

The Law of Christ - Part 1

by Charles Leiter

The sermon explores the distinction between the law of Christ and the law of Moses, emphasizing the transformative power of grace and love in the new covenant.

Duration: 48:46

Scripture: Genesis 3:15, Matthew 5:17, Romans 4:13, Galatians 3:8, Galatians 3:13, Ephesians 2:14-16, Hebrews 8:13

Topics: "New Covenant", "Justification By Faith"

Description

This sermon delves into the profound truths revealed in the Bible, emphasizing the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant in Christ. It explores the significance of Christ's sacrifice, the blessings of justification by faith, and the unity of the entire Scripture in God's eternal purpose in Christ. The message highlights the surpassing glory of the new covenant over the old, pointing to the ultimate fulfillment in Christ and the church.

Transcript

Well, what a blessing to be here this morning. I was thinking of an account from the life of Amy Carmichael when she was younger. There was an old lady struggling to make it across the street, and she went out and helped her, and something happened inside of her, and she was changed from then on.

And, you know, she ended up going to India. But sometimes the Holy Spirit does things in us. I mean, we come to a meeting, we hear a certain truth, and it's not just that we've been informed of something, but it's like a light comes on inside, and something has changed in our life from then on.

I've experienced meetings where my life was never the same after that. And that's really what we long for. We long for something more than just learning information.

And I was thinking now, I'm not just speaking for you, I'm thinking of myself. Whenever I wrote this book on the law of Christ, every day, if I determined my life, my success, well, am I reading my Bible, did I pray or whatever, I was doing fairly well maybe. But whenever I thought about Christ and the law of Christ, every day reminded of how far short I was falling.

We need to see the reality of what we're talking about. And that's what we long for today. Let's open our Bibles to 1 Corinthians 9. And we'll begin reading at verse 19.

Paul says, For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all that I might win them all. To the Jews I became as a Jew that I might win Jews. To those who are under the law as under the law, though not being myself under the law, that I might win those who are under the law.

To those who are without law as without law, though not being without the law of God, but under the law of Christ. There's that phrase. That I might win those who are without law.

To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some. And I do all things for the sake of the gospel, that I may become a fellow partaker of it.

We want to look at a very glorious, very wonderful subject today, and that is the law of Christ. And we have a small group here. You don't have any excuses for not answering questions if I ask you, so I'm going to start asking you questions.

What three groups do we see here in this passage? What's the first one? Paul says, to the Jews I became a Jew. There's one group. The Jews.

What's the second group? The Gentiles. The Gentiles. So, those without law.

And then the third group, well, they're the Christians represented by Paul himself. So, there's three groups here. It's amazing to see the Pharisee of the Pharisees talking about those Jews over there.

He says, to those Jews I became as a Jew. Here he is. He's in a different... something has happened to him.

He's different. And he doesn't identify himself anymore with those Jews. He said, to those Jews I became like a Jew.

Here's Paul. Saul of Tarsus, the Pharisee of the Pharisees, but something miraculous has taken place. And he's in this third category.

He's with the Christians now. But notice how these groups are described. The Jews are described as those who are under the law.

They're under the law. What law is this? Well, the law of Moses. They're under the law.

And normally when Paul uses the word law by itself, he's talking about the Mosaic law, the law of Moses. So, the Jews are under the law. What about the Gentiles? How are they described? They're without law.

Now, let me ask you a question. Are Gentiles totally without law? No, they're not. They're not totally without law.

What kind of law do they have? I'm going to have to talk really loud. First of all, I can't hear. They have the law written on the heart.

Anybody know where that passage is? It talks about the law written on the heart. Romans 2. He says, This is Romans 2, 14 and 15. He says, So, written on the heart, God says, that man is not just neutral.

He's not amoral. He has written on his heart the work of the law written on his heart. You remember in Acts chapter 28, they were shipwrecked on a certain island and the natives there started a fire and Paul

was picking up sticks and a poisonous snake attached to his hand.

And what did the natives say? They said, Surely this man was a murderer and justice has not allowed him to live. Now, how in the world did they know murder was wrong? None of them had ever seen a Bible. None of them had ever seen the Ten Commandments.

They knew murder was wrong. How did they know that a just penalty for murder would be the death penalty? See, justice has not allowed him to live. Now, look at that.

They knew, as Paul says at the end of Romans 1, they knew the ordinance of God that those who commit such things are not only worthy of death. They realized that. They understand that.

So, they have the law written on the heart. And then the Christians, they're described as under the law of Christ. That's the law they have.

And actually, the phrase here in the Greek is in-lawed to Christ. He says the Christian is in-lawed to Christ. We'll talk about that more maybe later on.

But I want to concentrate on this matter of the law of Christ. If someone were to ask you, if you're a Christian, what is your rule of duty? What is it that summarizes the way you're supposed to act, the way you're supposed to live? Would you just immediately answer, well, yeah, the law of Christ. That's my rule of duty.

Would you answer like that? That's the way Paul thought. And then if somebody said, well, what is the law of Christ? You immediately just explain to them what the law of Christ is. See, there's something very defective about the emphasis, the instruction that we've received when we don't even know what the law of Christ is.

Not only is it not foremost in our minds, we can't even identify it. And so that's what we're going to be talking about today. And we're going to go back, and we have to lay a foundation, and we've got a lot of things to cover.

But everybody's fresh, and we're ready to go. So, what is the law of Christ? Well, we can begin by saying what it's not. The law of Christ is not the same thing as the law of Moses.

It just isn't. And Paul makes that very clear in many places in the New Testament. He does it right here, in fact, in verse 20.

He says, to those who are under the law, the Jews, he acted as if he was under the law. You remember, he would do to the things that were necessary not to offend the Jews, though not being myself under the law. He wasn't under the law of Moses.

And many other places, I could give you these references. I know some of you are taking notes here. Romans 6.14, Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you're not under the law, but under grace.

And again, in Romans 7.4-6, maybe I ought to read this. Paul says more than once, verse 4, My brethren, you also were made to die to the law. Christians have died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God.

And then in verse 6, Now we have been released from the law, having died to that by which we were bound. So Christians have been released from the law. Ephesians 2, verses 14-16.

He says, He Himself is our peace who made both groups into one, that is Jew and Gentile, broke down the barrier of the dividing wall by abolishing in His flesh the enmity which is the law of commandments contained in ordinances. So Christ abolished the law of commandments contained in ordinances. Amazing statement.

Again, in Colossians 2, verses 13-17, really if we were to read the whole thing, but he says in verse 14, He cancels out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, that was the law, and which was hostile to us, and He has taken it out of the way having nailed it to the cross. That's the law. Galatians 2, verses 19-20.

You remember that? He says, I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. And he goes on and talks about how he's been crucified with Christ and so on. So he died to the law.

Now that's just a few. We could look at a number of others. But the Christian, according to the Bible, has died to the law.

We're free from the law. We're not under the law. And I just want to give a little bit of time here to review some history.

I'm going to do this on an imaginary blackboard. But right here, we have the giving of the law. And this is about 1500 B.C. There's the giving of the law.

And you remember what it was like. It was an awesome display of God's power and holiness. We're not talking about in the law of Moses something that men came up with.

We're talking about a direct, powerful, mighty revelation of God. And He came down on Mount Sinai and the mountain, it says, was burning like a furnace and trembling. And Moses, it says in the book of Hebrews, was terrified.

And the people said, don't let God speak anymore. And he wrote the Ten Commandments with his own finger. What does that mean? I don't know.

You know, the movie is portrayed as bolts of lightning. Maybe it was. But God wrote this with His own finger.

We're talking about something that is set in stone. Literally, it was set in stone. And this was a terrifying thing.

This was something that God said, I'm giving you these things as a perpetual, forever thing. You read through those laws and commandments. And so that went on.

That's 1500. That went on for 900 years. 900 years.

Which way am I going here? Maybe I'm going this way. 900 years. And there was a prophet named Jeremiah.

And what did God say through him? Days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. Not like the covenant I made with their fathers, which they broke. What are going to be the characteristics of that new covenant? He says, I will write my laws on their hearts.

Not on tablets of stone. I'll write my laws on their hearts. And I'll put them in their mind.

I'll put them on the inside. And then, they shall not teach every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord. For all shall know Me from the least to the greatest.

Under the old covenant, you could be a good Jew and not know the Lord. I mean, you could bring your sacrifices, you'd remain among the people of God. You didn't truly know the Lord, but you would be in good standing as a Jew.

You wouldn't be cast out of the covenant people and you would experience their blessings. But he says in this covenant, every person in this covenant that I'm getting ready to make, every one of them will know the Lord from the least to the greatest of them. If you were a good Jew, if you knew the Lord in the old covenant, you had to teach your neighbor and teach your brother, saying, know the Lord.

Somebody that really did know the Lord might go to his neighbor and say, you know, I truly know the Lord. You're doing all these sacrifices, but you need to know the Lord. But in the new covenant, God says they all shall know Me from the least to the greatest of them.

Jesus put it this way. It is written in the Prophets, they shall all be taught by God. Personally taught by God.

And what else in the new covenant? Their sins and their iniquities I'll remember no more. Those will be gone forever. Now that was 900 years after Jeremiah gives this prophecy.

And if you're keeping notes, that's Jeremiah 31, verses 31-34. And so, think, if you were a godly Jew, and you're thinking that God's going to make a covenant where everybody in the whole nation knows Him personally, and their sins are forgiven, and they have the law written on their heart, and so they're waiting. And they wait a hundred years, that new covenant doesn't come, and they wait it 200 years, and 300 years, and 400 years.

600 years later, in an upper room with a little group that could practically sit around a couple of these tables, Jesus said, this cup is the new covenant in My blood. Amazing thing. You know, it's something.

That first covenant came with flashes of lightning and thunder and earthquakes and everything. This covenant, all the thunder and lightning and earthquakes, they're contained in these quiet statements. And they're unbelievable, wonderful things.

He said, this is the new covenant in My blood. Luke 22. Not the blood of bulls and goats, but the blood of God Himself, God's Son.

Now think of this. When God made this covenant back here, 1500 B.C., did He say, I'm going to make an old covenant with you? Did He say that? He didn't say that. He said, He's making a covenant.

But then Jeremiah says, God says, I'm going to make a new covenant. And when you get to the New Testament, what happens in Hebrews 8, verse 13, He brings this out, and I'll just read it to you. He says,

when He said a new covenant, He has made the first obsolete.

Whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear. Now that's where we get the idea of the old covenant. The writer to the Hebrews says, look, God called this a new covenant.

That means that one's old. And it's ready to disappear. Why didn't He say it's already gone? Well, the Jews were still clinging to it.

The temple was still standing. They're still trying to do this stuff. But the ax has been laid to the root.

That covenant's over. When Jesus died on the cross, that was the end of that. And a new covenant had begun.

And the changes that were getting ready to take place were cataclysmic. I mean, they were unbelievable. We'll see this more as we go along.

Lord willing. But He's saying this thing is gone. It's over.

It's old. It's obsolete. Not under that anymore.

We're under the new covenant. And the Jews had a tremendous problem with that. And why wouldn't they? God gave that old covenant.

But there's something bigger happening even than that. But they had a tremendous problem. They said, look, it's right, you've got to believe on Jesus, but you've got to keep the law of Moses too.

And Paul said, if anybody says that, let him be accursed. Now, he says that is a serious, extreme error. Well, how's he going to prove that from the Bible? When it was obvious God gave that first covenant, how's he going to prove that that's gone? Pharisee of the Pharisees that he was.

Well, he goes back to something else to show the true place of the old covenant. And so let me ask you this, was there any other covenants in the Bible? There's this old covenant. There's this new covenant.

Were there other covenants? The covenant with Abraham. And now, we're at our blackboard here again. Here's 1500 B.C. Go back before 430 years, there was a covenant that was before that.

And Paul says, that's the big one. That was the one where God started the whole Jewish nation. He made a covenant with Abraham.

And what was the nature of that covenant with Abraham? God said to Abraham, now Abraham, if you do this, and you sacrifice this, and you offer these various sacrifices, and if you keep all this, then I'll do such, that's not the way that covenant was. He took Abraham out. He said, look at the sky.

Count those stars if you can count them. That's how many children you're going to have. It was a promise.

Totally different thing. This is a covenant of promise. And Paul says, look, back at the very beginning, God laid the foundation of the Jewish nation.

He made it clear, this is all promise. There weren't conditions. There weren't do this and you'll live.

It was a promise. Now let's turn to Galatians 3 and we'll see how Paul deals with this. And this is such a pivotal portion of Scripture.

Galatians 3 and verse 15. Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations. Even though it's only a man's covenant, yet when it's been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it.

Now the promises, if you go down through here, you can underline the word promise or promises. There's a lot of them. The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed.

He does not say, and to seeds, as referring to many, but rather to one. And to your seed, that's Christ. What I'm saying is this, the law which came 430 years later does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God so as to nullify the promise.

For if the inheritance is based on law, now here's the term inheritance. This promise has to do with an inheritance. If the inheritance is based on law, it's no longer based on promise.

Conflicts. Contrasts between promise and law. But God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

Why the law then? It was added because of transgressions having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made. That was Christ. Now, a mediator is not for one party only whereas God is only one.

Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be. For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. God never intended it for people to get saved through law keeping.

That wasn't the idea. But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.

Therefore, the law has become our tutor, our schoolmaster, to lead us to Christ that we may be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. We're no longer under the Mosaic Law.

No Christian is under the Mosaic Law. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Now I'm covering a lot of material here, but we're going to read this passage.

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with Christ. There's neither Jew nor Greek. There's neither slave nor free man.

There's neither male nor female. You're all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed.

Heirs. Remember we talked about an inheritance. Heirs according to promise.

Heirs according to promise. Now, what's he saying up here at the beginning of this? He says even if it's a man's covenant, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it and so on. Let me just give you an example.

When my grandfather died, my brother was the one that had been appointed, my older brother, to read the will. And our family was sitting around in my mother's living room. And he started reading down through my grandfather's will.

And all of a sudden, my ears perked up. He said to my grandson Charles, I will this, this, and this. Certain of his possessions.

Total surprise to me. Something he specially wanted me to have. Isn't that something? That's the way it is with you being a Christian today.

If you're a Christian today, that's why you're a Christian. There was a promise and an inheritance written up that you didn't even know about. And now you're partaker of it based on promise.

Now, my brother's reading this. He says to my grandson Charles, I give this and this. He looked at it and said, oh, I don't agree with that.

And he scratches a line through it. You think you could do that? This is a man's covenant, but it stands firm. And he also doesn't add conditions to it.

He doesn't say, well, yeah, I know he said that and he gave that promise, but I think really Charles shouldn't have that unless he does such and such and so on. I don't think he's really proved himself enough to inherit this stuff yet. That's adding conditions.

Paul says, look, the law of Moses cannot touch any of that. Why did God give it? He gave it as a temporary measure, a tutor, a child conductor, until he could get to the real stuff that he was going toward all along. And that's Christ.

You see, when God chose Abraham and established the nation of Israel, there was never any thought of this being the big thing. Anybody that's got this idea that he's got to the church temporarily until he can get back to the big stuff, Israel, total mistake. Israel was the temporary thing until God could get to the big stuff which is Christ and the church.

You see, that's what we're dealing with here. And Paul is saying, look, this law of Moses, it was a temporary school conductor for the stage of infancy. And now, you've entered into sonship.

We're going to talk about that more. But think of this idea of promise. It's a very wonderful thing.

God granted some things to Abraham by promise. Now, first of all, He promised him a seed. And if you think of it in the initial sense, the sense that takes place as you're reading the Old Testament, that seed was Isaac.

You know, He says, Ishmael's not the one that's going to live. I'm going to establish My covenant with Isaac. Sarah's going to bear a son.

And in Isaac, God says, your seed shall be called. Okay? So He promised Abraham a seed and that was Isaac. And we could read the verses on that.

If you're taking notes, let me give you some. In Genesis 17, 18, and 19. And also verse 21.

And then Genesis 21-12. Now, if I'm going too fast on this, stop me if you want to write some of these down. In Isaac, shall your seed be called.

So He promised Abraham a seed. Secondly, He promised him a nation. And all this takes place in Genesis 12, 1-3.

He says, I will make of you a great nation. Who is the nation? Israel was the nation. Physical nation.

I'll make of you a great nation, Israel. And I'm going to give you a land. What's that? Canaan.

That was promised right there in Genesis 12, 1-3 as well. And then He says, I'll give you blessing. I'll bless you.

I'll bless those who bless you. I'll make you a blessing. And when He blessed Abraham, you remember He gave him riches, He gave him old age, you know, a long life.

I'd say He didn't give him old age, but He gave him a long life. So that he might live to an old age. Protection.

Physical protection. All those blessings. Material blessings.

Now, all those are physical fulfillments. But when you come to the New Testament, you find out that those were minor compared to what was really being said. Who's the seed? He promised him a seed.

Who's the seed? We read it here. The seed is Christ. He says in verse 16, He does not say to seeds as referring to many, but rather to one, to your seed, that is Christ.

So God came to Abraham and He promised him, He says, one day, the Messiah is going to come. In your line, the Messiah is coming. He promised him a seed.

He promised him a nation. What's the nation? The church. Does the church ever call the nation? Remember, Jesus told a parable, He says, a parable of the vine growers that wouldn't give the fruit in the proper season.

He says, therefore, the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that brings forth the fruit of it. Who's that? That's the church. If what you're looking at is not bringing forth fruit to God, you're not looking at the church.

You may be looking at Christendom, but you're not looking at the church. The church is alive and well. I'm talking about Christians, real Christians.

They're alive and well and loving one another and bringing forth fruit to God. Jesus said the Kingdom will be taken away from you, given to a nation, a different nation. Not one nation, but men from every tribe and tongue and kindred all over the whole world make up this nation.

What's Peter say? He says, you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. We're the ones that offer up spiritual sacrifices. You see how the New Testament's interpreting these things? God promises Abraham, He says, go out and look at the stars.

That's so shall your seed be. Men from every tribe and tongue and kindred. What's the land? You think Abraham, oh, he said, I want that land of Canaan so bad.

I really want the land of Canaan. What's Hebrews say? They were looking for a country, a heavenly one. He wasn't going to be content with having the land of Canaan.

Abraham realized there's something big here that God's promising. And you remember in Romans 4, I better give you these verses for those that are taking notes. You may want to look back at this.

But in Romans 4 verse 13, he says the promise to Abraham that he should be the heir of the world was not through the law. The promise that he should be the heir of the world. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

There in Revelation, men from every tribe and tongue and kindred have been made priests to God, and they shall reign on the earth. A lot of what we talk about heaven, you know, really we're talking about this new earth. The meek shall inherit the earth.

And God said way back there in Genesis, He told Abraham in Genesis 17.8, He says your seed are going to inherit the land of their sojournings. Right now, we are sojourners on this earth. And many times, the earth is drinking the blood of Christians, but one day they're going to own the earth.

The meek are going to inherit the earth, and they'll reign on the earth. When God made this promise to Abraham, He's talking about this eternal thing, you see. A seed, a nation, a land.

The seed Christ. The nation, the church, the land, the new heavens and the new earth. What about the blessing? What's the opposite of blessing? Curse.

What's He saying in Galatians? Well, we'd better turn to this. Galatians 3, beginning at verse 7, Therefore be sure that it is those who are of faith that are the sons of Abraham. They're the true sons.

And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham saying, All the nations shall be blessed. What's the blessing? Justification. All the nations shall be blessed in you.

Before you become a Christian, you're under a curse. But when you're justified, you're blessed. You're under a blessing.

So then it is those who are of faith, those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham the believer. For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse, for it is written, Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law to perform them. Now that no one is justified by the law before God is evident, for the righteous man shall live by faith.

However, the law is not of faith. On the contrary, he who practices them shall live by them. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law having become a curse for us.

For it is written, Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. The blessing has to do with justification. The opposite of being condemned and under the curse.

You're forgiven, you're justified, you're under the blessing. Now look what we've done. We've come to the New Testament and we've found a whole lot more meaning in the Old Testament than what we could have if we read the Old Testament alone.

Now beloved, you've got to get hold of this. There's a lot of people including big time scholars that are a lot smarter than all of us who come to the Old Testament and they read the Old Testament and they decide what the New Testament ought to teach. And then they try to make the New Testament fit into what they think the New Testament ought to teach.

People do that with the Sabbath, for example. You just read about the Sabbath, this perpetual thing that's forever, and you read those promises and you get, oh well, the New Testament has to teach this, and you take everything that everybody said and twist it into that and try to fit it into that. What did Paul say? He said don't let anybody act as your judge with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day.

Things which are a mere shadow of what was to come, but the substance, the reality, the body belongs to Christ. Paul says we've got the reality now. You don't go to the old to understand the new.

You go to the new to understand the old first of all. Then you let the old inform you and teach you, but you don't let it dictate everything. And there are a lot of men that won't touch Galatians 3 because Paul is telling something that they don't like.

Alright, this is a basic principle. Come to the new to learn about the old. Now, along this line, have you ever wondered how somebody like Paul arrived at these things? Let me just quote the verse.

God's speaking to Abraham. He says, in your seed all the nations of the world will be blessed. Paul says, well, obviously, that means that in Christ all the Gentiles are going to be justified.

God preached the Gospel before Abraham. Where would you come up with that? You could say, well, the Holy Spirit showed it. But it's not just that.

Just think about this a little bit. Paul said there in 1 Corinthians, he said the preaching of Christ is a stumbling block. It's foolishness to the Gentiles, but to the Jews it's a stumbling block.

Why was it a stumbling block to preach Christ? What did he say in 1 Corinthians? We preach Christ what? Christ crucified. That was the stumbling block. Why is that such a big stumbling block? Well, first of all, they're looking for the Messiah to come and deliver the nation of Israel from the heel of Rome.

And so you come and say, the Messiah has come. Where is He? Well, He was crucified as a condemned criminal in the lowest form of Roman punishment by the Roman authorities. That's a stumbling block.

That's insane. But what else? There's something worse than that. What's the Bible say about somebody that's hanged? He's accursed.

Paul quotes it right there. Cursed. So here, you look at this and say, the Messiah has come.

The Romans killed Him as a condemned criminal in the lowest form of punishment that they have for the worst scum. And He died accursed by God. It's blasphemy.

Yeah, that's something I left out. You read in Deuteronomy, it says He who is hanged on a tree is accursed. No, it says He's accursed by God.

That's why Christ crucified as a stumbling block to the Jew. Now think of this. Paul is breathing out threatenings and slaughter.

He's determined to kill these Christians. He knows Christ is alive because He died under the curse of God. What happened? He meets the risen Christ.

He meets the Lord. He didn't know who He was at first. He says, Who art Thou? Lord.

He knew He was the Lord. Now, think of all the confused and mixed things going through his mind. He's thinking, how does this fit? He's the Messiah.

He's risen. But He died under the curse of God. Then all of a sudden it dawns on him, yeah, He died under the curse of God.

What's it say in Isaiah 53? He caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. He realizes He bore our sins in His own body. He realizes that this curse was not Christ's curse, but my curse.

And then he thinks, the opposite of that curse is blessing. And he thinks, that's what it meant. In your seed.

All the nations of Gentiles are going to be blessed. They're going to be justified. You see that? All of a sudden it makes sense.

Everything fits together. He's not importing into this verse some kind of stuff that He made up. He's reading what God actually meant.

God's saying to Abraham by promise, He says, Abraham, go out and look at the sky. He says, you're going to have children beyond your imagination. And what's going to happen through your seed down the line, way down there, your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day, Jesus said.

And he saw it and was glad. Abraham looks way down through the centuries and says, one day, your seed is going to come. And all the nations, not just the Jews, all the nations are going to be justified.

The condemnation is going to be lifted off of them. And they're going to be blessed. And so Paul says, God preached the Gospel beforehand unto Abraham, saying, in your seed shall all the nations be blessed.

These are wonderful things. What does all this mean? We're trying to get an overview of where we're going. You see, you can't just start out unless you realize what's happening here.

What's happening is, is all along, God is working towards Christ. He's the pinnacle of everything. The church is not some afterthought that God had when He had to give up on the physical nation of Israel.

The church is something that God was working for. He's wanting the body of Christ. The body of Christ.

The day is coming. This day is coming. And when you're part of the new covenant, you don't meet a Christian and say, well, you need to know the Lord.

You need to know the Lord more, but he already knows the Lord or he wouldn't be a Christian. His sins are forgiven. He's regenerate.

The Law is written on His heart. All of that's true in the new covenant. Why did God... I mean, it started back in Genesis 3.15. God says to the serpent, I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed, the children of the devil, and her seed.

And if God hadn't put the enmity there, it would have never happened. All of us would be serving the devil and be in love with him. God says, I'm going to do something to tear off a group of people that hate you.

I'm going to make them so they hate serpents. The devil. I'm going to put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed, and you'll bruise his heel, but he's going to bruise your head.

That's what happened on the cross. That was God's plan. You want to know what unifies the whole Bible? This one saving eternal purpose in Christ.

That's the unity of the whole Scripture. And everything God's doing is in order to get to Christ. You've got to realize, He raises up the nation of Israel not as something permanent.

He's trying to get to Christ. He gives the law of Moses not as something permanent, but as a stepping stone, a tutor, a child conductor to lead us along to get us to Christ. And once you get there, you're not under the tutor any longer.

Now, beloved, a lot of people have got in their mind, you know, the big stuff is back there that Moses gave. All the big stuff. And they even look back at the Ten Commandments as if that's the epitome of the Ten Commandments.

Think of this. What do you think is greater? You shall not commit adultery, or husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church. Which of those standards is higher? Think about it.

I mean, we ought to be looking at the words of Jesus. We ought to be memorizing the words of Jesus. Look what He said here.

This is unbelievable. But instead, people have in their heads that Moses was the big guy and Christ comes along in the Sermon on the Mount and said, now, I just want to tell you what Moses really meant. When He said this, He really meant that.

No, He says, you have heard, but I say unto you. It's amazing. He's on a mountain there too.

The Sermon on the Mount. And God the Son is speaking directly. He whom God has sent speaks the very words of God, for He gives not the Spirit by measure unto Him.

Everything that He said, perfect reflection of the character of God. We've got to have our minds renewed to see what we're dealing with here. Peter says, oh, it's good to be on this mountain.

Let's build three tabernacles. A cloud, a voice. This is my Son.

Listen to Him. And when they looked around, there wasn't anybody left but Jesus alone. See how radical that is? See what God's saying? I'm getting ahead of myself.

Lord willing, we'll go on with this in the next message.

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