

Introduction:

Throughout the history of the Christian church there have been ongoing disagreements about how to interpret Paul's teaching about the Law and its relationship to the NT believer. While Paul states that believers are no longer “under Law but under grace” (Rom. 6:14), he also states that the Law is good if it is used “lawfully” (1 Tim. 1:8). This is an important matter for us to consider together so that we can rightly understand our relationship to the OT as believers who are now “in Christ.”

“The New Testament never presents the law as a rule or standard for the believer in this age. Rather, Christ himself is the standard, the goal, the guide, and the one Christians look to dwell upon.” - Matthew Ferris, *If One Uses it Lawfully*

Main Point: Although Christians are no longer under the Mosaic Law as covenant, the entire OT remains God's inspired Word, given to _____ Christ and to make us _____ for living in our Father's world as we learn to walk by the _____.

Historic Christian Understandings of the Law

• The Threefold Division of the Mosaic Law

- (1) _____ Laws – These laws governed Israel as a nation and brought order to society.
These laws are no longer binding for believers, although they may be instructive.
- (2) _____ Laws – The religious laws regarding sacrifices, priesthood, dietary requirements, etc.
These laws were fulfilled in Christ and are no longer to be practiced.
- (3) _____ Laws – God's enduring moral requirements summed up in the 10 commandments (Decalogue).
These remain binding on believers who would be rightly related to God.

Critique: While these can be helpful descriptive categories, Israel was to obey the _____ Law and therefore every aspect of the Law was “moral.” – Consider Exod. 31:12-17

• The Three “Uses” of the Law

- (1) The _____/Civil Use – The Law restrains sin and contributes to a just political order.
- (2) The Pedagogical Use – The Law exposes sin, condemns the sinner, and points to need for _____.
- (3) The Normative Use – The Law serves as a rule or _____ to the believer's sanctification, showing what Christian obedience to God looks like.

Critique: While the first two uses can be helpful, the third use assumes a Covenant theological framework that views the Church as a _____ of Israel rather than a distinct people in God's plans.
Consider Gal. 3:23, 5:18

Key Points: Those who push back against these understandings of the Law are often called _____.

As those who are “in Christ,” a better term for us is that we are _____.

“The Christian's position as crucified with Christ, risen with him, and seated with him in the heavenly places puts us outside the realm of the jurisdiction of the law. This is not the same as saying believers have no obligation to holiness. Indeed, we are en-lawed to Christ, under obligation to him.” – Matthew Ferris

Important Principles for New Testament Believers

1. Christian morality and ethics are not _____ to law keeping.
2. The _____ of Christ puts believers in a different realm than when we were in Adam.
3. The Scriptures present an _____ of God's plans and purposes.
4. The NT consistently exhorts believers to holiness by _____ into Christlikeness.

“Sanctification is both a position and a goal. We pursue the goal because we already belong to Christ, and we do so by continually going back to the position of our identity in Christ, as justified and seated with Christ in the heavenly places.”

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How Does Paul “Use” the Law?

“Paul’s teaching about the law reminds us that our standing with God is not based on our ‘doing’, but on what God has done for us in Christ. It also teaches us that to please God we do not live under a code of law but rather under the Lordship of Christ.”

- Brian Rosner, *Paul & the Law*

1. Paul _____ the Law as law-covenant.

Rom. 6:14—For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Gal. 3:16a—Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made

2. Paul understands that the Law has been _____ by greater things.

1 Cor. 9:20b-21—To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. 21 To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.

Rom. 7:6—But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

3. Paul _____ the Law as Scripture that remains valuable for the NT believer.

▪ ***The Law is to be read as _____.***

(1) It anticipated Christ (Gal. 3:19,24; Col. 2:16-17)

(2) It bore witness to the Gospel (Rom. 3:21-22, 4:1-8)

(3) It finds its fulfillment in Christ’s person and work (1 Cor. 5:7, 10:1-4; 2 Cor. 3:14-16)

▪ ***The Law is to be read as _____ for living in God’s world.***

(1) Support those who minister among you (Deut. 25:4 in 1 Cor. 9:8-10)

(2) Learn from the sins of Israel (The wilderness wanderings in 1 Cor. 10:1-13)

(3) Care in the exercise of church discipline (Deut. 19:15 in 1 Tim. 5:19)

(4) Honor your father and mother (Exod. 20:12 in Eph. 6:1-3)

(5) Loving our neighbor (Lev. 19:18 in Gal. 5:13-14)

Key Point: Although we are not under the Law as NT believers, it carries the _____ and wisdom of God and is profitable for us to apply in our lives by the direction and _____ of the Holy Spirit.

“The Law was written for us Christians to teach us how to live... and the events it records were also written down to instruct us. In fact, all of the law is useful for moral teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness.”

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Concluding Thoughts

1. The Law is _____ for understanding how to live in the world according to God’s good design.

2. For the believer, however, a fruitful and faithful life in God’s world comes from our _____ with Christ and is produced in us by the Holy Spirit as we learn to walk by faith in Him.

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Key Points: Those who push back against these understandings of the Law are often called anti-nomian.

As those who are “in Christ,” a better term for us is that we are ex-nomian.

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