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“The Protection of the Church” 1 Timothy 1:8-11

I’m going to start off with a pop quiz. Who is this person?



If you can answer this question I should give you five dollars. Let me give you a little better chance at it, how about here, does that help?

That’s Eric Liddell. Some of you are probably saying who is Eric Liddell. In the movie *Chariots of Fire*, Eric



Liddell was the person who was to run the hundred-meter dash on a the 1924 Olympics. Eric Liddell had the conviction that it was wrong for a race on Sunday. Instead he entered the 400-meter race which was not run on Sunday, won a gold medal and they did a movie about it.

Sunday in him to run

What’s also interesting is that for the next 20 years he spent his days in China as a missionary and ended up dying in a concentration camp during World War II. His conviction to not race in the 100-meter dash in the Olympics on a Sunday is admirable. How many of us would bypass running the 100-meter dash in the Olympics on a Sunday? Probably none of us. But you get the point, he is undoubtedly living by a set of convictions.

Actually convictions like that weren’t all that uncommon back then. For example Christy Matthewson, one of the greatest baseball players of all time, never pitched on a Sunday. Which brings us to the question, as admirable as this is, should we do the same or do it on a Saturday, since Saturday is the Sabbath of the Old Testament, or what else should we be doing or not on Sunday?

Well that brings us to the text we have this morning. Paul had an opinion about the Law and he taught about the Law and he continues that. This is in light of the last passage and the Jewish myths that were surrounding the church that were needed to be combated and certain men were teaching doctrines that Paul considered to be fraudulent. So he instructed Timothy to remain on in Ephesus to protect the church. This week we are going to look at that Law that was being taught wrongly. Verse 8-11 of chapter one. **“But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it Lawfully, realizing the fact that Law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are Lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.”**

In this passage Paul teaches about the Law being good, the nature of the Law, the quality of the Law, the Law is good. He needs to say this because he is being opposed by saying he doesn’t respect the Law, that he thinks it is no good, so he has to speak to it.

We know that the Law is good, it’s from God and all things from God are good. God gave it, it’s good, that’s the bottom line, but there is even more than that. Paul speaks about the Law specifically in the Scripture, in Romans 7:12 he says the Law is holy. It’s good, it’s holy, the commandment is

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righteous, it's profitable. 2 Timothy 3:16 says all Scripture including the Law is profitable, today for understanding, for rebuke, for correction, for training and righteousness to equip the man of God for every good deed. So it's profitable. We know that.

He also taught the Law is an example and this is really how it is profitable. These passages are in Romans 15:4 and 1 Corinthians 10:11. These refer to stories in the Law of Moses and how the nation of Israel had the Law and did not follow the Law and were judged accordingly. Paul writes 1 Corinthians 10:11, **“Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.”** They were written for our instruction and we gain from that writing, it's profitable.

Romans 15:4, **“For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. There's a purpose, a profit for this as an example in our lives.”**

And finally and most importantly the Law is a tutor. This teaching comes from Paul's writing in Galatians 3: 23-25, **“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 to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.”** So this is the value, the goodness of the Law. It leads to Christ, it instructs to Christ.

But in order for it to do that it must be used Lawfully. We know the Law is good, verse 8, if one uses it Lawfully. If you use it right it is profitable, if you use it wrong it is unprofitable.

So how is it used Lawfully? It is used Lawfully if it is used as God intended it to be used. God had a purpose for the Law and this purpose was not what was being taught in the teaching of certain men that were surrounding the church, Paul was opposing them.

There is the passage in Acts 15 that really resolves this issue in the church. There were certain Pharisees in Acts 15:5 who would have believed, but said this **“But certain ones of the sect of the Pharisees who had believed stood up saying, “It is necessary to circumcise them, and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses.”**

Well, was this statement right or was this statement wrong? So they examined this, the apostles and elders came together on this matter in verse six and after much debate about should they be instructed to observe the Law of Moses, Peter gave this summary in V. 10-11, **Now therefore why do you put God to the test by placing upon the neck of the disciples a yoke which neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we are saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, in the same way as they also are.”**

Then this goes on about really what is required and what was required was not the keeping of the Law, just the sensitivity to certain things that the Jewish believers would be particularly offended by. So the Law had a role to be used as God intended it to be and now the church age that role is as a tutor to lead to Christ.

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Let's look more at the role of the Law. The role of the Law in verse 9-10 is said this way, **“realizing the fact that Law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are Lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching.”**

And let's explain this teaching. There are quite a number of passages that teach this but I'm just going to highlight a few of them. If you want even more information there's a paper we have on the Christian's Obligation to the Law of Moses and I can give that to you. It's also on our website as a position paper. I'm just going to highlight the most salient points of this.

Christ is the end of the Law to everyone who believes. A direct statement from Romans 10:4, He's the end of the Law to everyone who believes. The Law ends in Christ. He fulfills it all. He was perfect and in His perfection He has fulfilled the Law. Therefore when we are in Christ that fulfillment of the Law has been imparted to us, imputed to us, given to us. He is the end of the Law to those who believe, not to the unrighteous, to the believer.

Paul specifically taught that he was not under the Law. He specifically taught that in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. Now how could he teach this if he was under the Law? I know this can be challenging because some people can think that we have a whole part of the Scripture that you are saying is not something that we should be obedient to. Well you have to look at these words of Paul. How could he say this? **“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a slave to all, that I might win the more. And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are 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, 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.”**

So Paul, with the Jews, adopted Jewish practices to win the Jews for Christ. Among the Gentiles he operated as though he was not under Law because truthfully he says though I myself am not under the Law. He was a Jew but the Law was not an obligation for him, the Mosaic Law.

What was an obligation to him? It says it not being without the Law of God but under the Law of Christ. Under the Law of Christ. The Law of Christ in this passage and other passages like Galatians 6 says the Law of Christ is loving your neighbor as yourself. The Law of love, the Law instructing us in the New Testament as Christ instructed us. That is what we are under. A moral Law of God that reflects His character.

But then there is instructions given for specific people in specific times. So words in the Scripture need to be understood in the context. Certain things are being instructed to certain people in certain times and we need to look at what is being instructed to us, now look at what's instructed to other people and then necessarily transfer that to us.

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Because many statements are even to individual people or groups of people. And in the New Testament we have the teaching for the church. So this is how Paul can say he is not under the Law.

Let's continue building on this. Christians have been released from the Mosaic Law because they have died to the Law. And there's an illustration given in Romans 7:1-6 that I think clarifies this.

I would say this is the most helpful passage to really get a grasp on this concept. **“Or do you not know, brethren (for I am speaking to those who know the Law), that the Law has jurisdiction over a person as long as he lives? For the married woman is bound by Law to her husband while he is living; but if her husband dies, she is released from the Law concerning the husband. So then, if while her husband is living she is joined to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from the Law, so that she is not an adulteress, though she is joined to another man. Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die 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. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.”** So there's the illustration of marriage. That if two people are married and they are alive, then they are bound to one another, but if one dies there is no longer a bond of marriage. This illustration is applied to the Law and us. **“Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die 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. For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death. But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.”**

So here you have it. We have died to the Law. Who died? We died, the Law didn't die, we died. The Law continues and it serves the unrighteous to have a sense, to lead them to Christ. But for us, that relationship between us and the Law has been no longer continuing because we have died. We have died and we are now in Christ and Christ fulfilled the Law. So as we are in Christ that fulfillment of the Law has been imparted to us in righteousness and we are now under the Law of Christ, the Law of love.

This statement, **“having died to that by which we were bound so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter”** is a contrast between the old and the new. The newness of the Spirit the oldness of the letter is developed in 2 Corinthians 3 and we are going to look at this.

2 Corinthians 3:5-11 speaks of the new covenant. Christians are not under the Mosaic Law because of the new covenant, we are under the new covenant. **“Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with**

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glory? For if the ministry of condemnation has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory. For indeed what had glory, in this case has no glory on account of the glory that surpasses it. For if that which fades away was with glory, much more that which remains is in glory.”

There’s a contrast between the old covenant and the new covenant which passes away, was glorious but how much more glorious is the new covenant. The new covenant in Christ, this new agreement, this is why it is called the Old Testament, another word for covenant is Testament. We have an Old Testament, we have a New Testament and we are now under the new covenant. Not under the letter that kills, but Spirit that gives life.

Let me ask you about this letter that kills. **“But if the ministry of death, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was, how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory?”**

What is this, letters engraved on stones? What is he talking about? Can you think of anything that was letters engraved on stone? The Ten Commandments, those were the letters engraved on stone. That’s what that is speaking of.

So even the Ten Commandments, here you have a picture of it, is being referred to here. Now this is the monument that was in the Alabama courthouse and maybe some of the people who held vigils out there needed to understand more about the Law, including about the Ten Commandments. Because even the Ten Commandments are part of the Law that is being talked about as fading away.

It’s interesting as you read the Ten Commandments, these aren’t the same Ten Commandments as I read growing up, I was Catholic growing up, and what I remembered, I was taught there was one commandment that I didn’t learn, do you know what that one was? “Thou shall have no graven image.” That one.

Now you might understand why if you have ever been in a Catholic church, but they took out that one and they made the last commandment, thou shall not covet, they divided it in two and it became thou shall not covet thy neighbor’s wife and don’t covet thy neighbor’s stuff, that got divided into two.

So it’s kind of curious when I came to the Ten Commandments in the Scripture and discovered that wasn’t what I remembered, there was a reason for that. The Ten Commandments are part of the Law, the Law includes the Ten Commandments.

So now when we go back to 1 Timothy we see the Ten Commandments and I’ll read this passage again, **“But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it Lawfully, realizing the fact that Law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are Lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching,”**

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That's the Ten Commandments, almost. There are couplets here. There are three couplets to start with in verse nine. The first couplet is the lawless. The lawless are rebellious. Rebellious is actually describing what lawless are. How they conduct themselves. The lawless are rebellious, those who are without the Law act in rebellion.

The next couplet, the ungodly are sinners, the ungodly are sinners and those who are ungodly act in sinfulness. This element, we have ungodliness produces sinners, those who act in sinfulness.

And the third couplet, those who are unholy are profane, it's where we get the word profanity from. What's profanity? Words that are meaningless, they have no edification, that's what profane is. The unholy act as if God was meaningless. They act as if God was meaningless.

These three couplets summarize the first part of the Ten Commandments. These three couplets address the sins from the first part of the Ten Commandments, which are directly against God, each one of them. They speak to not having any God before God. They speak to not taking God's name in vain, profanely, without meaning, putting a graven image instead of worshipping God in spirit and truth.

The last part, the rest of this list follows the second part of the Ten Commandments, which are sins against mankind. As we read through this it becomes quite apparent. For those who kill their fathers and mothers, killing is literally smiting, striking, their fathers or mothers. This speaks against the fifth commandment of honoring your father and mother. The next one is murders, thou shall not murder.

The next one is immoral men and homosexuals, speaking against the commandment to not commit adultery, and incidentally this is one passage in the New Testament that speaks of homosexuality as being a sin directly.

Kidnappers refers to stealing, the stealing of children which was actually quite a problem in these days, there wasn't the tracking system that there is today and we even have our own problems with this. So kidnapping refers to stealing.

The next commandment, liars and perjurers, thou shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor. And whatever else is contrary to the teaching covers every other sin just like the thou shall not covet. There's a real catchall there. Thou shall not covet because coveting leads to all the sins.

So there is one missing here, isn't there? What commandment is missing out of this? The Sabbath, keeping the Sabbath holy. And you find that missing actually in the New Testament, in fact it is actually spoken against in Romans 14:5, **“One man regards one day above another, another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind.”** Or Colossians 2:16-17, **“Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day, things which are a mere shadow of what is to come, but the substance belongs to Christ.”**

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So what we can conclude is that some commandments continue on because they reflect the character of God. God being worshipped, murder, stealing, but some, specifically one in the Ten Commandments and many others in the Law, are reflecting not the essential character of God, but certain instructions that God gave for certain people at certain times in the New Testament like baptism and the Lord's Supper.

You can think of it this way, if you were to move from California to England you would change laws, you would be tried under the laws of England and many of the laws are exactly the same but there are some differences. So we have some different laws now in the New Testament, for example the commandment to be baptized or participate in the Lord's Supper, those are new to us as a church and some others went away like the Sabbath, because the Sabbath was specifically to the Son's of Israel.

You can find that in Exodus 31:12-17, the Sabbath was given as a sign of the covenant that God made with the Son's of Israel; it's a sign of them, that's why it was restricted to the nation of Israel.

So how do we deal with the Law? There's a reason for the Law. The reason for the Law is the Law is useful to bring the gospel to the unrighteous, to unrighteous people. So Jewish people steeped in the Law would be able to see their need for Christ, their sinfulness and need a Savior from their sins. And that's how the Law was useful. The purpose of the Law was to lead people to the Messiah, the Savior from sin.

What does that do for the rest of us? Most of us are not steeped in the Law growing up. Most of the rest of us will not really know those types of people, but the Law is still useful in this sense. Even those who are without the Law have a sense of the Law called their conscience; it is a sense of the Law called conscience. That's from Romans 2:14-15.

Even though there's people around you who could not even tell you one thing about the Old Testament they still have a sense of right and wrong, they still do, they know when they violate their own conscience. Even if their conscience is widely skewed from truth, all people have some semblance of understanding of right and wrong. And even when they have a skewed sense they know that they don't even keep their own flawed standards. So what ever their flawed standards are, they still are hypocritical even to what they advocate for themselves.

No one can legitimately say they are perfect, they haven't sinned, and even few people will even attempt to argue that verbally, that they are okay, that they have never done anything wrong. The gospel can build upon this innate sense of guilt to point people to the forgiver.

So when we speak with people we have something to start with, an innate sense of guilt, the Law of the conscience that helps people to have a sense of need for the Savior and if God is at work in their lives he will bring that sense of need to connecting with the forgiver, the one who forgives the guilt, and they will have a desire to be released. The gospel builds upon this innate sense of guilt and we have been entrusted with the gospel.

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The gospel of Christ has been entrusted to us and the Law is good and people can see their need. Paul had been entrusted with this and we too have been entrusted with this and let's move through people with the understanding of they have a need and help them to see that their guilt can be relieved by Christ in His gospel.

Let's pray together. Lord, we thank You for delivering us from sin. We thank You for the message that delivers mankind from sin.

We thank You for the sense that everybody has deep within themselves, though they may have suppressed it in unrighteousness, that they are sinful and that they need a Savior. Lord, we pray that our message, our words, can go forth among the people of the world to bring them to You, the Savior. That people can be responding to Your Word through the ministry that we can bring. We pray that each one here will be able to participate in this work that You have called us to. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.