

Exodus - Prelude to the Law

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[0 : 00] Let's go to Exodus chapter 20. Between a sore throat, seasonally, I believe, and then our elders retreat and lots of talking, even late at night and early in the morning, have a little bit of a sore throat.

I've been trying to save it for this, so we can pray that the Lord will sustain that voice, and I hope it won't be a distraction if I drink a little more or use a cough drop. If you look with me, it says chapter 20.

We're going to read together verses 1 through 21. My plan today is really we're covering the prelude, the introduction to the Ten Commandments, but as we open God's Word, let's read through the entire Ten Commandments.

So we're starting in verse 1 and reading through verse 21. And God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me. 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.

[1 : 25] 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, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.

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. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 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.

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.

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God has given you. You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery.

[2 : 50] You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything else that is your neighbor's.

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, and said to Moses, you speak to us, and we will listen, but do not let God speak to us, lest we die. 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.

The people stood far off, while Moses drew near to the thick darkness, where God was. Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, as we think about, what the Israelites beheld, their response, Lord, even, what Moses said, that, it was to test them, that they would not sin, that they would fear you.

Lord, we pray as we, enter into your word today, and the preaching of it, as well as in the weeks to come, as we consider, the Ten Commandments, that Lord, you would help us to see, both the law and the gospel, that you would, cause us to fear you, that we would not sin, and yet, that we would look to our Savior, Jesus Christ.

[4 : 32] Help us to maintain that balance, help us to understand your word, Lord, we pray you'd be glorified, in the preaching of it. Amen. Amen. Now, as I was saying earlier, today, we're going to do a little bit of an overview, of the Ten Commandments.

We're going to look specifically, at the prelude, or the prologue, to the Ten Commandments. And then, in the weeks ahead, we'll be able to spend, a sermon on each, of the Ten Commandments. One thing I want you to know, is that this is given to a, saved people. What I mean is, God has already brought them, out of, Egypt. In fact, we look at the very beginning of this, we talked a little bit last week, about God's covenant, God's making a covenant with them.

This is the Mosaic Covenant. And it begins with, what we saw in chapter 19, about who God is, and his character. But you'll notice there, at the very beginning, and God spoke all these words, saying, I am the Lord your God, who brought you, out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. So even as we begin, it begins on the premise that, God is their Savior. He has brought them, out of slavery. I think this is important, even as we begin, to consider God's law, that we understand, God's law is not given, to save, but it's given to those, who are saved.

[5 : 50] We don't follow God's law, for the hope, that we will be good enough, that we'll get into heaven. Those who are saved, have his law, as one of the reasons, for the giving of the law, that we might not sin, that we would fear God, that we would know him.

We're going to talk about, some of the other reasons, for that, even in this introduction. But this is really, the beginning of a new nation. Israel is forming, into a nation, at this very moment, and part of that is, law.

God gives the law. And we saw, already, in what we read today, that the desire, is that they would not sin, but remember what we saw, as well in chapter 19, you can look back, at verse 6, and you shall be to me, a kingdom, a priest, and a holy nation.

And so, God is forming them, forming them, into a kingdom of priests, and into a holy nation. How are they going to be, a holy nation? Well, God's going to set them apart, from the nations around them.

And, he's going to show them, his character, his holiness, that they may be holy, even as God is holy. And so that's the, outworking of this, understanding that, he's creating the nation, he's formulating them, he's showing them, what will it mean, for them to be God's people, and what will set them apart, from the nations around them.

[7 : 08] So as we think about that, I really want to, dive into the understanding, of the law. And, this sermon is really going to, build some foundation, for what we're going to see, in the weeks ahead. And, what I want you to see, is that as we look at the law, there are, three types of law, given to Israel, that we'll see, in not just, well not this week, but in the coming weeks.

The first we might think of, is the civil law. Now the civil law, was the law that God gave, to the nation, and how they ought to operate, under his rule, as a theocracy.

God was the God, who reigned over the nation. God, as the one rule giver, sets the rules for the nation. Here's how this nation will live, and again, this is what sets you apart, from other nations. You're going to live this way. Now, I believe, and do many theologians, that what we're going to see, as civil law, is no longer binding, because we're not a theocracy.

We have a different type of government. The civil laws that are given, are helpful for God's people, and especially, I think, helpful for nations, to understand, how we ought to rule. There are principles there, that we can use to say, what should a good government look like?

[8 : 23] And yet, there's also the reality, that we're not in a theocracy, we're in a different type of government, a republic, what's that going to look like? And so, again, we're not there yet, but we're going to see, some civil laws to come, and we would say, those aren't binding on us individually, or even as a nation, as they were to Israel, because of who was their king, their ruler.

And then secondly, there's ceremonial law. The ceremonial law, would have to do with, approaching God, in worship, sacrificial system, other things, involving that. And some of that, deals with the laws, of cleanness, and uncleanness.

What does it mean, to be clean? How do I become clean, versus unclean? So, those laws, are ceremonial laws. And, we believe that they were types, or shadows, of Jesus, and his sacrifice. They pointed to that. And so, not only would I say, that the ceremonial laws, are done away with, for us today, because, they have been realized, in the person and work, of Jesus Christ.

But beyond that, I would say, it would be wrong, for us to do, any of those at this point. Because it would be, undermining what Christ, had done. In other words, if we were to say today, well, I sinned, I'm going to sacrifice, this lamb.

[9 : 43] Well, God said in the Old Testament, to sacrifice lamb. Well, I'm going to sacrifice a lamb. Well, if we did that, that would be saying, Christ, and his sacrifice, is insufficient for us.

That lamb, think of even the Passover lamb, was meant to point to, Christ, who is our Passover lamb. The New Testament, makes it clear. And so, the ceremonial law, is helpful for us to understand, what was needed, to approach God.

And one way, it's really helpful, is for us to see, how great is Jesus Christ, our Savior. That he meets, all those ceremonial practices. He completes that. In Christ, we are clean, we are holy. Not based on what we eat, not based on, what we sacrifice, but upon him, his righteousness, his sacrifice. And then the third type of the law, is the moral law.

And the moral law, is what we see contained, in the Ten Commandments. I believe, that the moral law, is still binding, upon God's people. We'll have opportunity, to see more of this, but, the moral law, is a reflection of God, and his character.

[10:47] It, in many ways, precedes, the giving, of the Ten Commandments. We're going to see, multiple examples, of that, as we go ahead. But, just think of two, I think, that are very clear.

We have, the Lord's Day, or the Sabbath. Remember, the law is given now, but remember, what we saw, with the manna? They couldn't gather manna, on Sunday, or Saturday, on the Sabbath. Why could they not do that? Because, there's a principle, that's been in play, even if the law, has not been written by God, it's been understood, it's been written in our hearts, that they know, God rested, on the seventh day.

And so, it's a blessing, you get to rest, on the seventh day. We'll have more time, to look at that. But, another example, Cain kills Abel. Why is that wrong? As far as we know, no law has been given to them, that says, don't murder.

But, God's written the law, in his heart, because this is part of his character. We inherently know, this is wrong. If we take that further, we also understand, that even in a fallen world, there's a sense in which, God's law is written in the heart, of all people.

[11:55] People, know, or have some sense of, these ten commandments. At the same time, I'd say, we have the promise, in the new covenant, that God has written the heart, on the Christian, in a completely different way.

In a way that motivates us, to want to obey, not just, the guilt of knowing, that we're not doing that. So, what we understand, even with the moral law, is that no sinful man, can become righteous, or earn eternal life, by obedience to this law.

This was never intended, to be, the way in which, anyone would be saved. I'm going to spend, a lot of time, in this week, in the coming weeks, in the Westminster, larger catechism, and the Baptist catechism.

I know, we probably don't talk enough, about the catechisms, but, we have this, historical basis, and guys, church history is good. We have a solid foundation, in these things. And, these catechisms, were given, to teach children, and when you hear, some of the Westminster, larger catechism, you're going to say, it's pretty big.

But, kids were to memorize this, that they might know, how they ought to live. And so, we're going to be looking, at some, because, it does a great job, in treating, the ten commandments.

[13:11] So, this is, the Westminster, larger catechism, question 95. There's always a question, then there's an answer. And it says, of what use, is the moral law, to all men?

And the answer is, the moral law, is of use, to all men, to inform them, of the holy nature, and will of God, and of their duty, binding them, to walk accordingly, to convince them, of their disability, to keep it, and of the sinful pollution, of their nature, hearts, and lives, to humble them, in the sense of their sin, and misery, and thereby, help them, to a clearer sight, of the need, of the need, they have of Christ, and of the perfection, of his obedience.

So, now, I'm trying not, to get overly complicated, but we've said, that there are three types of law, civil, ceremonial, moral, and now we're looking, the moral law, which is the ten commandments, in the moral law, we have three uses, of the moral law, and those three uses, were just expressed, in the Westminster, larger catechism.

The first use is, the ten commandments, or the moral law, reveals God, his character, his nature, his holiness, and it reveals us.

It shows us, who God is, and it shows us, who we are, and therefore, one purpose of the law, is to show us, our need for a savior, to realize, we don't measure up to it.

[14:44] God's holy, I'm not, I can't keep this law, therefore, I need someone else, who can. Pretty simple. Secondly, there is a sense, in which, God's law, helps to restrain evil, even in a godless society, and as much, as that is applied, as much as, it's inherent in people's, knowledge that they

know, there's something wrong, about lying, and stealing, and murder, and even that, there should be worship, of a true God.

Even in a, pagan culture, this has influence. Now, it can be suppressed, but, it does restrain evil. And then thirdly, it's a guide for believers.

It teaches us, how should we live, in a way that's honoring, to our heavenly father, and our God. So those are the, historically, those are the three uses, of the moral law.

And so, as we go through, the Ten Commandments, we're going to be applying, those things.

Probably each one of them, in each commandment. How does this show us, our need for a savior? What does it teach us, about God?

How does it help, to restrain evil? How is we, how can we as Christians, if you're a Christian in here, how can we as Christians, live, in a way that's honoring to God, based on what we see, revealed in the moral law?

[15:58] Well, the moral law is also unique, as we, I talked about how the other two, are no longer binding, on the Christian.

Let's talk about some ways, in which the moral law is unique, that point to that reality. One is, the moral law, is the only one, that's spoken before the people. All the other law, the ceremonial law, and the civil law, is given to Moses, in private.

This is this unique instance, that we talked about last week, is they gathered the mountain, they consecrated themselves, three days, they enter into God's presence, Moses ascends the mountain, and God speaks, in a voice audible to them.

Though as far as I can understand, they don't understand it. It sounds to them like thunder, like explosions, maybe even like a volcano, fire, smoke. But it's enough, that they know, that God's speaking.

And you saw the response, Moses, don't ever let God, speak to us again. There's a sense, of his holiness. There's a holy dread, that falls upon God's people, because they hear his voice, as God speaks, those ten commandments, to Moses.

[17:07] And then secondly, this is the only law, that we have, that's written, by the finger of God. God writes on the tablets, the ten commandments. He gives it to Moses, in written form.

Which again, I think, elevates our understanding, of the moral law, in comparison to the other laws, that are given, and their purpose. Ernie Riesinger, has done a great job, in writing on, the law, and the gospel.

And here's one thing he said, I believe it's his book, the ten commandments. He says, the ten commandments, were written by God himself, unlike the civil, and ceremonial laws, which Moses wrote, at his direction.

Though given to the children, of Israel, after their deliverance, from Egypt, they enshrined, what Adam and Eve, were expected, to observe. They therefore, go back to the creation, and are authoritative, for all people, and every time, and place.

They are a fixed, objective standard, of righteousness. And so, everyone should be concerned, about his or her duty, to almighty God, the creator, and judge, of all the earth, who requires, a perfect, and perpetual, obedience, to his revealed will.

[18:23] Now he's tied together, several of the things, I've talked about already, but we said, it was in effect, before, it was given by God, on Mount Sinai. We talked about, how we saw murder, even there, right after the creation.

How we saw, the Sabbath, being observed. There was a creation ordinance, because God created, in this way, therefore you rest. But you see also, he talks about, it requires a perfect, and perpetual, obedience to his revealed will.

One reason I've stressed, the ongoing validity, or the perpetuity, of the moral law, is because, it has been so attacked, in recent years, by Christians. And one reason for that is, to be honest, I don't think, any of us like the idea, of a perfect, and perpetual obedience, to anything.

Maybe it's part of, American culture today. I'm my own boss. I determine what's true, and right. I make my own laws. And to think that, God has given a law, that must always be obeyed, and perfectly obeyed.

We're looking for, where's the loopholes? Where can we get out of this? And I hope as we go ahead, we'll see that, each one of these, Ten Commandments, have continuing, relevance to our life, and teaches us, how we ought to live, before God.

[19 : 38] Now I want to, zoom in for a minute, in what, really is the scope, of what we're looking at today, is verse two, gives us, what's called the, maybe the prelude, or the prologue, to the Ten Commandments.

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out, of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. So before God gives, the Ten Commandments, that we're to obey, he begins by, a little bit of an introduction, and we saw some of this, already in chapter 19.

But he reveals who he is. I am Yahweh, that's that name we've talked about, all throughout our study of Exodus. I am who I am. It's the covenant name for God.

So he says, I am the Lord, I am Yahweh, your God. There's an ownership of that. I am the God that is yours. I belong to you, in one sense.

You are my people even, is communicated. Who brought you out, of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. So I've said this already, but, he's identifying himself, as their savior.

[20 : 47] I'm the one who's delivered you. I'm the one who's brought you out. Now, if we were to put a therefore, there, what might be the conclusion? If we imagine, God's making the argument here.

I am Yahweh, I am your God, I'm the one who saved you, therefore, in verse 3 says, you shall have no other gods before me.

So as we think about that, what is the therefore? What's the conclusion he's drawing? I think what's implied, in the prologue is, therefore, you are to obey me, to honor me.

Know who I am. I am the one true God. I am Yahweh, the God, who defeated all the gods, of the greatest empire in the world, in Egypt. I'm greater than all their gods.

You've seen it already. I'm the one who saved you. I brought you out of that. I know I've told you guys before, but, my wife and I love, the Count of Monte Cristo, and there's that scene where, he saves the man's life.

[21 : 49] Jacopo, is that his name? He saves the man's life, and the guy says, basically, the rest of my life is yours. I should be dead, and the fact that I now live, what life I have, I'm going to live for you.

I will serve you the rest of my life. I'm selling myself into slavery, on your account, because, the life that I have, you bought that for me. You own that life.

God's implying that. God's saying that. He's saying, I am your savior, therefore, there should be no other gods before me. You know that, because you've seen no other gods. Not so great.

But also, all the Ten Commandments. There is a moral obligation of obedience. And even though it's not stressed here in the prologue, I think we could go beyond that and say, He is your creator. God made you. Even as we think about, how do we determine, how we ought to live? What is our purpose in life? Philosophy, doesn't determine that.

[22 : 49] Your creator determines what your purpose is. He's made you for something. And then the idea of your God, there's a relationship. God is saying, we have a relationship together.

If that relationship is to be maintained, if you're to have a relationship with a holy God, what's that going to look like? What are the parameters for this relationship?

How are you to live before a holy God that you might remain a holy nation, a kingdom of priests before God? We've said, He's establishing His covenant with them.

Deuteronomy 4.13 says, And He declared to you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform. That is the Ten Commandments. And He wrote them on two tablets of stone. So as we think about this, understand God's made covenant with them, and that's expressed primarily in the Ten Commandments.

God's Word affirms that. And so the idea of covenant, just refreshing, because I know we talked about this a few days ago, a few weeks ago, but God's covenant means there is a bond in blood, sovereignly administered.

[23 : 59] God has given a promise that He will do something for them. He's going to make them into a holy nation in the kingdom of priests. I will be your God, and you will be my people.

So that's God's promise as our sovereign Lord. But He also calls them to something. And we might even sum it up as, be holy as I'm holy.

Or we could sum it up as the New Testament sums it up, as Jesus sums it up. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself. That's the Ten Commandments. And He's saying, here's your part of this.

You're to do this. And remember, when we say the bond in blood, what we mean by that in covenant is, if you break the bond, what happens? You're cut off. You're killed.

The relationship ends. It's over. And do remember that, well, I'll come back to this, but they just promised beforehand, whatever God says we're going to do. You ever think about sometimes, like someone says, will you do something for me?

[25 : 00] And what do you always say? It depends. What is it? Maybe you guys aren't as fickle as I am. It depends. What is it? Because you don't ever want to make a promise you're going to do something and then find out later it's something that you can't do or you don't want to do or maybe even that violates God's law.

The Baptist Catechism, question 49, says, what does the preface to the Ten Commandments teach us? So that's just verse 2. What does verse 2 teach us? The preface to the Ten Commandments teaches us that because God is the Lord and our God and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all His commandments.

There's an obligation that I was speaking of earlier. I know we don't like that obligation or duty.

There's a duty upon us. But I also want you to see that the Ten Commandments are given to us as a blessing.

And I hope that will be communicated in the coming sermons. But Deuteronomy 6, 20-25. When your sons ask you in time to come, and can I encourage some sons and daughters to ask mom and dad when you get home these questions?

So when your son asks you in times to come, what is the meaning of the testimonies and the statutes and the rules that the Lord your God has commanded you? So kids, you can just say, what's the meaning of the Ten Commandments?

[26 : 25] Why has God given this to us? Then you shall say to your son, we were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and the Lord showed signs and wonders great and grievous against Egypt and against Pharaoh and all his household before our eyes.

and he brought us out from there that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give to our fathers. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes to fear the Lord our God and this is really the key here for our good always that he might preserve us alive as we are this day and it will be righteousness for us if we are careful to do all this commandment before the Lord our God as he has commanded us.

And so, what are we to tell our kids? Why has God given us this? God's law is not intended to be a burden upon us. It's a blessing for us.

It's parameters that keep us safe in fact it's the circle of blessing. Right? It's an area in which God blesses us. It's for our good.

How can we live a joyful life before our God? It's to keep them free. Did you catch that in there?

[28 : 01] He brought us out from there that he might bring us in and give us the land that he swore to give our fathers. And he commanded us to do all these statutes to fear the Lord our God for our good always that he might preserve us alive as we are this day.

We were a favor of slaves. He brought us out. And our life, he preserves our life by this. If you think about the judgment that fell in Egypt, you'll understand what's being said here.

Now, if we take that further, I want to be careful. I'm going to bring the gospel in. We're going to make this clear, but likewise, we understand that God's law is meant to be a safeguard for us. It's meant to lead us into eternal life and not hell.

We're going to talk about how that happens. It's not by saving us, by keeping it. But we're going to talk about that. It also deals with the idea of holiness. Leviticus 11.45, For I am the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt to be your God.

You shall therefore, you shall therefore be holy for I am holy. So the idea of God being our God, the relationship, that covenant relationship, means you to be holy before him.

[29 : 11] Zechariah and his prophecy of the Messiah, Luke 1.74-75, that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

Again, pointing back to Egypt. We've been saved from our enemies that we might serve him in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And then 1 Peter 15.19 really pulls from that passage in Leviticus we saw earlier.

It says, But as he who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct. Since it is written, you shall be holy for I am holy.

And then he goes on, he says, And if you call on him as father who judges impartially, according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile.

I think pointing back to the wilderness wanderings as well as what happened later for Israel.

Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

[30 : 23] And so, Peter then really brings it together and applies what we're seeing here. I've said already, God introduces himself as, I'm the one that brought you out of slavery.

I'm your savior. But what was probably not fully clear in the Old Testament to those believers at that time, to some extent they saw in the Passover, but what wasn't clear to them is made explicitly clear in the New Testament.

Peter says, We're to be holy as God is holy. Why? Because we're calling on a father who judges impartially. He judges rightly. And so, conduct yourself with fear throughout the time of your exile.

You think of the Israelites. I don't want God to talk to me. I'm so scared. But he moves on. He says, Knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Why ought we to live holy? Because God is holy. Why else ought we to live holy? Because we were ransomed from the futile ways in which you once lived. If we apply this to Israel, yeah, apply it to Israel, you were ransomed from Egypt and the folly of their gods.

[31 : 42] The way that you lived there, the way they lived in a pagan world, pagan society, culture. you were ransomed from that and brought out that you might be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.

But he makes it clear what was it with which we were ransomed. It's the precious blood of Jesus Christ. The Passover is there to teach us that. They were covered by the blood of the lamb.

So too, it's the blood of the lamb that's rescued us out of those ways. And some of you guys have experienced this very clearly. The folly of our forefathers.

Some of you can testify to this. Maybe you were saved out of a family who had never been Christian. As far as you know, as far back as you go, there were foolish ways of living in this world. And God's ransomed you out of that. By all accounts, naturally speaking, it seems odd that you would come to Christ. And yet, God saved you out of that.

[32 : 46] He's saying, that's true for all of us in the sense of we all were enslaved to sin. And God saved us from that. Therefore, you're to be set apart. Christian, Israel, set apart as a holy nation before God, a holy people.

But, look at verse 20 of chapter 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.

Well, a few things there. First, we see he's testing them. The Ten Commandments are a form of a test for them. It's also striking that he says, do not fear for God's testing you.

Moses, I'm not sure about the logic there, right? Don't fear because he's testing you. God, the holy God is going to test me. I think there's reason to be afraid.

And yet, that the fear of him, don't fear that the fear of him. And so, in some sense, Moses is rebuking them. Your fear is in the wrong place. A reverence for him should cause a fear of me and my sinfulness being struck down.

[34 : 08] But also, it ought to cause me, like Moses, to draw near to God, not to step further back, to move away. Listen to chapter 19, or you can flip back there, verses 4 through 8.

God speaking says, you yourself have seen what I did to the Egyptians and how I bore you on the eagle's wings and brought you to myself. Now, therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples for all the earth is mine.

And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. These are the words that you are to speak to the people of Israel. So Moses came and called the elders of the people and set before him them all these words that the Lord had commanded them.

All the people answered together and said, all that the Lord has spoken we will do. And Moses reported the words of the people to the Lord. So, I know I mentioned this earlier. I also said then we

talk about it again.

But, here they are making a promise that they're going to do what God asked them to. And if you see in verse 5, there's a condition. Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all the peoples for all the earth is mine.

[35 : 20] So, think of the covenant. Here's our covenant condition. For you to be a treasured people, what must they do? What? Obey my voice and keep all my covenant.

Or keep my covenant. Obey my voice and keep my covenant. That's all. And they're like, yes, we're in. The treasured possession thing sounds good. I want to be that.

Yep, I'll do it. And then they get the Ten Commandments. And how do they do? They fail. All you have to do to be God's treasured possession is obey His voice and keep His covenant.

No one has done it. No sinful human can. Christ fulfilled it.

But we can't. We can't keep His law. I've said before, sometimes we narrow the Ten Commandments down to, I can talk to people and they'll say, yeah, I'm a good person.

[36 : 23] You keep the Ten, oh yeah, I've never murdered anybody. Right? The Ten Commandments isn't just murder. And we're going to look at God's law in light of how Jesus teaches us His law in Matthew 5 through 7 in the Sermon on the Mount.

And when we look at that, we realize, I mean, Jesus says, murder's not just murder, is it? It's hating your brother. Oops. And adultery's not just adultery.

It's lusting. Oops. And over and over again, we realize, we don't measure up. We, as sinful humans, cannot keep God's law.

So why does God give it? Why does God tell them there'll be a treasured possession if they keep it, if they can't keep it? Well, it goes back to one of the functions of the law that we talked about earlier. This shows us our need. Our need for a Savior. Our need for Jesus Christ. It first reveals our need of perfect righteousness to stand before God. And then it shows us we don't have it.

[37 : 26] It shows us that just not actually physically killing anyone isn't enough to get me into heaven. I've got to be perfectly righteous. How am I doing on that?

We couldn't make it through a day of perfect righteousness. And so we're reminded over and over again of Savior. We need someone who can do this for us. Galatians 3.24 So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith.

Or, this has been translated another way to say God was our schoolmaster, our teacher. I'm sorry, the law was our schoolmaster, teacher. It guided us. It guarded us. It led us to Christ until he came. And the New Testament tells us that Christ fulfills the law. And I want to talk about what that means. What does it mean for Christ to fulfill the law? Well, Matthew 5, again, the Sermon on the Mount, verses 17-20, Jesus says, Do not think that I've come to abolish the law or the prophets.

I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. So before we go any further, when we talk about Jesus fulfilling the law, that doesn't mean he abolished the law. Because I hear all the time those who want to argue against the Ten Commandments will say, well, Christ fulfilled the law.

[38 : 51] Now, we just, we do the law of Christ. Right? Jesus has stated that my fulfilling the law is not an abolishing of the law. And so whatever it means is not that he got rid of it.

He goes on, he says, For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven. But whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

The scribes and the Pharisees were the ones who outwardly looked to be keeping the Ten Commandments the most. And he's saying, they're not even good enough. Your righteousness has to exceed that. So again, fulfilling the law doesn't abolish or remove the Ten Commandments.

So what does it mean? Well, here's some answers, I think, for us. It means he accomplished the purpose of the law. What was the purpose of the law?

[40 : 03] It was to show us our need for a Savior. It was to provide for a perfect righteousness, which Christ did for us. So he fulfills what the law was given to us, the purpose of that. Even if we think it teaches us how we ought to live, Christ lived it out the way it should have been done.

And so, we can think of the law as the law is given for us, but we also see the law is given for Christ. It's another way that's pointing us to Christ, and so he fulfills it.

He perfectly obeyed the law. He keeps it in every sense, even in thought. He never sinned. He never broke the law. I would even go further, and we've talked about the covenant.

What happens if you break the covenant? Right? We're dead. Okay? And we said, this people, Israel, as well as the church today, Christians today, have we kept the law?

No. No, we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. And so the wages of sin is death, therefore, in God, in Christ, fulfilling the law I think that also entails that he took upon himself the curse of the law that we deserved.

[41 : 17] So he fulfills it. He does it perfectly, and so he doesn't deserve to be condemned, but we were. And so, the option is, if we think about the covenant, either we keep the law and live, or we break the law and die.

We broke the law. We all deserve death. He kept the law. He is life. But he takes upon himself the curse of the law that we might receive the blessing of the law, if we want to think of it that way, that we might have life.

And then I've said already, he's the fulfillment of the types and figures of the civil and the ceremonial law that we've seen. I want to go further and say, tying this in with what we've seen with union with Christ, if we rightly understand union with Christ, salvation, if we understand this rightly, then we can say that we have fulfilled the law.

I'm not making that up. Let's look at Romans 8, 1 through 4. We read there, there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

How could that be? I've broken the law. The curse of the law is condemnation. I should be condemned. That's what I deserve. For the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ from the law of sin and death.

[42 : 47] for God has done what the law weakened by the flesh could not do by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin. He condemns sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us.

The righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit. So as we look at the Ten Commandments should I obey the Ten Commandments?

Yes. Will I obey the Ten Commandments? No. What does that mean for me? If I need to fulfill the Ten Commandments and I can't that I might be righteous before God Christ has done that for us and therefore in Christ Christian you fulfill the law.

Now I think if we rightly understand that then that's a scary idea for an unbeliever.

If God's standard is perfect obedience to his law and we're going to see as we go through the laws we don't keep one of those we don't keep the law if that's God's requirement and none of us do it what hope can there be?

[44 : 06] There's only one hope of fulfilling God's law it's being in Christ who fulfilled the law so God looks upon us and he says perfect righteousness perfect obedience fulfillment of the covenant in my son Jesus Christ that's our only hope I mentioned earlier the third use of the law and just in the application I want to encourage us that as Christians this does teach us how we ought to live before God even though we know we're going to fall short even though we are constantly in need of his spirit working in us but to bring conviction but also bring ability to obey here's what the Westminster larger catechism this is question 97 says about this it says what special use is there of the moral law to the regenerate so remember we saw before what general use is it to all mankind now we're saying specifically to Christians what use does the law have although they are regenerate and believe in Christ he I'm sorry although they are regenerate and believe in

Christ be delivered from the moral law as a covenant of works so as thereby they are neither justified nor condemned yet besides the general uses thereof common to them with all men it is of special use to show them how much they are bound to Christ for his fulfilling it and enduring the curse thereof in their stead and for their good and thereby to provoke them to more thankfulness and to express the same in their greater care to conform themselves thereunto as the rule of their obedience so Christian what use is the law for us what is my hope that we will see in the coming weeks as we consider the Ten commandments in God's law thankfulness to a savior who kept the law for us gratefulness to Christ the law points us to our savior and so

I don't want to present the law as you better keep this it isn't legalism it isn't we're going to earn salvation to this it's thankfulness to Jesus Christ foremost but you see as they go on to provoke them more thankfulness and to express the same how does the Christian express their

thankfulness to God or to Christ in particular for keeping the law for us and taking upon himself the curse that we deserve in greater care to conform themselves there unto as the rule of their obedience what it's saying is if we rightly understand that we failed in keeping the law and that Christ kept it for us and he took the curse that we deserve for it provokes us to thankfulness but also to obedience that we don't follow the law out of guilt or sense of duty but out of love for our savior because we want to please our heavenly father we want to know what pleases our father I thought about even in marriage a good spouse wants to know what's pleasing to their spouse and maybe they wouldn't have even thought of doing it before but because they know they like it they do it for them it's a way of expressing our love it motivates us to do things that we don't maybe normally want to do but we do it because we love our spouse now multiply that by infinity how great is our savior our thankfulness to Christ provokes us to want to obey joyfully as we will say with our kids and right away right not delaying it not begrudgingly but enjoy and right away Ephesians 2 10 says about Christians we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them so purpose in saving us is that we will walk in good words and

I want to maintain the balance all along again the law cannot be rightly fulfilled apart from Christ even in terms of our behavior we can't rightly obey the law even as Christians but again we rightly fulfill the law because we are in Christ Jesus who fulfilled the law rightly none of us can keep the law and therefore we all need a Savior and again I hope this provokes in us a thankfulness to Christ a dependent upon his righteousness and it ought to lead us to worship if we rightly understand that our thankfulness is there for Christ guys we ought to worship the Savior who did what we could not do Ephesians 2 89 for by grace you have been saved through faith and this is not your own doing it is the gift of the Ten Commandments make clear there's no ground for boasting and therefore it magnifies

[49 : 19] Christ it magnifies our Savior who perfectly keeps that law when we could not do it and again as we think about this salvation precedes obedience obedience doesn't get salvation salvation leads to obedience and therefore any time we think of the law it ought to be tied in with the gospel the law shows us the beauty of the gospel we might even think of how they'll if you go into a jewelry store and they place the jewelry of the diamond or the jewel on that black velvet the law magnifies the beauty of it helps us to see how great is the gospel so I want to encourage you trust in Christ trust in his righteousness I think there's probably a way in which we all before become Christians in pride think I'm righteous enough I'm good enough be done with that idea the ten commandment it sweeps that foundation away it says no chance are any of us good enough and so what hope do we have

Christ his righteousness even his death his taking the curse that we deserve for our failure to keep the law he took in our place and then finally I want you to praise God that Christ came to fulfill the covenant that we could not keep God graciously enters into relationship and we break the relationship over and over again we are an adulterous people yet God is merciful he's steadfast love endures forever he never stops loving his people and so we can praise God that in Christ we are declared righteous though we know we're not righteous we know we sin we know our sin and God looks upon us and says righteous because of Christ Jesus praise God for such a savior as that let's pray dear heavenly father we thank you for our savior lord magnifying us increasing us our thankfulness for

Christ for his righteousness but lord we think also for his taking upon himself the curse that we deserve for our unrighteousness for our sin thank you for such a savior lord as we look at the law keep us from falling into a legalism that believes I begrudgingly have to obey or if I obey I will be saved lord let us look to Christ and say because of the savior I want to please my heavenly father and lord also as we look at this we pray that you would show us our need for that savior especially those who don't know you lord that they would trust in you today that they would trust in Christ and his righteousness that you would save them from death and bring them into life we pray this in Christ name amen