

100 BIBLE LESSONS

Give these lessons to people you visit, youth groups, hospital patients, church visitors and new members. Use them in Sunday School, bus ministry, jail services, nursing homes, Christian schools, small discussion groups and many other places. God's Word will answer your questions and help solve your problems.

LESSON 25 – THE LAW AND THE CHRISTIAN

INTRODUCTION

One of the main purposes of the law was to reveal sin, to show exactly what sin is (Rom. 3:19-20; 5:20; 7:7). The Apostle Paul became aware of his sinful condition by looking into the law and knowing that on the basis of the law he fell short of the righteous standards of God and became aware of the fact that he was a sinner doomed to die. 2 Corinthians 3:7 & 9 call the Mosaic law the "ministration of death and condemnation."

This may seem strange but sin used God's good law to find an occasion through the commandment. The sin nature started doing what it could to cause the individual to violate God's commandments and sin all the more. Paul says that sin found an occasion through the commandment, it beguiled me and slew me. It wasn't the law that was bad but sin that worked death in me through that which was good (Romans 7:13).

This led to faith in Jesus Christ so that we could never depend on the law for the righteousness that we need but on Christ Himself (Gal. 3:24-25). As much as we may try to keep the law perfectly, because of the flesh we will never be able to do it. So the law drove us to faith for our righteousness, in Jesus the Messiah and a dependence upon Him and His righteousness to save us, for by grace we are saved (Eph. 2:5). So the law was never meant as an instrument of salvation but was used as God's diagnostic to show our need for the Saviour.

I. CHRIST HIMSELF TAKES THE PLACE OF THE LAW

The New Testament teaches us that the law is replaced by Jesus Christ. The law was the instructor or teacher until the coming of the great Teacher. That Christ Himself takes the place of the law is evident from a number of scriptures. Moses, who was only a preparatory, servant teacher, foretold that God would raise up a prophet to replace him. "You must listen to Him," said Moses (Deut. 18:18). On the mount of transfiguration the heavenly voice declared that Jesus was the One to supersede Moses - "*Listen to Him*" (Luke 9:35).

In His Sermon on the Mount Jesus repeatedly affirms that He replaces Moses as the great Teacher – "*You have heard that it was said to the people long ago [by Moses] ...But I tell you...*" (Matt. 5:21) The law of Moses was a child trainer, custodian and guardian until the coming of Christ. Galatians 3:24 clearly implies that Jesus replaces the law. In Judaism whatever was contrary to the written code was sin. In the New Testament whatever is contrary to Jesus and his principles is sin (1 Cor. 6:13-15). In

the New Testament, Christ and His gospel are the standard by which all behavior is measured. The timeless ethical principles in the law of Moses live on in Christ which is referred to at times in scripture as the law of Christ (1 Cor. 9:21; Gal. 6:2).

The New Testament focus is on the person of Christ. While the Jew found his pattern for living by following the law, the Christian finds his pattern for living by following Christ. While Paul urged Christians to practice “*the righteousness of the law*,” (Rom. 8:4) he did not lay upon them the regulations of the law (Eph. 2:15). The New Testament “teachings” cannot be separated from Christ and His person. When Paul refers to the “*law of Christ*” (Gal. 6:2), he means commandments either explicitly or implicitly derived from the life and teaching of our Lord.

The believer in Christ is free from the law of Moses but is not free from the eternal principles found in the law of Christ. These commandments find their root in love. You are free from Old Testament cultic taboos for which no justification in nature or in reason could be given - such as wearing a garment that contains both wool and linen (Lev. 19:19), etc. But you are not free to do anything that you cannot do in love for God and in love for our fellowman.

Does it make any difference how we live? Of course it does. It must. We have a new Lord, Master and King (Rom. 10:9; Acts 17:7). We have obligations toward one another (Gal. 6:2). We are no longer the servants of sin (Romans 6:17-18).

II. NOT UNDER THE LAW BUT UNDER GRACE

Because all Christians sometimes sin, we continue to need God’s grace – and the good news is that we continue to be forgiven and made clean through the atoning work of our Saviour (Rom. 3:24). Salvation is a gift from start to finish (Rom. 6:23).

Of course, God’s grace does not mean we are given permission to sin (Rom. 6:1-2). Paul specifically says that God created us to do good works (Eph. 2:10), and that grace teaches us to deny ungodliness (Titus 2:11-12). Throughout the New Testament, we are exhorted to obey God (Acts 5:29), and we are warned about sin (Heb. 3:13). But regardless of how obedient we might be, salvation does not come from our goodness, but through the grace of God given to us through faith in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:21-22). The perfect righteousness that we need for salvation cannot come from ourselves. It can come only from Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). The good news of the gospel is that His righteousness is given to us by Him. “*Christ Jesus has become our righteousness, holiness and redemption*” (1 Cor. 1:30).

As Christians we are not under the law but under grace (Rom. 6:14). Our righteousness has been provided through the shed blood of Jesus (Rom. 5:9) and not by the doing of any religious law (Mosaic or otherwise – Rom. 3:21). Romans 10:4 states, “*For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*” And if we confess with our mouth that Jesus is our Lord (King & Master) and shall believe in our heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved (Rom. 10:9). In this profession

we turn by faith from one kingdom to another (Col. 1:13-14), from one king to another (Matt. 6:24), from darkness to light, from one authority (Satan) to another authority (God) to receive the forgiveness of sins (Acts 26:18). Right relationship has been provided as a gift of grace and not a work of the law (Rom. 5:17).

Adapted from the teachings of Dr. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum. For Bible study purposes. Not to be sold.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. One of the main functions of the law is: a. to show you how good you are. b. to bring to you the knowledge of your sin. (Romans 3:20)
2. Our sinfulness (shown to us by the law) led us to Christ so that we might be justified (made righteous) by faith. True or False. (Galatians 3:24)
3. As much as we may try to keep the law perfectly, because of the flesh we will never be able to do it. True or False. (James 2:10; Romans 3:23; 1 John 3:4)
4. God saves us by grace through Christ's redemptive work. True or False. (Romans 3:24)
5. The law was never meant as an instrument of salvation. True or False. (Romans 3:20)
6. We are not saved by law keeping, but keeping Jesus' commandments show our love for Him. True or False. (John 14:15)
7. The Apostle Paul taught people to repent and prove their change of heart by the things that they do. True or False. (Acts 26:19-20)
8. In the New Testament whatever is contrary to Jesus and His principles is sin. True or False. (1 Corinthians 8:12; 1 John 5:17)
9. The timeless ethical principles in the law of Moses live on in Christ which is referred to at times in scripture as the law of Christ. True or False. (1 Corinthians 9:21 21; Galatians 6:2)
10. The New Testament focus is on the person of Christ. True or False. (Luke 9:35)
11. Paul urged Christians to practice "the righteousness of the law," he did not lay upon them the regulations of the law. True or False. (Romans 8:4; Ephesians 2:15)
12. When Paul refers to the "law of Christ," he means commandments either explicitly or implicitly derived from the life and teaching of our Lord. True or False. (Galatians 6:2; 1 Timothy 6:3-4)

13. The believer in Christ is free from the law of Moses but is not free from the eternal principles found in the law of Christ. These commandments find their root in love. True or False. (James 2:8; Romans 13:8-10)

14. You are free from Old Testament cultic taboos for which no justification in nature or in reason could be given – such as wearing a garment that contains both wool and linen (Lev. 19:19), etc. But you are not free to do anything which you cannot do in love for God and in love for our fellow-man. True or False. (Matthew 22:35-40)

15. As Christians we have a new Lord, Master and King. True or False. (Romans 10:9; Acts 17:7)

16. As Christians we are no longer the servants of sin but are servants of righteousness. True or False. (Romans 6:18)

17. Because all Christians sometimes sin, we continue to need God's grace – And the good news is that we continue to be forgiven and made clean through the atoning work of our Saviour. True or False. (Romans 3:24)

18. God's grace means we are given permission to sin. True or False. (Romans 6:1-2)

19. God's grace teaches us to deny ungodliness. True or False. (Titus 2:11-12)

20. Throughout the New Testament we are exhorted to obey God, and we are warned about sin. True or False. (Acts 5:29; Hebrews 3:12-14)

21. The perfect righteousness that we need for salvation cannot come from ourselves. It can come only from Jesus Christ. True or False. (2 Corinthians 5:21)

22. Our righteousness has been provided through the shed blood of Jesus. True or False. (Romans 5:9)

23. When we become Christians we turn by faith from one kingdom to another, from one king to another, from darkness to light, from one authority (Satan) to another authority (God) to receive the forgiveness of our sins. True or False. (Colossians 1:13-14; Matthew 6:24; Acts 26:18)

24. The power to express righteousness in our lives is in our dependence upon: a. our own will power. b. our knowledge. c. the Holy Spirit. (Romans 7:18; Galatians 5:16; Romans 8:4)