scriptural principles. It follows the Ten Commandments and principles found in other biblical laws. Recently the English legal system has been overridden by the European Law which is built on humanism. Either the English should re-establish its own legal sovereignty, or European law must be brought back to godliness, or both.

Some say we cannot legislate to make people righteous and therefore Christians should not bother trying to influence government or legislation. The Bible says the law was made for the sinful man. There must be a scriptural legal system within the nation to protect the society from criminals and from blasphemy.

Knowing this, that the law was not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners...(1Tim 1:9).

It is not just the duty of government to protect us from having our property stolen, but also to protect us from perversions that destroy the fabric of faith and family. Government is not to impinge our liberty of religious conscience, but neither is to allow vulgar attacks upon right values within a society.

Modern liberal democracies have failed in this area. Abortion, for example, is a violation of the rights of the unborn child. Some speak of the rights of the woman. Unless the woman is raped, she has the duty not to engage in sexual behaviour if she is not willing to bear the responsibility of caring for a child. This also includes the man.

Until the heart of the people in modern nations changes in respect to small families, abortion and homosexuality there is no hope. These show self-indulgence, more care for our own life style than for love of others and love of God. This has to be a heart change.

### Democracy

Democracy is the right form of government, but it is only possible in a godly society. When people are governed within by God's principles, we can be governed by a liberal and free society. But when

people have no law within, we must be governed by fascist governments that take away liberty and multiply laws.

Political bondage is inevitable in a nation where people have no morals. Nations lose their liberty because of sin. They are unable to govern themselves, so are governed by the gun. Bad leadership in the nation is not to be blamed on the leaders alone. The leaders come from the people of that nation. Righteousness among the people exalts the nation.

Modern forms of democracy uphold the concept of separation of powers. This is due to the belief that *power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely*, which stems from the depravity of human nature. Government requires accountability and a balance of powers.

God's law upheld this. In the Old Testament the king could not officiate in the temple as a priest. In Jesus this is not the case. He is King and Priest. British democracy separated political, judicial, religious, military and royal powers.

### Deuteronomy 23

In Deut 23:2 Israel were told not to follow a multitude to do evil. A person must follow what is right even if no one else does. This is especially true in the ministry of the gospel (Luke 16:1-13). False stewards follow what is popular. Servants of God follow what He teaches.

Deut 23:4 told Israel that if they saw their enemy's ox in a ditch they were to help it. This is *turning the other cheek*. Jesus did not invent this principle in the Sermon on the Mount. Deut 23:6 said they were not to wrest the justice from the poor nor oppress them. Other passages said that they must help the stranger and the needy, for God helped Israel when they were in bondage in Egypt.

Vs. 8 said they were not to take gifts, for corruption made the nation fall. Gifts blind the eyes and pervert judgement. No *friend* is to turn us away from doing what is right. People often make friends of people in positions so that they can obtain favour and pervert righteousness. This is the behaviour of the unregenerate.

### Lev 17:11-19

Israel was told not to steal nor deal falsely. This would include making false statements in tax returns, or insurance claims. We cannot excuse ourselves by saying that "everyone does it". That just makes two sins: falsehood and following the crowd. God does not forgive the sinner who says he has faith. This lifestyle shows that his faith is a lie.

Israel was told not to rob wages from their workers, not to even keep the wages till the next day. The rights of workers, poor, deaf and blind must be respected without delay. There is nothing worse than a selfish aristocracy or an uncaring leader. It is sin against God and man.

Israel was told to neither respect the rich nor the poor in judgement, but to judge according to what was right. Societies should give opportunity for the poor to work to improve their lives, but not allow them to live freely on the work of others. The law should apply equally to all men.

The *Law of Jubilee* returned all property to the original families that owned it, after fifty years, so that the sins of the fathers would not cause perpetual poverty in the family line. We need to have a fair society that allows all people to have access to education and equal opportunity to break the cycle of poverty.

The socialist interpretation of this principle often does not work, because people may adopt the values of their parents (that other people should pay their way) and remain unwilling to improve their own life. We need free enterprise so people can work at night and pay their fees and succeed. It is not up to someone else to pay our way.

The socialist interpretation of *Jubilee* takes responsibility away from families and makes government the caretaker. This weakens the family unit and weakens society. People are not held responsible for their decisions and may live immoral life styles supported by government. It is a redistribution of wealth that Moses did not promote. When we work and invest our wealth as capital, national poverty is reduced.

Leviticus 17 said that the people of Israel must love their brothers *from their heart* and must not take vengeance upon their enemy. This was also said by Jesus in the *Sermon on the Mount*. We can see clearly that God's law went to the heart of man and was not just concerned with outward acts. This is all that Jesus said on the *Sermon on the Mount*.

The Law of Moses was equitable and compassionate, without relieving responsibility from people. Israel never instituted the laws properly and so regularly suffered every form of oppression.

#### Accommodation

The law was not the perfect representation of God's will. It was an accommodation for the hardness of man's heart. Jesus said this in relation to divorce. The laws about women's rights in society and marriage and the laws regulating slavery for example, do not represent God's perfect will, but accommodate the human culture of the day.

This is also why polygamy was not condemned, but in the "beginning it was not so", for God made Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve and not Adam and Eve and Evelyn (Matt 19:7-9). Moses' Law was far more compassionate than any other law code of the day. It upheld the rights of the poor, the stranger, the slave, the woman and the common people under the king's rule.

#### Support

The law gave support to the needy. Ruth was able to glean the fields to have food (Ruth 2:17). The reapers were not allowed to reap the corners of the field, but leave it for the poor to have. Those who plucked fruit from a tree had to leave some fruit on it for the stranger to have. Following these laws by the letter today would be ridiculous, for strangers do not pass by our fruit trees in most societies now.

We might see this as a type of tax for social care. The best form of government is compassionate conservatism, which cares for people who have fallen upon "bad luck" and gives them a second chance, but does not sponsor irresponsibility in lifestyle.

Paul gave Timothy guidelines on whom the church should help among its members. He said the man who provides not for his own house is worse than an infidel (1 Tim 5:8). He said that a widow should not be the church's financial responsibility unless she is over 60 years old, has been the wife of one man (has lived a responsible life), has been given to good works, has brought up her children well and has cared diligently for others "24/7".

This is the type of life believers live. Lazy and irresponsible people should not be taken into the church's care. Believers must be diligent in good works.

But younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ...and withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. (1 Tim 5:11, 13).

### Pacifism

The commandment "You shall not kill" refers to murder, lying in wait, premeditated. It does not refer to killing animals, which God gave us to eat. Vegetarianism is a false belief. The command not to kill does not refer to capital punishment for criminals.

*Vengeance* means taking the law into our own hands. We should not execute justice on others, but give place to the law of the land. Believers and churches should be responsible civic citizens. We should obey every law that is godly. Government does not have God given authority to make ungodly laws, as Moses' parents did not obey Pharaoh and kill their child.

Sometimes Christians are called to suffer patiently under ungodly rule and other times we are called to overthrow ungodly rule. When we have the opportunity to do good and do not do it, it is sin. It is not sufficient to pray for peace and godly government. We must also act for it. Some say Jesus did not act in this way. That is because He came to redeem us.

Churches that cover sin, such as paedophilia, are acting against the law. Some cover paedophilia, not wanting the publicity. Churches should obey the law. Paedophiles should be judged by the law and not covered by churches.

There are times when capital punishment is a good thing and required to protect society. There are also times when war is necessary. God gave us police and armies to protect society, not for aggression against society, but to put down the aggressor. Pacifism is wrong in such cases, for we do not live in a sin free world. We live in peace today because others paid the price in the past.

Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God: and they shall receive to themselves damnation (punishment from the civil rule). For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil.

Will you not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good and you shall have praise of the same. For he is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do that which is evil, be afraid; for he bears not the sword in vain; for he is a minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that does evil. Wherefore, you must be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. (Rom 13:1-5).

### Christian Liberty

Paul said all things are lawful, but not all things edify, all things are lawful, but I will not be brought under the power of anything (1 Cor 6:12, 10:23-24). The issue is not so much what we do, but why we do it? What is our motive? That which we allow for ourselves is fine, so long as that thing does not rule and control us.

Paul also claimed we should not allow our liberty to be a stumbling block to others. If our liberty would cause others to stumble, then we should not take that liberty (1 Cor 10:27-33). This means that love for others is more important than our freedom to do something.

Finally, Paul said we that should use our liberty not as an opportunity to the flesh, or to serve self, but to serve one another (Gal 5:13). Liberty from the law is for the purpose of serving God. It comes back to what Jesus said, "Not My will but Your will be done." (Luke 22:42). This is what it means to be not under the law. God is a God of liberty, not of law. The "glorious liberty of the Sons of God" means there is no law and no sin, because the nature is right (Rom 8:21). This was God's plan before the earth was made.