

The Law of God in Light of the Kingdom

by Voddie Baucham

The law of God is perfect, timeless, and authoritative, and it remains relevant today as the foundation of the kingdom ethic.

Duration: 57:50

Scripture: Matthew 5:17-20

Topics: "Sermon on the Mount"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on verses 17-20 of the Sermon on the Mount as the thesis statement of Jesus' entire argument. Jesus clarifies that he has not come to abolish the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them. He emphasizes the enduring nature of the law until all is accomplished, even the smallest details. The speaker highlights that Jesus' thesis statement sets the stage for the following arguments where Jesus challenges the Pharisees' understanding of the law and calls for a righteousness that surpasses theirs.

Transcript

Welcome to the teaching ministry of Grace Family Baptist Church. GFBC's mission is proclaiming the supremacy of Christ to all men with a view of biblical conversion and comprehensive discipleship. Thank you for visiting gracefamilybaptist.net. I don't remember the first time I saw a scantron.

You know, that little test where you bubble things in and it comes back graded. Questions are all true or false or multiple choice because it's the only thing you can do when you get a scantron test, you know. I don't remember the first time I saw that, I experienced that.

We didn't have any of those. I went to college here in town at Rice. And Rice University was just a little bit larger than my high school.

Our student to faculty ratio was seven and a half to one. We didn't have many classes with scantrons. Everything was blue book tests.

You had to write it all out. We used to be happy when we saw a scantron. I never knew how those things worked until one day I went into the office and I realized that what they did was they took a key, they called it.

And the key was a scantron with all the right answers on it. You take the key and you put that through the machine. Now the machine knows what all the right answers are.

Then you take all of the tests and you put them through the machine after the key has gone through. And they're graded based upon whether or not they match up with the key. You know, in many ways, that's what we see when we look at the person and work of Jesus Christ as it relates to the law of God.

If we want to understand what it means to walk with God in accordance with His law, if we want to understand what it means to be righteous before a holy God based on His standard, we need a key. And that key is Christ. And here in this passage that we're examining today, Jesus all but says that for us in so many words, that He's the key to understanding the law of God.

He's the key to understanding our role, our disposition toward, our position as it relates to the law of God. This is difficult for us, understanding God's law in light of the kingdom. It's difficult for us for a number of reasons.

Let me just give you a couple of them. The first reason it's difficult for us is that we are very uncomfortable in the light of our culture with the law of God and feel like we need to apologize for God. For example, we've talked several times about Deuteronomy chapter 22.

And you go to Deuteronomy chapter 22, and this is why, by the way, most people don't like to even deal with Deuteronomy and most churches don't like to teach Deuteronomy or do anything like that because they feel like they have to always apologize for God. So you get to Deuteronomy 22, and here in Deuteronomy 22, we have the law of God, case law, if you will, as it relates to purity, as it relates to adultery. Deuteronomy 22, we see if a man believes that a woman that he married was not a virgin when they married, goes to the father's house and makes the accusation.

The father has to present evidence that the daughter was a virgin upon marriage. If the father is not able to produce such evidence, and if it is discovered that the young woman was not a virgin upon marriage, then she is brought to the doorstep of the father's house and stoned to death. Now here's the problem.

Most Christians, within the context of our culture, rather than try to explain that to people who already don't like God, who already don't like religion, most people, rather than explaining that, we'd rather just act like there are two gods, one on the left side of the Bible, the other on the right side of the Bible, and that God over there on the left side of the Bible, that mean, nasty one, we really don't talk about him. You know, he's like the crazy uncle that everybody has, doesn't want anybody to meet. Maybe you don't have that in your family, that person in your family that you'd rather people not know was part of your family.

Oh, really? There's nobody in your family that if they walk through the door of the church this morning to visit you on Resurrection Day, you'd say, that's how we treat the Old Testament law. That's how we act about the Old Testament law, like it's something that we can just cover up. And because of that, we don't really try to get there and see how it applies to the way we live.

We don't try to get there and see what the principles are behind it. But there's another issue. This is more of a theological and doctrinal issue.

We've heard this phrase over and over again. It's used in the Scripture. Paul uses it a number of times, nearly a dozen times.

We are not under law, but under grace. And we hear that. We say, Amen, Hallelujah, praise the Lord.

We are not under law, we are under grace. Now it's one thing to use that terminology, it's another thing altogether to understand that terminology. We know that we live during a period of theological illiteracy and biblical illiteracy.

So if you give somebody a phrase like that, and they don't have an understanding of the Bible, and they don't have a grasp on systematic theology or biblical theology, what do they come away with? They come away with, all that stuff on the left side of the Bible is irrelevant to us. Here's what they also come away with. I don't have to examine my life or walk in any way in light of or in accordance with the law of God.

Why should I? I'm no longer under law, I'm under grace. So that's the understanding that many people have. So we're embarrassed about things that we find in the law of God, and we're confused about God's law in light of the kingdom of God.

And as a result of it, we either stay away from it, or if we don't just stay away from it altogether, we misunderstand and misinterpret our relationship to the law. As a result of that, here's what we see. Listen to this from J.I. Packer.

The root of our trouble, putting it quite plainly, seems to be that we neither know nor care much about the law of God. On the one hand, we do not give ourselves to studying and applying law in the way that our evangelical forefathers did. Our neglect of the Old Testament in particular bears witness to this.

On the other hand, our thinking, unlike theirs, has a lawless tinge. There is an antinomian streak. Antinomianism means no law.

There is an antinomian streak running through it. We act as if our freedom from the law has made it a matter of comparative unimportance, whether we keep the law in daily life or not. We appear to care more for right faith than we do for right living.

We show a greater concern to be orthodox than to be upright. We seem to be more anxious to know the truth than we are to adorn it by our behavior. We are, it appears, more interested in feeding our own souls than in doing good to our neighbor.

We lap up the doctrinal chapters of the epistles, but we skate over the ethical ones. Our Lord accused the Pharisees of antinomianism, telling them that they had overlooked the weightier demands of the law, justice, mercy, good faith. Would He not have reason to bring a similar accusation against us? Here, then, is the root cause of our present moral flabbiness.

We have neglected God's law. Hear, hear. We have neglected God's law.

So what does that mean? Does that mean that we need to go and erect a law around the law like the Pharisees did? What does that mean? Well, I'm glad you asked. In our passage today, we get an answer to that question. Matthew chapter 5, beginning in verse 17, we have the key, not only to understanding the entire Sermon on the Mount.

Think about it this way. If you looked at this as an essay, if you looked at the Sermon on the Mount as an essay, and we teach our young people how to write essays, and some of you young people are so tired of writing essays, you know, anybody in the room just wish you never again heard 131 in your life? Anybody

in the room, you know? Yes. Thank you, Lord.

No more 131. I don't want to write a 131, you know? You write your first paragraph, and, of course, at the end of your first paragraph, you have to have your thesis statement, and in your thesis statement, you give your arguments, and then you have your three chapters in the 131, which basically expound on your thesis statement. Then you have your concluding paragraph where you wrap the whole thing up, and wah, wah, wah, wah.

Okay? You know what? If the Sermon on the Mount was a 131, our paragraph today, verses 17 through 20, would be the thesis statement. This is Jesus' whole argument in the Sermon on the Mount. It's the key to understanding everything that He's about to say, not just in the Sermon on the Mount, but listen, this paragraph is the key to understanding everything that Jesus does, says, and is in relationship to the law of God.

This single paragraph. Let's examine it. Verse 17.

Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

What a thesis statement. What a close to his thesis statement. You don't get this right.

You don't understand this. You're never going to enter the kingdom of heaven. This is the foundation of the kingdom ethic.

If you remember, we talked about Christian ethics and how the Sermon on the Mount is really a foundation for Christian ethics, for the ethics of the kingdom. Right actions, right motives, right goals. And here, in this one paragraph, he gives us the foundation upon which all of that is to be built.

Several things that we learn here about the law of God as it relates to the kingdom. And if we grasp these, it will revolutionize the way we view ourselves within the context of the law of God. First thing is this.

We see that the law of God is perfect. It's perfect. Look here in verse 17.

Do not think that I've come to abolish the law or the prophets. I've not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. In other words, when I talk about the law being perfect, as the psalmist says, the law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul.

Many people look at Jesus as though somehow the law was either broken, and by broken I don't mean that somebody broke the law, I mean the law itself. It's either it was broken, it's something that's broken, something that didn't work, or that the law was sort of plan A, and then Jesus comes and he's plan B. Jesus says, I didn't come to abolish the law. Those of you who think that, who think that somehow, you know, there were all of these different plans, and now all of a sudden here I am.

No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. There are people who think, well, first God tried with Adam, didn't work. Then God tried again after that with Noah, didn't work.

Then he tried with the patriarchs, didn't work. Then he tried with Moses and the law, didn't work. Then he tried with David and the kings, didn't work.

Now finally there's another plan that God has, and finally this one is going to work. As though somehow, somehow, there was something wrong, or something broken about the law of God. Far from it.

Jesus said, I didn't come to do away with the law. He didn't even come to fix the law. He didn't come to do away with it, he didn't come to fix it.

Why? Because he didn't need to. The law of God is perfect. It doesn't need fixing.

The law of God has always been perfect. The law of God will always be perfect. The law of God is perfect because the God of the law is perfect.

So whatever our attitude toward the law, and for many of us that's a problem. Here's another reason that we have difficulty. Because we have this sort of radical dispensational view of salvation.

And by radical dispensational view I'm not talking about just that theological construct, but here's what many Christians believe. Many Christians believe that the saints in the Old Testament were saved by keeping the law. But then after Christ, you're saved by faith.

This is what many, many, many Christians believe. And therefore, it just makes sense that Jesus needed to come at some point so that we could get away from that old concept of being saved through the law, and now have a new idea of being saved apart from the law. If you were here as you preached through the life of Abraham, you know that's nowhere near true.

Also if you were here as we preached through the life of Abraham, you know that we spent a great deal of our time in the book of Romans. Where Paul in the book of Romans explains, Abraham believed God and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Why was Abraham righteous? Why was he saved? How was he saved? By faith.

How were the saints in the Old Testament saved? By faith. But when you say that to people again, what's the first question that comes? Well, how can they have faith in Jesus if Jesus wasn't born yet? The answer? Genesis chapter 3 and verse 15. The Proto-Ewangelion, the first proclamation of the gospel.

God promised that the seed of the woman would come and crush the head of the serpent. It's the first promise of the gospel. It's the first proclamation of the gospel.

What do Adam and Eve believe from that moment on? We've sinned, we're going to die, but there's a Deliverer who's going to come. Those ten generations that we see in Genesis chapter 5, from Adam to Noah through the line of Seth, what do we see? The promised seed is on the way and he's coming. Noah's daddy names him Noah because he believes that a Deliverer is going to come.

Where does he get the concept from? He got the concept from Adam. The promise that was made in Genesis chapter 3 and verse 15. That's where he got it from.

Abraham gets a promise from God. The promise is about what? The promised seed. Isaac then comes.

Is he the ultimate promised seed? No, he's not the ultimate promised seed. Then God's going to make a point. Isaac's two boys are going to be twins.

What are we going to do? Rebecca, shall we flip a coin? No, God's going to work it out. The older is going to serve the younger. In other words, it's Jacob, not Esau, who's the promised seed.

That's fine. Well, then what happens? Then we come later on and we see this picture of Jacob. And we see these 12 sons of Jacob.

And all of a sudden we see this picture in Jacob's life. And when we see this picture in Jacob's life, what do we look at? We see Jacob is in love with one daughter, but gets the other one instead. And we see this love story and we interpret this love story.

And we think the continuation of the seed is going to come through the one that he really loves. Nope. The continuation of the seed was through the wife he didn't even want.

Judah was born to Leah, not Rachel. And Jesus Christ is the lion of the tribe of Judah, not Joseph. We come all the way to David.

David's always going to have a descendant of his on the throne. How's that going to happen? One of David's boys? It all points forward to Jesus. So in other words, Jesus is not plan B. Jesus is the fulfillment of plan only.

Amen? I've said it before, I'll say it again. God is not running for God. He's God.

He needs no contingency plans. He's God. This is God's plan.

So look here again. This is also key. If you do any research on this verse, you're going to see a lot of work on this verb, pleruo.

And what do we mean here by fulfilled? And some look at this and say, do I think that I've come to abolish the law of the prophets? I have not come to abolish them, but to fulfill them. As though Jesus is saying, in my life I need to fulfill the law. That's not the point he's making in that verb.

This is an eschatological statement. Jesus says, the law and the prophets were pointing to me. That's what he's saying.

I'm the fulfillment of these things. The law's perfect. The law doesn't need my help.

The law's perfect. And it perfectly anticipated me. It perfectly pointed to me.

So the first thing we need to understand, if we're going to understand God's law in light of the kingdom, is that the law is perfect. There is nothing wrong with the law. Listen to what John Calvin said, Christ therefore now declares that his doctrine is so far from being at variance with the law, that it agrees perfectly with the law and the prophets, and not only so, but brings the complete fulfillment of them.

Jesus is saying here, I'm not at odds with the law. And the law is not at odds with me. There's nothing wrong with the law.

The law is perfect. That's hard for us to hear, because that's not what we get in modern American evangelicalism. Law, bad.

Grace. The law is perfect. The law is wonderful.

Listen to what Mounce says about this same idea. To the pious Jew, the law was perfect and unchangeable. Jesus' life and teaching appeared to many to indicate a lower view of the law.

He healed on the Sabbath, failed to perform ritual duties, and was lax in observing religious feasts. It was necessary, therefore, for Jesus to point out at the beginning of his sermon, the relationship of his teaching to the law. Because of what he's about to do.

And again, Sermon on the Mount, his teaching, comes before what he's doing. He's laying a foundation for everything that he's about to do. And what he's saying is, when you see what I'm about to do, it may look like I have a problem with the law.

Newsflash, the law is perfect. I don't have a problem with the law. The law doesn't have a problem with me.

The one with the problem is you. You think you understand the law, but you have no idea. None whatsoever.

So the law is perfect. Secondly, not only is the law perfect, but the law is also timeless. Look at verse 18.

For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, again, the smallest letters in the Hebrew alphabet, not the smallest stroke, not a breath mark, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. The law is timeless. So again, the idea that there was this time or this period where we needed the law, and all of a sudden there's this time or this period when we don't need the law, not only is that incorrect, but it's a direct contradiction of the teaching of Jesus himself.

Jesus says the law is timeless. So there's not this hard and fast break that happens when Jesus comes on the scene. There's not a sense in which the law was wonderful and it was great up to a point, and now all of a sudden Jesus is on the scene, so we can just throw that away.

It's not necessary anymore. It's no good anymore. It's outdated now.

We need something different. We need something new. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The law is timeless. Jesus presents himself as the eschatological fulfillment, not a replacement of the law. And again, this is difficult for us.

Why? Because we've heard it over and over again, and we've said it over and over again. In fact, one of the words that we like to throw around is legalism. We have no idea what the word legalism actually means.

You know what legalism means to the average American Christian? Legalism means you pay more attention to the law than I do. That's what legalism means. You know what legalism means doctrinally? Let me just give you this brief definition.

It's actually a long definition from Bill Baldwin. We won't read all of these points, but I'll just read a few of these. What legalism really is.

Number one, using the Mosaic Covenant as though it is a covenant between you and God. Using the Mosaic Covenant as though it is a covenant between you and God. Okay, God, here's the Mosaic Covenant.

I'm going to keep it so that I can be blessed because I keep the Mosaic Covenant because it's covenant between me and you. Number two, attempting to be justified by one's own work. Attempting to be justified by one's own work.

That's what legalism means. You're actually trying to be justified and think that you're going to get into heaven by what you do. Number three, attempting to be sanctified by one's own work.

You actually think that you're going to become a better Christian because of your own effort. Number four, suggesting that our worth or worthiness, our self-esteem and self-satisfaction or lack thereof rest on our own works. Number five, any attempt to please God judicially or any supposition that our sin as believers has resulted in his judicial displeasure.

Again, his judicial displeasure. Talking about justification there. That's what legalism is.

Legalism has to do with our not understanding justification. Legalism has to do with our trying to please God because we keep the law. Legalism has to do with us trying in and of ourselves to satisfy the righteous requirements of God.

Legalism is that works righteousness that we've been talking about. That's what legalism is. Not delighting in the law of the Lord.

No. We should delight in the law of the Lord. It's timeless.

Listen to what MacArthur says in this point. So the moral standard set by the law does not change under grace. Indeed, it could not.

It is a reflection of God's character. But divine grace actually empowers us to fulfill the moral demands of the law in a way that the law alone could never do. The only way that the law could change is if God changed.

God gives us the law as a picture of what holiness and righteousness looks like. The only way for the law to change is if God changes his mind about what's holy and what's righteous. So God would have to say, you know what? I gave it a real good go back there in the Old Testament.

But I think me and my son Jesus, we can do better. No. The law is timeless.

Thirdly, God's law is relevant and applicable. Right here, right now in our lives today. God's law is relevant and applicable.

Look with me if you will to the next verse. Look at verse 19. Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven.

But whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. Here's what's ironic. Here's what we've said.

You want to be a really good Christian? Stay on the right side of the Bible. Stay away from the law. Because that law stuff, that's antithetical to Christianity.

Jesus says, you want to uphold a kingdom ethic? Obey the law. Teach the law. Huh.

Sounds ironic, doesn't it? Almost sounds out of place. Really makes us uncomfortable. But why? Why? Because of our misunderstanding of this phrase.

Listen to the London Baptist Confession. Our church's confession of faith. And it's statement on the law of God.

And how relevant and applicable the law is. Even right here and right now. This is number six in that chapter on the law.

Although true believers are not under the law. That's true. We're not under the law.

We're going to explain that in a minute. As a covenant of works to be thereby justified or condemned. Yet it is of great use to them as well as to others.

In that, first, as a rule of life informing them of the will of God and their duty. It directs and binds them to walk accordingly. Secondly, it says it restrains their corruptions.

And thirdly, it shows them God's approbation of obedience. And what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof. In other words, the law is a good thing for believers.

Why? Because if the law of God is perfect. And you want to be holy as He is holy. You got to have a standard.

Where do you get a standard? The law of God. The law of God. You want to have the right attitude toward your own sin.

And not just become an antinomian and lackadaisical and live any way you want to live. What do you do? Do you erect some standard from somewhere else? Do we just sort of put our heads together here and come up with some rules that we think would be really good for us to follow? Or do we go to the law of God? It's God's law. It is relevant.

It is applicable. It's simple. But finally, let's relieve some of the discomfort, shall we? God's law is insufficient for justification.

It's insufficient for justification. You're not going to be saved by it. Look at verse 20.

For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. He just said a mouthful. But here's the question.

What did Jesus actually just say? Did Jesus just say, the scribes and the Pharisees worked real hard and they got pretty close. But if you want to get in, you got to go further than they did. Is that what he said? The Pharisees, for example, had 613 laws.

613 laws. They were the gold standard of ethics in Jesus' day. One reason we don't understand this statement is because for us, the word Pharisee is a pejorative term.

You Pharisee. Here's what I want you to grasp. You can't understand what Jesus is saying unless you understand this.

During his day, during his age, if you were alive during the first century and you asked somebody, Who are the most ethical people, the most godly people, and the most righteous people you know of? There would have been no hesitation. They would have said, the Pharisees. Nobody's more godly than they are.

Nobody's more righteous than they are. Nobody's more ethical than they are. That would have been the answer bar none.

And unless we get out of our own understanding, and again, we hear this word and it's a pejorative term. Because of that, we don't understand the shock that this statement would have had. Jesus just looks at his hearers and he's preaching this message and he's talking about the law.

And everybody's going, yeah, I already feel really bad about it because the Pharisees have 613 laws and I can't keep those 613 laws. Jesus is saying, well first, here's what I want you to know. Law's perfect, law's timeless, the law's relevant and it's applicable.

I didn't come to destroy it, didn't come to replace it. I want you to know that. They're going, yeah, yeah, yeah, we know, you gotta keep the law.

And then he drops this on them. If you want to be part of my kingdom, you have to be more righteous than the most righteous people any of you know. To which immediately their minds would have gone to, well, there's no hope for me.

I can't even keep the 613 that the Pharisees have. How many more do I need, Jesus? Matter of fact, I can't even remember. Two-thirds of them? That's 613 laws.

I mean, if I'm going to travel, if I'm going to walk around on the Sabbath, I have to mark out my journey. Why? Because I can't take one step too many. If I take one step too many, then I've actually worked on the Sabbath, I've broken one of the 613 laws.

They had laws about when you could spit on the ground and when you couldn't. And what your spittle could do when it hit the ground. Jesus says, your righteousness has to exceed their righteousness.

All the air would have gone out of the place right there. First, you tell us that your kingdom is about all these people who are the people that we don't want to be. The meek, the gentle, the broken, the persecuted.

So you start off with a downer right there. Now you come to us and say, we've got to be more righteous than the Pharisees? You don't understand what Jesus means here until you go to the six antitheses that he gives right after. And we're going to preach through each one of those six antitheses.

So we're not going to do that now. But let me tell you what we're going to see in each one of these six antitheses. When Jesus talks about anger and lust and divorce and oaths.

When he talks about these six antitheses, here's what Jesus is doing. In every last one of them, here's the pattern. You've heard this.

Now when he says you've heard this, he's referring to the Pharisees. Remember this is his thesis statement that we just got in these few verses right here. These four verses.

We got his thesis statement. Now after his thesis statement, he's going to give us his arguments. And in each of these next six antitheses, here's what he's going to do.

He's going to say, you've heard this about murder. In other words, here's the standard of the Pharisees right here. Okay.

Here's the standard that you've been judging yourself by. You've heard this. Here's what I want to say to you.

That's not good enough. In every one of these six things, that's what Jesus is going to do. This is what you've heard and that's hard for you.

Guess what I'm here to tell you. That's not good enough. What do you mean? Here's what I mean.

It doesn't get to the heart of the matter. You don't kill him, but you hate him. The holiness and righteousness of God is not just about not killing him.

You can't even hate him. You haven't committed adultery, but you lust in your heart. The righteousness of God is not about you just working hard enough to restrain yourself to not do the thing.

No. That's not good enough. In other words, here's what Jesus is communicating in the Sermon on the Mount.

You can miss me by not obeying the law. And you can also miss me by obeying the law. The Pharisees miss me.

But they miss me by obeying the law. Well, what do you mean? Yeah, see, they're counting on the law for their justification. They don't look at the law and see this beautiful, unreachable, unattainable standard of God that drives them to their knees in repentance.

No, they look at the law and actually believe that they can get there from here. And because of that, they miss me. They miss me.

There's a ditch on that side of the road. But, folks, there's also a ditch on the other side of the road. Well, we cannot attain to that.

We can never get there. Jesus paid it all, all to him I owe. Sin had left the crimson stain, he washed it white as snow.

Therefore, why bother? Let's just sin all the more so that grace may abound. Paul's answer to that? Meganoita. May it never be.

Here's what Jesus is saying here. There's a righteousness beyond anything that you've ever seen. And you can't even get to the righteousness that you've seen.

I'm talking about a righteousness far beyond that. The law is perfect. The law is timeless.

The law is relevant and applicable. But the law is insufficient. The law was a road sign on the way to that place of final culmination and completion.

If the law in and of itself had been enough, then we could have stopped right there. But we didn't. We moved beyond Sinai.

It wasn't enough. It was the wrong mountain. You see the hill that we needed? It was just outside Jerusalem.

We're the one who kept the law perfectly. Laid down his life on behalf of his people who can't even keep it in part. We're the only righteous one.

Obedied to the end. Laid down his very life. Paid the price for your sin.

Took the wrath for my sin. Swallowed it up in righteousness. Bled and breathed his last.

And on the third day, rose again with all power in his hands. You want to keep the law? Here's a little secret. You must be found in the one who did it.

You have to be found in Christ. So now we go back to Genesis chapter 22. And what do we do with Genesis chapter 22? We've already said we don't act like it doesn't exist.

But what do we do with Genesis chapter 22? I don't like it and I don't want to talk to my friends about it. I wish it wasn't in the Bible. This idea of stoning a young woman because she wasn't a virgin when she got married.

I despise that. I've learned how to sidestep it. Just act like it's not there.

Most people don't read the Bible so they're not going to bring it up. I'll leave it alone in my own Christian life. Because after all, we're not under law, we're under grace.

That was for those people in the Old Testament. Well, all that stuff's gone now. They were saved by faith.

So what's with the law stuff? Let's go back where we began. Deuteronomy chapter 22. And we look there and we see this picture.

And we have our beautiful daughter before us. And there are a couple of choices. We can look at our beautiful daughters before us and we can say, Sweetheart, be afraid.

Be very afraid. Because this is what God's law says about little girls who are not virgins. So don't do that.

Just don't do it. Because God hates it so much that in the Old Testament, they used to put young ladies to death for it. So don't you do it.

Don't you do it. In fact, not only do I not want you to do it, I'm going to give you some rules that will help you not even get close to it. Don't talk to boys.

Don't look them in the eye. By the way, what I just described to you was the Pharisaical model of keeping the law. Why did they have 613 laws? Because they said just what I just said.

God's word says, God's law says, don't do this. In fact, not only do we not need to do that, but we don't even need to do this or this or this or this or this or this because all of that would lead to that. That's how they got their 613 laws.

Jesus says there's a better way. We look at our beautiful daughter and we say, Sweetheart, if you want to know what holiness and righteousness looks like as it relates to this issue of our purity, let me show you something here in Deuteronomy chapter 22. It'll send chills down your spine.

And when we look here in Deuteronomy chapter 22, here's what I want you to know. That passage of Scripture right there, it's here in order to show us God's picture of perfect holiness and perfect righteousness. But I want you to know something.

In and of yourself, you can't do this. You can never do this. And in fact, if you just work real hard and do it in and of yourself, you'll go to the altar as a young woman who has never laid with a man.

But you won't go there pure. Because you're incapable of making yourself pure. I want you to look at Deuteronomy chapter 22, sweetheart.

And I want you to recognize that the only way that you could be this picture of purity is if you are united to the one who laid his life down so that his bride could be pure. And I want you to give yourself to him. And I want you to trust him.

And I want you to recognize that the only reason that a young woman would move to a place of adultery like this is because she's coveting. She wants something that's not legitimately hers. And because it's idolatry.

She's not satisfied with the only one who was ever meant to satisfy her, the person of Jesus Christ. And she's trying to find her satisfaction that can only be found in Jesus, in some young man, in an illegitimate sexual relationship that will only drive her deeper into her dissatisfaction. I want you to see this.

I want you to understand it. And I want you to recognize that the way out of this is not just closing your eyes and gritting your teeth and trying real hard. But the way out of this is being satisfied with the only one who can ever fulfill all of your needs by having a life that's devoted to the right understanding, the right view, and the right worship of the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

Give yourself to Him. He will keep you pure and have as high a view of sex as God does that He never wants you to think it's bad. That He never wants you to think it's ugly.

It is wonderful. It is beautiful. It is glorious.

You need to anticipate it. It's an incredible gift from God. And it's only when your view of sex is high enough, not when you're scared, it's only when your view is high enough that this will even be something that you'll aspire to.

Did we render the law irrelevant? No. Did we make it a means of self-justification? No. We teach that the law is perfect.

The law is timeless. The law is relevant and applicable. But the law is insufficient to save.

Only Christ can do that. Is it easy for us to do that with God's law? No, not at all. It takes work for us to go through Leviticus and Deuteronomy and look at all of the laws of God and especially all of these case laws and figure out what the principles are there and how it is that we adjust our lives accordingly.

That doesn't mean we don't do it. Jesus gives us a key to understand the law. And that is this.

See all the law through the lens of Christ and His kingdom. Are we under the law? Nope, we're not. Amen, hallelujah, praise the Lord, we're not under the law.

And it's only because we're not under the law that we're actually free to render joyful obedience to the law. And that not of ourselves, because it is Him who works in us both to will and to do His good pleasure. So if you're here today and making every effort you can to keep the law and finding yourself frustrated and broken and downtrodden again and again and again.

Let me ask you this question. What's the key that you put in the scantron before you started trying to take the test? Was it your own ability? Was it self-righteousness? Was it another person that you look up to? Or was it Christ and the understanding of the law that we get from Him? Here's the other thing. Jesus says, Come to me all you who are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you and learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart. My burden is easy. My yoke is easy rather than my burden is light.

You know what I found? When I'm weary, worn down, beaten up, I usually find that I'm the only one on the yoke at that time. And I'm usually carrying something that I was never ever assigned. If you can't say amen, you ought to say ouch.

There are people in the room who need freedom today. There are people in the room who need liberation today. There are people in the room who need to come to the Lord's table today.

Maybe for the first time in a long time. Maybe for the first time ever. And instead of the sort of introspective navel gazing, trying to find worthiness in ourselves to come before the table, we actually recognize that there is none and we are finally free to rejoice in the grace of God.

Not rejoice in the grace of God because now there's no law and I can live any way I want to and it's all paid for. No. Rejoice in the grace of God.

Because I'm not under the law, I've been saved by Christ and as a result I'm now free for the first time to live in a right relationship with God when it comes to the law. Perfectly? Uh-uh. Sanctification is an ongoing process.

But here's the good news. When I'm walking with Christ and my focus is on Him and when I look to the law and recognize the sin in myself and always turn it back to praise and worship because Christ kept the law and repentance and faith that He is the one who will also keep it in me, something interesting happens. Instead of being on that roller coaster where I'm always beating myself to death, every now and then I look back and I say, hey, wait a minute, I've grown.

I'm not what I ought to be, not even what I want to be. But I'm not what I used to be. I've grown.

How do I know that I've grown? What's the measure? Well, I would argue it's the law of God. I look more like the righteousness that I see than the law of God. And it's His work.

And it's the fruit of my justification, not the means of my justification. That's the distinction. The law is perfect.

The law is timeless. The law is relevant and applicable. But my friend, the law is insufficient for your salvation.

That is precisely why Christ came, kept the law, died for sin, rose again on the third day, ascended to the right hand of the Father. And here's the beautiful piece that we often miss. He's seated there, not just gloating in His victory, but what does the Bible say He's doing? Forever making intercession for us.

I'm grateful for those of you who tell me from time to time, Pastor Rody, Pastor Rody, we're praying for you. I'm grateful for those of you. Some of you even keep up with the calendar and events and stuff like that.

Hey, how was so-and-so? I saw that you were going to be there. I prayed for you. That's wonderful.

That means more to me than you can know. But you know what means even more than that? That the King of kings and the Lord of lords is forever making intercession for me. Can you keep the law? No, you can't.

The greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. He's the only one who's ever kept it. He's the only one who will ever keep it.

So how do you and I accomplish it? By being in Him. So the next time you look at the law of God and recognize that you're not cutting it, here's what I want you to ask yourself. Not, am I trying hard enough at this thing? But ask yourself, am I firmly rooted and grounded in Him? That's the way to righteousness.

Being firmly rooted and grounded in Christ who is our perfect righteousness. You've been listening to the podcast from gracefamilybaptist.net Grace Family Baptist Church is located in Spring, Texas. For any questions or comments regarding Grace Family Baptist Church call toll free at 877-651-8814 or go online to gracefamilybaptist.net

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/18/SID18948.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/voddie-baucham/the-law-of-god-in-light-of-the-kingdom/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net