

Intro: Recently introduced into liturgy – At least James and I have drawn attention

An important distinction I've recently become more consciously aware of – more distinctly knowledgeable about – still growing

Introduced 1) As a help to us; to become intuitively familiar with the category

2) Conformity to our tradition (broadly: reading Scripture; narrowly?)

As I've studied, I've come to realize that 3 important teachings about law are interrelated – and Law/Gospel assumes some familiarity with the other 2

1. Divisions of the Law

A. Ceremonial

- i. Types and shadows—defunct after the revelation of the antitype

B. Judicial/Civil

- i. Order of the theonomic state
- ii. “Expired together with the state of that people...” (WCF 19.4)

C. Moral

- i. Rooted in God's character & creation; “natural law” – unchanging, unchangeable, and always in force

D. The Clarity of Examples

i. Ceremonial

a) **John 1:29**

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

b) **1 Corinthians 5:7**

⁷ ... For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

c) **Hebrews 10:12**

¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

d) **Acts 10:9–16**

⁹ The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. ¹⁰ Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance ¹¹ and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ¹³ And a voice came to him, “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” ¹⁴ But Peter said, “Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean.” ¹⁵ And a voice *spoke* to him again the second time, “What God has cleansed you must not call common.” ¹⁶ This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.

(1) *Notice Context: This is literally true, that the clean laws have been abrogated – this is because they always signified the necessity of separation from the Gentiles – no longer even acceptable – Thus, the clean laws are also “ceremonial” (typical)*

ii. Judicial/Civil

a) **John 18:36**

³⁶ Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”

(1) *This is not what the Jews expected – and it’s new – but the church is no longer to also be a political state*

(2) *And, as we just saw, no longer exclusively Jewish—the Gentiles are brought in – some will still be Roman... Irish... American*

b) **1 Peter 2:13–14**

¹³ Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake, whether to the king as supreme, ¹⁴ or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. (Moral/natural law, 2nd use)

iii. Moral

a) **1 Peter 1:15–16**

¹⁵ but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct, ¹⁶ because it is written, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*” (Lev19:2)

b) **Exodus 20:8–11**

⁸ “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day *is* the Sabbath of the Lord your God. *In it* you shall do no work: you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who *is* within your gates. ¹¹ For *in* six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

c) **Matthew 19:8**

⁸ He said to them, “Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, permitted you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so.

2. 3 Uses of the (Moral) Law

A. Pedagogical

i. A tutor to bring us to Christ

a) **Galatians 3:24**

²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

b) **Romans 7:7**

⁷ What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “*You shall not covet.*”

c) Exposes & Excites sin, **convicting** us and showing our need.

d) *Faith.* ... So I went on my way up the hill. Now, when I had got above half-way up, I looked behind me, and saw one coming after me, swift as the wind; so he overtook me just about the place where the settle stands.

... So soon as the man overtook me, it was but a word and a blow; for down he knocked me, and laid me for dead. But when I was a little come to myself again I asked him wherefore he served me so. He said because of my secret inclining to Adam the First. And with that he struck me another deadly blow on the breast, and beat me down backward; so I lay at his foot as dead as before. So when I came to myself again I cried him mercy: but he said, I know not how to show mercy; and with that he knocked me down again. He had doubtless made an end of me, but that one came by and bid him forbear.

Chr. Who was that that bid him forbear?

Faith. I did not know him at first: but as he went by, I perceived the holes in his hands and in his side: Then I concluded that he was our Lord. So I went up the hill.

Chr. That man that overtook you was Moses. He spareth none; neither knoweth he how to shew mercy to those that transgress the law

- B. Civil (not to be confused with a category of Law, above)
 - i. Constrains evil in society at large (remember the moral law is the “natural law” written on the heart of the creature – 1 Peter 2:14 above)
- C. Normative
 - i. Orders the Christian life
 - ii. Gives direction, shape for “how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance.” (Heidelberg 2)
 - a) **How many things are necessary for thee to know, that thou, enjoying this comfort, mayest live and die happily?**
Three; the first, how great my sins and miseries are; the second, how I may be delivered from all my sins and miseries; the third, how I shall express my gratitude to God for such deliverance.
 - iii. NOTE: This is *not* a different law, it’s a different *use*. The substance/content of the law does not change (10 commandments, love God/neighbor) – the *context* changes:

- a) This is “the law as it is the law of Christ” (as opposed to “the law as it is a covenant of works)

(1) “That’s a great tie. Can I buy it from you? I’ll give you \$5”
“No. It’s yours. **Here, take it**” (Imperative – for later)
Send a thank you card... with \$5 in it.
Might be same bill – but it functions differently

- iv. NOTE: The law in its third use has a pedagogical *aspect*: we still fail to keep it and it still drives us to the cross—though “driving us to Christ (by condemnation)” cannot be its *function/use* for the believer – this is what Paul means, “not under law, but under grace.”

3. Law / Gospel

A. Imperative / Indicative – Do / Done – Command / News

- i. Reformers: The Scripture contains these 2 words

a) **Theodore Beza:**

“We divide this Word into two principal parts or kinds: the one is called the “Law,” the other the “Gospel.” For all the rest can be gathered under the one or other of these two headings... Ignorance of this distinction between Law and Gospel is one of the principal sources of the abuses which corrupted and still corrupt Christianity.”

ii. **Galatians 3:10–12**

¹⁰ For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, “*Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.*” ¹¹
But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for “*the just shall live by faith.*” ¹² Yet the law is not of faith, but “*the man who does them shall live by them.*”

- iii. **Example:** We confuse the two every month: The 10 Commandments (Under the heading, Reading of the Law) (vv. 1-2) And God spoke all these words, saying: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”

B. Why it matters – because confusing Law and Gospel, or blending, loses the Gospel

i. Old Testament / New Testament

a) Two things happen

(1) *Lose specificity and detail of Old Testament : (e.g. Fourth commandment – remember: we pointed out earlier it is built into the created order)*

(2) *We call the (whole) New Testament “Gospel,” thereby including all sorts of commands:*

(a) **Matthew 7:12**

¹² **Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.**

(b) **Luke 10:25–28**

²⁵ **And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?”** ²⁶ **He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?”** ²⁷ **So he answered and said, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’ ”** ²⁸ **And He said to him, “You have answered rightly; do this and you will live.”**

(c) **Romans 2:13**

¹³ **(for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified;**

ii. Federal Vision

a) A Joint Federal Vision Profession (2007)

“We deny that law and gospel should be considered as hermeneutics, or treated as such. We believe that any passage, whether indicative or imperative, can be heard by the faithful as good news, and that any passage, whether containing gospel promises or not, will be heard by the rebellious as intolerable demand. The fundamental division is not in the text, but rather in the human heart.”

b) Again: This means that we are *not* saved by grace *alone*, through faith *alone*, in the work of Christ *alone* – The Gospel includes “what duty God requires of us.” (WSC 3)

iii. Roman Catholicism

- a) Practical progress in holiness is fueled by grace and ends in justification.

(1) *The “Good News” is that there is grace to help us obey (and thereby be saved.) The Gospel is that the Law has become easier to keep – we’re still under a covenant of works, and still saved through our obedience.*

iv. Popular (less technical) version

- a) The New Testament dispenses with the rigidity and tediousness of the Old Testament: Law reduced to one: Love

(1) *As though that’s easier (it’s actually just a summary)*

(2) *Still a covenant of works*

- b) Jesus died for everybody; all sins are atoned for – so we stand or fall based on whether we believe or not

(1) *Two covenants: The Covenant of Works and the New Covenant of Works ... Brings us to:*

C. Complications

i. Introduced concept of Law / Gospel with Imperative / Indicative

- a) What about, “Repent and believe in the Gospel?” (Mark 1:15)

(1) *“Repent” is law – because it’s object is the law and our failure*

(2) *“Believe” is a “Gospel imperative” because its focus is Christ and His accomplished work*

- (a) **Remember the tie? “Here take it.” That’s imperative
Taking it is not obedience to law, it’s receiving the gift
(according to promise)**