

Subject: A Christian View of God's Moral Law

Scripture: Romans 3:19-31

We have no problem thinking of God as Creator, Father, Shepherd, or Friend. But many people do not acknowledge God as the Law-Giver and Judge. We hear a lot about rights—human rights, workers rights, and civil rights. Last week one of our American political parties had a town hall meeting in which the presidential candidates gave their views on LGBTQ rights. What about God's rights? God has the right to make laws and hold us accountable if we break them.

1. The existence of God's moral law

The world operates on the basis of certain laws. There are three kinds of law:

- A. Natural laws that govern the physical world (for example, law of gravity)
- B. Civil laws that govern human life
- C. Moral laws that govern the spiritual world

These laws exist whether a person wants to admit it or not. A person may refuse to believe in the law of gravity, but that doesn't eliminate the law. A person may not believe there is a law called a speed limit, but that doesn't eliminate the law. A person may not believe in God's moral law, but that doesn't eliminate the law.

God's moral law can't be altered, amended, or destroyed. You can ignore it and you can violate it, but you can't remove it or replace it.

In 1882, just 10 years before his death, C. H. Spurgeon preached a message on "The Perpetuity of the Law of God," in which he made several points about a correct and biblical view of God's moral law.

2. The misuse of God's moral law

God's moral law cannot justify us before God. Any teaching that promotes salvation in whole or in part by keeping God's moral law is false teaching and a perverted gospel.

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.*

We are justified by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone.

Romans 3:24 *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*

Galatians 2:21 *I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.*

1 Timothy 1:5-11 ⁵ *Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: ⁶ From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; ⁷ Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what*

they say, nor whereof they affirm.⁸ But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;⁹ Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,¹⁰ For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;¹¹ According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

The law is not made for a righteous (self-righteous) man. Those who think they are righteous based on keeping the law will never be saved. The law is not a means to self-righteousness, but a means to self-condemnation, conviction, repentance and pleading for God's mercy.

3. The proper use of God's moral law

God's law has a 4-fold purpose:

A. God's moral law reflects His character

Romans 7:12 *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. The law is perfect and holy and good, just as God is perfect and holy and good. The nature of the law reveals the nature of the lawgiver.*

B. God's moral law restrains our sin

Imagine how life would be without laws. How fast would people drive if there were no speed limit? How many people would pay income tax if there were no tax laws? Laws keep us under control.

C. God's moral law reveals our sin

Romans 7:7 *What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*

God's law is like a mirror to show us our sin. It is like an MRI to show us our sinful heart. The law exposes our sin. The law not only reveals our sinful actions; it reveals our sinful desires, attitudes and thoughts. Jesus said it's not only wrong to commit adultery, but it's wrong to lust. Jesus said it's not only wrong to murder someone, but it's wrong to hate someone in your heart.

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

D. God's moral law drives us to Christ

Romans 3:19 *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

Galatians 3:24 *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

The Law is like a mirror, James says. It helps us see our “dirty faces,” but you don’t wash your face or comb your hair or brush your teeth with a mirror. The Law shows us what’s wrong, but only the grace of Christ can make us right.

Because we are born with a sin nature, we have no power or moral ability to keep God’s law and we have no desire to keep it.

What we could not do, God has done for us in Christ. He kept the law we could not and would not keep. He paid the penalty for our sins. It was a debt that we could not pay.

What attitude should we have toward God’s moral law?

Some say we don’t need the law anymore. We are now under grace, so we are free from it. All we need is faith. It’s alright if we sin because God’s grace is greater than our sin. But what does Scripture say?

- We establish (uphold) the law

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

To establish the law or uphold the law means we honor it, teach it, use it in evangelism, and we even use it as a guide for Christian living as the Holy Spirit enables us.

Romans 8:3-4³ *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:*⁴ *That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

The last time a policeman stopped me for speeding, he was gracious and gave me a warning. I drive on that road at least once a week. What do you think my attitude ought to be toward that speed limit and the policeman who will enforce it? Should I be arrogant and remove the speed limit sign? Should I go as fast as I please and hope he will be gracious again? No, that would be to make void the law. Here’s what I do... As I drive on that road I remember what the policeman did for me and I’m careful to stay within the speed limit because I’m grateful for his grace. I believe that’s what our attitude should be toward God’s moral law.