



The Law: Law and Gospel

What is the purpose of the Law? At the foot of Mount Sinai, the people of God waited for the return of Moses. On the mountain, God was taking the next step in the establishment of His people as truly His own. God knew that the people needed the law to understand the relationship that they were to have with Him as well as with one another.

The 10 Words better known as the 10 Commandments were handed to Moses to be delivered to a people very much in need of this law.

However, the law was not what was going to restore the relationship between humanity and their Creator lost with the fall into sin. God knew that in issuing the law, He was in effect increasing the violations of the law in this new nation (see Romans 4:15). God's purpose in issuing the law to His people was not to provide them with a roadmap to their own self-redemption, but rather to dramatize their need for the promised savior that He would provide through their lineage.

Rather than God's law, it is the Gospel of Jesus Christ that provides us with a path to redemption and a right standing with God our heavenly Father. The gospel as summarized in John 3:16 points us only to the life, death, and resurrection of Christ as our hope for a restored relationship with God and a future with Him in eternity.

The law shows us our sin while the gospel shows us our Savior. Kept in balance and distinguished properly, the law drives us to the realization that we are in need of a savior and that we are not able to save ourselves. The gospel then points us to Christ to find salvation in Him.

Thoughts for Reflection

How does recognizing the distinction between God's law and gospel clarify the message of Christianity in our daily lives?

"And God spoke all these words, saying,

²"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."

Exodus 20:1-2