



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

1 Timothy 1:8-11

"Should We Preach the Mosaic Law?"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the Scriptures and praise Thee that we have been given assurance by the Lord Jesus that they shall be fulfilled in their entirety and perfectly. We thank Thee that though heaven and earth may pass away, Thy word shall not pass away. And we thank Thee that there is no word that Thou hast spoken that shall return unto Thee void. And so we thank Thee that when we turn to the Scriptures we turn to that which is quick, living, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword. And we pray that as we study again tonight, that Thou will be with us and guide us and increase our devotion to Jesus Christ through the study of Thy word. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Returning again to Paul's First Epistle too Timothy, and our subject tonight is "Should We Preach the Mosaic Law?" Now, let me read these verses, although we're not going to consider them for a little while. Beginning with the 8th verse, the apostle has introduced his epistle with a salutation. He has spoken to Timothy concerning apostasy and heresy that is troubling the churches around the area of Ephesus, specifically Timothy is to stay at Ephesus and charge some that they teach no other

doctrine than holy Scripture. And then in the light of the fact that these false teachers were men who sought to be teachers of the Law, that leads the apostle into a little digression and it is found in verses 8 through 11. He says,

"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For fornicators, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust."

We've been saying in the two previous studies that 1 Timothy is primarily a pastoral letter, and by that I mean that it is a letter that is addressed to Timothy and has to do with things that have to do with the shepherding of the flock of God. It was written to set forth the conduct befitting members of the house of God, the conduct of individuals in the local church, and then the personal conduct of those who are members of the local church. The occasion was Paul's desire to combat the novelties that were being taught by the false teachers that were at Ephesus and evidently when news came to him that the church at Ephesus was troubled by novel new and false teaching, he took that occasion to write Timothy this grand little epistle that has to do with how we behave ourselves in the house of God. He wanted then solidly grounded in the word. Now, that is evident. It's not surprising, of course, that it should be so. But he has again mentioned sound doctrine. He doesn't want Timothy to allow any doctrine other than sound doctrine to be taught in Ephesus if he has anything to say about it.

Last night I was in Nashville, Tennessee for a Bible class in a home that I've been teaching over this winter, since last September. And this is my next-to-last time in the

study of 2 Peter, which I am doing for them in four lessons. I did here in about eight or ten or eleven. After the class someone came up to me, and I was stressing again the importance of sound doctrine and also admonishing them concerning the heresy with which Peter dealt in that epistle. And one young man came up afterwards and said that he had had an employee in his business who had, when she had become the mother of three children, she just decided two or three years ago, she's still very young. She's only about thirty now, but it was only about two or three years ago she just suddenly decided she was tired of married life and wanted to enjoy things again, and so she up and divorced her husband and left him with the three little children and decided that she would have a good time for two or three years. But a strange thing happened. She found Jesus Christ as her Savior after her divorce from her husband. I'm not recommending this, incidentally, [Laughter] as the proper way to get saved. But according to the testimony of this man she has found the Lord as Savior. She saw him the other day and she said, "I hear that you have joined the First Presbyterian Church."

I should say before I say what I'm going to say that there is a church in Nashville called the Lord's Chapel. I'm sorry you people here are in Believer's Chapel. That name is not quite as good as the name of this group in Nashville. The Lord's Chapel is the name of their church, and it's a charismatic church. And it's well known over that area as a charismatic church. They specialize in speaking in tongues and generally carrying on such as the charismatics do. And it's growing rapidly. It's a remarkably growing church. Their church burned down about a year ago. I don't know whether it was because of what was going on inside or not, but they have not only built it back, but built it back bigger and larger. And that's the background of this.

And she said to this young man, "I understand you've changed to the First Presbyterian Church." And he said, "Yes, I have." And she said, "Well, that's a fine church. But I'm going over to the Lord's Chapel. I need the heavy stuff." [Laughter]

Now, you don't get the heavy stuff in a charismatic church, you can be sure of that. You get the real light stuff.

Now, the Apostle Paul here was an anxious for these believers to have sound doctrine. And I am sure that he would have had some sharp words to say about the charismatic movement. But I didn't intend to really attack them tonight, though I'm not unhappy that that subject came up. [Laughter] I want to speak tonight about "Should We Preach the Mosaic Law?" And I think it is important for us before we take a look at what is said here in our text, at the question of the Christian and the Law of Moses.

This question is a most controverted subject both historically and practically. Historically there has been a great deal of discussion among sound Christians down through the years about the Christian's relationship to the Law. Now, of course, most of us in Believers Chapel could trace our spiritual lineage back to the Reformation of the 16th century, because the things that we proclaim here and the things that most of us believe are doctrine that the Reformers uncovered again in the illumination that the Holy Spirit gave to them. Well, when Luther uncovered the doctrine of justification by faith, or rather when he was found by God and came to the understanding of that great doctrine, he taught that there were two uses for the Law of Moses. One he called the civil use, or the political use, of the Law of God. And he meant by that that the Law of God as expressed in the Old Testament contained principles that were extremely useful and important for the ordering of life in the world. Now, he was speaking about secular righteousness. He simply said that the Scriptures of the Old Testament give us principles that are useful for governments, for national or local or state governments in our situation, that would enable them to order life in a more effective way.

Most of us know, of course, that many of these principles that are found in the Law of Moses are principles that are inculcated in our Laws in this land. And one of the reasons for the difficulties that we are having is that we are abandoning some of the great

principles that are found in the Law of God. Now, Luther believed very strongly that there was this civil or political use of the Law. And he proclaimed it.

But then the second use of the Law was the one that for Luther was the important one, and that he called the theological or the convicting use of the Law of Moses. He felt that the Law of Moses was designed by God to bring men to the knowledge of sin. And he was surely right about this, because the Apostle Paul states, "By the Law is the knowledge of sin." We will consider this question later in more detail. But there is no question but that the second use of the Law was the important thing for the Lutherans. And Luther felt that in the proper preaching of the gospel, one should first preach the Law and bring men under conviction and then preach the gospel to them. And that the proper way to preach was to preach the Law and then the gospel. And so in Lutheran theology at the present time, you will have great stress upon what they call the "Law and the Gospel." Now, that's a reflection of Luther's belief that the use of the Law as a convicting agent in the hand of God is a scriptural principle.

The Reformed side of the Reformation, that associated with John Calvin and his succession, added generally speaking, a third use of the Law. And they called it the third use of the Law or the normative use of the Law. And by that they meant that the Law not only served as a guide for civil and political governments and civil life in the nations, not only was it a mean for conviction of sin, but also the Law was a normative guide for Christians who have come to faith in Jesus Christ. And while some of them did not believe that Christians should be under the Law, they nevertheless felt that the Law was a device by which God instructed us in principles that aided us in our Christian living.

Now, Luther would not accept any so-called third use of the Law, and so the Reformers on the Calvinistic side fought a little bit with the Reformers on the Lutheran side over whether there was a third use of the Law. They both agreed, however, that the Law was useful for civil life and political life and that the Law was a means of bringing men to conviction of sin. This is not only a historical question, but it's a practical

question, because it has to do with the question, faces us very commonly as Christians, after we have come to faith in Jesus Christ are we under the Ten Commandments? But are we under Law?

Now, I think that the New Testament is very clear on that point. The Apostle Paul states in Romans chapter 6, "We are not under Law but under grace." Then in the 7th chapter he teaches the same thing, that we have died with respect to the Law. We live in a new sphere of life. We are now related to the Holy Spirit. That does not mean, of course, that the Law does not serve us as a means by which we are reminded of the holiness and righteousness of God. And while we are not under Law, one of the tests of the spiritual life is that the righteousness of the Law is produced in the life of the believer. The Apostle Paul in Romans chapter 8 and verse 4, in a very important text in this connection, says "That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." Christians in the present age, having believed in the Lord Jesus, are not under Law. They are under the Holy Spirit. He has come into the life of the believer to take the place of the Law. We are not under a code. We are to be guided by a person who indwells us, but for an outward test of the believer's life, Paul states, "The righteousness of the Law should be fulfilled in us." So if we are constantly breaking the Ten Commandments, that is good evidence that we are not being led by the Holy Spirit.

Now, having said that, let's take a look at the general features of the Mosaic Law just as preparation for looking at these verses in 1 Timothy chapter 1. The Law, as you know from reading the Scriptures, came in after the Abrahamic covenant had been established with Abraham. Why was the Law necessary? Why, after having given the Messianic promises to Abraham and to his seed, did God find it necessary to give Israel at Mount Sinai, the Mosaic Law? Well, the reason that God gave Israel the Mosaic Law was because the Abrahamic Covenant did not emphasize sin. The Abrahamic Covenant told of the blessings that God would bring to Abraham, to his seed, and all the families of the

earth through faith in that seed. But it did not say anything about the nature of man. And so at the time of the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai God gave into the hand of Moses an instrument by which he would be able to bring men to the conviction of their sin, which would prepare them for the coming of the Redeemer, the Lord Jesus. So the Law was necessary because God deemed it necessary for us to be taught how sinful we really are.

The Law was preparatory, and of course, it was a provisional document. It was provisional, because we are taught in Galatians that it came in after the promises. And we are also taught in the death of our Lord, when after our Lord had died, God rent the veil of the temple in twain from top to bottom and did away with the whole ceremonial system. He was teaching us the fact that the Law had only a temporary place in the economy of God. It came in at a particular time. It could not disannul the Abrahamic promises. Paul taught in Galatians chapter 3 it was provisional until the coming of our Lord Jesus, and when the Lord Jesus came the Law was done away with, because the Holy Spirit was given to take the place of the Law.

Sometimes we tend, in our study of the Old Testament, to fail to note that the Law is a unity. We cannot pick and choose in the midst of the Law. The Law was made up of the moral law of the Ten Commandments, the social laws that pertained to Israel and their political and civil life, and also the ceremonial laws, the whole Levitical system of priesthood and sacrifice and offering. But all of these things belong to the Mosaic Law. If a person, for example, broke one of the features of the Mosaic Law he was guilty of breaking them all, James has told us. The Law is a unity.

Now, of course, it was never intended to convey salvation, and even their ceremonial aspect was never intended to convey salvation. When the priests performed their sacrifices, they were not doing that in order to obtain salvation. That priestly system became the means of fellowship with God for believers, so that they maintained their fellowship with God by carrying out the prescriptions of the ceremonial Law, which God

had given to Israel. So the Law was never intended to give salvation. Hypothetically, of course, if one could keep the Law perfectly, then he would be saved. But actually no person could possibly keep the Mosaic Law perfectly, because we are sinners. The apostle states in Galatians chapter 2 and verse 21, "I do not make void the grace of God when I speak of justification by faith, for if righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain." So the Mosaic Law was never intended to bring salvation to men. It was intended primarily to bring conviction of sin.

Well now, having said that, let's think for a moment about the reasons that God gave the Law. And what I'd like to do now is to turn to a series of passages and look at them, and then we're going to look at our passage in 1 Timothy. But first of all, let's turn to Galatians chapter 3, and verse 19, Galatians chapter 3, and verse 19, because here we are taught that God gave the Law in order to give the knowledge of sin. Galatians chapter 3, and verse 19, the apostle writes after having said "The inheritance is not by the Law otherwise it would not be by promise, but God gave it to Abraham by promise," he asks the question in verse 19 then, "Wherefore then serveth the law?" Why the Law? And adds, "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." It was added because of transgressions. In other words, it was given to rouse within us the sense of our sin.

Now, he states this also over in Romans chapter 3, and verse 20, so will you turn over there? Romans chapter 3, and verse 20, the passage that I referred to earlier in the message, verse 20 of Romans chapter 3, "Therefore" Paul writes, "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." The covenant that God made with Abraham is primary; the promises that are associated with the coming of the Messiah are primary. But man must be brought to see his need and to desire blessing before he will be responsive to the promises. And so, God gave the Mosaic Law in order to bring us to a sense of sin. So the Law was the means of stirring up within the inner man of men, the sense of sin.

Let me illustrate, let's just suppose that I should have on this little pulpit desk before me a glass of water. Let's suppose it contained some very deadly germs, but they were very difficult to see. Let's suppose that they have, by virtue of being left here for some time, they have sunk down to the bottom of the glass and really you cannot see them at all. Now suppose I should take a spoon and stir the water in that glass. Then looking you could see that there was some foreign element in the water. Now, let's suppose that the spoon was absolutely clean. Now, is the spoon then responsible for the dirt and the germs that are in the glass? No, the spoon has simply enabled us to see what was there all the time.

Now, the Law is holy, just, and good, the apostle says. It is not evil itself. It is God's means by which we see what is really in our hearts. One might ask the questions, how can the Law both strain sin and at the same time stimulate sin? Well, the command inwardly stimulates to rebellion. Have you ever noticed how it is that when someone tells you, "Don't do that" that the first thing you want to do is to do it? Have you ever noticed that? Well now, if you don't notice it in adults, you notice it in children. Now, I have two little children around my house right now. They are beautiful children. They're my own grandchildren, and unfortunately they have so won their grandfather's heart that I'm probably not as hard on them as I should be. Can you imagine how I would react? The other night I heard a little outside of my study, "You hoo." [Laughter] I said, "Who's there?" She said, "It's your beloved daughter." Well, it would be very difficult for me to discipline her at that moment.

But now, the command, I've noticed that you give to children some how or other stimulates within the hearts of children the desire to do the very thing that you say "Do not do." And yet, in the Law there were also penalties, or sanctions we say, so that penalties and sanctions in the Law are designed to restrain us from doing the things that displease the Lord. But since our hearts are wicked, when the commandments come, "Thou shalt not," there is the wickedness of the inner man that is stirred up within, often

to do the very things that we are told not to do. Well, the first use then of the Law, or the first purpose of the Law, is to give them knowledge of sin.

Now, let's turn to another passage that reveals another aspect very closely related to this. Romans chapter 7 and verse 13, in which the apostle informs us that the Law has been given to reveal the evil nature of sin, not only to give us the knowledge of sin, but to let us know how evil sin is. Verse 13, after the apostle has said the Law is holy and the commandment holy, just, and good, he asks the questions, "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." So you see, it is the work of the Law to enable us to see how sinful sin is, that sin is so evil that when the good commandment of the Law comes with its "Thou shalt not" that only stirs up sin to be exceedingly sinful. So you can see that the Law is given in order that we might understand how evil sin really is.

Third, let's turn to Romans chapter 5, and verse 20, Romans 5, verse 20. Now, the apostle up to this point has been speaking about the parallel between Adam and Christ. And when he has reached something of a stopping point in verse 19 he has said, "For as by one man's disobedience," Adam, "many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Now, someone might answer, "Well Paul, you've traced righteousness to Christ, and you've traced disobedience to Adam. Where does the Law come in?" And after all remember, the children of Israel had been for many hundred of years under Law, and their whole life was regulated by Law, those sacrifices, the commandments. And all of the civil and political aspects of their life were governed by features of the Mosaic Law. So "Paul, what about the Law?" And he answers in verse 20 by saying, "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." In other words, the Law came in order to stir up the number of sins to increase sin. That seems a strange thing that a good thing like the Law would be given by God to increase sin, but that is what he says, "Moreover the

law entered, that the offence might abound." That means that the Law came that sins might so abound in number that we might sense just exactly how sinful we really are.

Incidentally, that word translated "the Law entered" is a word that was used of theaters for individuals who played a subsidiary part on a stage. If we could imagine, for example, a stage such as this stage being the stage of a theater, and if we could imagine on the front part of the stage a scene in which the leading characters are speaking with one another and the plot is progressing. And then if we could imagine back over in a corner a chair and a table and a lamp, and if we could imagine a door back there, too, if you cannot you can think of them coming out of the baptistery. And they come out of that door if, for example, a butler were to come out of that door and go over and take an ash tray and empty it and then pass back out the door while the main characters are carrying on something up here on this part of the platform. The word that was used to describe the butler coming in and coming in along side was the word that is used here. So the Law has secondary status. It is not the primary thing; the Abrahamic promises are the primary thing. The promises that lead up to the sufferings of the Messiah on the cross are primary, but the Law has that temporary force and that secondary force of bringing to us the knowledge of our sin, and in this context by making sin actually abound.

Now, the purpose of this is not in order for God to be pleased with more sin on the part of man, but he is trying to get us to see how sinful we really are so that we will be prepared for the coming of Christ. Now, if you'll turn back to chapter 3, verse 19 again, there is another aspect of this that I didn't stress when we were looking at it a moment ago. But in chapter 3, verse 19 the apostle says, "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." That word guilty, incidentally, means "liable to judgment, liable to punishment" or "answerable to God." So the point then of the giving of the Law is not only to give the knowledge of sin, not only

to reveal its evil character, not only to reveal the great number of sins, but it is given in order that we might know the guilt of sin.

Now, it's not enough for us to know that we are sinners in order to be ready for the coming of Christ. We need to know that our sin is punishable, and that when we have sinned against God we are guilty. And since we are guilty, we are liable to judgment. And the judgment of holy Scripture is eternal judgment. So the apostle states then that the Law has been given to reveal the guilt of sin. Incidentally, preaching the guilt of men is something that needs to be done today. It is a lost element in the preaching of the gospel, and this is one of the reasons we have such a superficial kind of conversion today. When we preach simply about the great things that we obtain and the happy life that we have when we come to Jesus Christ, the result is that the sense of sin is very superficial, and therefore the appreciation of the saving work of Christ is also very superficial. But when preaching is directed toward the guilt of men and their liability to judgment and a judgment that is eternal in its force, then we begin to appreciate in a much deeper way the things that Jesus Christ has done for us.

Now, I know that offends people, of course, to tell them that they're sinners is bad enough. We like to tell them that perhaps they're not very happy or they're not adjusted properly. We don't like to come out and call them sinners and then on top of that to say that they are guilty and that they are condemned. That's an exceedingly bad taste in our enlightened latter part of the 20th century. But nevertheless it is the thing that is needed, and in our gospel preaching it is something that we desperately need today. So the apostle says, "The Law was given to show that all men are answerable to God."

Now, there is another use of the Law that is different. It is found over in Galatians chapter 3, and verse 24. This use of the Law is as a slave guardian to the time of Christ. Will you notice Galatians 3:24 then? Here Paul says the Law was given to train the nation. He says, "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster." Now, when we think of schoolmaster we think of a person who is principal of a school. That is not the meaning

of the Greek word *paidagogos* which is used here. The word *paidagogos* is a reference to a trustworthy Greek slave. Usually a Greek slave, because the Romans used the Greeks whenever they could. The Greeks were more intelligent than the Romans, particularly at this time. The Romans loved to rely upon the intellectuality of the Greeks. They copied the Greeks; even their language is in some ways a copy of the Greek language.

And so, wealthy Romans desired to have Greek slave guardians. These men were trustworthy Greek slaves. They frequently were rather elderly. That is, they were thirty-five or older. They were men of good character. They were companions and guardians of the children of the Romans. Their duties were to generally take care of the young people, teach them, train them, take them to school, and come and get them from school when necessary. Then their duties concluded when the young Roman who usually wore a crimson bordered *toga praetexta*, that was the technical term for the toga that a young child wore before he came to his maturity. Then at a certain stage in his life, there was a little family ceremony in which the male son took off the *toga praetexta* and put on the white *toga virilis*. That is, the toga of the man, the adult's toga. And at that point he became a regular adult son in the family. He was introduced into the family counsels and took his place there as a respected member of the family. The *paidagogos* then was a slave guardian who had a temporary task.

That's what Paul means here when he says "The Law was our schoolmaster," our slave guardian "unto Christ." That is, to the time of Christ, that we might be justified by faith. So it was the purpose of the Law to serve as a kind of narrow guide for the nation of Israel, so that the nation would be prepared for the coming of Christ, and when the Messiah came they would sense their sin, and would be, of course, responsive to him. Now we know, that this was not ideally realized in the sense that the nation as a whole turned away from the Lord Jesus. But there were some, the elect ones in the nation, that remnant according to the election of grace in the nation, who did respond to the coming of the Lord Jesus.

Finally, in Hebrews chapter 10, in verse 1, the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives us another use of the Law. Hebrews chapter 10 verse 1, the writer of this epistle, this is one of the reasons, one of the minor reasons, why it is probably that the Apostle Paul did not write the Epistle to the Hebrews. The stress that the Apostle Paul gave to the use of the Law does not, generally speaking, suit the stress of the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews. They do not contradict one another, of course, but the stress of this author is on the ceremonial system, the priesthood, the offerings, and so on. And we read in chapter 10, and verse 1, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come."

Now, what does he mean by that? Why, he means the sacrifices. They looked forward to the sacrifice Christ would offer. The priesthood, the priestly service by the men who performed the priesthood, they looked forward to the universal priesthood of every believer and the preeminent priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ, a priest after the order of Malchizadek. And then the offerings, the many offerings, the burnt offering, the sin offering, the trespass offering, the meal offering, the peace offering, the offering of the red heifer, the drink offering, these various offerings were designed to set forth certain aspects of the saving work of Jesus Christ. So all of this great system, which God introduced into Israel, was a shadow of good things to come, "And not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make those who come to it perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins." So the ceremonial system, then, was designed to testify to the new age that was coming. It is a shadow of good things to come.

Now, these are the primary uses of the Law, to give the knowledge of sin, to reveal the evil character of sin, to reveal the great number of sins, to reveal the guilt of sin, to train the nation, and to testify to the new age. Now then, what shall we say about 1 Timothy chapter 1 then in the light of this? So let's turn over to 1 Timothy and I hope

as a result of this rather lengthy preparation we will be better able now to understand what Paul says here in verse 8 through 11 when he speaks about the Law.

Now, these men who were false teachers had sought to be teachers of the Law. And Paul had said, "They don't understand what they say, not that about which they affirm." That is, they don't understand what they're talking about. But, I say, the Jewish character of the false teaching is evident in the fact that they want to be teachers of the Law. But this leads the apostle to a characteristic digression. And he's going to digress and talk about the place and function of the Law, because these men who want to be teachers of the Law, they don't understand the Law at all. Now, I hope you notice that this lengthy digression of mine is in thorough apostolic style, because that's what Paul does here, he digresses.

So we read, "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully." Now, what then does he mean when he says that "the law is good," if we use it lawfully? Well, in the light of what we have just heard about the purpose of the Law, the major thing that comes through is the Law is not to be preached as a means of salvation, it is to be preached as a means of bringing conviction of sin. That is to use the law lawfully. So the Law is good if it is used in that way. Now, you can see the writer of this First Epistle to Timothy is in thorough harmony with the things that Paul says in Romans, because there he says it's not the Law that is responsible for our sin. The Law reveals sin. The Law is holy, just, and good, he says in Romans 7, verse 12. So here, "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully." But you can take a good thing and use it unlawfully and then create havoc.

If I should, for example, preach to you that men are saved by doing things, specifically the Ten Commandments, I would be using the Law unlawfully. That is exactly what Garner Ted Armstrong does. He talks a great deal about the Law of God. He uses scriptural expressions, but if you will carefully listen to him, you will see that he preaches a salvation of doing the Law. Now, in the first place, it is contrary to Scripture. Salvation

is not through the Law. It is a total misunderstanding of the nature of man, who is totally unable to keep the Law of Moses. Only one man was ever able to keep the Law and that was the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot keep the Law, and furthermore, the Bible says that you are in bondage to sin, and there is no possibility of your keeping it. When you try to keep it, you fail. And Paul's statements in Romans chapter 7, when he speaks about how he doesn't do the things that he wants to do, and what he doesn't want to do he does do, just illustrate and underline this fact.

Now, the other side, verse 9, "Knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man." Now, what does he mean when he says the law is not made for a righteous man? Well now, in Pauline language a righteous man is a just man. Now, what is a just man in Pauline language? Well, a just man in Pauline language is a justified man. Now, what is a justified man in Pauline language? Well, in Pauline language a justified man is a man who has acknowledged his sin, and who has relied upon Christ and the saving work that he has accomplished for his salvation. That's the righteous man.

Now, that's his standing before God. I'm one of those men incidentally. That doesn't mean that in his inmost being sin has been eradicated. It simply means that his standing before God is that of a righteous man, because Jesus Christ has taken his sin. And through reliance upon him I have come to the forgiveness of sins and a righteous standing before him. In the sight of God I am righteous, because I have had conferred upon me the gift of righteousness, not anything that I have in myself. It is given by God. It's a grace work. What I cannot do, what I cannot earn, what I cannot merit has been given me by God. That's the righteous man. So he says the Law is not for a righteous man. It's not made for a righteous man. This is the basis, incidentally, of the Lutherans saying that we are not under Law, and that the Law does not have this third use for us. It's not made for righteous people.

Now, for whom is this Law made? Why, it's made for the unjustified, the unrighteous, those who have not been born again. Look at what he says, "The law is not

made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy." Have you found yourself there yet? Well, if you haven't, just keep looking. "And profane," incidentally, you'll notice as you read through these, that what Paul is doing is thinking about the Ten Commandments. Now, if you will look at those six adjectives describing individuals, lawless, disobedient, lawless before whom? Before God; disobedient to whom? To God; ungodly, before whom? God of course, ungodly, sinner, against whom do they sin? God; unholy, with reference to whom are they unholy? Of course, with reference to God; profane men, common men, all of these things have to do with the first table of the Law. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy soul." That's our Lord's summation of this. These six adjectives have to do with the first table of the Law. So the Law is given for that kind of person, persons that have broken all of those specific first four commandments of the ten.

But now we read on, "for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers." Now, the next two are sins against the fifth commandment. He turns to the second table of the Law which has to do with offenses against men. You remember the Lord Jesus added when he summarized all of these, "And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." So he summed up the two tables of the Law, the Ten Commandments, in those two statements of his. Now, here "murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers." that's sin against the fifth commandment. "For fornicators, for them that defile themselves with mankind." I skipped manslaughter. "For manslaughter," well that is a sin against the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," manslaughter. Then "For fornicators, for them that defile themselves with mankind." Now, these are sins against the seventh commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery." They are sexual sins. We're full of this kind of thing, of course. "For kidnappers," that's sin against the eighth commandment, "Thou shalt not steal." The rabbis said that stealing included traffic in human beings. Do we have any of that today?

No, we don't steal one person today very often. We do little kidnapping, but we like to get them all into a 747 and steal the whole thing if we possibly can.

The apostle says the Law is directed against that type of thing. It's the Law of God against that. And finally, the last two are sins against the ninth commandment. He says, "For liars, and perjured persons." Have we had any illustrations of that recently? No, just about every day for the past two or three years it's been constantly on our TV screens under the title "Watergate." That's only a reflection of our national character, and in spite of what you think, they weren't all lawyers. [Laughter] Although, they are the most excellent ones, it would seem, in these particular sins.

Now, there is one other things that I want you to notice here before we move on to the conclusion. I want you to notice that Paul says that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but it is made for a lawless man. In other words, he says it is not made for the justified man; it's made for the unjustified man. And then he describes the unjustified man here with all these adjectives which represent violations of the commandments of the moral law. Now, I ask you a question, how can you tell who is a justified man and who is an unjustified man. Well, he's given us the clues here. The unjustified men are characterized by these adjectives and nouns. They are lawless, or they're murderers. Now then, if we have men who are characterized by these things, what may we say on the authority of the word of God about their spiritual condition? We may say they are not justified people. So you see, what Paul is telling us here is he's giving us ways by which we can say, or see, that which is a justified person, that which is an unjustified person, and unrighteous person. So we shouldn't pass by without noting that this list provides us with a guide for identifying the unjustified. Now, I'm not suggesting we go out and try to identify, I'm just saying the Lord Jesus said, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and so did the Apostle Paul in effect. And in our Christian fellowship and also in our activities as deacons or elders or in any kind of official position

that you have in the Christian church, teaching Sunday School, these things are to be taught as word of God.

Now then, he says, after he concludes with this list he says in verse 10, "If there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine." I like that. He's given us a long list of these sins and sinners, and then he says that doesn't include the whole thing, if there's anything else contrary to sound doctrine. And incidentally, this is the first time in the Pastoral Epistles that we have the word sound doctrine. It's a particular word that in the Greek text often meant "healthy, wholesome." So sound doctrine is healthy doctrine, it's a characteristic word of the Pastoral Epistles. It's a word that Paul learned to use in the latter stages of his Christian life. And evidently the reason that he did was that he saw in these churches that he had formed evidences of some unhealthy manifestation of sin, and he felt it necessary to point out that true biblical doctrine is healthy doctrine. This is the authentic truth, sound doctrine, and what Paul would say then about the immoral life is not only is it wrong, but it is really sickness, diseased life. It's a very serious thing.

You can see that the apostle had a very strong doctrine of the perseverance of the saints. He felt that the saints who had been truly born again would persevere in their faith and in a life contrary to these descriptions that are given here. Now, from the divine side it is God who keeps the saints. From the human side, they persevere. The Apostle John said concerning some false teachers, "They went out from us, because they were not of us. If they had been of us, they would have continued with us." It's fair to say that truly born again people continue in the faith. And when people make a loud profession of faith and then fall away, and fall into sin, and persist in sin over a long period of time, it's fair to say the evidence is very strongly against a genuine conversion to Jesus Christ.

Many of you probably have people in your family who have made professions of faith, and you've wondered about them. Do not take the view that they are Christians who have backslidden if their departure from the faith has persisted over a long period of time, and their lives are characterized by disobedience to Scripture. It is much safer to

take the view that their decision was not a genuine decision, and therefore, you may exhort them to be saved, to get saved, before it's too late.

Now, Paul concludes by saying, "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." Now, do you know what he is saying there? He's saying, for this is added to everything that proceeds in this little paragraph. He's saying that everything that I have said is according to the gospel that was given me by divine revelation. That's what he's saying. He's saying, "Everything that I have told you has come from God. It's according to the gospel of the glory of God, which was committed to my trust." And incidentally, do you notice that it was the gospel of the blessed God. He says the gospel tells us of God's glory. It tells us of his power, of his majesty, of his compassion in the person and work of Jesus Christ. What does the Law tell us? Why, the Law tells us of man's sinfulness. But the gospel tells us of the remedy in the compassion and saving ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so I say to you tonight that the preaching of the Law of Moses, should we preach the Law of Moses? By all means we should preach the Law of Moses as a means for the conviction of sin. We should not preach the Law of Moses as a way of salvation, or as a code under which we come as believers. But we should preach it as a revelation of the holiness and righteousness of God, that which he demands of men, if they seek to stand on the basis of their own merits before him. And by means of that, perhaps God will convince some of the sinners they cannot stand on their own merits. They must flee to Jesus Christ. Times up. Let's close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are thankful to Thee for the great teaching the Apostle Paul has given us, and we thank Thee that according to his own words, what he has said has come in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God. And now we pray that we may be mindful of the righteousness that is contained in the Law, and by the help of the Holy Spirit may our lives, day by day, become...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]