

Title: The End of the Commandment

Text: 1 Tim 1: 5-11

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Place: SGBC, New Jersey

The apostle Paul told Timothy to stay at Ephesus to preach the gospel of Christ. He said, “that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: *so do.*” (1 Timothy 1: 3-4)

Paul gives this same description to Titus, telling us who these people were, saying, “For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision.” (Titus 1: 10) The circumcision say to believers “except ye keep the law of Moses you cannot be saved.” (Acts 15: 1, 5) Their teaching is the opposite of sound doctrine. Sound doctrine declares righteousness, sanctification, and salvation is by the grace of God in Christ, not by the works of the law.

In our day, most have turned from the gospel to teach man’s version of the law which does not edify in godliness.

## **THE END OF THE COMMANDMENT**

The Spirit of God moved Paul to declare the edifying end to which God brings the child of grace through sound doctrine—**1 Timothy 1: 5: Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:**

The legalists claim to be guardians of the law. When Christ walked this earth they set Christ against Moses; Christ against the law he gave. They do the same in our day.

Matthew 22: 24: Saying, Master, Moses said,...what do you say?

John 8:5: Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

When they heard the apostle Paul preach that the believer is no longer under the law but under grace, they tried to set all men against him “Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all *men* every where against...the law.” (Acts 21: 28)

Our Lord Jesus Christ and every child he saves has been accused of being against the law by those who desire to be under the law. It is why Cain killed Abel. Works and grace are enemies because they are really saying of Christ, “We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.” (Jn 19: 7) Legalist in our day are saying the same thing when they hear believers declare that Christ has freed us from the works of the law and yet they insist that believers must keep the law given at Mt. Sinai. Christ told the Pharisee’s what is true of the legalist in our day when he said, “had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.” (John 5: 46)

In our text, Paul says that the divisive spirit of the legalist is not the end to which God delivers his elect through sound doctrine—“Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.”

When God blesses his child to hear what the law says about him, that he is a vile, unholy, unrighteous, God-hating rebel, and God makes his child behold the Lord Jesus crucified in his room and stead, God brings his child to this end: “faith unfeigned.” In the day of his power and grace, Christ makes his child willing to lay hold of Christ and rest entirely in him for all. No longer is he a man setting the law against Christ as he

pretends to believe on Christ. Now, Christ is all unto him! Now, he is taught of God, led of the Spirit, not law. He walks by faith, not law. His good works are produced by Christ, not law. But anyone who claims to believe salvation by grace in Christ yet rejects this sound doctrine rejects Christ in feigned faith!

God brings the child of grace to this end: “a pure heart.” He is regenerated and sanctified by the Spirit of God. (Titus 3: 5) God creates in his child a new heart which is pure. (Ezekiel 36: 26) It is to have a heart set on Christ alone, to obey Christ, and to abhor sinful self-righteous self.

The end of the commandment which God creates in his child is: “a good conscience.” Through sound doctrine the Spirit of God purges the conscience with the blood of Christ from dead works to serve the true and living God. (Hebrews 9: 14) The only way a sinner can have a clear conscience is only when he rests in Christ for Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

God brings his child to this end: “charity.” God gives a love for God and a love for one another. This is the spirit of the law in which believers worship and serve God and one another.

Matthew 22: 36: Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law? 37: Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38: This is the first and great commandment. 39: And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 40: On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Therefore, this is what the apostles taught and this is what we teach. Sound doctrine.

Romans 13:8: Owe no man any thing, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. 9: For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and *if there* be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. 10: Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the fulfilling of the law.

Someone says to us, “You don’t know what you are to do because you say you are not under the law and only the law teaches that!” No, faith and charity constrains true believers so that we have no desire to sin against God and one another. But the law of Sinai does not teach us that. Christ does it by the law of faith and love written on the new heart. And only God can bring a sinner to this end.

Galatians 5:22: the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, 23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

## **A SAD TRUTH**

Sadly, naturally, self-made religious men have turned from this sound doctrine—**1 Timothy 1: 6: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; 7: Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.**

In our day, rather than using the law to declare all flesh guilty and rather than preaching Christ as the end of the law for all things, men teach the law and corrupt the gospel teaching it according to man’s understanding. They write creeds that men follow instead of God’s word. They bring the law down to a level which men can obey. But they are not God’s commands and it is not God’s gospel. Their so-called holy obedience is only obedience to man-made commands and creeds. Their hope is in a helpless Jesus who cannot save without the sinners help.

They “understand neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.” They prove that they have no idea what the law says. Paul said

Galatians 4: 21: Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?

Romans 7:14: For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

When he was a lost, self-righteous Pharisee, Paul said his sin deceived him into thinking he could obey the holy law of God until God made him hear the law condemn him. He said,

Romans 7: 8: For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin *was* dead. 9: For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. 10: For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*.

The sad thing is that one day they will wake up in glory and God will declare all their works were iniquity!

## THE TRUTH ABOUT THE LAW

The Holy Spirit of God declares the truth about the law—**1 Timothy 1: 8: But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; 9: Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10: For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; 11: According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.**

God’s law is like God—“the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” (Romans 7: 12) Therefore, the man who keeps the law is as God as God. Please here this. Only Christ kept the law! Only Christ is one with God in holiness, justness and goodness! Though the legalist claim to be guardians of the law, only God’s saints love the law of God so deeply that we will not give any sinner credit for keeping it, except through faith in Christ our Law-Keeper! The legalist accuses those who hold to this glorious gospel as making the law void. Yet, those God has given faith to rest in Christ from all our works is the only one who establishes the law. We do not do so by our works but Christ whom we have believed established it for us and in him we have established the law. (Romans 3: 31)

The law is good if a man use it lawfully to declare all flesh guilty before God. Paul said that is the purpose of the law,

Romans 7: 13: Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

When blessed by God the law made him see that what he thought was holiness and righteousness was an unholy, unrighteous attempt at keeping a law no sinner can keep. This is the law’s purpose.

Romans 3: 19: Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20: Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight:for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.

Now, God's regenerate people "know the law was not made for a righteous man." The sanctified believer is a righteous man in Christ. In Christ, we are perfect before the law so the law has nothing to say to Christ or to anyone in Christ.

Furthermore, the sanctified believer is a righteous man in that he lives his life doing what Christ has taught us is right, under the grace of God, so that we live by faith which works by love. By God's grace, by God's power, by the constraint of Christ's love working in our hearts, believers do not live in sin. But the law is not what works this. Christ does.

Let me illustrate this. A sign in the store says, "Anyone caught stealing will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law." That sign was not made for the man who does not steal. That sign does not apply to him at all. He does not need that sign to make him honest and it is not that sign making him honest.

So it is between God's people and the law of Mt Sinai. A sanctified believer does not need the law to make him obey and it is not the law that makes him obey, God's grace does that.

We are not without sin. Our old man is nothing but sin—we break the law every moment continually in thought, and far too often in word and deed. And when we outwardly break any law, in the court of our conscience, Christ will convict us of our guilt as far as the flesh is concerned. But it is still not the letter of the law that makes the new man turn from sin and ask God's forgiveness, it is Christ the Lawgiver constraining us within by his love and grace. The Spirit makes us behold Christ on the cross, laying down his life for God's elect, being separated from God in our room and stead, making us righteous in him. It is Christ who turns and constrains us by his love which made us righteous and holy by God's grace. You cannot make a legalist understand this because he knows nothing of it!

The law was made for the unrighteous, the disobedient, sinners outside of Christ—you can read that list—but notice the end—"if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."

Christ and his finished work—being under grace, not law—being saved by Christ's redeeming, sanctifying work—apart from any works done by us before or after conversion—is the glorious gospel of God. Any teaching that turns sinners to themselves away from Christ—to their law keeping away from Christ's law keeping—to their righteousness away from Christ our Righteousness—is contrary to the glorious gospel of God. And if a sinner is left trusting his so-called law-keeping, one day in final judgment, God will use that very law he claimed to keep to condemn him forever. Christ said,

John 5: 45: Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust.

Believer, rest in Christ and love one another! That is the end which God brings all his people to rest.

**Amen!**