

# THE LAW OF THE LORD

(No. 1238 – 6/12/23 – Sermon Online Zoom)

## I. INTRODUCTION

A. **Ps. 19:7** (NKJV): *The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.*

There  
are  
500  
refer-  
ences  
to law  
in the  
Bible!

1. Many Christians are confused about God’s law and its proper place in their lives; some even teach that because of grace, we can now discard the law.
2. Unsaved people often “accept” Christ in churches or evangelistic campaigns, yet remain lawless, unconverted; they failed to allow the law of God to convert them.

B. The law is an important key for the Church today

1. We need to know how to use the law correctly, especially in evangelism.
2. In this study, we will learn how God’s law plays a crucial role in true conversion of the soul...

## II. GOD IS THE LAWGIVER

A. God created laws that govern the universe (motion, gravitation, biogenesis, thermodynamics, electricity & magnetism, planetary movement, etc.)

1. The universe is lawful!
2. The winds, seas, and animals always obey Him (see Jer. 8:7; Jonah 1:4, 17; 2:10, etc.)

B. God also established laws of morality and righteousness (in the Old Testament, the Torah—Ten Commandments and other laws, statutes). [Note: The Heb. word *torah* 1<sup>st</sup> appears in Gen. 26:5. with Abraham, long before Mt. Sinai.]

1. God is the Lawgiver and the Law-enforcer:

**James 4:12:** *There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?*

2. Whenever a law is broken, there are consequences—transgression of law brings judgment and penalties.

### III. THE AGE OF LAWLESSNESS

- A. Many want the golden streets and pearly gates of God's kingdom, but they don't want a *King* ruling over them!
- B. Jesus gave a parable that describes a spirit that will be prevalent in the last days: lawlessness:

**Luke 19:11-14, 27** (NKJV): *<sup>11</sup>Now as they heard these things, He [Jesus] spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. <sup>12</sup>Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. <sup>13</sup>So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.' <sup>14</sup>But **his citizens hated him**, and sent a delegation after him, saying, 'We will not have this man to reign over us.' ... <sup>27</sup>But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.'"*

- 1. Note how the king called these lawless ones "enemies of mine"—unconverted sinners *are* God's enemies!
  - 2. **Rom. 5:10**: *For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through His life!*
  - 3. **Rom. 8:7-8**: *<sup>7</sup>The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. <sup>8</sup>Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.*
  - 4. **Col. 1:21**: *Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.*
- C. Jesus Christ will reign forever as King of kings:
    - 1. **Rev. 11:15**: *The seventh angel sounded his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, which said: "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign for ever and ever."*
    - 2. **Rev. 19:11-16**: *<sup>11</sup>I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice He judges and makes war. <sup>12</sup>His eyes are like blazing fire, and on His head are many crowns. He has a name written on Him that no one knows but He Himself. <sup>13</sup>He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is the Word of God. <sup>14</sup>The armies of heaven were following Him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and*

clean. <sup>15</sup>Out of His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. **He will rule them with an iron scepter.** He treads the winepress of the **fury of the wrath of God Almighty.** <sup>16</sup>On His robe and on His thigh He has this name written: **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**

- D. It is impossible to have a kingdom without law, rule, justice, and government:

**Isa. 9:6-7:** <sup>6</sup>For to us a Child is born, to us a Son is given, and the **government** will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup>Of the increase of **His government** and peace there will be no end. **He will reign** on David's throne and over His kingdom, establishing and upholding it with **justice and righteousness** from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

- E. There is a false teaching that has produced multitudes of false brethren in churches; it dismisses anything concerning God's law as "legalism," saying that salvation is all by grace, and because of that, we can do whatever we want.

1. Passages such as **Rom. 6:14** are often quoted out of context: *For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.*

2. But Paul prefaced this statement with these words:

**Rom. 6:1-2:** <sup>1</sup>What shall we say, then? **Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup>By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?**

3. And Paul clarified Rom. 6:14 in the verse that follows:

**Rom. 6:15:** *What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!*

- F. This kind of teaching encourages carelessness, a lack of the fear of God, and a lawless spirit which Jesus and the apostles predicted would prevail in the last days:

1. **Mat 7:13-16, 21-23:** <sup>13</sup>Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup>But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it. <sup>15</sup>**Watch out for false prophets.** They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. <sup>16</sup>By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?... <sup>21</sup>"Not

Two Roads to Eternity has been our least popular book... no surprise!

everyone who says to Me, “Lord, Lord,” will **enter the kingdom of heaven**, but only he who **does the will of My Father** who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup>Many will say to Me on that day, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?” <sup>23</sup>Then I will tell them plainly, “I never knew you. Away from Me, you **evildoers!**”

- a) Why did Jesus warn about false prophets right after teaching on the two roads? Apparently, there will be *many* false prophets who deceive *many* to stay on the broad road to destruction!
- b) Note again that the *kingdom* is the realm where God *reigns*—i.e., the place where His will is done; those on the narrow road obey the King and do His will!
- c) “Evildoers” (or some translations read “workers of iniquity”) is the word *anomia* in Greek, which literally means “without law (*nomos*) or lawless.”
- d) **Mat. 24:11-12:** <sup>11</sup>Then **many false prophets** will rise up and **deceive many**. <sup>12</sup>And because **lawlessness** [*anomia*] **will abound**, the love of many will grow cold.
- e) The deception of lawlessness is so great that it can be disguised with an outward appearance of righteousness and even with false signs or miracles:

**Mat. 23:28:** *Even so you also outwardly **appear righteous** to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and **lawlessness** [*anomia*].*

2. **2 Thess. 2:3-12:** <sup>3</sup>**Don’t let anyone deceive you** in any way, for that day will not come until the rebellion occurs and the **man of lawlessness** [*antichrist*] is revealed, the man doomed to destruction. <sup>4</sup>He will oppose and will exalt himself over everything that is called God or is worshiped, so that he sets himself up in God’s temple, proclaiming himself to be God. <sup>5</sup>Don’t you remember that when I was with you, I used to tell you these things? <sup>6</sup>And now you know what is holding him back, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. <sup>7</sup>For the **secret power of lawlessness** [*anomia*] is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. <sup>8</sup>And then the **lawless one** [*anomos*] will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of His mouth

Lawless-ness is a very important sign to watch in the last days—it is the very spirit of antichrist!

*and destroy by the splendor of His coming. <sup>9</sup>The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of **counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders**, <sup>10</sup>and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. <sup>11</sup>For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie <sup>12</sup>and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.*

G. Jesus hated lawlessness and so should we!

**Heb 1:8-9:** *<sup>8</sup>But about the Son He says, “Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of Your kingdom. <sup>9</sup>You have loved righteousness and hated **wickedness** [anomia; “lawlessness” NKJV]; therefore God, Your God, has set You above Your companions by anointing You with the oil of joy.”*

#### **IV. THE LAW AND THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER**

A. What is the correct use of the law under the New Covenant?

1. Do we abolish it and throw it away?

**Mat. 5:17-19, 21-22, 27-28:** *<sup>17</sup>**Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.** <sup>18</sup>I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. <sup>19</sup>Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven...*

<sup>21</sup>**You have heard** that it was said to the people long ago, “Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.” <sup>22</sup>**But I tell you** that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, “Raca,” is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, “You fool!” will be in danger of the fire of hell... <sup>27</sup>**You have heard** that it was said, “Do not commit adultery.” <sup>28</sup>**But I tell you** that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. [NOTE: Rather

than abolish or diminish the Ten Commandments, Jesus greatly expanded their scope and application!]

2. The law is for the lawless:

**1 Tim. 1:8-11** (NKJV): <sup>8</sup>*But we know that the law is good if one uses it **lawfully** [Gk. *nomimōs*; “properly, correctly”], <sup>9</sup>*knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but **for the lawless** and insubordinate, **for the ungodly and for sinners**, for the unholy and profane, for **murderers** of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, <sup>10</sup>*for **fornicators**, for **sodomites**, for **kidnappers**, for **liars**, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, <sup>11</sup>according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.***

3. The law silences every mouth, putting an end to all self-justification and excuses, giving each person a knowledge of sin and declaring the whole world “GUILTY!”

**Rom 3:19-20** (NKJV): <sup>19</sup>*Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that **every mouth may be stopped** [“shut, silenced”], and **all the world may become guilty before God**. <sup>20</sup>*Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the **knowledge** [Gk. *epignōsis* = recognition, discernment, acknowledgement”] of sin.**

- a) The law stops our excuses and self-justification by forcing us to acknowledge sin.
- b) We would not know that idolatry, blasphemy, murder, lying, or covetousness were sin without the law:

**Rom. 7:7:** *What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed, **I would not have known what sin was except through the law**. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “Do not covet.”*

- c) Once we know the law, lawlessness and sin are clearly discerned:

**1 John 3:4:** *Everyone who sins **breaks the law** [“commits lawlessness” NKJV]; in fact, **sin is lawlessness**.*

- d) Note how Jesus used the law to silence those who wanted to justify themselves:

**Luke 10:25-29:** <sup>25</sup>On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup>“**What is written in the Law?**” He replied. “How do you read it?” <sup>27</sup>He answered: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind”; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’” <sup>28</sup>“You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.” <sup>29</sup>But **he wanted to justify himself**, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” [NOTE: Jesus went on to give the Parable of the Good Samaritan—He did not try to press the man for a “decision”; he was not yet repentant.]

**Mat. 19:16-22:** <sup>16</sup>Now a man came up to Jesus and asked, “Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?” <sup>17</sup>“Why do you ask Me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, **obey the commandments.**” <sup>18</sup>“Which ones?” the man inquired. Jesus replied, “**Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, <sup>19</sup>honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.**” <sup>20</sup>“All these I have kept,” the young man said. “What do I still lack?” <sup>21</sup>Jesus answered, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me.” <sup>22</sup>When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth [NOTE: The man had come to justify himself, but Jesus used the commandments to show the man the sin that was in his heart—he had made an idol out of his wealth which he loved more than God; he went away silenced!]

4. The greatest purpose of the law is to lead sinners to Christ:

**Gal. 3:24:** So, the law was put in charge [“our schoolmaster/tutor”] **TO LEAD US TO CHRIST** that we might be justified by faith.

- a) The great preachers of old like Jonathan Edwards, George Whitefield, John Wesley, Spurgeon, Finney,

and D.L. Moody were experts in using the law for this purpose—to make sinners deeply aware of their sinfulness and their desperate need to flee from the wrath to come—to run to Jesus for salvation and forgiveness of sin.

- b) John Wesley quote: “Before I can preach love, mercy, and grace, I must preach sin, Law, and judgment... Preach 90% Law and 10% grace.”
- c) The conviction of sin brought by the law is what drove Paul to cry out to Jesus for rescue from sin’s bondage:

**Rom. 7:9-25:** *<sup>9</sup>Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. <sup>10</sup>I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. <sup>11</sup>For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.*

*<sup>12</sup>So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. <sup>13</sup>Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But **in order that sin might be recognized as sin**, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful. <sup>14</sup>We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.*

*<sup>15</sup>I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. <sup>16</sup>And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. <sup>17</sup>As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. <sup>18</sup>I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. <sup>19</sup>For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. <sup>20</sup>Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it. <sup>21</sup>So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.*

*<sup>22</sup>For in my inner being I delight in God’s law; <sup>23</sup>but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me*

*a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. <sup>24</sup>What a wretched man I am! **Who will rescue me from this body of death?** <sup>25</sup>Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!*

- d) The law was NEVER intended to *help* us; rather, it renders us *helpless* and hopeless, in need of a Savior!
- 5. The law of God leads a sinner to true repentance and conversion:
  - a) **Ps. 19:7** (NKJV): *The law of the LORD is perfect, **converting** [Heb. shoob = “to turn back”] the soul.*
  - b) **Acts 3:19-20** (NKJV) <sup>19</sup>*Repent therefore and be **converted**, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, <sup>20</sup>and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before.*

- 6. Here’s how it works:

“I’m a lawbreaker and enemy of God, about to face His horrible wrath and judgment (which I richly and rightly deserve), but I turn to my ONLY HOPE—I call on the name of Jesus Christ to save me and forgive me!”

- 7. The law was NEVER intended to make us righteous—thinking that our works can somehow justify us—that is legalism.
  - a) Keeping the law will not get us into heaven, but breaking it will definitely take us to hell!
  - b) We may keep every commandment, but if we break only one law, we are still guilty of breaking it all:  
**James 2:10-11:** <sup>10</sup>*For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is **guilty of breaking all of it.** <sup>11</sup>For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not murder.” If you do not commit adultery but do commit murder, you have become a lawbreaker.*

- B. What is the proper place for the law in a true believer?

► IN HIM!

- 1. **Heb. 8:10-13:** <sup>10</sup>*This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. **I will put My laws in their minds and write them on their hearts.** I*

*will be their God, and they will be My people. <sup>11</sup>No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, “Know the Lord,” because they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest. <sup>12</sup>For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” <sup>13</sup>By calling this covenant “new,” He has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.*

2. **Heb. 10:16:** *“This is the covenant I will make with them after that time, says the Lord. **I will put My laws in their hearts, and I will write them on their minds.**”*
3. Quoted from **Jer. 31:31-34:** <sup>31</sup>*“The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke My covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. <sup>33</sup>“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. **“I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be My people.** <sup>34</sup>No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”*
4. Even Gentile unbelievers have the requirements of God’s law written in their hearts:

**Rom. 2:14-16** (NKJV): <sup>14</sup>*For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, <sup>15</sup>who show **the work** [“that the **requirements**” NIV] **of the law written in their hearts**, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them) <sup>16</sup>*in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.**

<p>In the New Covenant, God didn't throw away the law... He put the law inside us!</p>
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C. The true believer doesn't throw away the law, he meets all of its requirements!

1. God didn't do away with His law—He got rid of the stony heart so we could keep His laws! The New Covenant of grace doesn't produce carelessness with God's law; rather, it causes us to be *careful* to keep His laws:

**Ezek. 36:26-27:** *<sup>26</sup>I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup>And I will put My Spirit in you and move you to follow My decrees and be careful to keep My laws.*

2. **Rom. 8:1-4:** *<sup>1</sup>Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For what **the law was powerless** to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so, He condemned sin in sinful man, <sup>4</sup>**in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us**, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.*

- a) The law was powerless to make us righteous—it was never intended to do that!
- b) Only through the blood of Christ's New Covenant and the power of the Holy Spirit are the righteous requirements of the law **fully met in us!**
- c) The Holy Spirit brings the kingdom of righteousness into our hearts:

**Rom. 14:17:** *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of **righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.***

## V. CONCLUSION

- A. God has promised that the last days will be a time of unprecedented lawlessness. Because of that, the Church needs to carefully study and understand God's law and how to use it correctly.

- B. Much of modern evangelism has been reduced to an “altar call” where the lights dim, soft music plays, and emotional “decisions” are made to “accept” Jesus without any real conviction, contrition, or conversion.
- C. But it is God’s law that converts the soul—God’s law is essential to bring sinners to a knowledge of sin that produces godly sorrow and repentance that will lead them to Christ.
- D. What has happened to preaching that warns people to “flee from the coming wrath” (Mat. 3:7)? Where are the preachers like Spurgeon who use the holy demands of God’s law to bring the lost under conviction: “There is a war between you and God’s Law. The Ten Commandments are against you... [they], like 10 great cannons, are pointed at you today, for you have broken all of God’s statutes!”
- E. Where are men and women of God who will press the claims of law and judgment to make ungodly rulers squirm?
- Acts 24:25:** *As Paul discoursed on **righteousness**, self-control and the **judgment to come**, Felix was afraid and said, “That’s enough for now! You may leave. When I find it convenient, I will send for you.”*
- F. When we use the law correctly, the Holy Spirit can act on the person’s conscience to bring conviction:
- John 16:8:** *When He [Holy Spirit] comes, He will convict the world of **guilt in regard to sin** and **righteousness** and **judgment**. [NOTE: It seems we should be talking to the unsaved world more about sin, righteousness, and judgment!]*
- G. Let us pray that in these last days, many unsaved people will be “cut to the heart” by the preaching of God’s word and truly converted to Christ (Acts 2:37-39).

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*The law of the LORD is perfect,  
converting the soul.*

– Psalm 19:7–