

THE LAW IN GALATIANS

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Galatians 3:24-25 ... 'Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.'

Which law is the apostle Paul speaking about in Galatians above? Some say Paul was speaking of the moral law, so they can do away with the ten commandments and be excused to continue living in sin. While others say Paul is speaking of the ceremonial laws, so as to not make it look like Paul was 'doing away' with the ten commandments. On this page I will show you that **both positions are wrong**.

We do in fact believe that Paul is speaking of the moral law in Galatians 3, and will show you why. **But the position in which many professed Christians take today, in using Galatians 3 to do away with the ten commandments is completely wrong and dangerous.**

Question: Is the moral law of the ten commandments holy? Answer: *Romans 7:12*
... '*Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*' - **YES!**

Question: Are we, in this sinful flesh, holy? Answer: *Romans 3:10* ... '*As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one.*' - **NO!**

Ok, so we have a law which is holy and a people who are unholy. Do you see a problem here? Due to our sinful nature inherited from Adam and Eve, we have an in-built natural tendency to sin against God's holy law, which makes us unholy. But the question is, can the ten commandments do anything about our sinful nature? Notice what Paul said regarding the law ... "*For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.*" (Romans 8:3). But I thought the law was 'holy', how can it be 'weak' also? Well, notice what Paul said. The law is "*weak through the flesh*". In our sinful, fallen nature, the law has no power to transform us and make us righteous. This is the 'weakness' of the law. So we are in need of something else to bring us in line and restore that broken trust and relationship with God.

Romans 8:3 ... 'For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.'

So God sending His Son Jesus to 'condemn sin' in our fallen nature was the answer. But what did the people need before Jesus came? They needed a 'schoolmaster' to help keep them in line and direct them to God. You see, the holy pair in Eden before the fall did not need any written instructions, as they had a relationship with the Creator and communed with Him every day. They walked in the Spirit and had God's character. But when sin entered, that connection to God was broken and since then, man fell further and further away from God and His holy character. So God had to introduce written instructions to keep the people in line and stop them falling too far away, and help them understand the plan of salvation.

Galatians 3:19 ...'Wherefore then serveth the law? It was **added** because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.'

What was the law 'added' to?

Genesis 22:18 ...'And **in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed**; because thou hast obeyed my voice.'

Galatians 3:16 ...'Now to Abraham and his seed were **THE PROMISES** made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, **which is Christ**.'

Galatians 3:18 ...'For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham **by promise**.'

The written law was **ADDED** to the promise of the coming 'seed' [Jesus Christ] who would 'bless all nations'. Why was it added? Because of transgression [sin]. Because of a broken relationship with our Creator, the Lord needed to give written instruction to help bring us back to Him and point us to the Son of God.

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." In this scripture, the Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law. The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ, and to flee unto him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." (E.White, 1888 Materials, p.1575)

So while the written moral law contained in the ten commandments is holy and good, it has no power whatsoever in of itself to change this fallen, sinful nature we all have. Which is why Paul called it a 'schoolmaster' until Christ was to come. What does a schoolmaster do? He teaches people. In the same way, the ten commandments teaches us of sin in us.

Romans 3:20 ...'Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: **for by the law is the knowledge of sin**.'

Romans 7:9-13 ...'For I was alive without the law once: **but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died**. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. **But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful**.'

Do you see what Paul is saying here? He is saying that the 'schoolmaster' [moral law] teaches us of sin. But what does that bring about? DEATH! And when a sinful nature like ours see the holy commandment, it rises up against that holy commandment even more, because the sinful nature is opposed to that which is holy. And the result is death. But can the moral law itself do anything about the sin in us and resulting death? No, not a thing! And this is why the written law can only be a 'schoolmaster' to teach us of our sin. Then we realize we need the Saviour to help us with this condition.

Romans 7:24 ...'O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'

And this is where the written moral law brings us to, and can go no further. It brings us to the realization that we are sinful, wretched, heading for death, and in need of something else to deliver us from this body of death. And the answer is Jesus Christ. Whereas the law brings us condemnation, Jesus brings us grace and life. And that is the purpose of the written moral law [the schoolmaster], to bring us to Jesus Christ.

But does that mean the ten commandments are done away with and we need not keep them anymore? "God forbid!"

Many a person in Christendom use verses like this in Galatians to say that the ten commandments have been done away with and we need not keep them anymore, which excuses their rejection of the 4th commandment concerning the 7th day Sabbath. But this is a complete and utter falsehood that will lead many in the churches to be excluded from heaven. When we look at the law, we see our sinfulness, which leads us to Christ for salvation. THEN, when we come to Christ, He gives us His Spirit, ENABLING us to then keep the moral law and not sin. Do you see the difference? Instead of looking to the law and trying to keep the law ourselves to be saved, we use the law simply to point out our sin, which leads us to Christ and then through faith and surrendering our lives to Christ, a new power takes control of our lives, a power that is not available in the law. That power being the Spirit of Christ which ENABLES us to keep the law.

The whole problem with the Jews was that they looked to the law for salvation, instead of looking to God. They thought that their salvation was based on **their own law keeping**, rather than God's grace. They missed the truth that the written law was merely their 'schoolmaster' to point them to the coming Messiah who would save them FROM their sins, which the law could never do. This is why Paul in so many texts had to reaffirm that we are 'no longer under the law'. In other words, we are no longer under the schoolmaster, as we are now lead by the Spirit of Christ.

*Galatians 4:21-28 ... 'Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, **do ye not hear the law?** For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise.'*

Do you not 'hear the law'? It reveals that we are sinners and therefore worthy of death. So those who 'marry' themselves to the law, ie, try to earn salvation through law keeping, they will be in a perpetual state of bondage to sin, **because the law cannot redeem you from sin**. And as we learned earlier, it was through the PROMISE that we were to be made free, not through the written law. So those, like the Pharisees, who rely upon law keeping to save them, cannot be a 'child of the promise', and therefore will remain in perpetual sin and death. But those who by faith, accept the salvation of the Lord and look to Jesus for life, they become 'children of the promise' and are made free. But what are they made free to do? Sin? "God forbid!". They are made free to live life in the Spirit.

And what does being led by the Spirit do? ... *Romans 8:4 ... 'That **the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us**, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.' ... It causes us to keep the law, so that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. Remember, we learned earlier that the law is 'holy and good', but we are not. So then those who are led by the Holy Spirit of Christ will keep the holy law. This is how salvation works. In Christ, we are restored to a right relationship with God and what will a right relationship with God look like?*

*Romans 6:16 ... 'Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of **obedience unto righteousness?**'*

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

So this is what should happen with any true Christian. They look at the law and see their sin. They turn to God in repentance for salvation through faith in His Son Jesus. Then they surrender to Jesus and allow His Spirit to work in them, and He then keeps the moral law through His life in them and they become, through the indwelling Spirit of Christ 'obedient unto righteousness'. The moral law is then 'established' and shown as 'good and holy' through the Spirit led obedience of the saints. And God's holy character, which the moral law reflects is seen in His people.

Did the apostles ever say that the moral law is to be crucified? No! It is our sinful lives - 'the old man' which needs to be crucified. If the moral law could have simply been done away with, then the Son of God needed never to die for us, because God could have simply done away with the law. But the fact that Jesus had to live a perfect life in this fallen flesh and die for us, shows that God's moral law is an everlasting law that will never be abolished. But Paul simply confirms that we cannot be saved BY the law, as the law brings death to sinful man, we can only be saved by faith in Christ, which brings life.

With Christ dwelling in our hearts by faith, He cuts away our sinful tendencies, and the sinful nature of the first Adam dies, while the spiritual nature of the 'last Adam' takes hold of us, and causes us to walk in the commandments of God. And so we '*establish the law*' through faith

*Romans 7:14 ... 'For we know that **the law is spiritual: but I am carnal**, sold under sin.'*

This is the issue, as we said earlier. The law is holy and good and 'spiritual', but we are 'carnal', having an inherited sinful nature. So we needed something to bring us back in line with the loving character of God. The written law could not do it itself. Which is why we needed the Son of God to make us spiritual again through His own life, which would then bring us back in line with that holy, good and spiritual law of God - His character - His love.

*Galatians 2:19-20 ... '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 liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'*

Do you see? Paul did not crucify the law, he **CRUCIFIED SELF** - the old man! And yet many professed Christians crucify the law of God in order to excuse their continued life of

sin. Just because we are no longer under the guidance of the written law, nor under the curse of the law, through faith, does not mean the moral law is now abolished. Many professed Christians are heading down the 'wide road' to destruction with their wrong views of God's holy law and their distorted interpretations of Paul's writings.

Summary

What is the law spoken of by Paul that we are 'no longer under', and was our 'schoolmaster'? It was the whole law, **including** the moral law found in the ten commandments. The written moral law points out sin. This brings about death in us, and because the written law cannot do anything about our sin, it then directs us to the Saviour, who has the remedy for sin. Then, as we turn in repentance to the Redeemer, He gives us His Spirit, which cuts away our sinful tendencies and by faith, through the life of Christ in us, we keep the ten commandments. The Pharisees did not understand this, and many professed Christians today still don't understand it, as they either still look to the law for salvation, or they crucify the law and continue living in sin. Neither of those options are of faith.

Paul's writings were all about directing the believer to Jesus Christ. In fact, the whole of God's Word is about directing people to Jesus Christ. **Jesus IS the 'Word'. Jesus IS the 'way' and Jesus IS the 'life'!** We cannot get to the Father by the ten commandments, we can only get to the Father through His Son Jesus Christ. And those who live in Christ will be 'made righteous'. With the 'righteousness of the law' being fulfilled in them by faith! And this message was given in 1888 by Jones and Waggoner.

"The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones. This messages was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure." (E.White, 1888 Materials, p.1336)

It has never been a message of the people receiving righteousness through law keeping, which the Pharisees wrongly believed. It has always been a message of the people receiving righteousness through faith in Christ, which then brings about obedience to God's commandments through faith and the life and Spirit of Christ in us. **LOOK TO JESUS, NOT THE LAW, AND THROUGH FAITH HE WILL CHANGE YOU AND IMPART TO YOU HIS RIGHTEOUS CHARACTER.**