

The Law Is Not Enough

Exodus 20:1-21; Genesis 15:1-6

Todd Chapman - June 11, 2017

The understanding that Old Testament folks were saved by keeping the Law and New Testament folks are saved by grace is a flawed, unbiblical understanding that is detrimental to our faith journey. God has always saved by His grace through faith.

THE LAW:

How it has been misunderstood: Old Testament followers of God were saved by keeping the Law.

- Distorted view of the Law. Legalism.
 - So much of Pentateuch contains the Law.
 - Proposes we can do it.
 - Misrepresents God.
 - Removes the need of Jesus.

How it was intended. The Law was intended to point to our utter, total, absolute need for a Savior.

- Accurate view of the Law. Faith.
 - Pentateuch points to faith.
 - We can NOT do it.
 - God loves us and does it all for us.
 - Escalates appropriately our need of, and affection for Jesus.

Exodus 20:1-21

¹ And God spoke all these words, saying, ² "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³ "You shall have no other gods before me. ⁴ "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. ⁷ "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. ⁸ "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹ Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰ but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. ¹¹ For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. ¹² "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you. ¹³ "You shall not murder. ¹⁴ "You shall not commit adultery. ¹⁵ "You shall not steal. ¹⁶ "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. ¹⁷ "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not

Scripture this week:

covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's." ¹⁸ Now when all the people saw the thunder and the flashes of lightning and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, the people were afraid and trembled, and they stood far off ¹⁹ and said to Moses, "You speak to us, and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us, lest we die."²⁰ Moses said to the people, "Do not fear, for God has come to test you, that the fear of him may be before you, that you may not sin." ²¹ The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was.

Genesis 15:1-6

¹ After these things the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision: "Fear not, Abram, I am your shield; your reward shall be very great." ² But Abram said, "O Lord GOD, what will you give me, for I continue childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" ³ And Abram said, "Behold, you have given me no offspring, and a member of my household will be my heir." ⁴ And behold, the word of the LORD came to him: "This man shall not be your heir; your very own son shall be your heir." ⁵ And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." ⁶ And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

Questions for Discussion:

Ex. 20:1-21 and Gen 15:1-6.

What does it mean?

1. How would you summarize God's story thus far?
2. What is Abram struggling to comprehend in 15:1-5?
3. Why is God's promise difficult for Abram to trust?
4. What does God promise Abram?
5. How will God's promise to Abram be fulfilled?
6. In what sense will Abram's descendants be innumerable?
7. What is the importance of an heir?
8. How does Abram's perspective change?
9. How is Abram made righteous?
10. What is Abram's "action" in 15:1-6?
11. How would you paraphrase Genesis 15:1-6?

How does it apply?

1. What does this text teach us about God?
2. Where are you tempted to try to earn God's favor?
3. How do we balance "saved by faith" vs. easy believism?
4. How would our lives look differently if we relied more fully on Jesus' work and less on ours?
5. How can we celebrate God's united, unchanging plan of salvation this week?