

Using the Law
Deut. 5:1-21

Point: God's commandments have great depth and rich application.

Why This Topic?

Confusion: What is Law? How to use it? Its importance.

Introduction:

The law is like a 3D puzzle. It sits compact, dense and unified. But like a 3D puzzle it can be unpacked into its full implications. Unpacking the puzzle is accomplished by understanding the proper relationship between the parts. The integrated and unified characteristics of the law are seen in the *summary*¹ of the Law, the Ten Commandments. The fact that the Law is a unity is further seen in James' insistence that to violate one part is to violate all of it (James 2.10). There is interpenetration between the Commandments as well. This is demonstrated in the sin of cheating. It is not merely lying nor simply stealing: it is both. So, the law is not just the bare-bones Ten Commandments, it is more. [The points (1-8) correspond to the Larger Catechism points on the last page]

I. Packed: The Law Described

A. UNITY: Time-Space continuum (Point 3)

1. Identity: Col. 3.5: Covetousness is Idolatry
2. Combined: Amos 8.5: Lying Plus Stealing = Cheating
3. Progressive: 1 Tim. 6.10: Love of Money Related to Multiple Evils (Root to Fruit)
4. Integrated: James 2.10: Break One; Break All

¹ Mat. 22:37; 15:4; 19:19

B. TIME: Forbidden Never; Commanded Maybe (Point 5)

1. All Forbidden Requirements are never to be done
 - a) Heb. 11.25: choosing Christ over sin
 - b) Job 13.7: rhetorical: don't speak evilly
2. All Commands are to be done: Deut. 4.8,9
3. Particular Duties are not to be done at all times
 - a) Mat. 12.7 mercy over sacrifice
 - (1) *Mercy (eating) over narrow obedience to Sabbath*
 - b) Truth Telling: People don't need to know EVERYTHING

C. LENGTH: Everyone bound; Everything bound; Absolute Perfection (Point 1)

1. Rom. 1-3; Mat. 11: 21 (Pagan cities)

D. WIDTH: All elements of the command: causes, means, occasion, appearances; provocations thereunto (Point 6)

1. Two Examples:
 - a) No Verse Demands Translations:
 - (1) *Q156: Is the Word to be read by all? YES: therefore translate!*
 - (2) *This demonstrates that those actions needed to fulfill the command are required as well*
 - b) No Verse Demands Reading
 - (1) *Not Deut. 6:6 or Proverbs. Most Learned Verbal Memorization.*
 - (2) *Yet Church strived for it*

(3) By Christ's time: you heard it SAID, but it is WRITTEN

c) Positive: Knowledge of languages; skill at translation

d) Negative: Not untrained (children); not during war, etc.

2. Causes: Internal? External? Intentional?

a) Matt. 5.21ff. Anger/Lust Root-Cause of Acts

b) Irresponsible language may cause a fight (teens)

3. Means: Which Tool? Immediate? Mediate?

a) Mat. 15.4-6: Cursing Parents;

b) Different Means; Same Effect

4. Occasion: During the night? During the day? At home? At work?

a) Don't Bring Work Home: Different occasion

5. Appearances:

a) 1 Thess. 5:22,23 (appearance; Friberg: kinds)

b) appearances: weaker brother; witness to unbelievers (Rom. 14)

c) kinds: variations on a theme

6. Provocations: Taunting; Irritating; Instigating

- a) Gal. 5:26: Pushing the limit
- b) Brothers & Sisters do this naturally
- c) Rather Rom. 12:10

7. PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES

- a) Businesses
- b) SCHOOLS

E. DEPTH: Spiritual: mind, will and emotions; words, works, gestures (Point 2)

- 1. Outward: the finger, names, actions
- 2. Inward: mind, will, emotions, conscience
- 3. Rom 7:14 (Spiritual: heart); v.21 mind
- 4. Deut. 6:5, Mat. 22:37: all our faculties
- 5. Not a half-way religion
- 6. LOVE & LAW: If you love me....?
- 7. Mat. 23:23

II. Unpacked: The Law Explained

A. Tools for the Law (Point 4)

1. Parity of the Law: Binary Reasoning

a) No Third Option Except in Christian Liberty

2. Tools

a) Syllogisms

(1) No one verse says: "Trinity"

*(2) That which has all the attributes of God is God;
Christ has x...*

b) A Fortiori

(1) Lesser to greater: If a bike cannot carry two ppl, it cannot carry three.

(2) Greater to lesser: If a tow rope can move a truck, it can move a car

(3) If cursing parents is wrong, how much more against God?

(4) Matt. 12:11; Mat. 6:30; Mat. 7:11

(5) OT to NT: children in cov't; more grace in NT, how much more for them?

(6) Multiple principles

(a) Mat. 10:24: leader not greater than master

(b) Christ's anointing

(c) Therefore how much more should we be publicly validated

c) Inductive: most likely

3. Commanded Implies Forbidden

- a) Is. 58:13
- b) Deut. 6:13 → Fear no one else
- c) Mat. 4:9 Serve God → Do NOT Serve Satan
- d) Mat. 15:4 Honor Parents → Do not dishonor parents

4. Forbidden Implies Commanded

- a) Mat. 5:21 Murder → Anger → Avoid anger → Duty to reconcile
- b) Eph. 4:28 Do not steal → Work instead
- c) Do not murder → Preserve Life
- d) Do not adultery → Preserve marriage
- e) Do not lie → Tell the truth

(1) But what is commanded is not always to be done

5. Promise Implies Punishment

- a) Ex. 20:12 → no honor; curse of short life
- b) Prov. 30:17 joined with Ex. 20:12

6. Punishment Implies Promise

B. Relationship of the Law

1. To Ourselves: Accountability (Point 7)

- a) Forbidden or Commanded (All Law)

(1) Deut. 6:6,7: Every opportunity

b) According to our vocation

(1) Superiors: Ex. 20.10; Gen. 18.19; Josh. 24.15

(2) Equals: Lev. 19.17

(a) HOA: neighbor problems

2. To Others: To Support (Point 8)

a) Commanded

(1) To be Helpful: 2Cor. 1:24

b) Forbidden

(1) To Avoid: 1 Tim. 5:22

C. The Law of Love: Neither Legalism or Antinomian

1. Deut. 6:5

2. Mat. 22:36ff. against legalism

3. Rom. 13:8ff.

III. Summary

1. Understand the Inter-relationships:

a) Height, Width and Depth

b) This will help you understand the law in all its fullness

2. Use It Aright: For God's Glory

a) Mat. 23:23: Weightier matters! Gospel first!

b) To guide you in the will of God

c) To guide you to Christ in violation thereof

Q99: What rules are to be observed for the right understanding of the Ten Commandments?

A99: For the right understanding of the Ten Commandments, these rules are to be observed:

1. That the law is perfect, and bindeth everyone to full conformity in the whole man unto the righteousness thereof, and unto entire obedience forever; so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin.[a]

This is the length of the law.

a] Psa. 19:7; James 2:10; Matt. 5:21-22

2. That it is spiritual, and so reaches the understanding, will, affections, and all other powers of the soul; as well as words, works, and gestures. [a]

This is the depth of the law.

a] Rom. 7:14; Deut. 6:5; Matt. 5:21-22, 27-28, 33-34, 37-39, 43-44; 22:37-39

3. That one and the same thing, in divers respects, is required or forbidden in several commandments. [a]

This is the unity of the Law.

a] Col. 3:5; Amos 8:5; Prov. 1:19; I Tim. 6:10

4. That as, where a duty is commanded, the contrary sin is forbidden;[a] and, where a sin is forbidden, the contrary duty is commanded:[b] so, where a promise is annexed, the contrary threatening is included;[c] and, where a threatening is annexed, the contrary promise is included. [d]

This is the parity of the Law

a] Isa. 58:13; Deut. 6:13; Matt. 4:9-10; 15:4-6; b] Matt. 5:21-25; Eph. 4:28
c] Exod. 20:12; Prov. 30:17; d] Jer. 18:7-8; Exod. 20:7; Psa. 15:1, 4-5; 24:4-5

5. That what God forbids, is at no time to be done;[a] What he commands, is always our duty;[b] and yet every particular duty is not to be done at all times.[c]

This is the timing of the Law.

a] Job. 13:7; 36:21; Rom. 3:8; Heb. 11:25; b] Deut. 4:8-9; c] Matt. 12:7

6. That under one sin or duty, all of the same kind are forbidden or commanded; together with all the causes, means, occasions, and appearances thereof, and provocations thereunto.[a]

This is the width of the Law.

a] Mt. 5:21-22,27-28; 15:4-6; Heb. 10:24-25; I Thes. 5:22-23; Gal. 5:26; Col. 3:21

7. That what is forbidden or commanded to ourselves, we are bound, according to our places, to endeavor that it may be avoided or performed by others, according to the duty of their places. [a]

This is the accountability of the Law.

a] Exod. 20:10; Lev. 19:17; Gen. 18:19; Josh. 24:15; Deut. 6:6-7

8. That in what is commanded to others, we are bound, according to our places and callings, to be helpful to them;[a] and to take heed of partaking with others in: What is forbidden them.

[b]

This is the supportability of the Law.

a] II Cor. 1:24; b] I Tim. 5:22