



“So speak, and so do, as they that are being judged through the law of freedom” – James 2:12

LAWLESSNESS IS NOT FREEDOM

LAW – FRIEND OR FOE?

Among churchgoers, law is a hated enemy. They hate law possibly even worse than they hate their so-called Devil. The churches have gone so far as to teach that the main mission of Jesus was to do away with God’s law. That’s an astounding claim.

This line of thinking suggests that God intentionally undermined his own creation by saddling it with his law that was detrimental.

But why? How could theologians arrive at this astounding theory? What is it about law that evokes such revulsion among churchgoers?

Yet, this is an enigma because while law is hated in church circles, it is loved in political circles. Law is seen as bad theology, but good politics. This also brings to mind the very popular and unquestioned American doctrine: “separation of church and state.” Under the rubric of “high ethics” Americans claim that religion must be contained in a world of its own, kept separate from the world of politics (and law). Each of the two venues are perceived to have their own exclusive set of terms and concepts. Political terms and concepts don’t apply in the church realm, and church terms and concepts don’t apply in the political realm. Pretty confusing. But then, considering that both church and state are bogus institutions, what could we expect from them other than confusion?

The doctrine of “separation of church and state” is actually a ruse. That which is considered reasonable in one realm is considered unreasonable in the other. The truth is, both realms are bogus.

This is odd on the face of it. But, a closer look helps clarify an important Bible truth the world overlooks.

Much of the current degradation of life quality in America has come about due to a thoughtless acceptance of an oxymoron: namely, that law can be universal in one venue, but optional in another.

One might ask: is law ever optional? Can the universe function without law? Can a man’s life function without law? If every movement, reaction and function of every element, molecule and atom in the universe operates in accord with

principles of law, how can law be optional?

Furthermore, if physical laws are universal, how about spiritual laws? For instance:

7. *Be not deceived; God is not mocked. For whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap.* (law of just returns)

Gal. 6:7

41. *The Son of man shall send forth his messengers and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and them that do lawlessness.* (lawlessness offends Jesus)

Mtt. 13:41

4. *Whoever commits sin transgresses also the law; for sin is the transgression of the law.* (sin cannot be defined without law)

1 Jn. 3:4

23. *... whatsoever is not of faith is sin* (faithlessness is sin).

Rom. 14:23

17. *Therefore to him that knows to do good, and does it not, to him it is sin* (acting against conscience is sin).

James 4:17

17. *All injustice is sin*: (injustice = sin = breaking of law).

1 Jn. 5:17

Since “sin” is defined as “transgression of law” ... it follows that law governs and defines every right or wrong that occurs in our world. All injustice, all unfaithfulness, all failure to follow the dictates of conscience is sin. These things cannot be defined as “sin” without law.

This clear truth presents certain people with a big problem. When people attempt to pick and choose where and when law (God’s law) is applicable, they are playing a fool’s game. Like little children, they may think they can

play god and make up their own rules ... but in truth no one ever gets away with that. It doesn't work. The creation works according to the rules (laws) of the Creator. Adam proved it when he tried playing god: "You shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). Once Adam believed he could be his own god he lost the position God had given him and his life turned bitter and painful.

CHILDREN MUST GROW UP

15. Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him.

Pr 22:15

There is also a second class of people (other than churchgoers) who hate law. Children! From the time of infancy children typically hate law ... because to them it means restriction, and children don't like to be restricted ... even when it is for their own good. The same is true for childish-minded adults.

But, as the Bible explains, children are foolish ... and in order for them to survive childhood they require a governor ... someone greater than themselves. That someone is called "mother." Mothers protect and save their infants from depravation, starvation, exposure, injury and death ... and they do it day in and day out. They do this by forcing law upon their babies according to the environment that surrounds them. Mothers save their children by observing laws of common sense and survival. Mothers do this because they love their babies. But children hate it. They hate it because foolishness is bound in their hearts. It is the nature of children to be foolish and to hate law ... and it is the nature of mothers to love their children enough to protect them from their lawlessness.

This principle, while easily seen in the case of children, applies also to older people who cling to their childish mentality. Childish adults and churchgoers hate law for much the same reasons that small children hate it. They don't like to be restricted to the laws of creation (laws of God) ... even though a knowledge and application of law is the only way to survive. If we disobey or ignore the law principles that govern the world around us we will perish.

24. Therefore whosoever hears these words of mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man, who built his house upon a rock:

25. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded on a rock.

Mtt. 7:24-25

The "rock" is a reference to the truths of God. God's law is truth, and building on truth makes your house strong. Building on sand (lawlessness) make your house weak.

When we ignore or break the laws of creation the consequence (punishment) is a "rod of correction." The consequences that result from ignoring or breaking law are painful ... and they correct and instruct us if our sensibilities are open to learning truth. Life is a learning

and maturing process that permits people (if they are thoughtful) to grow from spiritual children into spiritual adults. Law (true law) is the yardstick by which we can measure truth ... and truth sets us free (Jn. 8:32). If we are paying attention, God's law explains how the creation works. Knowing how it works provides useful information about how to avoid many pitfalls.

LAW = PRINCIPLE

Another word for "law" is "principle." God's laws are the principles He built into his creation. An interest in, and awareness of, God's principles (laws) is essential to becoming a thoughtful and mature Christian. Willingness to examine, analyze and evaluate the world around us is the mark of a thoughtful, intelligent and spiritual man.

For a thoughtful man, God's law can lead him away from foolishness (lawlessness) and childishness.

7. The law of Yahweh is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of Yahweh is sure, making wise the simple.

8. The statutes of Yahweh are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of Yahweh is pure, enlightening the eyes.

9. The fear of Yahweh is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of Yahweh are true and righteous altogether.

10. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.

Psalms 19:7-10

The childish/immature mind does not believe that God's laws are perfect, right, and more valuable than gold. Rather, they see God's law as beneath them. They think they are smarter than God.

8. Therefore hear now this, you who are given to pleasures, that dwell carelessly, that say in your heart, I am, and none else beside me; ...

9. But these two things shall come upon you in a moment in one day, the loss of children, and widowhood: they shall come upon you completely for the multitude of your seductions, and for the great abundance of your associations.

10. For you have trusted in your wickedness: you have said, No one sees me. Your wisdom and your knowledge, it has perverted you; and you have said in your heart, I (am important), and no one else.

11. Therefore shall destruction come upon you; you shall not know from where it rises: and mischief shall fall upon you; you shalt not be able to put it off: and desolation shall come upon you suddenly.

Isa. 47:8-11

If we break the laws of creation those laws will break us. We either learn from law or we suffer the consequences. This is the rule of life, and we ignore it at our own expense. Faith in Christ is the motivation to learn truth and the laws of God.

It is childish to assume that we can ignore the laws of God with impunity. The creation, including man, is governed by laws – both physical and moral. Break any one of them and we incur consequences ... sometimes in the form of physical injury, and sometimes in the form of spiritual injury – depending upon which law we break. No one breaks God's laws without consequences. When we ignore God we cause damage to ourselves and to those around us. The sins of the fathers are even visited upon the children (Dt. 5:9). When fathers rebel against God, or ignore Him, they suffer, and their children suffer as well.

A child's mind, or the mind of a childish adult, is undisciplined and full of self-indulgence and foolishness (i.e., lawlessness). To the mind that is childish and immature, law seems a burden and unwanted. To such a mind, law seems to restrict him from doing what he wants ... including things that hurt others. Thus, when such a mind is allowed to make law, he makes law that favors himself and gives him advantage over others.

Thus we can see the difference between man's law and God's law ... and why God does not authorize man to make his own (i.e., be his own god). The First Commandment is to have no other gods before Yahweh. The most common transgression of that commandment is by men making law ... placing themselves as gods deciding for themselves, without consulting Yahweh, what is acceptable and what is not. And they can change their "laws" from day to day according to their moods.

In contrast, God's laws never change. They are consistent and can always be counted on to guide us to truth, and to keep us free.

SONSHIP

11. *When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.*

1 Cor. 13:11

In the preceding scripture the reference to a "child" is the Greek word "*nepeos*" which means literally "speechless" or by implication "thoughtless." The obvious use of this particular word to describe a child clearly implies immaturity and a lack of inquiry and thought. By contrast, the reference to "a man" signifies becoming mature and thoughtful.

In today's world it seems that maturity and manhood have become something to be dreaded. People worship youth and the childish mentality ... and the advantages of age and wisdom are unwanted. Rather than honoring elders in America, youth, immaturity and thoughtlessness (often shallowness and childish arrogance) are held up as models to be emulated. Today's world is upside-down due to upside-down values that Americans embrace.

In contrast to modern preferences, God's instruction to us is to grow up; to be mature and thoughtful. One of the examples of this in the Bible is the tradition of sonship.

The Biblical concept of "sonship" is held up as the goal of all who worship God and wish to follow Christ. "Sonship" (wrongly translated "adoption" in the KJV) is the honorable status of becoming spiritually mature with the authority and responsibility of a leader. In other words, it signifies the coming of age and receiving your position of respect, trust and honor within your family and ecclesia. It is the transition from "childhood" to "sonship."

The epitome of this important distinction is shown in the case of the Father's recognition of Jesus in Matthew 3:17, 17:5; Mark 1:11; and 2 Pet. 1:17. God spoke in apparently audible communication, "... *this is my Son in whom I am well pleased.*"

This announcement had specific and cultural implications. It was not merely an routine acknowledgment that Jesus was born of God. It was much more. It was an announcement declaring Jesus to be **THE SON** (heir of The Kingship). God was telling those present that Jesus was officially declared THE SON, THE PRINCE, and He was inheriting his rightful throne.

This traditional scenario had been played out many times in Israel. Isaac was declared Abraham's "only SON" (Gen. 22:2, 12, 16; Jms. 2:21). Now it is worth noting that Isaac was not Abraham's only male offspring. In fact, Isaac wasn't even the oldest male offspring. Rather, Isaac was Abraham's "only son" in the spiritual sense. He inherited Abraham's spirit, and thus became the spiritual seed to carry the authority and responsibility and the heritage that Abraham had received from God. Thus, Isaac was "the only begotten son" to Abraham much like Jesus is "THE ONLY BEGOTTEN SON" to Yahweh.

In Galatians 3, Paul tells us that God used law (in this case the "added" law of the Old Covenant –Gal. 3:19) to bring Israelites to maturity and the status of sonship.

24. *Wherefore the law (the "added" covenant law) was our pedagogue (child tutor) to bring us to Christ (spiritual maturity)*

25. *But after faith is come we are no longer under a pedagogue.*

26. *For you are all the SONS of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*

29. *And if you are Christ's then are you Abraham's seed (a reference to Isaac - Abraham's only son and firstborn heir), and heirs according to the promise."*

Gal. 3:24-27, 29

The Old Covenant, along with the body of statutes (laws) that it created, was "added" to the existing laws of God. God's laws never change ... but covenants can change. The Old Covenant was "added" ... and later it was taken away. That set of "added" covenant laws ended when that covenant ended (when Israel rejected Yahweh as her

King – 1 Sam. 8). That covenant ended, but the laws of God and his creation did not end. God's laws of creation and morality never change and they never end.

In the KJV, translators callously mistranslated "huiothesia" (Gk) as "adoption" (Rom. 8:15, 23, 9:4, Gal. 4:5). The correct translation is "sonship" which has an entirely different and important meaning. In Eph. 1:5 they even went so far as to render this Greek word "adoption of children" ... adding more insult to injury. The Greek term, however, refers to a child of God becoming a "son" of God.

God loves his children too, but He expects them to grow up to be "sons." These are spiritual designations.

When we become "sons" we graduate to a position and a place in Christ's Reign. A "son" in this sense has taken on the responsibility of representing The Reign Of Christ. While we are children we are not held to this standard. That's because children are spiritually immature.

Once this principle is clear to you it can be seen all through Scripture. Children have the luxury of being under the authority of parents who are responsible for them. In scripture, irresponsibility is called "lasciviousness" – translated from a the Greek "aselgeia" that means "incontinent"). "Incontinence" (Gk - "aselgeia") means lack of self-discipline. It is translated "lasciviousness" in the KJV, "licentiousness" in the NRSV, and "sensuality" in the NASB). It is amazing how the theologians and translators dance around the true meanings in order to avoid going against church doctrine. In essence, the term actually signifies "lawlessness."

Self-control ("continence" - i.e., to contain self) is the measure of becoming a thoughtful "son." In New Testament terms, this condition is also connected to becoming "a new man" (i.e., being reborn from above). This process is also referred to as receiving "life" and being "raised" in Christ. And as my readers know, it also equates to having one's eyes and ears opened ("eyes to see and ears to hear").

These sonship attributes are honed by being spiritually trained through our observance of law. The "law" to which I refer is the law of the Creator, not the perverted man-made laws of legislators. Man is forbidden from making law. We can apply law, but we cannot make law. Moses didn't make law. He only recognized and taught God's law. Likewise, Jesus did not make law. He only upheld the laws of his Father. Yahweh is our only "Lawgiver" (Is. 33:22).

THE SUBTLE BEAST INSIDE US

Every one born into this world comes with a "soulish" nature inside. It comes as standard equipment. Man is born with a natural proclivity to be childish, lawless and selfish. This spirit of man is contrary to the spirit of God.

God offered Adam the ability to overcome that beastly nature. That ability was called "life." Adam opted to reject "life. This "life" is now offered through Jesus, and is called "light." The "light" can overcome the childish, selfish nature that we were born with. This is the very thing I've been harping on: namely, SONSHIP.

In Genesis 3, we are told that the "serpent" (probably a politician or priest) appealed to Adam's nature to rebel

against God's spirit ... and against God's commandments. The main prohibition that God had laid upon Adam was that he could not act as a god. That was the meaning of the prohibition against partaking of "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." In essence, it meant that Adam was precluded from making his own rules and deciding for himself what was good and what was evil. Being "God" was reserved for Yahweh the Creator and Lawgiver.

The serpent, appealing to Adam's natural proclivity (the beast within) persuaded Adam that he had the right to be "as God knowing good and evil" (i.e., that Adam could be his own god and make his own laws). Adam bought the serpent's lie, and chose to reject God's law.

This example is important to us because it represents the challenge that every mortal man must face. It shows us that every one of us must let "the old man" die by placing our inborn soulish nature in subjection to the spirit of Christ. The spirit of Christ is that "life" from God that empowered Jesus to overcome the same temptation that Adam failed to overcome. Jesus was tested by three temptations, and in each case He refused to think of himself as his own god (lawgiver) (Mtt. 4). Also, in 1 Jn. 2:16 we are told that the temptations of the world are summed up in these same three temptations: namely, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." These reflect the natural spirit inside natural man. This natural spirit must be overcome through the spirit of Christ who, himself, overcame them as our example.

The systems of the world, i.e., the religious and political systems that control every aspect of the lives of the folks who believe in them, can be compared to the "serpent" in Genesis and the "tempter" in Matthew. The world system (the Beast System) has perfected and polished the temptations that appeal to that soulish nature that comes natural with all men. It is that soulish nature that makes children hate God's law ... because God's law exercises control over that soulish nature.

It is this soulish nature that rules every child, and every childish adult ... unless and until he has "... put off the old man (soulish nature) with his deeds; And has put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him" (Col. 3:9-10).

36. *If the Son therefore makes you free, you shall be free indeed.*

Jn. 8:36

WHAT DO YOU LOVE?

15. *"Love not the world (system), neither the things that are in the world (system). If any man loves the world (system) the love of the Father is not in him."*

1 Jn. 2:15

When we mature in Christ we put off our base nature, and instead we love the Father and his law. Then we are SONS ... and therefore FREE (Mtt. 17:26).

Ben Williams

WWW.BENWILLIAMSLIBRARY.COM