

Serm. Series: The Good, The Goad, The Guide: Ten Commandments

Sermon Text: 1 Timothy 1:5, 8; Matthew 7:21-23; 22:34-40 The Law Is a Guide: The Third Lawful Use of the Law

Because God's law reflects His character and reveals the inner character and conduct that pleases Him, we lawfully use the law as a guide for life.

We lawfully use the law to:

1) Define love for God (1 Tim. 1:5; Matt. 22:34-38, 40)

- a) "The aim of our charge [which includes a lawful use of the law (v. 8)] is love . . ."
- b) The First a Great Commandment does not displace the moral law, but summarizes it (Matt. 22:34-38, 40).
 - i) Religion of One God (1st Commandment)
 - ii) Regulation of Worship (2nd Commandment)
 - iii) Reverence for God's Person, Revelation, and Works (3rd Commandment)
 - iv) Rest of Holy Contemplation and Communion (4th Commandment)
 - v) Righteousness of Life among Humanity (5th-10th Commandments)
 - (1) 2 Tables of the Law
 - (2) We cannot love God if we do not keep both Tables (Isa. 1:15-17; 58:6; 1 John 4:20-21).
- c) **Application:**
 - i) Warning against empty professions of love (John 14:15, 21, 23; 1 John 2:3-6).
 - ii) Augustine's principle of interpretation of Scripture: love.

2) Define love for neighbor (1 Tim. 1:5; Matt. 22:39-40)

- a) "The aim of our charge is love . . ."
- b) What is love for other people?
- c) We cannot love people if we do not keep the first Table of commands.
- d) The Second Great Commandment summarizes our duty to God in relation to humanity (Matt. 22:39-40).
 - i) Religion of God's Revelation (1st-4th Commandments)
 - ii) Regard for Authority (5th Commandment)
 - iii) Reverence for God's Image-bearers (6th Commandment)
 - iv) Resolution of Fidelity (7th Commandment)
 - v) Respect for Other's Stewardship (8th Commandment)
 - vi) Righteousness in Testimony and Judgment (9th Commandment)
 - vii) Relish of God's Providence over You (10th Commandment)
- e) **Application:**
 - i) Warning against self-deception (James 1:26-27).
 - ii) "New" love (1 John 2:7-11; John 13:34; 15:9-11)
 - iii) Augustine's principle of interpretation of Scripture: love.
 - iv) Law's Positive: What the law requires; Negative: What the law forbids; General equity of the case law; Wisdom literature; Holy Spirit, who is Love, guides our application

3) Inspect heart motives (1 Tim. 1:5; Matt. 5:21-37)

- a) "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart"
- b) "The law is spiritual" (Rom. 7:14).
- c) Jesus shows the spirituality of the law (Matt. 5:21-37)
- d) **Application:**
 - i) Self-examination by meditation upon the law (James 1:22-27; Psalm 1).
 - ii) Believers are convicted of sin (James 2:9), not unto condemnation, as the world (John 16:8), but unto repentance, as God's people.

4) Inform the conscience (1 Tim. 1:5)

- a) "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience"
- b) The faculty of the soul for moral discernment
- c) Function of Conscience: Testify About Choices (Rom. 2:15; 9:1; 2 Cor. 1:12) Others' Actions (2 Cor. 4:2; 5:11)
- d) Health of Conscience ("good c." Acts 23:1; 1 Tim. 1:5, 19; 1 Pet. 3:16, 21; "clear c." Acts 24:16; 1 Tim. 3:9; 2 Tim. 1:3; Heb. 13:18; "for the sake of c." Rom. 9:5; 1 Cor. 10:28)
- e) Damaging of Conscience (1 Tim. 4:2; Titus 1:15)

- f) Uninformed/Misinformed Conscience (1 Cor. 8, 10)
- g) Christian Liberty under the Law (1 Cor. 10:29)
- h) **Application:**
 - i) Patience with misinformed consciences
 - ii) Humility to have conscience educated by God's Word
 - iii) Hope for the defiled conscience is found in the blood of Christ (Heb. 9:9, 14; 10:22)

5) Incite faith (1 Tim. 1:5; Matt. 7:21-23)

- a) "The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith" (*anhypocritos*)
- b) Not speculative theology (1 Tim. 1:4, 6)
- c) Not lip-service (Matt. 7:21-23)
- d) Not dead faith (James 2:14-26)
- e) **Application:** "Faith working through love." (Gal. 5:6)

Doxology: Praise the LORD, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion! For He strengthens the bars of your gates; He blesses your children within you. He makes peace in your borders; He fills you with the finest of the wheat. He sends out His command to the earth; His word runs swiftly. He gives snow like wool; He scatters frost like ashes. He hurls down His crystals of ice like crumbs; who can stand before His cold? He sends out His word and melts them; He makes His wind blow and the waters flow. He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and rules to Israel. He has not dealt thus with any other nation; they do not know His rules. Praise the LORD! (Psalm 147:12-20)