

# On Biblical Justice and Rape

20 upvotes | 9 October, 2018 | by OsmiumZulu

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RC's recent [post](#) raises an important issue for all men living in our contemporary western culture.

How are we, *especially as Christians*, supposed to think and act regarding accusations of rape?

Unsurprisingly the Bible is not silent on the matter. Not only does scripture offer important insight into matters of justice, but it provides us the framework of thought that western civilization was built upon. There are a few key Biblical principles especially that offer a way out of this mess while protecting true victims.

“A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. - Deuteronomy 19:15

This passage expresses well the legal understanding that an accused party is presumed innocent until a witness *beyond* the accuser can testify against the accused. The other "witnesses" need not even necessarily be people; security footage or DNA evidence could theoretically suffice. God's standard of justice is that an accusation alone is not enough to convict someone of a crime.

While this passage alone effectively refutes the idea that "the woman should always be believed" and upends the faux "justice" of the #MeToo movement, the Bible does not stop there. God's standards are yet higher.

Falsely accusing someone of a crime is not a small matter to God. The ninth commandment found in Exodus 20:16 is commonly cited as "Thou shalt not lie" but the actual text is "Thou shalt not bear false witness against your neighbor." Scripture prescribes a fit punishment for those who break this commandment and bear false witness:

“The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother. So you shall purge the evil from your midst.” - Deuteronomy 19:18-19

Imagine if women faced the potential of paying restitution, jail time, or being put on a “false accuser” list if they made false rape claims. Imagine if our courts demanded two or more “witnesses” (at least points of evidence) before they would find the defendant guilty. The effects could not be overstated. Women would be far less likely to do stupid things that put them at risk of being raped, or take the risk and live with their decisions. They would certainly be much more careful before accusing anyone of sexual crimes as it could very well cost them dearly. It would help put and end to the ruining of men’s lives for consensual but regrettable acts.

The bottom line is that Christians need to recover and proclaim is that the Biblical standard goes beyond “innocent until proven guilty” and “by two or three witnesses” but actually ascribes penalty for those who make false accusations. Until then, there is no reason for anyone to expect the flood of false charges to lessen; they come at no cost.

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## Comments

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Uncommon\_Sense\_12345 1 points 10 October, 2018 12:23 AM [recovered]

This is just proof that Christianity is another made up religion. You guys are trying to re-invent the wheel yet again. Protestant Reformation No. 2. Who will be playing Luther?

On another note, guess we will have the raped virgin marry her rapist now and have the rebellious son stoned too.

But Oz, I do find your stance on this a bit strange. Shortly after the sub was started, I suggested that Christian women should dress more modest in a similar fashion to Muslimahs, just not that extreme. You accused me of being legalistic although the NT case can be made for modesty of behavior and clothing including a head cover. I guess it only flies when you suggest going all OT biblical.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 5 points • 10 October, 2018 12:39 AM

Non sequiturs and straw men don't inspire a tremendous amount of confidence that you are genuinely interested in a dialogue, nonetheless do you have a specific question that you want answered or is this just you spending your afternoon shaking your fist at a god you don't believe exists?

Uncommon\_Sense\_12345 1 points 10 October, 2018 12:46 AM [recovered]

No I spend some my time marveling at Christians destroying the religion inside out.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 3 points • 10 October, 2018 12:50 AM

It is both humorous and sad that non-Christians think they have enough understanding of our faith to make inane comments like that.

IronMonk48 • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 04:50 AM

In the Bible women had to marry their rapists.

Red-Curious • 8 points • 10 October, 2018 02:27 PM

As /u/OsmiumZulu alluded to, this is a misunderstanding. The passages usually referenced to support this conclusion are Deuteronomy 22:28-29 and Exodus 22:16-17, neither of which references rape specifically. In deuteronomy, it says, "and **they** are found out," implying that she went along with it too. Likewise, in the Exodus passage, it references when a man "seduces a virgin," implying that she was allured by him. I'm not convinced that either of those passages are talking about rape victims - at least not exclusively.

More to the point, God didn't command that she marry her rapist. God's position remained consistent as with the rest of the Bible: she is under her father's headship and should do as her father instructs. If her father instructs her to marry the guy, so be it. If not, then not. The presumption here is that a father loves his daughter and would not marry her off to someone if he didn't legitimately believe that was best for her. This is affirmed by Jesus's assumptions on parent-child love in Hebrew culture in Luke 11:11-13.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 3 points • 10 October, 2018 05:24 AM

While the notion is often stated, it is more involved than that. This article gets into some of the surrounding considerations that are often neglected.

Willow-girl • 2 points • 13 October, 2018 01:43 PM

That's a good article. I agree context is important. That was a world in which being a rape victim -- being forcibly deflowered -- would render a girl unmarriageable. She'd probably be forced to live out her life as some kind of poor-relation. Under the circumstances, many women probably WOULD choose to marry their rapist and at least have the higher status of being a wife and bearing children! Especially since, in the absence of the rape, the woman probably would have been married off to a man of her father's choosing, perhaps to seal a business deal. Her feelings or desires may or may not have been taken into account. I doubt very much sex was truly consensual in those days. Being forced to marry your dad's new business partner probably wasn't all that much different than being forcibly raped by a stranger.

[deleted] • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 02:17 AM\*

hmm, I wouldn't go through the old testament trying to find commands on how to deal with things like this.

I think one of the reasons Jesus came was to show us an example of how to live to take place of some type of rule structure. All I can do is glean some wisdom from this but it's hardly a command for Jesus followers, no more than circumcision.

Deep\_Strength • 9 points • 9 October, 2018 06:23 AM

Or you know, Jesus mentioned affirming 2 or 3 witnesses for Church matters as well in Matthew 18:

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. **But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.** If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

Several examples of this in the NT:

[https://www.openbible.info/topics/two\\_or\\_three\\_witnesses](https://www.openbible.info/topics/two_or_three_witnesses)

It's not just an OT command.

[deleted] • 6 points • 9 October, 2018 03:52 PM

Can't argue with Jesus

rocknrollchuck • 4 points • 9 October, 2018 01:10 PM

Old Testament Law was divided into Moral, Ceremonial and Civil law.

Here is a great breakdown of this, and why we follow the Moral law today but not the Ceremonial or Civil law.

Red-Curious • 4 points • 9 October, 2018 05:06 PM\*

Eek ... the Bible doesn't actually make that distinction. I've heard this argument more times than I can count, and it always falls flat in my mind. It's another one of those products of cultural Christianity that makes me shudder every time I hear someone mention it - which is a lot.

For the sake of argument, let's assume that Hebrews 8 went on to say: "There are 3 types of laws: moral, civil and ceremonial. When the old covenant was made obsolete, it only affected the civil and ceremonial laws, but the moral laws are still over you." I'm pretty sure that's not in there, but let's suppose it is. How do we, even with this assumption, go about categorizing which laws are moral, civil, and ceremonial? There would have to be yet another verse - or an entire book - making the categorization with each reference.

Consider: is the commandment not to bear false testimony against your neighbor a civil law about court proceedings or a moral issue about lying? One will argue that it's clearly talking about presenting a case to a judge (civil), while another might say that it's in the 10 commandments, so it must be moral. But who says the 10 commandments are all moral laws? There's no standard. Instead, when we do this we're making up a law for ourselves - deciding on our own which laws can be done away with and which can't. This is the exact same standard that is applied to justify homosexuality - "That wasn't a moral law, it was only a civil one, so that law went away" - and then when the new testament comes around, "Oh, Paul was still speaking to the Jewish people in that passage, who were under the law still."

Leviticus 19 is another great example:

3 Respect father/mother and honor Sabbath - moral or civil? Let's assume moral

4 Idols - Moral

5-8 Offering, "sacrifice it in such a way" - ceremonial

9-10 Don't glean fields, leave for the poor - civil welfare or moral generosity? I'll go with civil here

11 Steal, lie, deceive - moral

12 Swear falsely - moral

13 Defraud, rob, hold back wages - civil, I presume?

14 Mock the handicapped - moral or civil? Let's say moral

15 Judge fairly - civil

16 Slander - moral or civil? Let's say moral

17 Don't hate in your heart - moral

18 No revenge or grudge; love neighbor as self - moral

19 No cross-breeding, cross-seeding, cross-weaving - civil? I hardly see why. Moral? But most people disagree. We'll go with ceremonial?

20 Sex with a slave - civil

21-22 Forgiveness for sex with a slave - ceremonial

23-25 Wait before eating fruit of a new tree - civil?

26 Bloody meat, divination, omens - meant might be civil, but the other two moral? maybe civil?

27 Sideburns - let's assume that's civil, otherwise a lot of guys would have to get a new hair cut. Goodness, I can't even grow sideburns if I wanted to!

28 Tattoos - again, we'll assume this is civil

29 Don't let your daughter be a prostitute - sounds moral, but the justification is a civil "greater good" one; we'll go with moral

30 Sabbath - moral or civil? we'll call it moral

31 Mediums, spiritists - moral with a civil justification? we'll go with moral anyway

32 Stand up for and respect the elderly - moral

33-34 Treat foreigners well - civil, but maybe moral? let's say civil

35-36 No dishonest measurements - civil, presumably, but honesty can be called a moral issue too. I'll say civil

Phew ... that's a lot of laws and virtually no distinction or categorization. They're all spliced together. What are we to make of that? Not just the fact that some of them are highly debatable, of course.

What I make of this is that the tripartate-law advocates would suggest:

"We are bound to follow Leviticus 19:3, 4, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, the first part of 26, 29, 30, 31, and 32 ... but because Jesus died, now we can ignore Leviticus 19:5-8, 9-10, 13, 15, 19, 20, 21-22, 23-25, the last two parts of 26, 27, 28, 33-34, and 35-36"

See how ridiculous that sounds? Do you think when Moses wrote Leviticus 19 he was distinguishing between these 3? Or do you think God just gave him a law and we all are the ones who decided to splice apart these laws and commands years later? And if the distinction mattered to God, why didn't he put it in the Bible so that we would better understand the Gospel?

Tag: /u/lololasaurus /u/neytax /u/BobbyMckee

rocknrollchuck • 2 points • 9 October, 2018 05:14 PM

Okay, I understand your point. So how would you answer the question then: Why do we follow some of the Old Testament laws, but not all of them? Aren't you just picking and choosing which laws to follow?

That's the question that atheists and agnostics ask over and over. A good, clear answer would be most helpful here.

Red-Curious • 5 points • 9 October, 2018 05:15 PM

I have an answer, but will follow up soon - deadline in 15 minutes and I just procrastinated too long typing that :p

rocknrollchuck • 2 points • 9 October, 2018 05:21 PM

I look forward to it!

Red-Curious • 6 points • 10 October, 2018 04:36 PM

**1/2** - Long Reply Incoming

Okay, so to back up briefly, the OT law was never historically divided into three types - that came afterward. For as much as Paul talks about the law in his epistles, if there were a historical segregation, he would have mentioned it. Instead, we see him arguing over and over and over again that the non-Jews were not subject to Jewish law. He speaks in broad terms, even as to the most fundamental and basic, most important laws they had, like circumcision.

In Acts 15 there was a council that met to decide what laws would be imposed on the Gentiles and not. Paul was present and presumably argued against imposing any laws at all. James brought up the concession to limit it to just a 3/4 (depending on how you interpret it) OT laws - and this was made not as a command that those were the only laws to be retained, but as a concession to maintain peace and unity between otherwise warring factions of Jew and Gentile within the church. Paul's real view on this becomes evident when, years later (presumably after the hostilities died down), he writes in places like 1 Cor. 8 and Romans 14 (among several other places) that even those OT commands that were forbidden to the Gentiles in Acts 15 are really

permissible as long as it doesn't violate one's personal convictions or we're not causing our brother to sin (ex. eating food sacrificed to an idol: forbidden in Acts 15, but permitted in 1 Cor. 8).

The Acts 15 council made no reference to moral laws being preserved. They only listed 4 out of the entire OT testament. And given their status as a peace-making concession rather than a theological conclusion, I have to assume that the whole of the OT law is no longer applicable to anyone who is a Gentile.

Accordingly, when you ask:

Why do we follow some of the Old Testament laws, but not all of them? Aren't you just picking and choosing which laws to follow?

No, I'm not picking and choosing any of them. I'm following Paul's conclusion that they are all rendered moot by the new covenant. From my reading of the Bible, this seems so plainly obvious that I'm not sure how so many Christians miss it.

Many want to point to Matthew 5:18 and only quote: "until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law" as their basis for assuming the law is still applicable. But they leave off the last 4 words of that verse: "until everything is accomplished." What were Jesus's very last words before dying? "It is finished" (John 19:30).

When Jesus died by the law, we died to it with him (Romans 7:4), and thus the law no longer applies to us. "You are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14).

I know this only answers the "picking and choosing" part of the question, and I could spend 3 more comments here, so I'll just move on and if there are any more questions I can address them.

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Moving into a post-Gospel world, I believe the law of the Old Testament is no longer binding on anyone - none of it. Not even the 10 commandments.

That doesn't mean that there are no standards we should live by. It merely means that the old testament and the old covenant are no longer that standard. Paul replaces the legal standard of morality with a spiritual one - more on that in a second.

I want to be clear that I'm not talking about soteriology right now, as I'm assuming we all already agree that the old covenant did utilize the law as part of its soteriological model, but that the new covenant utilizes grace as its primary vehicle through which salvation would be found. So, when I talk about the law as a standard, I don't mean merely for salvation (a point on which I assume we already agree), but as a list of rights and wrongs from a moralistic lifestyle perspective.

As I've noted on this sub before, I don't believe the law ever existed to point out wrong things simply because God things bad things are bad, but to restore us to be the people God had originally intended. "Bad" or "evil" or "wrong" is not an eternal, innate concept. In the beginning was God and God alone. When God created Adam and Eve, there was no sin or evil. That was introduced *ex post facto*.

I often ask people whether God created the law for himself or for man's benefit. While there is truth in both arguments, most people appropriately answer: for man's benefit. Jesus gives this example when saying, "The Sabbath was created for man, not man for the Sabbath." If God didn't want us to break the law simply because "Mmm, that's bad, m'kay?" then how are we to benefit from it? How does that help us? It doesn't - it would be for God's own nuisance value that he

wants us to keep the law (as if we actually held enough significance in the grand scheme that our behaviors could be a nuisance to God).

Instead, the point of the law is to help us to become the kinds of people God intended when he created humanity in the first place. The old covenant was not about avoiding bad things merely because they were bad, and thereby saving ourselves by managing our sin. It was meant to develop a positive, affirmative character that was oriented toward godliness.

The command "do not steal" isn't about stealing being part of some higher moralistic list of "no no"s; it's because God wants us to become the kinds of people who don't need to steal in the first place.

The command to keep the Sabbath isn't about it being wrong to go to work or help your donkey out of a ditch on a particular day of the week; it's about being the type of people who are able to appreciate and enjoy what God has given us instead of working ourselves to death.

The command not to covet our neighbor's wife and possessions isn't about some darkness that grows in a person's heart; it's about making us the kind of people that are content with what God has given us so that we don't become envious of those who are given more. God will have grace on whom he will have grace and mercy on whom he will have mercy (Romans 9, I think?). Some of the workers in the parable of the talents/minas got more than others - and that's totally at the master's discretion. Coveting isn't bad for coveting's own sake. It's "bad" because a person who covets isn't living up to the type of person God wanted him to be.

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Now, in the OT and even through the Gospels, humanity had a significant disadvantage. Here's how this works:

Originally, God revealed himself to humanity by telling us who he is and what he expected. This is how it is through most of the OT, as occurs through the law and the prophets as external indicators of God's intentions for mankind.

When humanity couldn't accept that, God came down to show us who he is with a real, tangible example in the person of Jesus. We had God incarnate walking the earth explaining everything to us and showing us what it looked like to live it out in practice. But that still was not enough.

Jesus says, "It is better for you that I go because unless I leave the helper will not come to you" (John 16, I think). That helper is the Holy Spirit. Instead of telling us who God is and what he expects (OT) or even showing us (Gospels), the Holy Spirit changes the game by entering into us, becoming one with us, and transforming us into who God is and what he expects of us (through Spirit-led sanctification).

To that end, the OT law is obsolete because God no longer communicates his expectations to us through such things. He uses the Holy Spirit internally within us.

Tag: /u/lololasaurus /u/neytax /u/BobbyMckee

Red-Curious • 4 points • 10 October, 2018 04:37 PM

2/2

To summarize the above:

All of the OT law and old covenant are now obsolete (Hebrews 8, notably 8:13).

The commands are not about creating a dividing line between good and evil, but about pointing us to a positive, proactive character of godliness.

God's method of revelation and communication with man is no longer predominantly external (as most people still treat it), but internal through the Holy Spirit within us.

This is where I get back to the part about Paul replacing the external legal standard of morality with an internal spiritual one. This is where your question really gets answered, using the context of all of the above. Paul gives a 2-part standard for moral issues in a Spirit-driven framework.

1. "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean." Romans 14:14
2. "Whatever does not proceed from faith is sin." Romans 14:23

The first verse basically declares that nothing is inherently sinful. I usually use watching child pornography as an easy example. Everyone agrees this is sin, right? What if you're an FBI examiner watching it to find clues that lead to the arrest of the perpetrator. Still sin? Trick question. If he wasn't a Christian, yes it's still sin (Hebrews 11:6). What if he is a Christian? Still a trick question: we need to know his motives. Was he doing it to glorify God through working diligently as God desires of him? Probably not sin then. Was he doing it to advance his career without any mindfulness to glorify God in what he does? Probably still sin.

In this way, the second part deems everything we do that isn't prompted by our faith as sinful. As a result, I believe that "not sinning" is the exception to the rule, rather than the inverse, which most people innately assume: "I'm a good person, except the times that I sin." Sin is not something we do when we're not being good; in our flesh sin is our default state and good is what we do when we are not sinning.

In light of the above, the standard I apply for all moral issues: **Does it proceed from faith?** That is the "good, clear answer" you're looking for.

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## Conclusion

Now I want to be clear: I'm not saying we all make up our own standards. We don't decide what we want to do and rationalize our faith to support it. Rather, the Spirit compels us toward a mission and if our behaviors are not oriented toward the fulfillment of that mission (i.e. because of our faith), then all such things are sin - even something as innocent as helping an old lady cross the street or giving money to the poor. See 1 Cor. 13:1-3 or Isaiah 64:6.

Accordingly, the orientation of our hearts toward or away from God's purposes (i.e. our faith) is what draws the line between "sin" and "not sin."

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## Common Objections

So, when I present this most people say, "Cool, so as long as I don't feel guilty when I look at porn, it's perfectly fine to do it, right?" That would certainly be possible in framework that only contemplates Romans 14:14. But that's why Paul gave us Romans 14:23 as the reverse buffer. When you look at porn, are you doing it because something about your faith compels you to do it? If the answer is no, then it's still sin, even though it's not an inherently sinful activity.

"What if I just want to chill out to Netflix for an evening? Do I always have to be acting out of

faith all the time, non-stop for it to be sin? Is TV always sin because I can't watch it from faith?" This question always comes up because Americans love their TV.

Yes, if you're watching TV just to kill time and to gratify your own desire to veg out, it's probably sin. Why? Because it's not proceeding from faith. 1 Cor. 10:31 is a little more explicit and even lists eating and drinking - common life necessities - as things that we must always do to God's glory, and it would clearly be sin if we were doing it for any reason other than to glorify God because that verse commands that "whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." So again, the primary question is: *why are you doing it?* Motive matters.

In the reverse, though, there are countless ways to redeem these activities - not in that we're trying to justify our actions by pretending our motives are different than they are, but by actually changing our motives. As Brother Lawrence said, "Our sanctification did not depend upon changing our works, but in doing that for God's sake, which we commonly do for our own."

So, I used to be addicted to TV. I'm glad that addiction is over. But I still watch TV. My purpose in doing so is now less about watching a show simply because I enjoy it. It's because I have a friend at the gym or a neighbor or a co-worker - all people I'm trying to share Christ with - who have mentioned these shows and I'm trying to build a commonality with them, and having familiarity with something they get excited about is immensely useful in developing that relationship.

The fact that I enjoy the TV shows I watch does not negate the fact that if I could not use that time to advance God's purposes in this way, I wouldn't be watching the show in the first place. In my mind, "I really like that show and want to watch it" is not enough of a reason for me to invest the time to watch that show. My focus is on my mission: make disciples. To do that, I have to find strategic ways of building relationships with others that will earn me a place of influence in their lives that can be leveraged for Christ.

To continue with the TV example, I love going to my wife's work parties. There are so many shallow and superficial people there. The topics of conversation always start with things like the weather, something going on in the office, a popular thing in the news, etc. - innocuous things that most people don't actually get passionate about.

Enter me: "So, what types of things do you do for fun?" They always list impressive things, like running or playing an instrument or researching the NASDAQ - and some even deny that they ever do anything fun at all, only working all the time. "Fun? Free time? What's that?" is a very common answer. I know better.

No matter what their answer is, I follow up with: "You watch any good shows lately?" About 95% of the time (there are rare times when people legitimately don't watch any TV) they'll give me a couple things they've seen recently. If I've seen it or heard enough about it to hold a conversation on the topic ("That's a great show. What do you think will happen to Jack after that last episode?") - invariably, a spark lights up in their eye. They get a more crooked and intense smile than their previous superficial expressions. They're invested in the conversation, which I can now steer whichever way I want.

That includes 4 times that I've been able to share the Gospel with people as a result of these conversations (out of about 6 or so of my wife's work parties I've attended), and 3 of these couples having visited our church afterward - and that's just with my wife's work parties, and it's far more common to have these conversations and results with people I'm already in-context to chat with. I promise you that couldn't have happened if we just talked about the weather. It happened because I'm intentional about how I use my free-time, orienting it toward engaging in

things that I know will be useful for building relationships with non-believers.

1 Cor. 9:20-23 - "To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. **[To those who love watching TV, I became like one who loves watching TV, to win those who love watching TV. To middle-class suburbians, I became like a middle-class suburban, to win middle-class suburbians.]** To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the Gospel, that I may share in its blessings."

See how that works? That's the line between good and evil: *Does it proceed from faith or not?* The law doesn't dictate this. The Holy Spirit compelling me toward a mission and to act from faith to God's glory does.

Tag: /u/lololasaurus /u/neytax /u/BobbyMckee

rocknrollchuck • 2 points • 10 October, 2018 05:12 PM

Wow. This is just a wall of truth. You've given me some things to think about, thanks for this!

KUZURI271828 • 2 points • 11 October, 2018 07:10 AM

I love this sub, so many red pills.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 2 points • 10 October, 2018 07:15 PM

So RC, would you say that God's standard revealed here:

“A single witness shall not suffice against a person for any crime or for any wrong in connection with any offense that he has committed. Only on the evidence of two witnesses or of three witnesses shall a charge be established. - Deuteronomy 19:15

Is no longer to be followed? If so, I have a few questions.

Did God require this standard of justice in order to benefit His people?

Jesus upholds this standard for matters of Church discipline in Matthew 18:16, and Paul upholds it in 2 Corinthians 13:1 and 1 Timothy 5:19. Should we not do the same?

Can we improve upon God's revealed standards of justice?

Simply put the idea that the New Covenant invalidates the entirety of the Old Covenant is just not a critically reasoned position. Neither Jesus nor Paul behave that way and the church historic has never held to the position you've asserted.

Sure, some aspects of God's law changed (circumcision, dietary restrictions, temple sacrifice, etc) but it was not a wholesale sweeping away of what God had previously revealed as we see some of it was retained (prohibitions against adultery, theft, murder, etc.) This is why distinctive categories have been commonly used to differentiate between different types of laws.

Now, you suggest that because Paul never made a distinction between ceremonial, civil, and moral laws that we ought not either. Well, Paul never used the term "Trinity" yet clearly had a firm grasp on the subject. That the ancients didn't use the distinctions that we do in no way negates the use of those distinctions. Besides, they make perfect sense:

**Ceremonial** - These laws pertain largely to the rituals around: \* Sacrifices for sin atonement \*

Separateness from the nations \* Worship in the temple

These are no longer valid because:

Jesus satisfied the entire sacrificial system that was a foreshadowing of cavalry

The gentiles have been grafted into God's family and are no longer separate

The temple was destroyed and now our bodies serve as God's temple

Simply put, none of the ceremonial laws make any sense in light of what has taken place in the New Testament.

**Civil** - These laws pertain to how God commanded Israel to be governed. These pertain primarily to:

Defining what is crime

Providing standards for prosecution

Prescribing punishments

These are somewhat trickier than ceremonial laws and Christians can and do disagree about these depending on other attendant theologies. Nonetheless, these laws are still important to all Christians because they reveal God's attitude toward certain behaviors and that attitude does not change.

“When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if anyone should fall from it. - Deuteronomy 22:8

Here we see that God values human life enough to expect us to take reasonable precautions for the safety of others. We don't typically use our rooftops as living spaces, but the principle remains. Perhaps if you live in a neighborhood with children around this verse prompts you to fence your pool so they don't accidentally fall in and drown.

The key question regarding God's civil law is this: can we administrate society more justly than by God's own commands?

**Moral** - These laws pertain to God's character and how He has ordered the world. As these are derived from God's very character, which is immutable, they are necessarily unchanging.

“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image. - Genesis 9:6

This command is pre-mosaic. We see that God's justice requires the death penalty for murder because to murder an image bearer is an assault on the one whose image is being shown; God.

These moral laws extend beyond Israel and God even judges the pagan nations for violating it.

To suggest that this law, and those like it, are somehow made obsolete by the New Covenant is ludicrous. Paul's entire argument in Romans 1 and 2 is predicated on even the pagans understanding and suppressing the moral law, and are thus guilty before God.

You mentioned that you do not believe the 10 commandments are binding on Christians. Can you imagine any scenario where sleeping with another man's wife or worshipping an idol is not sin? I certainly lack the imagination for it.

The reality of the law of God is not as straightforward as you make it out to be. I wish it were, but that doesn't square with how Jesus or Paul behaved or taught. Hence the need for making distinctions of categories. We can debate and disagree about what elements of the law were moral, civil, or ceremonial, we can debate about how certain civil laws pertain to today, but

what we can't do is take the easy path of tossing out the Old Testament law entirely. Trust me, it would be a lot simpler if you were right and I wish it were so.

/u/lololasaurus /u/neytax /u/BobbyMckee /u/rocknrollchuck

Red-Curious • 2 points • 10 October, 2018 10:37 PM

We don't follow Jewish law simply because Jewish law says so. It is not a binding standard over non Jews. But it does still hold advisory capacity in that it reveals the character of the God we intend to orient our hearts toward. With that in mind, to answer your first set of questions:

1. God did require it for the benefit of a specific people in a specific time. But the OT law does not transcend all cultures over all time. Am I in sin for having my son circumcised on the day he was born instead of the 8th day? No. The circumstances making the 8th day optimal are no longer a medical concern. The law was made for man, not man for the law.
2. Of course we uphold what Jesus and Paul instruct - but not because the law said so; rather it's because we cannot possibly act in faith when we are knowingly abandoning what Christ taught. Also note that they don't cite the law as the reason for their exhortation - "the law says so, so you'd better do it!" They cite heart issues for refraining that standard.
3. We can't, but God can, which he did through Christ (except maybe on a technical theological level, which is that my standard was true even old testament times). Also, justice is highly context dependent - something even the ancient Hebrews understood and applied before blindly killing disobedient children.

Simply put the idea that the New Covenant invalidates the entirety of the Old Covenant is just not a critically reasoned position

I can't speak for the critics, but I can quote Hebrews 8:13 - "By calling this covenant 'new' he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and outdated will soon disappear." I'm not sure how you get around that.

some of it was retained (prohibitions against adultery, theft, murder, etc.)

Right. But they weren't retained as the law. The whole point of Jesus bringing these up in the sermon on the mount is to show that these are all really heart issues and not just the law for the law's own sake - and even then he's speaking to Jews in a time when that law was directly over them.

Again, we are not under the law, but that doesn't mean the law is uninformative. I owe no obligation to any old testament Jewish law, but I do owe an obligation to the author of those laws. He has not imposed those laws as a burden over me, but they do guide my expression of faith through what it reveals of the God I love and serve and how I might reflect his character to the world. This is what it means to be free from the law and free from sin but a slave to righteousness. Paul doesn't say, "You're not under the law ... except those ones. You're still under those ones."

Paul never used the term "Trinity"

Indeed, but he did most certainly distinguish between Father, Son, and Spirit - the first couple verses of romans makes that clear. I'm not married to the word trinity. I am married to the biblical concepts that compel that conclusion. No such compulsion exists in the bible for a tripartate view of the law.

ceremonial ... civil ... moral

Yeah, I fully understand the distinctions, but you still haven't provided a biblical basis for the distinction. By creating one for ourselves, we're developing our own man-made standard for which laws we're going to follow and not. In my book, that's not cool and is dangerously close to liberal theology. Never impute man made philosophies on scripture and theology.

What you do with the civil laws is certainly appropriate, though. You are drawing principles from the law about who God is and letting that be a guide rather than a strict statute to be observed as an authority over us.

I agree with pretty much everything you said on the moral law. As you note: it's not wrong because some verse in Deuteronomy or Leviticus said so. It's wrong because it breaks the image of God that we are meant to reflect to the world, and which our faith compels us to bear. I don't avoid killing people because some verse in Exodus told me not to. I don't do it because I love my God: heart over law.

I hope that makes more sense. I don't think things have to be as complicated as the human-created tripartate law line of theology makes it.

Tag: u/rocknrollchuck

rocknrollchuck • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 10:13 PM

After reading u/Red-Curious's reply and then yours, I think it boils down to the difference between an external obedience of the Law, and an internal transformation that causes our character to change to be more like Christ, which results naturally (spiritually) in obedience to what glorifies God.

The transformation causes a change into something which has different properties. An example would be heating water to produce steam: when the transformation from liquid to gas takes place, the vapor naturally rises because that's its nature. It is the same with us and the transformation of the Holy Spirit in us.

Red-Curious • 2 points • 10 October, 2018 10:43 PM

Amen - though the law does still inform us, because for some people sanctification isn't automatic.

[deleted] • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 05:10 PM

Thanks for such a great + detailed response. I'm very grateful to have a productive conversation on a great topic.

I agree with essentially everything RedCurious just wrote and let me preface this reply with one point - we are all united with one simple thing, we are Jesus followers and believe in Christ - so regardless if someone has a small disagreement on something, it doesn't really matter that much. Let me comment on a few things that stood out for me.

First, Sin. The word sin comes from the Hebrew hata - which originated in archery and literally refers to missing the mark or missing the center of the target. So another way to think of sin is missing the mark. I heard a good conversation on this strangely enough by Jordan Peterson and Dr. Oz (I'm not trying to bring their theology in here, just where I heard the discussion). Anyway, I find that very interesting to see sin as missing the mark. Let me quote one thing here

Yes, if you're watching TV just to kill time and to gratify your own desire to veg out, it's probably sin. Why? Because it's not proceeding from faith.

I understand your point. If you know you have this desire to be lazy and just gratify your laziness and you know there are better activities you could be doing - then yes, it probably would be sin. Likewise, if you worked 70 hrs this week very intensely and wanted to rest on a day and watch TV to unwind, it may be a very different situation and you could glorify God by enjoying your day off and resting/recovering. I think the real key here that you hit on (which I tried to do but I'm not as good of a writer as you!) - is that Christ and the Holy Spirit together give us this constant road map that apparently we need to check in with frequently, no different than using a GPS on your smartphone to drive somewhere - the route may change, there may be an accident or roadblock and you may need a detour. To take that analogy one step further, Christ is the location where we are headed and the Holy Spirit is like the GPS that constantly is readjusting and guiding us (not a perfect example I know, but I just made that up 30 seconds ago haha).

Anyway, I am very encouraged by your post and basically agree with all of it. I went back to check Romans 14 because it really is an exact example of people saying - "hey, what are the rules, we need some good rules here". And Paul via the Holy Spirit and Christ's example kind of lays out a plan - here's how you should handle this. Let me quote Paul -

· **22** So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves. **23** But whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.[c]

Basically his conclusion is "keep it to yourself". I think we lack humility sometimes - I'm not saying you guys, I'm saying myself. It's so hard to sit there and be quiet when you feel like you know something more. But I think Paul was smart enough to understand this and he says, "hey keep that between you and God. You don't need to tell everyone XYZ is not a sin and you do XYZ because it's fine."

So it returns to the earlier point, Jesus brought something new - something much more simple but much more difficult. And it has to do with loving others as Christ loved them and then also the Holy Spirit / God's word to help you figure out where/what to do.

Thanks for the good discussion.

Red-Curious • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 06:25 PM

Right on.

To expand a little more, hama was only the prefix/root. Hamartano was the archery term and it goes beyond merely missing the mark. Hamartano was a measurable distance from the exact dead center of the bull's eye to the place the arrow struck. Even if the arrow was

on the bull's eye, if it was even slightly off center, it had a hamartano distance. This goes along well with my framework of sin being the default state of all people still living on earth, even when we think we're doing good, and that the only true "good" we can ever do (i.e. something completely devoid of sin) is when God does it through us - which is not a difficult state to achieve, but is impossible to maintain indefinitely.

The other major conjugation is hamartia, which was a literary term, not an archery one. It was used to describe a single flaw in an otherwise perfect character. Examples would be Achilles' heel or Othello's jealousy. Hebrew literature knew this term in the context that it only took one small flaw to ruin the whole of a man and his entire life, even his noble virtues. For example, if a man's one flaw was jealousy, the fact that he was an honest man, devoted to truth wouldn't redeem him; instead, his honesty and passion for truth would be redirected away from good pursuits toward hunting down an alleged lover who might not actually exist. Hopefully that adds some value to you.

As for "loving others as Christ loved them" - what's your view on how Christ loved them (in a John 13:34-35 context)? Because I very rarely see a good answer to that question.

[deleted] • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 06:40 PM

As for "loving others as Christ loved them" - what's your view on how Christ loved them (in a John 13:34-35 context)? Because I very rarely see a good answer to that question.

I've been thinking about this a lot recently. I don't pretend to be a perfect person, I'm more screwed up than most! But I'm trying to learn and do better everyday. I say that to just set up that I'm trying to get better at what I say below.

Let me start by quoting a verse from the parable of the good Samaritan:

**36** "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

**37** The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

I believe when Christ is saying exactly the same thing as he did in the story of the Good Samaritan. When you read about everything Christ did throughout the gospels and let's say you even have the Holy Spirit alongside you, you start to get an image or a standard of Christ and his love. Just like the Good Samaritan was this ideal, this standard of not only who was his neighbor but a way to love someone in need.

As some people say, it's almost like you have to know and picture Christ playing the role of you and figure out what Christ does in that role. The whole WWJD thing was so cultural and played out that it lost meaning but really, if you could take out the cultural bias on that and say "how would Jesus love XYZ person". One author that I listened to recently, Bob Goff, who comes off as the nicest person in the world had a great way of posing this - "How can I be Christ to this person?" or something to that effect. Like how can I serve, speak, act, think, whatever - to this person so that I am

acting like Jesus would be to them.

It's actually a powerful idea and I can't think of any more powerful idea. So when Jesus says, love others as I have loved them - he's telling us to be Jesus to others. I find it fascinating that Jesus spent the last 15-30 min or whatever washing their dirty feet and then he moves on to, hey guys - as I've loved you, love each other. It's a new command because he just lived an entire life that was selfless and perfect.

I honestly can't find a higher idea or ideal.

Red-Curious • 2 points • 10 October, 2018 07:25 PM

You successfully avoided the red herring! Good job. Most people answer that Jesus died for us, so John 13:34-35 is about radical sacrificial love. But Jesus says "have loved" in the past tense. He hadn't died yet.

Your answer appropriately gives one sub point nested beneath what I think Jesus actually meant. But notice the subtle, yet extremely relevant difference. In the parable of the good Samaritan Jesus is addressing "who is my neighbor?" in the context of "love your neighbor as yourself."

But "love your neighbor as yourself" is different from "as I have loved you." In John 13 Jesus was talking to the 12. How did he love them?

He disciplined them. He reproduced his character in them and trained them for his mission. He gave them a purpose and role that would have an impact on eternity - something no one else on earth could have done for them. He gave them something to believe in.

Serving them is merely a sub point under this. That is one of the many tools he employed while training them. Their relationship was defined by their status as his disciples, and the mission to spread the good news to all nations was the imperative of that discipleship relationship. But service, kindness, patience, teaching, rebuking, gentleness, etc. - these were all different methods he employed to get the job done and the methods he wanted them to continue to utilize ... you know, as opposed to other methods of spreading a message, like newsletters, brute force, political power, war, mass marketing, etc.

If my interactions with someone are not designed to lead them closer to Christ, am I really loving them through that action? After all, "God is love," so if he's not the goal, is it love? That's why Isaiah 64:6 notes, "Even their good deeds are as filthy rags." That's why Hebrews 11:6 says, "And without faith it is impossible to please God."

I hope that makes some sense. Just some things to think about. If morality is defined not by the law or our behaviors, but the orientation of our hearts, is what the same can be said for love and interpersonal interactions ... bringing us right back on point to one of the main purposes of this sub: how to build right and healthy interpersonal relationships. That's part of why I say marriage is discipleship. If I'm not discipling my wife, I don't truly love her anyway.

rocknrollchuck • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 09:59 PM

This is a good response!

[deleted] • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 11:27 PM

Below is a repasted reply, adding a few things.

Athiest have every right to question why we don't stone women who commit adultery or follow other practices from the old testament. It doesn't make sense to say that, oh well we follow these 5 because they are moral but the civil ones, we don't... Is that biblical or was that made up by some commentary? You will find no one who keeps the whole law, Paul struggled keeping the whole law! So what portions do you keep? The ones that are convenient enough culturally or make sense to you. This is a major reason some intellectuals struggle with Christianity - because people argue that the old testament should be followed at times, then they find sentences that say to kill sinners and they say, well that part isn't cool.

The reality is that Jesus came to create a new covenant and a new deal. The last law was contractual and performance based, Christ replaced that and it's complete. Again, you can get all the wisdom and learn about God and stories but the old testament is no longer (for Jesus followers) - a place to find commandments. When Jesus said follow my commands, he literally meant his commands - not stoning sinners. In fact, there's a story with that in it - isn't there.

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Yes, he fulfilled it and replaced it. There is no reason to say, "he did away with it.". Look, theres a very simple test, you don't follow all the law. There are hundreds of commands in Deut. You pick and choose what you like and don't.

The Bible as you know it was constructed for hundreds of years. In fact, the first many generations of Jesus followers had no New testament, certainly had no old testament, they didn't know the law or any if the things you are saying.

Yet Christianity great like wildfire in the first many hundred years. How? They only had personal accounts of what Jesus said, a few letters from the apostles and Jesus teachings. If the law was necessary (old testament), Christianity couldn't have existed because almost none of the gentiles followed it fully or even knew it

rocknrollchuck • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 11:56 PM

I get what you're saying, but what about the rest of the New Testament? Do the things that Paul wrote carry the same weight as the things Matthew, Mark, Luke & John wrote that Jesus said? For instance, Jesus is not recorded in the Gospels as having anything to say at all about homosexuality. Paul addressed this in Romans. So are you including the writings of Paul, Peter, James, etc. here?

[deleted] • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 12:40 AM

I think you know the general answer is that the Bible was inspired by God and written by man.

Does so and so's writings carry the same weight compared to so and so? Sure, I guess. It really depends on what you're saying. Paul said once for women to not wear hats, does that carry the same weight as what Jesus said? I'm not here to be an authority, I was here stating the obvious that the law doesn't stand because you can't pick and choose pieces.

Someone said earlier quoted this:

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 1 John 2:3

Well, guess what - both Jesus and John wrote what those commandments were in plain language:

Jesus:

12 My command is this: **Love each other as I have loved you.** 13 Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command. 15 I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. 16 You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. 17 This is my command: Love each other.

John:

**3** We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands.**4** Whoever says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. **5** But if anyone obeys his word, love for God[a] is truly made complete in them. This is how we know we are in him: **6** **Whoever claims to live in him must live as Jesus did.**

As for the whole idea, "Jesus didn't say anything about \_\_\_\_". He didn't have to - Jesus taught stories and lived a life to show us how to live. Yes Jesus was God and yes I believe in the resurrection, yet with all that, Jesus came to be a perfect example of how to live and love. Did Jesus say who was your neighbor? No, he told a story and gave an example of this Good Samaritan guy that went way deeper and had much more power than making a neighbors list. 2000 years later we still have things named \_\_\_\_ samaritan, because an example and a story go well beyond a rule.

A story I once heard about your question... in the early roman empire, it was completely acceptable to abandon newborn babies if they were female or weak. There wasn't a lot of money or resources and many families had to do this. The early Jesus followers (i.e. before 200 A.D.) in Rome decided that this was wrong and they would take in these children and care for them. The parents had convinced themselves it wasn't murder because if the child could survive for sometime and was strong, they may take the child back (it could be seen as a fitness test). Now Jesus never gave a commandment not to do that - which is ridiculous, there could be no way to think up 1,000,000,000 commands on what not to do. In fact many counterfeit experts learn the real currency so well that they can see and understand what is fake. Jesus gave the example so he didn't have to write and explain all the things that were not to be done and instead let himself and his words be the guide, along with the holy spirit.

Likewise the New Testament has nothing to say of fornication - it's because Jesus set a higher example, the Sermon on the Mount was much more difficult to keep than the law because it dealt with the heart. The standard was much higher but also much simpler. It's Christ. So instead of me directly answering about XYZ sexual acts, I would rather say - what Jesus did - he's the authority, not me. And all of Paul's writings are based on what Jesus said and did, they are application of Jesus teachings.

rocknrollchuck • 0 points • 10 October, 2018 05:44 PM

I think you know the general answer is that the Bible was inspired by God and written by man.

Does so and so's writings carry the same weight compared to so and so? Sure, I guess. It really depends on what you're saying. Paul said once for women to not wear hats, does that carry the same weight as what Jesus said?

I look at it as God wrote the Bible, using men as pens to put the ink to paper. So do Paul's writings carry the same weight as the words of Jesus? Yes - if God is the Author of Scripture, then He inspired it to be written by writing it through the hand of that person. Either all Scripture is inspired by God, or none of it is. There is no in-between imo.

As for the whole idea, "Jesus didn't say anything about \_\_\_\_". He didn't have to - Jesus taught stories and lived a life to show us how to live.

But yet Jesus **did** say something about homosexuality. See this short video.

Likewise the New Testament has nothing to say of fornication

This is ridiculous. There are numerous references to sexual immorality in the New Testament, which covers a much broader area than simply fornication.

And all of Paul's writings are based on what Jesus said and did, they are application of Jesus teachings.

Paul's writings consist of what the Holy Spirit told him to write.

For the rest, see u/Red-Curious's epic two-part answer, he covered it thoroughly.

[deleted] • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 05:51 PM\*

I wrote out a long reply and it was too argumentative and unproductive. I think we are missing each other's points. Good luck to you.

Willow-girl • 1 point • 14 October, 2018 11:54 AM

I think the way this is generally interpreted is: "All of the Old Testament rules have been tossed out the window and we live by grace now. P.S. It's still wrong to be gay!"

lololasaurus • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 06:17 PM

I want to be clear that I'm not talking about soteriology right now, as I'm assuming we all already agree that the old covenant did utilize the law as part of its soteriological model, but that the new covenant utilizes grace as its primary vehicle through which salvation would be found. So, when I talk about the law as a standard, I don't mean merely for salvation (a point

on which I assume we already agree), but as a list of rights and wrongs from a moralistic lifestyle perspective.

I don't have time to get into all of this right now - though I wish I did, but deadlines... but no one has ever in the history of mankind been saved by keeping the law in any form or fashion. It's always been grace and grace alone. We bring nothing to the table but the sin that makes it necessary to save us. So no, this misses the entire point of Christianity.

Adam was never saved by lawkeeping.

Moses, who gave us the law, was not saved by keeping it.

David was not saved by the law.

Abraham was not saved by the law. (Easy proof from memory: Romans 4 :))

The law condemns. The law reflects our sinfulness back at us. It drives us to the feet of Christ on bended knee - if it does anything else for you (speaking generally, not you specifically) then you're missing the point and need to really consider whether you think you can obey God that perfectly.

There is only one who has kept it in perfect active and passive obedience - Christ. No one else in history.

There has not been a man or woman or child in history not saved by grace, friend :)

Before Christ, people looked forward to Him and enjoyed types and shadows and the occasional Christophany and of course the prophets and such.

After Christ we have the very word of God and we have seen our salvation has been accomplished and applied.

tagged: u/Red-Curious

Red-Curious • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 06:42 PM

I agree with all of this. I think you may have misunderstood something, which is why I was making clear not to confuse soteriology into anything I was discussing.

lololasaurus • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 06:51 PM

Fair enough. I'll re read later when I have time to read more thoroughly, and ask your pardon for misunderstanding you in the meantime.

Red-Curious • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 07:42 PM

No pardon necessary, brother. You're just looking out for the good of the sub in an area where there could have been confusion. Thank you. Keep it up!

rocknrollchuck • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 06:52 PM

Thanks for your answer. I do understand this, but was actually looking for a copy/paste answer that I could use when others ask me this question.

There has not been a man or woman or child in history not saved by grace, friend :)

Yes, this is absolutely correct. But every so often I get thrown this question online and in person by atheists and agnostics, seeking to shut me down through what they see as inconsistencies in my theology. Until Red's epic answer, I never had a good response besides the one I shared about division of the Law. I now understand it much better, and will have to

work on boiling it down to a simple answer that can be given in response in the moment.

The law condemns. The law reflects our sinfulness back at us. It drives us to the feet of Christ on bended knee

Yes, this is something that I have learned well from Ray Comfort's teachings. The Law is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.

if it does anything else for you (speaking generally, not you specifically) then you're missing the point and need to really consider whether you think you can obey God that perfectly.

No, it's mostly the question of if the Law does not apply anymore, then what moral framework are we to go by? For example, is it now okay to steal? To murder? To use God's name in vain? Obviously I know it's not okay, but putting that distinction into words where someone else can understand it can be challenging.

lololasaurus • 2 points • 10 October, 2018 06:56 PM

I disagree with him completely that the law doesn't apply.

This teaching on his part so far as I can tell is a repeat of a combination of marcionism and possibly elements of antinomian thought.

The law in the new covenant is no different.

I encourage folks to look at the Westminster standards for an exposition of this that has withstood about 500 years of scrutiny.

rocknrollchuck • 1 point • 10 October, 2018 07:00 PM

I'll check out the Westminster standards, thanks for that!

Willow-girl • 2 points • 14 October, 2018 11:48 AM

LOL, we actually knew a guy like that. Fancied himself a preacher man (well, he was from Oklahoma). Claimed that since he was saved, he could do anything he wanted, because Jesus. In the end, he screwed us over in a business deal, ripped us off for a couple hundred bucks. I guess Jesus forgave him, though, eh? It's people like that who give Christians a bad name ...

rocknrollchuck • 1 point • 14 October, 2018 01:25 PM

Yes, agreed.

lololasaurus • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 05:25 PM

All civil laws are moral, but not all moral laws are civil.

All civil laws have a magistrate's penalty for disobeying them.

All civil laws are based in justice, which is based in moral law which flows from the character of God.

We never 'ignore' laws. Some were merely a type and foreshadowing of Christ.

I'm interested to see your response to rocknrollchuck when you get a chance. I'm not trying to come

on as argumentative... just that your position is actually the cultural christianity one. Ours goes back as far as this has been actually directly studied (or nearly anyway) in church history. ;-)

OsmiumZulu[S] • 3 points • 9 October, 2018 02:18 AM

Why?

[deleted] • 2 points • 9 October, 2018 03:15 AM

Well, as Paul would say - if you use some of the law then you must use all of it. There's lots of stuff in Deut that you wouldn't implement.

I'm more attuned to it right now because I just read a book on it. Do whatever you'd like. Just realize it doesn't make sense to upload 1,2 or 10% of the law if you discard the rest. That's the reason Jesus had a new covenant.

lololasaurus • 3 points • 9 October, 2018 06:05 AM\*

I encourage you to pick better books, because you're missing the boat with nonsense like this.

You don't discard any of it. Any at all.

You know that there are three types.

Moral law. This is the law that you break and need Christ's finished work on the cross for.

Ceremonial law. This is a type and shadow of Christ to come, but Christ fulfilled it all. Things like not eating shellfish to set themselves apart from the Nations, sacrificial laws, priesthood laws, these are all things our high priest Christ fulfilled for us.

Judicial law. This is law that expired when the body politic of Israel passed away. Generally any law in scripture that has a penalty carried out by the magistrate. A just biblical republic should have laws in general equity with these.

The reason Jesus made a new covenant isn't because he changed His laws. He didn't. Not one jot or tittle of the law has passed away.

You aren't saved by keeping the law. If you try this, you are not saved.

But if you are saved, you'll seek to keep the law out of love for the One who loved you first, because that is how an adopted child of the Father acts, that is what an adopted child of the Father LOVES.

And if you saved and in charge of a Nation and seek to do justly as a ruler (or voter) then you are given an example of justice in the laws of the body politic Israel and you should heed it.

And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. 1 John 2:3

neytax • 2 points • 9 October, 2018 02:06 PM

Wow thank you very much for this comment.. The explanation of the different laws was exactly what I was looking for. Did you figure that out by yourself or did you read about that somewhere?

lololasaurus • 3 points • 9 October, 2018 02:29 PM

Well, it's all through scripture and parts of it I understood right away as a new Christian. Parts of it came later when I read through the treasures of my fathers in the faith and was delighted to find a name to put on what I already grasped at the edge of my mind.

That said, it's just the (generally speaking) historical protestant understanding of scripture. During the Reformation this is what the reformers hashed out and of course there are many elements of this from much earlier as well.

If you would like to read more about it here are some things to google --

The Westminster Standards (larger catechism, shorter catechism, and westminster confession of faith)

The Three Forms of Unity (heidelberg catechism, canons of dordt, and belgic confession)

Threefold use of the law

Modern liberal protestant thought (since maybe 1929 in the mainstream since that's when old Princeton was taken over) has injected all kinds of doubt and nonsense regarding the law and tries to turn anyone who says we ought to precisely care what the law of God says into a pharisee or legalist but a pharisee looks to his lawkeeping to save him, same with a legalist -- a Christian knows he is not ever saved by keeping the law and that the law merely reflects the sinful condition of his heart and shows us our infinite need for our Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. But it also is how we are to then live, having actually been saved.

As to whether nations should create laws in general equity with the judicial laws of God, this is a more hotly contested point in Christian circles and that's fair. I think we should because I don't think you'll get more just laws than the ones God gave us, but I do NOT think that we should be making heart-laws enforceable by the magistrate. IE - I think personally that the physical act of adultery (having sex with your neighbors wife) should have a penalty enforced by the magistrate as has been true throughout most of history until recently. However I don't think that the heart act of adultery (lusting after your neighbors wife) should have a penalty enforced by the magistrate. I think this is necessary because one ought not to prosecute a crime except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. And God will deal with the one who is sinning in his heart (whether with eternity in hell, or by having already poured out His just wrath on our Lord).

Obviously I'll grant that there is debate among the people of God about many of these matters. There is a position known as new covenant theology that argues that Christ did away with the old testament law and replaced it with new covenant law, outlined in the sermon on the mount and other of Christ's teachings. However I reject this because it's essentially a soft version of Marcionism where the God of the old testament is much harsher than the God of the new testament. As the law flows from the character of God (justice is one of His attributes), it suggests implicitly that justice has changed (and in a sense, that God has changed). But God doesn't change - God is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Christ did not do away with any law, not a jot or tittle -- He fulfilled it for us perfectly in total and perfect passive and active obedience. When God looks on one of His elect, He sees the perfect righteousness of Christ imputed to us instead of our sinfulness. And for those of us who are part of His elect, nothing can take that away from us, nothing. But this will play out in His providence by our growing in grace, confessing our sins and forsaking them (this a gift of the Holy Spirit as well... not by our own doing), by becoming more sanctified throughout our entire life, never being sinless but always dying more and more to our sin and living more and more to Christ (which looks a lot like caring about the laws of the Father who loves us and adopted us) until the day we die and are made perfect in glory.

[deleted] • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 03:51 PM

Yes, he fulfilled it and replaced it. There is no reason to say, "he did away with it.". Look,

theres a very simple test, you don't follow all the law. There are hundreds of commands in Deut. You pick and choose what you like and don't.

The Bible as you know it was constructed for hundreds of years. In fact, the first many generations of Jesus followers had no New testament, certainly had no old testament, they didn't know the law or any if the things you are saying.

Yet Christianity great like wildfire in the first many hundred years. How? They only had personal accounts of what Jesus said, a few letters from the apostles and Jesus teachings. If the law was necessary (old testament), Christianity couldn't have existed because almost none of the gentiles followed it fully or even knew it

[deleted] • 2 points • 9 October, 2018 03:42 PM

Actually, you didn't use any theology or any things Christ said to justify your point or why my point was wrong.

Let me clarify more clearly, The old testament law is obsolete. It's replaced by Christ law. Jesus commandments are not in Deut. There are maybe 600 commandments there. You observe very few if any.

You don't discard it, sure. But it's been replaced by something greater. This is the whole reason for the names new and old testament.

lololasaurus • 2 points • 9 October, 2018 02:55 PM

Just a thought here -- Christ did exactly the opposite throughout His entire ministry.

Consider the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. OT scripture was all that Christ quoted.

Consider Christ's excoriation of the Pharisees in Matthew 15 where he rips them apart for trading the commandments of God for the traditions of men. And here he's talking about some pretty controversial stuff by our standards - capital punishment for reviling your father and mother (though this wasn't the sort of thing that happened to young children obviously, this is a much more drastic scenario involving grown children).

It's true that Christ gave us an example of how to live.

But Christ lived that way because none of us will. He lived a perfect life in passive and active obedience because only One who did that would be the perfect sacrifice for the sins of the people of God. Christianity is still a religion of blood sacrifice - we just have a perfect sacrifice for our sin.

If for you the main reason for the Incarnation was to give you an example of good morals, I encourage you to come and know Christ with us because you're missing the entire point of Christianity. Christ came to save sinners - and I will grant that I am probably the worst of them. But we sin by breaking the law of God. And Christ kept it perfectly and then was put to death in the perfect sacrifice for our sin. And now for the elect, we have Christ's righteousness imputed to us. Believe on Christ. It's true that He's a perfect example and you'll never go wrong imitating Him. But that's not why He came.

[12] I thank him who has given me strength, Christ Jesus our Lord, because he judged me faithful, appointing me to his service, [13] though formerly I was a blasphemer, persecutor, and insolent opponent. But I received mercy because I had acted ignorantly in unbelief, [14] and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. [15] The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. [16] But I

received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. [17] To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (1 Timothy 1:12–17)

[deleted] • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 03:56 PM

Oh, I think you're right. I misspoke in saying whole reason, it's one of the reasons.

rocknrollchuck • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 03:57 PM

Amen, this is a great response!

Willow-girl • 0 points • 9 October, 2018 04:11 AM

The effects could not be overstated.

Yes, I imagine men would feel pretty free to rape with impunity if they were certain of going undetected.

These are always going to be messy, "he said, she said" crimes. There is no easy solution.

OsmiumZulu[S] • 5 points • 9 October, 2018 04:14 AM

There are some easy solutions at hand. I am a big believer in empowering women... with firearms. Armed women aren't typically rape victims.

Willow-girl • 2 points • 9 October, 2018 04:21 AM

An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure!

The closest I came to being assaulted was when a boss put his hands on me many years ago. I was 18, a newlywed, and he was a middle-aged disgusting fat pig of a man. Certainly he couldn't have mistakenly believed I was attracted to him -- nope, he was simply a predator seeking to take advantage of a naive young waitress.

At the time, I was too stunned by his behavior to do anything but get away from him and out of his office as quickly as I could. The next day, after having some time to think it over, I told him if he ever put his hands on me again, I'd tell my husband. My husband was a big, burly construction worker and he and his crew ate lunch at that restaurant almost every day.

The boss didn't say anything, but the next day his wife called to tell me I was fired.

If "Me Too" were around then, I might have ended up owning that restaurant, lol.

Stryker7200 • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 07:17 PM

What it would require is women behaving in a less risky way. Instead of women going home with a guy they met at a bar they would go with their friends. Instead of walking down the street alone in the dark they would stay in or do it with a friend, etc.

Of course this would never fly because "muh equality" is so important. Why shouldn't a woman be able to do these things by herself? And why are men such evil pigs making it so they can't? Etc etc

Willow-girl • 3 points • 9 October, 2018 07:43 PM

You make it sound as if walking down a street alone in the dark were a bad thing. Is it really too much for a woman to expect that she should be able to do so without being attacked?

Stryker7200 • 1 point • 9 October, 2018 08:09 PM

No I don't, all I'm saying is the premise they are going to be arguing from. 80 years ago most women

would not go out in the night alone in a city. The fact they can do that today is because men have changed things to allow them this freedom.

If we were to require two witness for a rape allegation etc. women would say they can't go out alone anymore because it would give men the chance to rape them, even tho it is highly unlikely.