

God: The Ultimate Humanitarian

Chapter 5: A Humanitarian by Giving the Law

People don't like rules and laws. People don't like rules and laws because they don't want to be told what to do. Children don't like the rules their parents have for them. Adults do not like traffic laws or tax laws or HOA laws.

We don't like anyone or anything that tells us what to do. We certainly don't want God telling us what to do. Most people don't like God because of his Law.

In fact, most people see rules and laws as the opposite of love. They see rules and laws as binding and controlling.

In his Word, God shows us that his rules, his laws, are the definition of love for us. With his laws, God keeps us from harm and danger, protects us from trouble, and shows us the proper, God-pleasing way to live.

In this chapter we see God's great love in giving us his Law.

1. What did you learn from chapter 5?

2. There are many different definitions of Law in the Bible. To understand God better, we need to look at each one and understand why God gave it and what he was intending to do with it. What is the meaning of the word "law" in the following passages?

✦ Psalm 119:92. If your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction.

- Law, especially in the Old Testament, can mean **__All of God's Word__**.
- Does the Law bring us delight? **No, the Law makes us unhappy**
- What part of God's Word brings us delight? **The Gospel, what Jesus has done, brings us delight**

✦ John 1:45. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

- The Jews referred to the Law of **__Moses__**, also called **__the Torah__**. This type of Law included the **_first five books of_** of Moses.
- These are: **Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy**

✦ John 1:17. ¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

✦ The most ordinary way we think about the Law is the one that was given at **__Mt. Sinai__**. The summary of this Law is the **__10 Commandments__**.

3. There are also different kinds of the Law of Moses.

✦ Leviticus 23:4-5 These *are* the feasts of the LORD, *even* holy convocations, which you shall proclaim in their seasons. 5 In the fourteenth *day* of the first month at even *is* the LORD'S Passover.

➤ The Ceremonial Law. These laws were given to the Jews to organize and direct their Worship Life.

✦ Exodus 21: 12-16. 12 ^a“Whoever strikes a man so that he dies shall be put to death. 13 ^bBut if he did not lie in wait for him, but God let him fall into his hand, then ^cI will appoint for you a place to which he may flee. 14 But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by cunning, ^dyou shall take him from my altar, that he may die.

15 “Whoever strikes his father or his mother shall be put to death.

16 ^e“Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found ^fin possession of him, shall be put to death.

➤ The Civil Law. These laws were given to the Jews to organize and direct their Everyday Life.

➤ Exodus 20: 3-7. “You shall have no other gods before me.

4 “You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. 5 You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

7 “You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

➤ The Moral Law. These laws were given to the Jews and to people of all time to show them their sin and need for a Savior.

4. What purposes does the law serve?

✦ Mirror Romans 3:20. Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

✦ Curb Exodus 20:5-6. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

✦ Guideline Psalm 119:9. How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. 10 I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands.

5. What is the primary purpose of the law and why?

To show us our sin --- a mirror --- that Law's main purpose is to show us how many sins

6. Our sinful nature wants us to believe that there is a fourth purpose of the Law..... to save us. According to Romans 5:20 what can the Law never do for us?

7. In Romans 3:20, the Apostle Paul says that no one becomes righteous by keeping the law. Yet, in Luke 10:25-28, Jesus tells a man that he can obtain eternal life by keeping the commandments. Please explain the apparent contradiction between these two sections of Scripture.

Luke 10:25-28

²⁵ On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. "Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

²⁶ "What is written in the Law?" he replied. "How do you read it?"

²⁷ He answered: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'"

²⁸ "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

Jesus said that if you follow the Law you can be saved. Yet, Paul says that no will be righteous, or holy, by following the Law.

We put the two together, although perfection is a way to get to heaven, it is not possible for a sinful human being, born in sin, and sinful from birth, to live a perfect life in any way.

Someone had to live that life for us. Jesus is the only one who could and did live perfectly in our place.

8. Discuss the blessings that come from having God's law.

A. It gives us an awareness of how lost we are so that we need a Savior.

The Law shows us how far away from holiness and perfection we are. It shows us we need help.

B. It shows us how we, as believers who have God's grace, can show our love and thanks to God. **Once we see our sins, we can appreciate how undeserved God's love for us is and we can appreciate what he has done for us.**

C. It guides us how to live our Christian life by showing us what God thinks is right and wrong. **Shows us what God thinks is right and wrong so that we know how he would like us to act in this world.**

D. It keeps sin at bay by curbing the sinful actions of people.

We feel guilt over sin, most people will not do some of these terrible things.

E. It shows us a path of happiness and contentment in this world. In general if we follow God's Law, we will avoid many of the problems and troubles that sin brings. We will avoid the troubles we bring on ourselves because of our own sins.

9. When the Lord gave the commandments at Mt. Sinai (Exodus 20), he started by using a very special word יְהוָה. This was God's special name for himself which showed his love for his people. The LORD proclaimed his special name and its special meaning in Exodus 34:6. The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin.

The people were to follow God's commands, not because God demanded it, but because God had shown love to them. Exodus 20: 1,2. And God spoke all these words: ²"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

➤ How had God shown his love to the Israelites?

Brought them out of Egypt, Saved them at the Red Sea, provided for them as they traveled.

➤ How did God continue to show his love to the Israelites?

He forgave many sins, he brought many to heaven, He sustained them for 40 years in the desert, He provided God centered leadership, he brought them to the promised them,

10. What is our motivation to keep the commandments?

Our thanks to Jesus for what he has done for us.

11. How does the giving of his law demonstrate God as the Ultimate Humanitarian?

He did not want us to experience trouble and problem. He wanted us to live at peace with ourselves and with others.

He wants us to know right and wrong so that we understand how great the Gospel is.

Without the Law, we would never need to know or need the Gospel.

We would not know how much we need the rescue and forgiveness that the Lord provides.

He also wanted his right and wrong to be clear.

Assignment: Please read Chapter 6 of *God-The Ultimate Humanitarian*