

## The Law (2 of 2)

### Difficult

Common difficulties understanding verses that refer to "the law"

Misinterpreting a reference to the ceremonial law as a reference to the moral law.

Misinterpreting a reference to old testament scriptures as a reference to the moral law.

Failure to understand when a verse is referring to a wrong use of the moral law.

Rich young man - Can eternal life be obtained by obeying the commandments? (**Mt 19:16-22**) (No)

Jesus was showing the difference between mere mental assent and genuine faith, as evidenced by actions that spring from a heart that appreciates and is aligned with the will of God.

Was the law minimized or eliminated by the gospel? (**Lk 16:16**) (No)

The pre-context refers to the covetous nature of the religious leaders. (**Lk 16:14-16**)

The "law and the prophets" refers to the old testament scriptures.

The old testament scriptures are focused around the coming Messiah (Christ). (**Lk 24:27, Jn 5:39**)

The message of those scriptures should have been enough to transform their covetous hearts. (**Lk 16:29-31** from the post context)

Now, the Messiah stood before them in human form and John was pointing the people directly to Him.

The point is that a greater light was now shining and they still refused to abandon their wicked ways. (**Jn 3:19**)

The Bible clearly states that the gospel does not nullify the law. (**Ro 3:31**)

The post-context clearly refutes any idea of the law being obsolete. (**Lk 16:16,17**)

If Jesus relaxed the punishment for breaking the law, then doesn't that imply that the importance of following the law is diminished? (**Jn 8:3-9** compare **Lev 20:10**) (No)

Jesus did not relax the punishment. He took on the punishment Himself. (**Jn 1:29, 1Pe 2:24**)

Jesus emphasized that we must abandon sin, which is the breaking of the law. (**Jn 8:10,11** compare **1Jn 3:4**)

Jesus, as the Sacrifice, asks us also to be merciful and forgiving. (**Mt 5:38,39** compare **Ex 21:24, Mt 6:14,15**)

Is the law a shackle and burden? (**Ac 15:5,10,11,24**) (No)

The context is a controversy about whether physical circumcision should continue to be required.

The law mentioned here is the ceremonial law, not the Ten Commandments moral law. Physical circumcision is a symbol of a spiritual condition that is to be realized through faith in Christ. (compare **Dt 10:16, Ro 2:28,29, 1Co 7:19, Gal 5:6**)

The controversy indirectly included the host of burdensome, Jewish, embellishments that were erroneously added to their traditionalized version of the law. (compare **Mt 15:3-9, Mt 23:1-4**)

Note that the decision was not to forbid physical circumcision, but rather that it is not a required element for salvation.

Not "under" the law (**Ro 6:14**)

We are no longer **under the external letter** of the law, but rather under the indwelling Spirit that loves the law. (**Ro 7:6, 2Co 3:3, Heb 8:10, Heb 10:15,16**)

We are no longer as children **under the external supervision** of the law. (**Gal 3:24,25, Gal 4:1-7**)

We are no longer hopeless lawbreakers **under the condemnation** of the law. (Ro 8:1,2, 1Jn 3:4-9)

This verse also says we are under grace. (Ro 6:14)

Grace does not abolish the law, but rather, fully establishes it. (Ro 3:31)

See the post context. (Ro 6:14,15)

Did Christ end the law? (Ro 10:4) (No)

The verse does not say Christ ended the law. Rather, it says He is the end (goal / end result) of the law. (Gal 3:24)

Christ is the fulfillment of the law in the sense of being the perfect example of a life in harmony with God's law. (Mt 5:17, Jn 15:10, Heb 4:15, 1Jn 2:4-6)

Did the law become obsolete after Christ came? (Gal 3:19-25) (Ceremonial law -- Yes)  
(Moral law -- No)

"It was **added** because of transgressions **till the seed** should come to whom the promise was made." (from Gal 3:19)

"added"

God's moral law was known prior to Sinai. (examples: Ge 26:5, Ex 16:28-30)

God's ceremonial law was known prior to Sinai. (examples: Ge 4:4, Ex 5:1-3)

The knowledge of God's moral law was largely lost during the centuries of Egyptian bondage, resulting in a deep decline into sin.

The significance of God's ceremonial law was obscured during the centuries of exposure to Egyptian idolatry.

The detailed, written communications of God's moral and ceremonial laws were added soon after the exodus from Egypt.

This renewed, detailed knowledge brought the people to an awareness of sin and their need for the Saviour.

"The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (from Gal 3:24)

"till the seed" (Christ is the Seed, Gal 3:16)

When Jesus died as the true Passover Lamb, the entire ceremonial, sacrificial system ended. (Mt 27:50,51, Col 2:14,17)

Now, under faith, the moral law is written in each believer's heart, rather than remaining external in stone. (Eze 11:19,20, Heb 8:10)

The moral law is not obsolete, but rather, established in each believer's heart. (Ro 3:31, Rev 12:17, Rev 14:12)

The moral law is still necessary as a mirror in which all can see their sins, and thus, their need for the Saviour's sacrifice and righteousness. (1Jn 3:4)

Which law? (Eph 2:15) (Ceremonial)

The "law of commandments contained in **ordinances**" refers to the ceremonial law. (compare Ex 12:43, Nu 9:12, Col 2:14,17)

The law "abolished in his flesh" refers to the ceremonial law. Jesus is the sole sacrifice for sin to Whom it pointed. (Jn 1:29, Heb 10:1-4,11,19,20, 1Pe 2:24)

Which law? (Col 2:14) (Ceremonial)

The "handwriting of ordinances" clearly identifies this law as the ceremonial law. (See the previous difficult verse)

The remark that this law was "against us" further identifies this as the ceremonial law. The ceremonial law written by Moses was placed on the side of the ark. (Dt 31:24-26)

The stone tablets, moral law, written by God's own finger, was placed inside the ark. (Ex 40:20, Heb 9:4)

The post-context remarks that this law was a "shadow of things to come" and "the body is of Christ" further identifies this as the ceremonial law. (Col 2:14,17)

Is the law the old covenant? (Heb 8:1-13) (No)

See the "The Old Covenant" section of the Covenants topic)

