

The Law and the Gospel

John Colquhoun (1815)

Chapter 9 (Lesson 12)

The Establishment of the Law by the Gospel

Colquhoun views this chapter to “be of inexpressible importance”. One of the main problems he saw in Christianity is how the gospel is made to be an _____ of the law.

“It is proper here...to remark that to make the law void is to abrogate, abolish, or set it aside as to prevent it from being any longer binding on the conscience. It is to annul the divine authority and obligation of its precepts and penalties.”

Such attempts to render the law void can be seen when a person tries to substitute his own righteousness in place of the perfect righteousness of the law (in _____). Another attempt to render the law void can be seen in the idea that the law has no place in the Christian life (in _____).

Salvation- *“Every sinner is guilty of this who goes about to establish his own righteousness in order to his justification, or endeavors to satisfy the law with imperfect instead of perfect obedience, with carnal instead of spiritual performances, and with partial instead of universal obedience.”*

Sanctification- *“He (the sinner) attempts to abolish the perpetuity of it with respect to himself by persuading himself that although it originally obliged him to perform perfect obedience, yet now in consequence of the mediation of Christ, it obliges him to yield such obedience no longer (Jude 4).”*

In contrast to these wrong views of the law Paul writes, *“Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold (establish or cause to stand) the law.”*

In Scripture both the doctrine of _____ and the doctrine of _____ cause the law to be upheld.

How does the doctrine of faith uphold the law?

1. The doctrine of faith establishes the law as it is in the form of a _____ of _____

There are three elements to this understanding. First, the doctrine of faith (teachings of the Bible) reveals how holy and perfect this law is and how even one transgression of this law brings an awful _____. Second, the doctrine of faith reveals how _____ the transgressor of God’s law is, left to himself. Third, the doctrine of faith reveals how in Jesus Christ alone is the perfect requirement of the law met and _____.

“According to this doctrine, the law in its federal form is far more honored by the righteousness of the second Adam than it was dishonored by the disobedience of the first...In proportion to the stupendous humiliation of the Son of God, who stooped so low as to become subject to a law that was adapted only to creatures who as such are infinitely beneath Him, is the honor done to the precept and penalty of that law by His obeying the one and His enduring the other.”

2. The doctrine of faith establishes the law as tis is in the form of a _____ of _____ to the saints

“In the hand of the adorable Mediator, the sovereign authority of the law, as the instrument of government in His spiritual kingdom and as the rule of duty in His holy covenant, is confirmed; and as the high obligation of it is not only confirmed but increased.”

“According to that doctrine, all believers are bound by infinite authority to obey; they are enabled sincerely to obey; they are constrained by redeeming love to obey; they resolve and delight in dependence on promised grace to obey; and they cannot but obey the law as a rule of duty. The love of Christ, as revealed in the gospel, urges them;

the blood of Christ redeems them; the Spirit of Christ enables them; and the exceeding great and precious promises of Christ encourage them to obey and yield spiritual and acceptable obedience...While they do not obey it for life, but from life, they account obedience to it not only their duty but their privilege and their pleasure.”

How does the doctrine of grace uphold the law?

1. The doctrine of grace establishes the law as it is in the form of a _____ of _____

Sinners who have not the grace of God view the law as abominable and the Christ who delivers them from the terrors of the law as _____. Whereas, when grace is at work in the heart of a sinner their views toward the laws just demands, their need of salvation, and the beauty of the One whom has been sent to rescue lost sinners, all change. It is grace that opens the sinner’s eye to the reality of the law as being in the form of a covenant of works.

By grace they see the necessity of Christ’s _____ obedience, where in, He honored the law by submitting to its just punishment on behalf of His people.

2. The doctrine of grace establishes the law as it is in the form of a _____ of _____

Grace continuing to work in the heart of a redeemed sinner does _____ make them desire to throw off the law but instead gives them a desire to obey the commands of the law (love the Lord thy God and love they neighbor).

“As it is believers, and they only, who are under the law as a rule in the hand of the Mediator, so it is they, and they only, who are enabled to perform that sincere, holy obedience which flows from faith working by love.”

“Till a man have saving faith implanted in his heart by the omnipotent agency of the Holy Spirit, he can do nothing but transgress the commandments of God’s holy law...When that living faith which works by love is implanted and increased in his heart, vital motions and acts of spiritual obedience cannot but follow. Such a man will not only account it a privilege and a pleasure to yield sincere obedience to the law as the rule of his duty in time but will rejoice in the cheering prospect of being able to honor it with perfect obedience through eternity. He delights in it after the inward man, and therefore he rejoices in the hope that, by the grace of his adorable Redeemer, he shall be eternally bound by it and eternally conformed to it.”

God is glorified (and we are made most happy) when His _____ is _____.

“As the ultimate end that God has proposed to Himself in our redemption is the glory of His infinite perfections, so His chief subordinate end, as the righteous governor of the universe, is the honor of His holy law.”

“The Lord Jesus, according to the everlasting covenant made with Him, must submit to all this humiliation, service, and suffering so that the honor of the divine law might be vindicated and the sovereign authority of it established. Ought not we, then, to regard the law of God with the highest esteem and veneration and to tremble at the most distant thought of ever disobeying any of its holy commands?”

“The gospel, when it is accompanied with the demonstration of the Spirit of God and is received in the love of it, does not only excite the believer to obey the law as a rule of duty, but it is the only doctrine that can excite and dispose him to yield to it voluntary and sincere obedience.”

“The divine law is established and honored more in the salvation of one sinner than in the damnation of all the sons of men. In the justification and salvation of a believing sinner, both the precepts and penalty of the law are established and honored; but in the damnation of unbelievers, it is the penal sanction only that is honored.”

“Nothing, perhaps, is a surer symptom of reigning hypocrisy in a man than to take pleasure in hearing the promises and blessings of the gospel preached to him but to disrelish all such discourses as, even by evangelical motives, enforce the duties of the law on him. It is only the man who is secretly resolved not to perform all his duties who commonly is unwilling to hear of them.”