



Rooted to be Fruitful

Bible for Life

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law *Content and Intent of Law*



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The Confusion

PAULINE UNDERSTANDING OF CONTINUITY & DISCONTINUITY

Discontinuity of the Law

- You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace (**Gal 5:4**)
- But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code (**Rom 7:6**)

Continuity of the Law

- Children to obey parents in view of the 5th commandment (**Eph 6:1-3**)
- **Jer 31:31-33** talks about the law written in our hearts. But it is still the law nonetheless.
- Surely the moral codes as described in the 10 commandments still applies?





The Conclusion

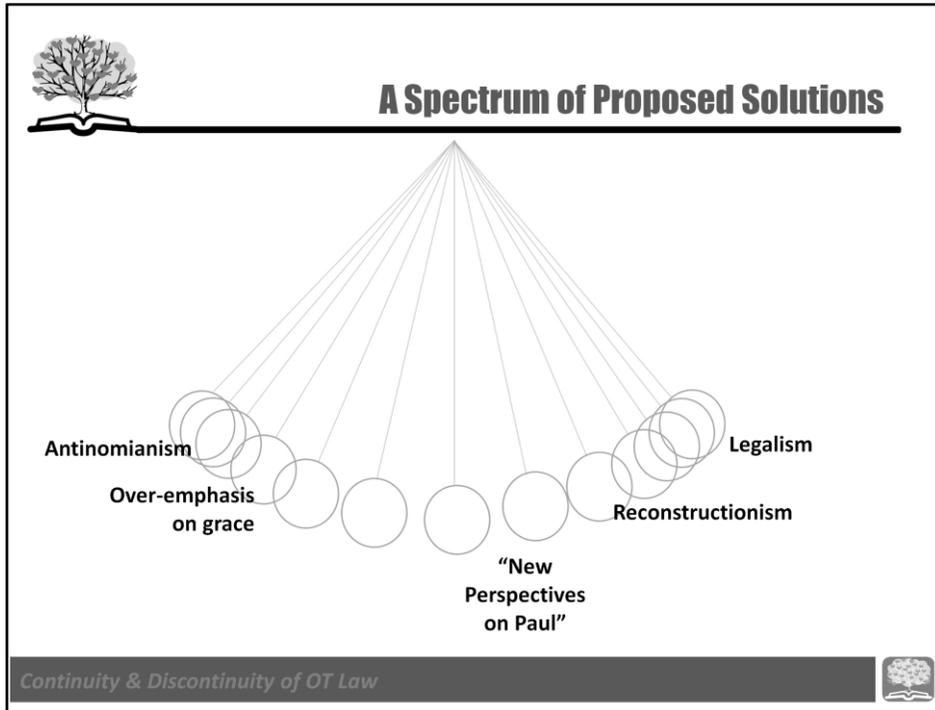
FULFILLMENT NOT ABOLISHMENT

“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. For truly I tell you, 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” (Matt 5:17-18 – read until v. 20)

- Christ came to “fulfill all righteousness” (Matt 3:15)
- Christ “fulfilled the Law” (Matt 5:17)

The Issue at hand, then is: “HOW was it fulfilled? And HOW are we to live in accordance to its fulfillment?”





The Protestant’s creed that we are justified *Sola Fide* – by faith alone – is the most foundational but also one of the least understood tenet of Christian orthodoxy.

On the extreme end of the spectrum – Antinomianism – we have a complete and total severance of grace from law. It argues that Christians are no longer under legal requirements to do the works of the law; and as such the standards of the law no longer applies even as a benchmark for morality. Such stance, however, almost always turns grace into a license for immorality (see **Jude 4**), and misuses freedom as a cover-up for evil (**1 Pet 2:16**). And the verses I quoted are but some of the ample warnings given against such worldly extremism.

However, the opposite is also equally evil. If antinomianism argues that the law no longer applies to us, legalism argues that the law in its entirety still applies to us. After all, God’s righteous laws are eternal in nature (**Ps 119:160**), and Jesus Himself taught that not one smallest letter or stroke of a pen shall be erased; as His role was not of abolishment but of fulfillment (**Matt 5:17**). But speaking in terms of abolishment, Paul argues that to continue in the law was to abolish the offense of the Cross (**Gal 5:11**). And that such teaching actually constitutes as “*a different gospel – which is really no gospel at all*” (**Gal 1:6-7**). And Paul proceeds by pronouncing *anathema* to such gospel; thus proclaiming them to be heretical and

unchristian!

Formulating the Christian's relationship and response to the Old Testament Law, therefore, had been anything but easy. And as you shall see in this lesson, providing mere *clichés* as answers barely helps in the real, daily sense of the understanding. To say, for example, that "*we are no longer bound by the law but are enabled to do it willingly*" is accurate but shallow. For indeed, there are some law of the OT that would be disturbing if we are to perform them in the modern world. The requirement for Levirate marriage, for example, where a younger brother is required to fulfill the marital duties of a deceased elder brother, would surely not apply today. But who is to decide the various applicability then? If we are to judge, then we are the law's interpreter and therefore its master (which we are not!).

And so a whole range of spectrum of solutions is proposed. On the side tending towards legalism, the Reconstitutionists would reinterpret and reapply the laws for current times. I would argue that such efforts would be no different in essence to what the Pharisees did when they tried to formulate how obedience to the Torah would look like. The New Perspective on Paul, pioneered by figures like NT Wright, EP Sandres and James Dunn argues that Paul, when he talked about the discontinuity of the Law, only mentioned about such practices such as the observance of festivals and circumcision – and on the other hand argues from the law itself how a child is to obey their parents – and therefore was arguing for the law's continuity even after Christ. On the other side of the equation, we have the charismatics, and people like Joseph Prince in Asia who overemphasizes on the doctrine of grace to such an extent that the message becomes a weak social gospel.

I would argue, as I will proceed to explain, that the Law in its ENTIRETY was fulfilled in Christ. And therefore, we are no longer living in bondage to the ENTIRE law. However, the freedom that we have gained is to be lived in accordance to the FULFILLMENT. That Son gives us true freedom is undisputed (**Jn 8:36; Gal 5:1**); but the proper and rightful response to this is our willingness to place ourselves again as slaves under this Lord (**Eph 6:6**). The previous *yoke* of slavery was burdensome, heavy and even deadly (**Gal 5:1**), but the *yoke* of Christ, to be taken upon invitation in willingness is easy and light (**Matt 11:30**). In fact, we were individually brought under the weighty curse of the law – from which Christ had redeemed us (**Gal 3:13**), but the law of Christ will cause us to carry each other's burdens (**Gal 6:2**).

This new law, new yoke, new slavery, depends upon Christ as the culmination of the old law (**Rom 10:4**), but as the verse explains *so that* there may be righteousness for everyone who believes. The old law brought death; the new law gives righteousness and life!



A Methodology and its Problem

DIFFERENTIATING THE NATURES OF THE LAW

- **CEREMONIAL.** Consecration for worship. Clean/ Unclean.
- **CIVIL.** Rules for communal living. Administration of justice for shalom.
- **MORAL.** Synchronization to the attributes of God. Legally just.

PROBLEMS

- 10 Commandments – Moral? Ceremonial? Civil?
- **Eph 6:1** – Child obeying parents in consideration of the 5th commandments. Thus, moral.
- **Col 2:16-17** – Sabbath as the 4th commandment is included as the shadow which reality has been realized in Christ. Thus, ceremonial.

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law



In trying to understand the nature of the law, many scholars have helpfully indicated that the law can be categorized under three different purposes; as noted above.

① The **ceremonial laws** are those given for worship – which was provisional for sinful men in approaching the holy God. It distinguishes between the clean and the unclean by giving the benchmark of holiness – GOD himself. It stresses that (contrary to many modern teaching, mind you) sinful men cannot come before the holy God just as they are. They must be made clean, must come through a sacrifice, and must keep themselves clean so they would not be consumed. In its application, the ceremonial laws are given as a constant reminder that we are never good enough for God – and thus need a mediator. It reminds us of our sinful nature, and stresses the fact that the primary understanding of sin is separation from God. It's primary leader is the *Priest*.

② The **civil laws** are given so that God's people would live together in a manner that reflects God's attributes. It is to administer justice, to allow for mercy, and to encourage the people's faithfulness in keeping the Lord's promises. It presupposes the sinfulness of man and acknowledges with Thomas Hobbes that unless directed, man's social actions will always tend towards *homo homini lupus*. It creates a conducive environment for doing good, by rewarding it and threatening punishment

for evil. It wields a sword to punish the wrongdoer, and the intended result is God's shalom. Its primary leader is the *King*.

③ The **moral laws** are given so that man can live in a way that reflects God's own attributes. Again, it presupposes man's sinfulness and therefore is given in the "do and don't" format. Christ would later extend this rule to explain that righteousness (*dikaiousune* – legal state of being just) constitutes not just passivity in evil but activity in good. The primary leader for morality is the *Prophet*, whose role was to reveal God's word and will to mankind.



An Evident Structure

Category	Scope	God's Characters (Rom 7:12)	Christ as Leader	Calvin's Use of the Law	How Fulfilled in Love (1 Tim 1:5)
CEREMONIAL	National	Holy/ Consecrated	High Priest	Mirror. God is holy, and calls His people to live in a consecrated manner before Him. Benchmark. Ceremonially Unclean → Ceremonially Clean.	Sincere Faith. In approaching God (Lev 10:3 - Heb 11:6)
CIVIL	Communal	Good	King	Restraining Evil. God calls His people to not be conformed to the ways of the world. His people to display communally another "way of life." Cut off/ Remaining.	Good Conscience. Fellowship of light (1 Jn 1:5-10; Mat 18:15-20)
MORAL	Personal	Righteousness / Legally Just. Dikaiousune	Prophet	Reveal what pleases God. Inner righteousness and faithfulness as expression of faith. Fruitful/ fruitless. Faithful/ Wicked	Pure Heart. Godly sorrow with earnest desire to do God's will (2 Cor 7:10-11; Eph 5:10)

Engaging the Fallen Culture – Niebuhr's View on Christianity & Culture





(i) CEREMONIAL LAWS

CEREMONIAL. Consecration for worship. Clean/ Unclean.

Intent: Provisional for sinners approaching a holy God (see impl of **Lev 10:3**).

Fulfilled: *“Unlike other **high priests**, He does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once and for all when He offered Himself” (**Heb 7:27**). The Ceremonial Laws were fulfilled in Christ as the **High Priest** becomes one with the **Sacrifice**.*

Living in its Fulfillment: (eg.) *“Get rid of the old yeast, so that you may be a new unleavened batch – as you really are. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed. Therefore let us keep the Festival, not with the old bread leavened with malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth” (**1 Cor 5:7-8**). Also on approaching God **Heb 11:6***





Keeping the Feasts

Distinguishing the SHADOW and the REALITY of the Law

Feast	Time	OT Description	NT Fulfillment/ Prophecy
Passover <i>Pesach</i>	14 Nisan	Remembering God bringing Israel out of Egypt	Christ our Passover lamb (1 Cor 5:7)
Unleavened Bread <i>Hag Hamatzot</i>	15 Nisan (week)	Remembering the haste with which they left Egypt. Yeast as symbol of sin was forbidden.	Sanctification of the Church (1 Cor 5:7-8). Note <i>"let us keep the feast."</i>
First Fruits <i>Yom Habikkurim</i>	6 Sivan	Beginning of barley harvest, earliest crops.	Christ the firstfruit of the risen (1 Cor 15:20) as promise for resurrection of the dead
Pentecost <i>Shavuot</i>	+50 days after Passover	Beginning of wheat harvest. The giving of the law at Sinai 50 days after crossing the Red Sea.	The birth of the Church (Acts 2). The Law written in our hearts by the Spirit (Ez 11:19; 2 Cor 3:3)

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law





Keeping the Feasts

Distinguishing the SHADOW and the REALITY of the Law

Feast	Time	OT Description	NT Fulfillment/ Prophecy
Trumpets <i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	1 Tishri	Beginning of the 7 th (Sabbatical) month	Second Coming (1 Thess 4:13-18) with a trumpet call
Day of Atonement <i>Yom Kippur</i>	10 Tishri	(Annual) Removal of the people's sin. High Priest makes sacrifice.	(Once and for all) Sacrifice of Jesus the Great High Priest (Heb 7:27) to be fully realized.
Tabernacles/ Ingathering/ Booths <i>Sukkoth</i>	15 Tishri (week)	Final harvest. Commemorating God's deliverance and protection during the wandering. (see Lev 23:39-43)	John 7:2. Christ as Living Water and Light of the world VS water ceremony & illumination of the temple. Rev 7:9-17; 21:1-22:5. The Final Ingathering and union.
Sabbath	(Week)	Completion of Creation.	Completion of New Creation. The final Sabbath-rest (Heb 4:9)

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law





The Offense of Returning to the Law



Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law



The most helpful illustration of why the law must no longer be enforced is this illustration about fulfillment. And this is especially and immediately applicable to ceremonial laws.

If a boyfriend and a girlfriend are in a long distance relationship, they would each constantly keep photos of the other close by them. This will sound romantic, because it represents their desire to be reunited. However, if after they had been reunited, the boyfriend refuses to meet the girlfriend and instead keeps on looking at the photograph and confessing his desire to be united; it will not only lose its romanticism, it will start to be very offensive!

And so, it is the case with the ceremonial laws. As we have discussed, Christ has fulfilled each and every one of those ceremonial requirements. And so, after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, every sacrifice of lambs did not only lose their value, they have now become offensive. And this is because the very thing the sacrifice represented had already come!



(ii) CIVIL LAWS

CIVIL. Rules for communal living, given for the *common good* (**Rom 13:4**). Creating an environment where it is conducive to do good. Fostering *Public Conscience*. Administration of justice for shalom.

Intent: The way to live as God's chosen people; avoiding the corruption of the world. Outward expression of the "*more important matters of the law*" (**Matt 23:23**)

Fulfilled: Having escaped the patterned corruption of the world, we now aim to participate in the divine nature (**2 Pet 1:3-4; Rom 12:1-2**). We were "*included in Christ*" (**Eph 1:13**), ingrafted into Christ and commanded to remain in Him (**Jn 15:1-17**). The Civil Laws were fulfilled in Christ as the *King* is one with the *Law*.

Living in its Fulfillment: and are to live in the fellowship of light (**1 Jn 1:5-10**), to be bound in communal accountability with one another so as to keep the Body of Christ pure (**Matt 18:15-20**). Haustafeln to be kept (**Eph 5:21-6:9 ; Col 3:18-4:1; 1 Pet 3:11-7**) with the view of Christ as the Head of the Church, and therefore ruler and *King* over all.

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law



One of the most important intent of the civil laws was that they were given as a consequence of Israel being CONSECATED for God. And thus, they are not to behave like the other nations, not to follow after their (devious) practices, and not to be idolatrous after their God. The logic is that we will become like those we worship. And so if we claim to worship God, we will be increasingly conformed after His image.

Therefore, many of the civil laws need to be understood in the cultural context of the days. We need to not only look at the *what*, but also the *why* of such laws. I will discuss this in the next slide, where we should obey not only the content of the law but also (and more importantly) its intent.

But the danger is that of self-interpretation. And this often happen because of our hardened hearts (see for example **Matt 19:8**). And one wich often gets heated debate is the case of wives submitting to the husband. I have forgotten the countless times with which I have heard the explanation that this was a civil arrangement due to the partriachal nature of the Israelite's culture and the unequal opportunities for women to receive good education back then. However, without getting a premature explanation of its intent, we need to first see that the Bible gave such orders on the basis of CREATIONAL ORDER, not cultural predisposition. And this as a principle, is

eternal because it stood upon an unchangeable historical fact.

But lest we argue unnecessarily on this topic, I will give a teaser answer to the Bible's revelation on this. Wives' submission does not degrade them in any way; and does not change the truth of equality one bit. But rather, these were designed to reflect the Trinitarian Godhead where the Holy Spirit witnesses only to Jesus, and Jesus submits only and always to the Father; all the time whilst remaining equally divine. It is we who have applied the doctrine of equality wrongly, and should consult the Bible on how it is intended to be. But to argue against wives' submission to the husband based on patriarchal culture is nowhere warranted in the Bible.



(eg) More Important Matters of the Law

Distinguishing the CONTENT and the INTENT of the Law

Civil Law	Content	Intent	Example
Kinsman Redeemer & Levirate Marriage	Lev 25:25; Deut 25:5-6	Promise & inheritance	Ruth & Boaz (days of Judges) Judah & Tamar (Pre-Mosaic)
Tithes & Offerings		Faithfulness & dependence	Abraham (Pre-Mosaic) David (1 Chr 29:10-20)
Consecrated food & provisional facilities for Levites	Mrk 2:23-28 1 Sam 21:1-6	Justice & Providence	Ahimelek & David
Provisions for unwitting sinners; Cities of Refuge etc	Eg. Ex 21:13; Jos 20:7-8 Lev 4:7, 18	Justice & Mercy	Adonijah 1 Kings 1:50-52; Joab 1 Kings 2:28-33 (Note: conjunction with ceremonial law)

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law



God provided Civil Laws in the OT to ensure that **social justice** would be administered in reflection to His own perfect justice. In such circumstances, as Jesus Himself explained, there are the more fundamental principles governing those laws; and these are “*the more important matters of the law*” – which really was about communicating and implementing God’s justice, mercy and faithfulness (**Matt 23:23**). The danger of the written code is that people could perform outwardly whilst foregoing inward adherence. For example, Jesus was saying that the Pharisees and the teachers of the law in His days were outwardly fulfilling the written requirements of the law, but are doing it of selfish gains and self-righteousness. And by doing so, they not only have disregarded the Law, but have in fact become wicked and hypocritical (**23:28**). And so Jesus emphasized on the importance of INWARD adherence as being the initial step to OUTWARD obedience (**23:25-26**). The **Intent**, then, is initial and foundational. The **Content**, on the other hand, is the result and fruit of the former. Look at how this was also the case for the people of the old covenant who were declared just. I have mentioned these cases individually during our coverage of those books, but here are a rough summary put in its proper context of this lesson:

1. **Boaz.** In Ruth 2, we are given the story of how Ruth, a Moabite widow, had to resort to gleaning in another person’s field to stay alive. This was a provisional

arrangement given in **Deut 24:19** as a way for the foreigners, the fatherless and the widows (who were unable to provide for themselves) to be able to attain mercy. Now, it was very possible for an owner to be completely adherent to this law without fulfilling its intent. He could have instructed the workers to be extra careful with the harvesting, and perhaps even reward or punish them in accordance to how much they can save. But to do that would just show the merciless attitude of the owner. Consider what Boaz did in **Ruth 2:8-18**. Boaz went beyond what was required of him by the law: ① He guaranteed her protection (**v. 8-9**); ② was kind to her because of her faith in Yahweh (**v. 11-12**) and ③ even ordered the workers to purposefully pull out some stalks from what had already been harvested and leave it for her to pick up (**v. 15-16**). Boaz did not find the law burdensome at all; but did it willingly and joyfully because it was an act of *mercy*; and he went above and beyond what was required of him. I would say that this is one example of one who not only performed the **Content** of the Law but understood and adhered to its **Intent**.

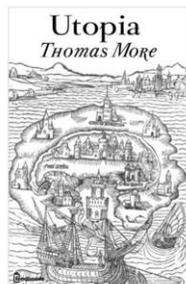
2. **Ruth**. Boaz rightly pointed out that Ruth had shown extraordinary faith when she decided to stick by Naomi despite their extremely unfavorable condition (**Ruth 2:11-12**) and that what she did was in fact taking refuge in the Lord (**Ruth 2:12**). This very act, in its isolation, would have proven Ruth to be one who understood the **Intent** of the law - as she showed faith in God despite being a foreigner to the Promise. However, Ruth did not stop there. Boaz again identified her extraordinary faith in her proposal to him for marriage (**Ruth 3:7-9**); stating that this kindness was greater than the first (which was taking refuge in God). This was because Ruth not only appealed to be under God's wing, but by doing so sought to fulfill God's **Intent** of protecting familial inheritance through the law of levirate marriage and kinsman redeemer. She had shown herself as one who not only had faith and acknowledged the true God; but as one who also was eager to fulfill the plan of God.
3. **Ruth and Boaz**. What was perhaps more incredible was that these acts of Ruth and Boaz was during the days of the Judges, when Israel's morality was marked by "the people doing what they thought was right in their own eyes, because there was no king." And this story was given as the background story of how Ruth got to be the foremother of David, Israel's greatest king.
4. **Abraham**. The context we are looking at is **Genesis 14**. Abraham (then Abram) was called by God, and in the context of this story was showing himself to be faithful in managing his personal belongings. Prior to that, Abraham separated with Lot and allowed his junior nephew the privilege of choice (**13:8-9**). Lot chose based on sight; in contrast to Abraham who left it to God to provide for him. Abraham's choice was sandwiched by communication with God before and after the event. After that, Abraham had to rescue Lot who was taken captive, and won where the King of Sodom lost. However, Abraham refused to take the plunder (which was more than legitimate!) because he saw the possibility that such act might cause people to attribute his success to something other than God (**14:22-24**) – perhaps because he already experienced people saying that about him because he got rich from his shameful episode with Pharaoh. What further emphasized this desire of Abraham was when he gave a tenth of

everything he owned to Melchizedek despite the fact that he wasn't under any requirement of law to do so! (This was pre-mosaic, mind you). Thus, Abraham did what he did not because it was required of him, but because he sincerely wanted his life to be a testament of God's goodness to him. He understood God's *Intent* for him; despite not having the *Content* specified.

5. **David.** In **1 Chr 29:10-20**, David's prayer showed such great understanding which should characterize our giving to God. Everything comes from God, and whatever we give didst originate from Him. And this should cause us to be the cheerful giver that God loves (**2 Cor 9:7**) – giving out of an overflow of thankfulness rather than out of dutiful obligation.
6. **Ahimelek & David.** Jesus also explained to the Pharisees how their understanding of the Sabbath was gravely mistaken by quoting the example of Ahimelek & David in 1 Sam 21. The Pharisees had made rabbinical laws about what were legal or illegal on Sabbaths; and they were accusing the Disciples of breaking these laws. And so, Jesus referred to how Ahimelek gave David and his companions the consecrated bread to save their lives; although the bread was only to be eaten by priests. The reason that David and Ahimelek were not guilty despite what happened could perhaps be understood by the message on Sabbath. "Sabbath was made for men, not men for Sabbath," was the response. This meant that the requirement for Sabbatical rest from work was for the benefits of men and for the remembrance of God's material provision. It wasn't the other way round. Therefore, if we apply the same logic, Jesus was arguing that the showbread was provisionally given to the priests because they worked in the house of God and had no other source of income. Showbread for priests, not priests for showbread could be the applied logic.
7. **Adonijah & Joab.** We've so far been dealing with positive examples. Now, we shall deal with negative ones. Adonijah had attempted to usurp the throne from Solomon and failed. When pursued, Adonijah went and took hold of the horns of the altar (**1 Kings 1:50-51**), which meant that he was throwing himself at God's mercy at the very symbol of forgiveness. See, **Lev 4:7, 18** describes to us that the blood applied at the horns of the altar was a sacrifice for unintentional sins; and Adonijah appealed to that. Solomon understood it and exercised divine mercy when he spared Adonijah under the condition that he repented (**1 Kings 1:52**). He would later die when he proved to still vie for the throne; by the way. But when Joab used the same formula when he was pursued, Solomon acted differently and killed him on the spot. What gives? It wasn't that Solomon was inconsistent and unmerciful, but rather, it was Joab who did not understand the prerequisites of mercy. Joab had taken the horns at the altar as a formula with which forgiveness was owed to him. He did not appeal for forgiveness, and did not promise repentance (which Adonijah did), but merely clung on to the horns as if it was some magic formula. His death, therefore, wasn't an absence of mercy but rather the execution of justice in absence of repentance. Joab merely saw the *Content*, but ignored the *Intent*.



Philosophy of (Civil) Law



Presupposition of Innocence or Sinfulness

Enforced Obedience



Education

Consciousness of Law

Apart from the Law
Informed by the Law



Grace

Desire to do Good

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law



Actually, the most examples we get from our country laws are the civil laws. Civil Law has this unique characteristic: It manages society as a whole. It ensures that the individual, the minority & the less able are protected against the wrongful actions of sinful men.

Thomas Hobbes argued that men would behave "*homo homini lupus*" (man becoming predatory wolves to themselves), and therefore needs Government to restrain evil. However, those chosen as the Governments are themselves evil and selfish men. But they become necessary evils – granted power in the form of social contract to ensure the restraint of other evil. People like Hobbes looked at the inherent sinfulness of man.

Theories of Utopia, however, brings the other side of the coin; where its proponents see it possible that a system can be built which (almost) totally obliterates evil. And they presuppose the potential of good in man; that man can be nurtured for good.

The Bible affirms both the inherent sinfulness of man; but also that man is still the *imago dei*. However, sin's control over man's life is so pervasive, man is *totally depraved* – their inclination is always toward evil. However, man is also the image of God, and as such live for lofty ideals such as justice, goodness, love etc. As such, we

observe in Biblical history that a society is almost always formed on lofty ideals. However, the descent into evil is also inevitable and at its climax, man will conduct the vilest of evil in the justification of goodness (**2 Tim 3:1-5** describes such inevitable state, where man will be blatantly evil, but yet doing so with a “*form of godliness*”).

So law serves as the restraint of evil. It prolongs the pace of decay. And where education is successful, man feels duty-bound to act civilized and are put in a conducive environment for apparent good. However, such environment does not quench man’s sinful nature, which will ultimately find other ways to express itself. And this is why in lawful and prosperous countries, you will find creative expressions of sin perhaps unheard of in many other part(s) of the world. Herein, their education and habit in law will cause them to make those expressions of sin to become normative. And when they have done so, they would have anesthetized their conscience so completely, they would see no more shame in parading their sins (**Isa 3:9**) and legalizing its practice (**Rom 1:32**).

And so law is never a solution for righteousness, but its guardian. No one can become righteous by works of law, but the law nevertheless serves as a benchmark with which we see our own sins (**Rom 3:20**). The reason for this was evident. Man’s INCLINATION remains unchanged the whole time they were conformative. Our obedience was superficial rather than inherent. We will find the most legal way to do the crime we desire. We trespass the intent whilst remaining guiltless on its content. We will all be guilty of accurately paying our taxes whilst finding for ways and means to reduce it. Of being polite to people whilst inherently despising them. Of donating money to third world countries without ever wanting to meet the people. Of using love to express lust. Of claiming for justice only when it suits our self-interest. When the outside of our cups are clean, we would like to think we are clean on the inside, without realizing that all this does was to increase hypocrisy (**Matt 23:25-26**).



Fostering Public Conscience



Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law



And so a systemic failure is potentially more dangerous than an individual case of injustice. When a man steals a chicken in a village, the whole townsmen would come and serve him justice. However, when systemic evils (such as riots) happen, hardly anybody ever gets the blame.

Have you ever heard of the 2012 case where a 2-year old infant was ran over by (two) cars and 18 witnesses just avoided the kid? That incident caused an outcry in the whole world and causing them to ask whether there was still such a thing as conscience in China. However, to the Chinese, they could actually give their justified explanation (though with a deep sigh). The laws were administered in such a way that one who helped could actually be implicated in the incident. And so a badly administered system of justice (and I would argue also, a societal value based on atheism) would kill the individual consciences of man – causing a very terrifying public display of sin.



(iii) MORAL LAWS

MORAL. Synchronization to the attributes of God. Legally just(ified).

Intent: Man as image of God, to reflect the moral attributes of God. *Dikaioisune*.

Fulfilled: Synthetic (not analytical) righteousness that is attained by faith as opposed to works of the law (**Rom 3:20**). Because moral laws reflect the attributes of God, good works is made possible only with union with Christ (**Jn 15:1-17**). The moral laws are fulfilled as Christ the *Prophet* is also the *Word*.

Living in its Fulfillment: Upon receiving justification through faith, man is to live in its fulfillment. Faith is to express itself through love (**Gal 5:6**). This would be expressed in the extensions given in the Sermon on the Mount (**Matt 5-7**) where Jesus explained the essence of morality to be first and foremost an inward reality before it is outwardly expressed. Only when morality becomes our imparted nature (ie. living by walking in the Spirit) would we be able to be active in good as opposed to being only passive in evil.

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law





Fruits & Tree

Distinguishing the RESULT and the ESSENCE of the Law

Context: Describing how Jesus came to FULFILL the Law

Moral Law	Extension	Mat
Do not murder	Do not hate	5:21-26
Do not commit adultery	Do not lust; Be faithful	5:27-32
Do not break your oath	Tell the truth	5:33-37
Just retribution	Servitude	5:38-42
Love your neighbor	Love your enemies	5:43-48
Do good	In secret	6:1-18

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another" (Jn 13:34-35)

Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law



The context of the above commands was that Jesus was explaining how He came to fulfill, not abolish the Law (5:17). This, then, is how the Law is fulfilled:

- 1. It will yield a righteousness that surpasses the strictest legal adherence (5:20).** Because the intent was not to abolish but rather to fulfill, Jesus came to accomplish the legal requirements of the law. Indeed, He did all His earthly work "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matt 3:15). And Jesus proceeded by explaining the fulfillment of the law when His people did the good works in the following characteristics:
- 2. It is attained through Impartation.** The commandments that Jesus gave in His sermon on the mount are all impossible commands for the sinners. Our nature is self-pleasing and self-serving; and so we tend to be unable to do good when it is detrimental to us. Man's best try would be the righteousness of the Pharisees – which was far from being good enough (and thus must be surpassed). Therefore, it has to be another righteousness – the righteousness of God that is given apart from the law but through faith (Rom 3:21-22).
- 3. It is inherent as opposed to external; essential as opposed to phenomenal.** The root of murder is hate. The root of adultery is lust. The root of divorce is unfaithfulness. The root of broken vows is untruthfulness. Love had to be unconditional. Doing good must not be for its reward. These were the essence of

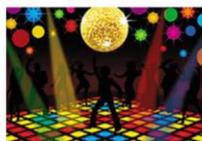
true spirituality that can never be achieved by sinful men.

4. **Its source is divine.** We are unable to do good because we are separated from the Source of good: God. That is why **Matt 7:15-20** tells us that there can only be two types of tree: a good one and a bad one. Those that are united with God will yield good fruits, but those that aren't can only yield the works of the flesh.
5. **It is missiological.** Because good fruits come from good tree, so our good works testify about God's goodness. When we love, we will testify for Christ (**Jn 13:34**). When we do good works, we show ourselves as God's handiworks (**Eph 2:10**). When we bear lasting fruits, we show ourselves to be Christ' disciples, and thus glorify God the Father (**Jn 15:8; Matt 5:16**). The ultimate end for good works is WHO it points to. When it points to ourselves, we boast; and fall into self-righteousness.
6. **Finally, it is doxological.** Our good works as defined can only be done when we are united with God. It can only be performed through Christ's own perfect obedience to the Law. And it is thus done for the glory of God alone. It is therefore thoroughly doxological. "*For from Him and through Him and for Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever! Amen*" (**Rom 1:36**)

We are paradoxically saved not **by** works but **for** works (see **Eph 2:8-10**). When we try to attain salvation through good works, it is legalism. When we refuse to do good works after we claim to have been saved, it is antinomianism. Faith, rather, is the initial paradox with which we are saved. But works is the subsequent paradox with which we live out our salvation.



Exercise: Ok or Not OK?



Continuity & Discontinuity of OT Law



Alright. I think it is fitting to end the lesson applicatively rather than just theoretically. The study is not exhaustive, for that will need more than available time permits. However, a good way to see if we have gained agreement is to see us apply our knowledge to issues we face in everyday lives. I have four which I think will be helpful:

- **Discotheque/ night clubs.** Are Christians permitted to go to nightclubs/ discotheques? How about smoking? Those are not found in the Bible.
- **Heavy metal christian music.** Are heavy metal music allowed in church?
- **Yoga.** Can Christians do yoga?
- **Eating Kosher.** Can Christians eat the un-kosher food? How about pork? How about blood?

If you answered the above questions in the “*allowed/ not allowed*” format, then you are still trapped within the legalistic mentality; and of staying stuck on content and not intent. The answer, rather, should be in the format and understanding of the following context: “*all things are permissible, but not all things are beneficial*” (1 Cor 10:23).

Alright, on to the examples. I’ll start with one with varying answer. Can Christians do

yoga? The answer is not a yes or a no. Soem people overly spiritualize yoga and say that it is a pagan practice. I will argue through **1 Cor 8:4** that an idol is nothing, and there is only one God. So, a true Christian would be able to identify the fact that the spirituality taught in yoga is false and meaningless. The perceived mysticism involved therein, as far as I have observed, are more psychological than mystical (but we will not touch on that too much here). But the greater danger doesn't lie there. Above and beyond its promises for health, I think the main (false) promise of yoga is that of *peace* and tranquility. In other words, the main benefit of yoga is peace. But false peace. Jesus' peace differs from the world's peace (**Jn 14:27**) . But a person's lack of peace may be indicative of his/ her spiritual standing. If we feel troubled, distressed, even hopeless; those are the symptoms that we should go back to the Lord and seek help and peace from Him. The unsaved person's feeling of emptiness is indicative of the meaninglessness of his life; which can only be solved in Christ. But when we do yoga, and feel that we attain peace from it, we may begin to feel that we no longer need a Savior. This is akin to us being terminally sick, and then using painkillers. We solved the symptoms but not the root of the problem. But the lack of pain may now prevent us from getting serious help. And when we do, it may be too late. But if I want to do yoga because it teaches good stretching? You're free to do that! But only when such practice do not put a stumbling block to those weaker in faith (see **1 Cor 89-10** for the principle). For everything is permissible, but it may not be beneficial for our ministry to use the freedom that way.

Next, about music. Can we use heavy metal music in the church? I won't give a long explanation, as this will need another session. But I will give 3 principles of aesthetics with which you can judge. ① **Beauty is NOT neutral**. You see, if you have set up a nice candle light dinner, dressed in your best suit, with your bevoled wife; and then the music played is R&B, I will not be happy! And when I watch a war movie, and the fighting gets intense, but the background music is jazz, it ruins the moment. If you agree on this, it menas that you agree with me that music is NOT neutral. There is approproateness to music. So we need to ask also what kind of music is appropriate to bring before God with the understanding that we learned that among those who approach Him He must be regarded as holy. ② **Beauty is NOT in the eye of the beholder**. You see, sin affects your value, our taste, what we appreciate and what we like. David wasn't tempted by Bathsehba because she was old, fat and ugly. She was exceedingly beutiful, but that beauty was appreciated wrongly. Eve didn't eat the forbidden fruits because it had worms in it. She was tempted because it appeared pleasing to the eye, good for food and desirable for gaining wisdom. See, when you think that beauty is neutral, and is all-subjective, you can be sure that your sinful nature will cause you to enjoy all the wrong things. ③ **Conformity before Creativity**. Try playing music without the prescribed keys E, B, G, D, A and its variants. You'll be playing chaos. The problem with creativity and innovation is that in order to exceed the rule, you need to know then first. Thinking outside the box requires for you to identify the box. God called us to be creative. In fact, he called us to be co-creators with Him in creation. We learned this in Genesis. He made the trees, but He didn't make the chairs. Cultural Mandate is a command for us to develop God-glorifying cultures out of what He had given us through the

created order. When we cut down trees, produce chairs, replant the trees – what we get are trees and chairs. We have multiplied God’s creation. But our production relies on God’s creation; and that is why our work gives God glory. So, conformity is essential before creativity.

I’ll stop here for brevity’s sake. We may end up discussing more in our session depending on what interests you. But the point is that the regenerate Christian will want to please the Lord who had given the greatest sacrifice to save us. We will, in turn want to “*find out what pleases the Lord*” (**Eph 5:10**), not out of duty-bound mentality but out of a heart overflowing with thankfulness.



Conclusion

"Love is the Fulfillment of the Law"
Rom 13:10

Engaging the Fallen Culture – Niebuhr's View on Christianity & Culture



The Lord Jesus Christ taught this: That the entire Law hang on two commandments of loving God and loving others. Paul later on would also summarize by saying that Love is the fulfillment of the Law. Now, what we have learned today would have shown you that this "love" is not merely weak, emotional and illogical. It is a passionate longing and seeking after for the will of God. It is the fruit of our salvation, that we now live for Christ and want to please Him.

I just want to close with two verses: "*We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ*" (**1 Thess 1:3**). These are the factors behind our good works. Its direction is provided by our faith in God (through the Word). Its motivation is provided by the love of God who first loved us. And its determination is guaranteed in spite of persecution by the hope of glory we have in Christ. Such works become doxological in nature; as they are from Him and through Him and for Him. To Him be the glory forever! Amen. (**Rom 11:36**)



"We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way, bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of His holy people in the kingdom of light"

Colossians 1:9-12

Soli Deo Gloria!