

## "Laws You Could Love"

Here's the plan! From this Sunday after New Year's until Easter, we will study the Ten Commandments, as found in Exodus 20. Eleven sermons in all (with a couple of "one-off" Sundays along the way.) Eleven weeks rather than ten because of this morning's introduction to the idea of spending a couple of months on this topic.

**NOTES:** (Five NOTES in total, arranged under three questions)

**QUESTION #1:** *Why study the Ten Commandments?*

**BECAUSE:**

NOTE 1. it is 2010

~~1. it is 2010.~~

NOTE 1. we just finished Exodus 19 Something to be said for being working our way straight through the Bible, but... we just finished Exodus 19 (No plans to preach the rest of "Exodus", or "Leviticus")

NOTE 1. we just studied "freedom from slavery to sin" And the New Testament writer James associates the law with liberty.

**James 1:25** But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

**James 2:12** So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty.

**The law = the formula for freedom**

This explains the Old Testament attitude towards the law of God. "A love affair" **Psalm 119:97** Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.

NOTE 2. godly people love the Law

**QUESTION #2:** *Why does the Bible speak negatively about the Law?*

*For example, what about the "weakness of the Law"?*

NOTE 2.a The "weakness of the Law" is the weakness that the Law reveals: our own moral weakness

→ Our own sinfulness.

**Romans 8:1-4** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus ... For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do.

*What about the "curse of the Law"?*

NOTE 2.b The "curse of the law" is the curse that the Law identifies: the curse of disobeying God.

**Galatians 3:10-14** For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them"... [Not cursed for relying on the works of the law. Cursed for failing to obey God ] Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us...

*Aren't we "dead to the Law"?*

NOTE 2.c Our death to the Law is the end of our old life and the beginning of our new life in the Spirit.

**Romans 7:1-6** ... my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

NOTE 3. The biblical "complaint" about the Law is about its inability to justify us This is why the strongest statements against the Law are found in Romans and Galatians, letters both written about "justification by faith." In actual fact, what the Bible is speaking against is the idea of trusting in our obedience to the Law to justify ourselves.

**Romans 3:20** For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight...

**Galatians 3:11** Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith." By the way, what is justification? **(Question 33: —Westminster Shorter Catechism)**

**Answer:** Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein He pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in His sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone.

**QUESTION #3:** *Why love the Law?*

**NOTE 4:** The Law is an instrument of God to prepare us to believe in Christ

What the Law is especially good at is showing us our need of a Savior.

**Romans 3:20** For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

**Romans 7:7-12** What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet." But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead... So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

**Free from the Law** means **free from what it reveals** about us and to us: our sin and our condemnation → our death sentence: the eternal consequences of sin.

**BUT the Law also frees us from the temporal consequences of sin:** all the grief and pain and complications that we cause ourselves and others when we go against God's standards: that is, the Law instructs us how to live the Promised Life

**NOTE 5.** The Law outlines the liberty for which we have been set free

**Galatians 5:1,13,14** For freedom Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery... For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

**Romans 8:1-4** And NOTICE that the commandment to love our neighbors summarizes the whole law.

The Ten Commandments are a more detailed summary:

**Exodus 34:28** So he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights. He neither ate bread nor drank water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments. **Deuteronomy 4:11-14**

**ACTIONS:**

a) Study the Law.

**Psalm 119:97** Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day.

**Psalm 1:1-3** Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

b) Learn to love the Law

**Psalm 19:7-11** The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; the precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb. Moreover, by them is your servant warned; in keeping them there is great reward.

**Next Sunday: (January 10)**

**Exodus 20:1-3**

**"Freedom from false gods"**