

“The End of the Law”
Romans 10:4
(Preached at Trinity, January 31, 2010)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In the opening verses of **Chapter 10** Paul is expressing his great concern over the hardness of the Jews towards the Gospel of Christ. They were ever on his mind. He continually prayed for them.
2. Although they had a great zeal for obeying the Law they failed to understand that their obedience to the Law was entirely insufficient to make them right in the eyes of God. They failed to understand the inner corruption that polluted their entire being.
3. They had a zeal but not according to knowledge. They were ignorant of God's demand for perfection.
Romans 10:3 – “For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”
4. Their ignorance was based upon their misunderstanding of God's demand for perfection under the Law.
James 2:10 – “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.”
5. This demand for perfection leaves all men condemned.
Romans 3:10 – “As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one.”
Romans 3:23 – “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;”
6. We would all be hopeless except for one thing.
Romans 10:4 – “For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”
 - A. First, what do we does Paul man by “law” here?
 1. Is he talking about the moral law, or ceremonial, or judicial?
 2. There are some who insist that we have no grounds for making distinctions. That all of the Old Covenant laws should be viewed together and all are completed in Christ.
 - B. This brings us to the other word in question in this verse. What does Paul mean by the word translated “end?”
 1. Some have interpreted it that in Christ the Law has ended. That Christ has abrogated the Law.
This is one meaning of the Greek word **te , loj**. It can mean “to end or terminate”
 2. The word can also mean to fulfill.

7. So what law is Paul referring to and what does it mean that Christ is the end of the law?
- A. Paul has consistently used the word “law” in this epistle to refer the moral law or Ten Commandments. For example:
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.”
- B. Does the word for “end” mean that Jesus brought an end to the Law or does it mean that He fulfilled the Law? The answer is both.
8. How is it that Christ is the both the end of the Law *and* the fulfillment of the Law? Let’s examine them one at time.
- I. How is it that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law?
- A. Jesus made this proclamation in the Sermon on the Mount
Matthew 5:17-19 – “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”
1. Jesus said in **Matt. 5:17**, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law”
 - a. The word for “destroy” is **katalu, w** – it means to dissolve
It is similar to our word abrogate
 - b. Jesus is saying, “Do not think I’ve come to abrogate the Law.”
 2. The word “fulfill” is **plhro, w** which carries the meaning “to make full” or “full measure.” In other words Jesus came to realize the full measure of the Law.
 3. He says that not one “jot or tittle” will pass till all is brought to full measure.
 4. He goes on to say that whoever breaks the least of the commandments will be least in His Kingdom. The attention is upon detail.
In other words, our relationship to the Kingdom is given in terms of our attitude towards the Law. We must have a high view of the Law – every jot and tittle.
 5. John Murray – “There can be no escape from the conclusion that the Law is directly relevant to membership in and station within the kingdom of God.”
- B. When the Bible says that Jesus fulfilled the Law it means the Jesus met all the demands of the Law. He obeyed it perfectly.
1. Theologians talk about Jesus’ *passive* obedience and His *active* obedience.
 - a. By passive obedience we are referring to His willingness to accept the Father’s will in coming and dying for sinners
Philippians 2:8 – “And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”
 - b. By active obedience we are referring to His active and deliberate obedience to every aspect of the Law’s demands.

2. He met the demands of the ceremonial law by laying down his life as a perfect sacrifice
3. Jesus met the demands of the moral law through His perfect obedience
The Law demands perfect righteousness and Jesus came to fulfill all righteousness.
4. God's Law demands perfect obedience
 - a. No one has been able to meet these demands
 - b. Many have tried. The Law convicts our conscience. Many have tried to silence their conscience through their efforts.
The Jews labored hard. They had a zeal but were found wanting
 - c. We have not kept the Law and so we stand under God's condemnation. We are guilty.
 - d. When Jesus went to the cross He took upon Himself our sins paying the penalty
 - e. But there's more. Jesus kept the Law perfectly that we might receive His righteousness.
Jesus gave us an imputed righteousness – this is justification.
5. The perfect life of Christ not only qualified Him to be a spotless sacrifice for us, it also provided for us God's perfect righteousness.
The Law demands perfection. Jesus fulfilled the Law's demands.
We receive it by faith – this is what Paul was referring to in **Chapter 9 Romans 9:31-32** – “But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. ³² Wherefore? Because *they sought it* not by faith,”

II. How is it that Jesus is the end of the Law?

- A. It does not mean that through Jesus the Law has come to an end
 1. The Old Covenant served as a shadow of God's eternal redemptive purpose. There were also aspects of the law that were particular to the Old Covenant. The civil law was a rule for national Israel. The ceremonial laws and ordinances found their fulfillment in Christ.
 2. But the moral law will forever stand as God's standard of holiness. It stands as God's rule of perfect righteousness.
This can never end
Samuel Bolton – “The Law, as it is considered as a rule, can no more be abolished or changed than the nature of good and evil can be abolished and changed. The substance of the law is the sum of doctrine concerning piety towards God, charity towards our neighbors, temperance and sobriety towards ourselves. And for the substance of it, it is moral and eternal, and cannot be abrogated.”
 3. Grace has not ended the Law as a rule of righteousness. Faith has not changed the Law as God's perfect standard.
Romans 3:31 – “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”
- B. Jesus has ended the Law as a means of attaining righteousness
Romans 10:4 – “For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness”
 1. Now, we must be very clear here. The Law has NEVER been a means of justification.

- a. The Law was never given as a covenant of works. It has never been a means of life or as a way of salvation. This is because we have all broken it. We are born in sin.
 - b. The Jews, on the other hand, tried to use the Law as a means of being right with God.
2. The Jews sought to rest upon their obedience to the Law
Romans 9:31 – “But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.”
Romans 10:3 – “For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”
 How were they going about to establish their own righteousness? Through obedience to the Law.
3. We have been delivered from the Law's inability to justify us. When we were lost we sought to justify ourselves through works of the Law.
- a. People seek to justify themselves by the Law even if unconsciously.
 If you ask most people if they are going to heaven they reply, yes. What they mean is they think they've been good.
 - b. Until we die to the Law we will seek life and righteousness through obedience to the Law. This is what Paul will be saying as the chapter continues.
Romans 7:9-10 – “For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. ¹⁰ And the commandment, which *was ordained* to life, I found *to be* unto death.”
 - c. We have to guard ourselves today from being brought back under this bondage.
Galatians 2:16 – “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”
- C. Jesus has brought us under a new relationship to the Law
1. We have been delivered from the condemnation of the Law
Romans 8:1 – “*There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”
 2. We have been delivered from the strictness of the Law – freed from its rigor wherein it demanded absolute perfection.
James 2:10 – “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.”
 - a. We are not freed from the requirement of perfect obedience but we are freed from the demand of perfect obedience as a condition for salvation. This is because Christ has met the demands of the Law.

- b. The Law made impossible demands upon us.
Galatians 3:10 – “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”
- c. Under the Gospel we are freed from the impossibilities.
 Under the Law God demands perfect obedience and every infraction brings us under His condemnation and ever increasing wrath.
 Under grace God takes pity upon our weakness
 Samuel Bolton – “In the Gospel God accepts affections for actions, endeavours for performance, desire for ability. A Christian is made up of desires, of mournings, thirstings, and bewailings: O that my ways were directed! O miserable man that I am! Here is Gospel perfection. . . Yet, God has mercy for ‘can-nots’, but none for ‘will-nots’. God can distinguish between weakness and wickedness.

Conclusion:

1. Do you understand how essential Christ is?
 Jesus is the Alpha and Omega. Everything starts and ends with Him.
2. Do you want eternal life? Then keep the Law perfectly. This is what Jesus told the rich young ruler. But he could not and did not – and neither have you.
 Jesus fulfilled the demands of the Law.
 - A. If you want to be saved you have to trust Him alone. You have to want Him alone. Jesus says, “Follow Me.”
 This means you have to be willing to leave all else behind.
 - B. This is what Jesus told the rich young ruler.
Matthew 19:21-22 – “Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me. ²² But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.”
3. Obedience to the Law cannot save you. Only Jesus can save you. He fulfilled the Law.
4. You must have Christ. Read the verse again:
Romans 10:4 – “For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”
 This means to everyone who trusts Christ alone; to everyone who will have Him alone.
5. God’s promise is universal and it is specific.
 To everyone who believes.
 That includes you.