

Law and Gospel

Introduction

We've looked at how God the Father created the world. We looked at how even when we disobeyed him, he promised to send a Savior rather than destroy us. We looked at everything that Jesus did so that we would be saved and live forever. We studied how the Holy Spirit leads us to believe everything that Jesus did. After looking at all of that, what we want to do is thank God. Today's lesson will begin to show us how to do that.

Opening Prayer: God, I thank you for your law that shows me my sin and for your gospel that reveals the righteousness of Christ as your gift to me. Amen.

Lesson Aim: Where do we find how God wants us to obey his commands and why do we want to?

Part One

Read Luke 10:25-37.

- 1) Luke tells us that the man asked the question to test Jesus. That means he was not sincerely asking the question to learn something. What do you think was the intent of his test?
- 2) How did Jesus answer the man's question?
- 3) How does the expert in the law summarize the law?
- 4) The law demands total love toward God and neighbor. It was perfectly clear, but that was a problem for this man. He realized he could not keep that law perfectly. His whole life was spent justifying himself, even if that meant shrinking the law down to his ability to keep it. What question does he ask and what does he mean by it?
- 5) In verses 31 and 32, the priest and the Levite were both workers in the church and should have seen their fellow countryman as their neighbor. Samaritans like the one in verse 33 were typically considered enemies by Jews like the man who fell into the hands of robbers. What point did Jesus make in this parable? How did this answer the man's question?
- 6) All people are our neighbors. Under God's grace, we can show love to all. Considering Jesus' parable and answer, why is it a great comfort that we are not bound under the law to earn eternal life?
- 7) What does our forgiveness in Christ lead us to do?

Read Deuteronomy 5:22 and Romans 2:14-15.

- 8) Where has God written his law? (We find it in two places.)

Read Matthew 5:48 and 1 Peter 1:15-16.

- 9) What does God expect of us?

Read Romans 3:19-20.

- 10) What is not the purpose of the law?
- 11) What is the purpose of the law?

God's law shows us that we sin every day. The law leads us to serve God because we know we have to do God's will in order to avoid God's punishment. In Part Two we'll look at another, better reason to serve God.

KEY POINT 1 - God our Savior teaches me that he wants me to obey his commands gladly and perfectly because he has given them to me for my good.

What I've learned so far:

Part Two

Read 1 Corinthians 2:9-10.

- 1) Although the law is written in both the heart and in the Bible, the gospel is written only in one place. Where is the gospel found?

Read Romans 6:23.

- 2) What have we earned and deserve?

The law tells us what God wants us to do or not to do, but the gospel says that everything has been done for us by Christ.

Read John 3:16.

- 3) Whom does God love?
- 4) What has God done for you?
- 5) What do we have to do to get eternal life?

In the gospel God tells us what he has done to save us. The gospel tells us that Christ has done everything necessary to pay for all your sins.

Read Romans 12:1 and Colossians 3:15-17.

- 6) What reason does the Gospel give us to obey God?

The gospel leads us to serve God because we want to thank God for all he has so graciously done for us through Christ our Savior. The gospel moves us to serve God because we want to, not because we have to.

The Lutheran Reformers liked to use the word "promise" to refer to the gospel. Gospel means "good news," but the Lutheran Reformers liked to use "promise" because it explains the nature of the gospel a little more clearly than "good news." The gospel is not merely the opposite of bad news, just as faith is not merely knowledge of historical events. The gospel is the promise of forgiveness of sins and of justification for Christ's sake.

KEY POINT 1 - The gospel teaches us that we don't have to obey the law to have eternal life, but we get to obey the law to thank and serve God who created us and saved us.

What I've learned so far:

Part Three

Study pages 40-45 and 117-122 in the Catechism and answer the following questions.

- 1) Summarize the law in one word.
- 2) When do we fail to obey God's commandments perfectly?
- 3) Who only has obeyed God's commandments perfectly.?
- 4) What purposes does God's law serve?
- 5) Why is the gospel so comforting?
- 6) How is the gospel like the law?
- 7) How is the gospel different from the law?
- 8) How does the gospel change us?

Helpful Passages

2 Corinthians 5:15

Law or Gospel?

Luke 18:13—When the man realized how sinful he was, he also realized how much he needed a Savior.
What response does the law lead us to have?

1 John 4:19

What reason do we have to love God?

Romans 1:16

Are you ashamed of the gospel?

Do you ever live like you are?

How?

Main point — God’s law is written on our consciences and in the Bible, and we obey it because we love and thank him for what he has done for us.

Final considerations:

Agree or Disagree?

- 1) ___ There’s no excuse for a person not to be a Christian. Everybody has a conscience.
 - 2) ___ It’s a drag being a Christian because of all the fun I miss out on with the laws God wants me to obey.
 - 3) ___ Most of the time I obey God’s law out of love for Jesus, but sometimes only because I fear punishment.
 - 4) ___ I know that as long as I obey God’s law I will never have any hardship or trouble in my life.
 - 5) ___ Now that I’m a Christian I no longer need God’s law.
 - 6) ___ People would be more willing to live a Christian life if we emphasized the law more often.
- 7) What do we learn from the law?
- 8) What do we learn from the gospel?
- 9) This is a classic German Lutheran painting. Notice and identify its visible depictions of law and gospel.



10) Christmastime is a major gift-giving season. Is the giving of gifts at Christmas in keeping with the gospel message of the season? It can be. How so? In what ways can the custom of giving and receiving gifts at Christmas serve to obscure the gospel message and thus become sinful?



What I’ve learned:

Commit to Memory:

- John 3:16