

The Law and Salvation – Comparing Bible Versions

Law is Light?

We often think of the Bible as a whole being a light (Psalm 119:105 “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”).

- We know that God is light (1 John 1:5 This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all.)
 - Many would agree with me if I said Jesus being a light (John 8:12 Jesus said, “**I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.**”
- Those are pretty well known, but did you know that the law is light too...

KJV - Proverbs 6:23 For the commandment *is* a lamp; and the law *is* light; and reproofs of instruction *are* the way of life:

- Without the law, we would have no idea what God expects or what is right versus wrong.
 - The law of God is light by illuminating what is holy versus unholy and what is righteous behavior versus sinful behavior.
 - When we are sharing the Gospel with someone, the first hurdle that we must jump over is showing the person and having them realize that they are a sinner, which is impossible to do without the law.
- For the Christian, the law illuminates what is sinful and often shows the consequences of sins that are masked by the deception of this world.
 - This is why we teach and preach from both the Old and New Testaments and when we present the Gospel, we make sure that people know that in the eyes of God, they are a sinner, because Galatians 3:24 says, “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”
 - If the law is light, what do the modern Bible versions say in this same passage of Proverbs 6:23...

ESV – Proverbs 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light, and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life,

NASB – Proverbs 6: 23 For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching is light; And reproofs for discipline are the way of life

NIV – Proverbs 6:23 For this command is a lamp, this teaching is a light, and correction and instruction are the way to life,

Message – Proverbs 6:23 For sound advice is a beacon, good teaching is a light, moral discipline is a life path.

- They replaced the law being the light to teaching being the light.
 - You might not immediately see how dangerous this is but who teaches?
Teachers.
 - They have effectively replaced the law of the Bible from being the source of light to the teacher being the source of light.
- Teachers can teach anything and call it the truth and these modern versions are supporting it wholeheartedly.

2 Timothy 4:3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

2 Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

- The Bible makes it clear that there are sound teachers, that teach from the Word of God and there are false teachers that create their own doctrines and beliefs and teach “damnable heresies.”
 - Then how can there be both a difference in teachers and the modern versions saying in Proverbs 6:23 that “teaching is light”? It’s confusion!
- I have said it before that the primary goal of creating a new translation is not readability or clarity, it is to make money for the publisher.
 - The more the Bible appeals to a wider audience, the more money you make with that translation.
 - The “law is light” is exclusive and offensive because the law of God tells us what is right and wrong, we would rather have “teaching is light” because we can get a powerful speaker to itch our ears and tells us what we want to hear.

What Does the Law Do to the Soul?

KJV – Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD *is* perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD *is* sure, making wise the simple.

- We already talked about the law being light, but it not only illuminates the sin, it also plays a part in “converting the soul” of a lost person.
 - The law shows us both how wicked humanity is but also how holy God is at the same time.

- He is not breaking his law and he is not accepting sin, but gives consequences for sin and the wages of sin is death.
- The law illuminates the sin, show that the lost person is a sinner, but also plays a part with the Holy Spirit to convict the sinner of their sins.
 - It helps to illuminate the guilt and consequences of the sins and at that point, the next step of the Gospel is to introduce Jesus Christ and his payment for the sins of the world on the Cross of Calvary.
 - The goal for the Gospel is for Jesus to convert the soul of a sinner to one that is saved by His blood.
 - What do the other versions say about what the law does to the soul?

ESV – Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;

NASB – Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.

NIV – Psalm 19:7 The law of the LORD is perfect, refreshing the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple.

Message – Psalm 19:7 The revelation of God is whole and pulls our lives together. The signposts of God are clear and point out the right road.

- The ESV says the law is “reviving the soul” (bringing the soul back to life, as if it were previously alive).
 - The NASB says the law is “restoring the soul” (as if it were bringing the soul back to where it was previously).
 - The NIV says the law is “refreshing the soul” (as if it were giving strength to a tired soul, cheering up a depressed soul).
 - The Message says the law “pulls our lives together” (as if it were just an improvement or small change).

Galatians 3:11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is* evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

Galatians 3:13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that hangeth on a tree:

Galatians 3:21-22 *Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. **22**

But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

- Galatians 3 makes it clear that the law cannot justify (it cannot pardon sin, it can bring us with right standing with God.
 - It also says that the law is a curse, because we constantly sinned against it and it brought condemnation and death.
 - Finally, Galatians 3:21-22 says that law could not give life (so how could these modern versions say that the law revives, restores, refreshes and pulls our lives together?).
 - The law works in the conversion process by ultimately pointing us to the one who completely fulfilled the law, Jesus Christ!