

God's Law and the Christian, part 2

God's Law and
the Christian -
Message

**Obeying the law
of Christ out of
love for Christ is a
necessary pursuit
for the believer
who is under the
New Covenant.**

Obeying the law of Christ is essential in the life of a Christian

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments (Jn 14:15)

“just as you have always obeyed...now much more in my absence, work out your salvation” (Phil 2:12)

You were saved “that you may obey Jesus Christ” (1 Pet 1:2)

“The one who says, ‘I have come to know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in Him” (1 Jn 2:4)

Paul was not “without the law of God”. He was “under the law of Christ” (1 Cor 9:21)

God takes disobedience seriously

He has given our conscience to convict us (1 Cor 10)

He has given other believers to point out our sin (Gal 6)

He will discipline us (Heb 12)

Jesus gave us church discipline and His Holy Spirit to convict us (Mt 18)

Several lines of defense against disobedience

God is the
cause of our
obedience

“it is God who is at work in
you” (Phil 2:13)

“I will put My Spirit within
you and cause you to walk in
My statutes, and you will be
careful to observe My
ordinances” (Ezek 36:27)

Development 1:
Jesus added a new
law not found in the
OT (Mt 5:44-48)

Development 2:
Jesus added
intensity and
freshness (Jn 13:34-
35)

NT laws are
concerned with
transformation of
the heart (Mark 7:1-
23; Eph 2:28-29)

Expanded scope of neighbor

Narrowed scope of neighbor

NC law demands a
change of character.
It demands positive
good as a
replacement for evil

The law of Christ expands upon
moral law from the OT

Love is the proper motive of obedience

Our obedience is “faith working through love” (Gal 5:6)

“we love because He first loved us” (1 Jn 4:19)

“the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us” (Rom 5:5)

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (Jn 14:15)

J. I. Packer on Romans 7:15ff

Packer asks, “What is going on here? New motivation, supernaturally restored by the coming of the Holy Spirit into a man’s heart, is manifesting itself. This is Paul the Christian...testifying to the fact that now by grace he loves God’s law and wants to keep it perfectly to God’s glory. His reach, however, exceeds his grasp, and his qualified success feels like failure. Sin within him, dethroned but not yet destroyed, is fighting back”

Love obeys God out of gratitude

“In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins” (1 Jn 4:10)

“the love of Christ controls us” (2 Cor 5:14)

“Let all that you do be done in love” (1 Cor 16:14)

Love is the governing principle

Love is the
practical
outworking
when obeying
God

Love is not merely an emotion

Love acts

Love responds to needs

Love gives God the glory that He deserves

Love for God is precisely this, keeping His commandments (1 Jn 5:3)

Love is obeying

Should the promise of rewards be our motive for obeying God?

Packer asked if rewards should be our motive. He answered: “Strictly speaking, no. The Christian’s reward is not directly earned; it is not a payment proportionate to services rendered; it is a Father’s gift of generous grace to his children, far exceeding anything they deserved...We serve our God, not for reward, but because he is our God, and we love him.”

“If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them” (Jn 13:17)

Sinclair Ferguson said that “blessing...comes from obeying, from putting what we understand into practice” (Lessons from the Upper Room, p. 34)

Our Father’s grace-gift for our obedience is this heart-happiness, this deep-seated wellbeing

I sought the Lord

I find, I walk, I love, but, **O the whole**
Of love is but my answer, Lord, to thee;
For thou wert long beforehand with my soul,
Always thou lovedst me.