The Law and The Church

Introduction

May we have a word of prayer. *Lord, all that we do today, we wish You to be honored among us; honored in our hearts, honored in our lives, honored in the presentation of Your Word and the hearing of Your Word. Lord, grant to us that we might give the Holy Spirit free reign in our hearts to speak to us, that the finger of God might be put on our hearts. We truly would be Your people in these last days. Amen.*

Let me tell you where I am. March 24, 2024 was the last time I was invited to present or speak to you, so it has been a while. It is a rare occasion, but it is a great honor to be able to address you and to speak to you and to bring you the word of the Lord. I do count it as a great honor.

This morning I want to share six different points - or lines of argument - however I want to think about it, so that you will know when lunch is about to be served, okay? I will give you 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, so you will know. But I do warn you that the first four points particularly deal with the truth of the Word, and it may not have a great deal of application at first. But the last two points that I want to make, I want to spend a little bit more time, and I want to talk about the church and we in the church.

I apologize beforehand, but I am probably going to use quite a few scriptures. I had an opportunity to hear Bakht Singh one time, and he used maybe 100 scriptures in a two-hour message. I am not going to do that, okay? I am not even going to get close to that. And he did it from memory, each verse.

The Law Is the Expression of God

So let us start with Hebrews 1:1, my first point. “In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets.” God spoke. Well, that is the first point that I want to make, is that God spoke. God spoke and gave the law to Israel, to men. The law is broken up into three parts. Basically it is the commandments, the ordinances, and the statutes. The law God spoke. It is an expression of who God is. It is not arbitrary rules and regulations for a people that He knew were stiff-necked and would be rebellious, and therefore He built this law for them.

No, this is the point that I want to make: the law is the expression of God Himself, His nature. He is revealing His heart to men through the law. When we see this law, when we see this word, we see God Himself. He separates not Himself from His word. Interesting where it really began. Look at Genesis 26:5. Abraham has just passed away. Isaac is now the heir apparent, the heir to the inheritance that God has for his family, for his intended nation to be. And so, He talks about the sojourn in the land, and the land that they would be given, so on and so forth. And He says in verse five, “Because Abraham obeyed my voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

How on earth did Abraham ever have the commandments, the statutes, and the laws? Nowhere is it ever recorded in the Scriptures that Abraham ever received those things. But I think it is a foretaste, a foreshadow of what shall be, what was given to Moses. It started with Abraham. God desired to express Himself, to show His heart, and He did it through His voice, as He says, My voice or My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws. Then, of course, in Exodus 20:1, "And God spoke all these words, saying," and then He goes into the commandments that were given unto Israel, and then He goes into the ordinances, and then He goes into the statutes of what was given to Israel.

We know from the New Testament in Romans 7 about the law, that a description of the law in Romans 7:12 says, "So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good." The law is good; it is holy and just because God Himself is holy and just and good. Therefore, His word through the law is that also. James 1 tells us that the law is a perfect law because God Himself is perfect. It is just who He is, it is just what He says. Therefore, that is what it is, it is perfect.

He goes on to say, "It is a law of liberty." It is totally the opposite of what you think law would be. Law, you think, would be restrictive and "thou shalt not." Let me give you an illustration of what liberty feels like, what it is like. Luann and I lived on an island. They call it an island; it is actually an isthmus. It is Coronado in San Diego. You are on the 5 Freeway. You can get off the exit and you are onto the Coronado Bridge. You are going 55 miles an hour on the bridge. You come onto the island; there is a long avenue that goes right into North Island. And so everybody is still going 55 miles an hour, going to work to North Island. As soon as you turn off that main street and you get onto the side streets of Coronado—15 miles an hour, that is it. Fifteen miles an hour is all you can travel.

You might think that is very restrictive, but in reality, to our hearts and our minds, what a relief. We live in a village; what a nice place. Everything is quieted down, everything is slowed down. Everything is just a small town atmosphere. The law of 15 miles an hour was a liberty for the people that lived on that island. It was not a restriction for us. So the law was meant to be that of liberty for the people of God. Of course, turn to Acts 7, and Stephen says about the law something very telling. Acts 7:37-38 says, "This is the Moses who said to the Israelites, 'God will raise up for you a prophet from your brethren as he raised me up.' This is he who was in the congregation in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our fathers; and he received living oracles to give to us."

God's Word, God's law seems to be so set in stone. It was set in stone, actually, but it was living, it was alive. We have that same expression in Hebrews 4, that the Word is living and active because God is living. It is an expression of Himself. So please keep that in mind as we talk about the law, that it is God Himself who is just revealed.

Christ And the Fulfillment of the Law

Jesus And the Law

Let us go onto my second point. Let us go and see what the scripture says about Jesus and the law. Again, Hebrews 1:2 goes on to say, “But in these last days he has spoken to us by [a] Son.” Not a Son, by His Son, that preposition is not there in the Greek. It is this inexpressible that He has spoken. God has spoken by Son, by His Son. And then in Matthew 5, Jesus, very familiar verses to you probably, verse 17 and 18: “Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfil them. For truly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished.”

“I have come to fulfil the law.” The word “fulfill” there is quite interesting. It has, in Strong's, it talks about, it has the picture of a net full. And I thought of Simon in Luke chapter 5 when Jesus told them to cast out their net and it says that he brought back his net and it was to overflowing, bursting the net. That is what it means that Jesus fulfilled the law, not that He obeyed it, but that He is the law, because the law is God Himself. Therefore, He is the law Himself. He is the picture of it. Let us put it this way, He is the embodiment of the law of God. Again, put out of your mind, we are so set that the law is this thing of restrictions and rules and regulations and binding people or bounding people up. No, it was meant to be in God's heart, that of life to His people. The problem was with the people, not with God and not with the law.

G. Campbell Morgan said about this section of the Scriptures, when Jesus said this, that this Sermon on the Mount, or the Manifesto, whatever you want to call it, is not the gospel. Jesus did not preach the gospel in the Sermon on the Mount, nor is it a law for some future kingdom age. How dare you steal the word of the Lord from any of God's people by saying something is for something way in the future, and it is not for you, so do not even read it. It is not for you. That is not true, I do not think. God, the Lord Jesus, presented the Sermon on the Mount in order to show the holiness of God. Now, God's attributes, God's nature is that of holiness. And that is the beginning of the gospel, when you recognize who you are dealing with and what your need is, God and all His mighty holiness.

It is the law. And what Jesus is, it is like a mirror that has been put in front of man, and man looks at it and sees himself as he is. But the law is that perfect mirror, that perfect life of the Lord presented to His people. It says in John 5 that the Scriptures, all the Scriptures, you look at them, you seek eternal life. But they bear witness to Me. Of course, when Jesus is using the word Scriptures, there is no New Testament Scriptures, there are no Gospels yet; all there is is the Old Testament Scriptures. And He says they, all of them, bear witness to Me because it is God expressing Himself.

Embodiment of the Word and the Law

In a sense when I said that Jesus embodies the Word, a good illustration, I think a good image of that, is in John the Baptist. It says in Luke 3 that when John was in the

wilderness before his ministry started, that the word of the Lord came to John in the wilderness. And that is never described for us, what that was. Did he have all the scrolls with him, like maybe Paul did in Arabia, reading these scrolls and studying the Word and everything? I do not think so, but something, the Word of the Lord came to John in the wilderness. Boom. It changed his life. It began his ministry. He saw something.

And then, in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, they quote Isaiah: "There is a voice crying in the wilderness," so on and so forth. And it is applied to John the Baptist. But interestingly enough, in John chapter one, John says, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness." It is no longer a word that is outside, talking about him. But John is that word. He is what Isaiah said. "I am that voice." He embodies it. You look at it, that is Isaiah, that is what Isaiah said. Right there in that flesh and blood, right there. He embodied it. In the same way Jesus embodies the word of the Lord and the Law. And we have a perfect example of that when Jesus goes to Nazareth in Luke chapter four, and He quotes the Scriptures: "The Spirit of the Lord has come upon Me, has anointed Me," to do all these different things. And He sits down, and they all look at Him. And He says, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your presence." He had not done all that stuff yet. He did not say all that stuff to the Nazarenes in the synagogue. But He says, "All of that is here before you now because I am what Isaiah said." He embodies it.

At this point, I just want to make the distinction for us that I fully recognize that the Old Testament, the commandments, the ordinances, the commandments were written by the finger of God upon a table of stone. And they were there for Israel. They were put in the ark, always before Israel. But for us, I recognize fully that the word for us is no longer written on a table of stone. But it is the Spirit of God that has written that word upon our hearts. We become that word. It is inside of us. It is part of us, who we are. The Spirit has written it on our heart with His finger. And I would go on to say also that the application of that word, of that law, of those ordinances or statutes, are found in Christ as the Spirit speaks to our hearts. Not because we read it and we want to obey it, but because the Spirit is saying something to us. It is our life, and it is life for us.

God's Heart for the Stranger in the Law

God's Heart in the Ordinances

Now, I want to go back to the law, okay, to the ordinances. And I just want to emphasize one particular emphasis that God makes that expresses Himself in His ordinances. And I want to begin with Exodus 22. And I am going to go through, let us see, five different verses here in Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers, all dealing with the same subject. Again, it is God expressing His heart, and not just rules and regulations. Exodus 22:21: "You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." The word there, "stranger," in the Hebrew is synonymous with the words "sojourner," "foreigner," a "guest" that is among you, or a modern word we would use would be "aliens" that are among you.

Exodus 23:9: “You shall not oppress a stranger; you know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.”

Leviticus 19:33–34: “When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.” You shall love him as yourself.

Care for the Sojourner

Leviticus 19: 9-10: “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field to its very border, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard; you shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD your God.” You are to care for, take care of the sojourner, the guest, the alien that is among you; you shall love him as yourself. He shall be like a native.

Numbers 15, last one. This has to do with the statutes of dealing with the offerings. I will read it in part in Numbers 15:14, “And if a stranger is sojourning with you, or any one is among you throughout your generations, and he wishes to offer an offering by fire, a pleasing odor to the LORD, he shall do as you do.” Verse 16: “One law and one ordinance shall be for you and for the stranger who sojourns with you.”

God in His heart towards those that were aliens and strangers was that of treat him as yourself, treat him as a native. Do not think small of him, like the Pharisees will in Jesus’ day. On three of these different occasions, the Lord emphasizes, remember, remember, remember, you were strangers. You were in that place at one time. I will just read a verse in Deuteronomy really quick: “And you shall make a response before the Lord your God, ‘A wandering Aramean was my father, and he went down into Egypt and sojourned there, few in number. And there he became a nation, great, mighty, and populous.’” You began as a wandering Aramean. You were not even a Jew. You were not even a Hebrew. You were just a Bedouin out in the wilderness, and you sojourned in Egypt, and then you became a mighty nation; only because the Lord was with them.

Jesus’ Heart for Strangers and Outcasts

Jesus’ Love for the Stranger

Back to Jesus again, and just for a few minutes. How Jesus epitomized this love for the stranger. I mean, how many different things could I show you that you already know about? How many different people that He touched. Whether it was the stranger, the foreigner, the Samaritans, the Syrophoenician woman, the centurion and his slave, or the many others that were even rejected by Israel as outcasts from society: the lepers, the woman with the flow of blood, and the crippled and the blind that were outcasts of society. And Jesus reached out to them, He touched them, He changed their lives, He set them free, He gave them peace, He healed them. But I think the greatest illustration of Jesus’ attitude towards the foreigner, the alien, towards the stranger, is found in Luke.

Interestingly enough, there are three movements of Jesus towards Jerusalem in the book of Luke, in the Gospel of Luke. And I think in my studies it seems to correspond to the three different feasts that were being celebrated in Jerusalem at that time. The first one is in Luke 9:51. And in each of these instances, when Jesus goes to Jerusalem, is headed to Jerusalem, look what His first encounter is or what He says. The first thing He says on His way to Jerusalem, the feast the Jews are celebrating before the Lord. It is the ultimate of their expression as God's people, their enjoyment of the Lord together as one. And these are the first things that Jesus did on the way.

Again, Luke 9:51: "When the days drew near for him to be received up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem." He had to go through a Samaritan village. And He sent messengers that they might prepare the way for Him to go through these Samaritan villages.

And do not forget, the rule of the day through the Pharisees was that the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans; they are outcasts. They are the Gentiles; they are unclean. But Jesus is going to go through the village of the Samaritans, and they do not want to receive Him for whatever reason.

And so, James and John, in their zealousness for the Lord, with the spirit of the Pharisees, say, "Shall we bid fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" And Jesus' response to them: "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. For the Son of Man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them." The men's lives that He is talking about are the Samaritans. "I came to save the Samaritans. I came to save the strangers, the foreigners, those that are not of your ilk, not of your color, not of your religion. I came for them, to save them."

Jesus' Heart Was for the Foreigner

Luke 13:22, Jesus, second movement towards Jerusalem to the Feast of Dedication found in the book of John. And beginning in Luke 13:22, I think it is, "He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem." And then somebody comes up to Him and says, "Salvation. Who can be saved? How many can be saved? Are there going to be a lot? Are there going to be just a few that will be saved?" And Jesus answers him, as you well know, about striving through the narrow door and seeking to enter. And those that will seek to enter through that door, they will not be able to enter through the door because the door is closed to them. And He says to those, "But we knew you, but you taught in our streets. We did this for you, we did that for you. You are one of us." And Jesus says, "You are workers of iniquity." Cold-hearted Jews that will not have anything to do with Samaritans. You are cold-hearted, you are blind."

And Jesus goes on to say, and men will come from east and west, from north and south, and sit at table in the kingdom of God. Those are the Gentiles, those are the east and west, north and south, from all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues shall come and sit in the kingdom of heaven. And then to belabor the point, the last one in Luke 17:11-

19, this is on the way to the final Passover. “On the way to Jerusalem, He was passing along between Sama’ria and Galilee. And as He entered a village, he was met by ten lepers,” the nine Jewish lepers, and the one Samaritan leper. And we know the story very well. And the one comes back, you know where the nine went? They went to the priests so that it would be recognized that they were cleansed and they could enter back into society, into Jewish society, where the Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. But the Samaritan, where did he have to go? He had no priest to go to. He had no society to enter back into. So he returns to the Lord Jesus and he falls before Him and worships Him.

And Jesus says, “Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?” And he said to him, “Rise and go your way; your faith has made you well.”” Jesus' heart was for the foreigner.

We, the Laodicean Church

Now, I would like to spend the last 25 minutes and talk about the church. We are the church. In God's eyes, there is no distinction between the church universal and the church local. We are the church. When the Word speaks to the church, He is speaking to us as part of that church. Now, as I talk about a couple of things here that are, as Harry Foster once said to us—he came to Pointe Valley and he gave a message and he was very, very pointed and direct—he said, “That is a bit near the bone. You know, this word might be a bit near the bone for some of us, but we need to hear it.”

Our Selective Values

I am going to do something. I am going to protect myself, okay? I am a coward. A.W. Tozer, we all know him. Steve mentioned him quite often, as I understand he was a prophet to the church. He began his public ministry in 1919, but he died in 1962. So basically the bulk of his public ministry was probably during the 40s and 50s in this country and in Canada. And if you read anything by Tozer, you know how biting, how direct, how—what a sword it was that he was dividing between soul and spirit. And his criticisms, his charges against the church, that is in the 40s and 50s. Now, when we think about the 40s and 50s, that was an innocent time compared to what we have today. You can only imagine what Tozer would say today about the church, especially the things about worship. He was oh so against the form of worship back in the 40s and 50s. Oh, imagine what he would say today about the worship in some of these churches.

Well, I am going to hide myself. I am going to cloak myself and take up his mantle. Okay? Get mad at his spirit, do not get mad at my spirit. There are some in the church today, I do not know what the percentage of it is—it seems to be a growing percentage—that have an idea. I disagree with the very premise of it, but that is not for today to discuss. But they have a premise that the church is in this country in order to reform the government, to establish a Judeo-Christian value system that the government might display, might convey. Okay, if that is your position, then fine.

My only point is, if that is your position that the church is supposed to reform the government, then do not cherry-pick the Judeo-Christian values. You take one, they take two, they take three, maybe four different things that need to be reformed in the government. What about the rest of the Judeo-Christian values? What about the stranger that is in our land? How many of us have adopted the popular propaganda that they are nothing more than the criminal illegal aliens? They do not belong here. But what does the Lord say? What is the Lord's heart? What is Jesus' heart towards the stranger, towards the alien? Love them as yourself. Think about that for a while.

Our Laodicean Conditions

I was really glad to hear Lucio say this last summer, that they are the sister epistles to Ephesus and to Colossians. Colossians sort of mirrors Ephesians, but it is a little bit more condensed version of Ephesians. But it is the same message. It is to the grownups, to the mature Christians, to the believers that think they have pressed on to the full counsel of God and to the greater truths of the Scriptures of the body of Christ and all of that. I want you to read something in Colossians 4, kind of interesting. Colossians 4:15-16: “Give my greetings to the brethren at La-odice’a, and to Nympha and the church in her house. And when this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the La-odice’ans; and see that you read also the letter from La-odicea.”

Oh, so Ephesus, Colossae, and Laodicea are all of that same measure of Christ. They received the greater truths. They knew the greater truths. Of course, you know where I am going now: Revelation, chapter three. How far the Laodiceans had fallen. I realized something as I was looking at this. I wish I had a dollar for every time that I have heard that we are in the Laodicean age. I would be a rich man right now. And I think it is all true. We are. But you know what? We are not in the Laodicean age. We are the Laodicean Church. We are that church that Jesus is talking to. The church is one in His sight and in His heart. Therefore we are this church, and He speaks to us. I used to always read it as them and us. But no, it is us that He speaks to.

And I just want to emphasize, of course, what He says, the charge against them. But I also want to look at, just not leave it as a charge, but the Lord in His graciousness and His great love and His great mercy and compassion for all of His people, He gives us the remedy. He gives us the antidote to the disease that is so prevalent among us as the Laodicean Church.

So first the charge, in Revelation 3:17, “For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.” I am rich, I have prospered, I need nothing. I just recognized, just a couple of days ago, that, notice it does not say we. We, the church, the Laodicean Church, the physical church of Laodicea that John may have been writing to. It says, “I, I am rich.” It is all individually oriented. Nothing of the corporate, the corporate has been lost to them. They no longer see the body of Christ. Now it is just, “I, I, I am rich.”

I wonder what it meant by that, “I am rich.” Two things that I can think of. They think they are rich materially. Boy, do not we think we are rich materially in this country?

Do not we? We have all the luxuries that probably no age before us has ever experienced. All the luxuries have been given to us. Are those blessings from God? Or are those deceptive gifts given by the enemy to us? Sometimes I think that we in this country are in far greater bondage to the enemy than any Christian that is in any Islamic, Buddhist, or whatever country. There is a subtle bondage that has taken hold of the American church. The American church, that materialism has become such a part of its being, that if that were to be taken away in any way, I wonder how many people would still be faithful to the Lord.

I remind you of what the devil said to Jesus on the mount of temptation. In a moment of time, he showed Him all the kingdoms of the world. I do not know how it happened, how he could do it as a finite being. But I think personally that it was all the kingdoms, past, present, and future, the devil showed Jesus. And I think the enemy was so undone by this being before the Son of God that he revealed something that he did not want to. I do not think he wanted to reveal, but he said, all the authority and all the glory of all the kingdoms of the world are mine to give to you. Material wealth, material goods. Who do they belong to?

I am rich spiritually. I am enlightened. We are enlightened. We have tasted of the heavenly gift. We are partakers of the Holy Spirit. We have tasted of the goodness of the Word of God. We have tasted of the powers of the age to come. We are rich, but we are Laodicean Christians, we prospered. I have prospered. I am prospering. Ever increasing, the "I" is ever increasing, ever growing richer, good capitalists. That is what we are. Good Christians that are just pressing on. But so much of what we have is head knowledge. Knowledge, and how much of it is being worked out in our lives? So much rich, we are rich, need nothing. I am satisfied. I am satisfied where I am at. We have received all the great truths, and they are ours.

The Remedy

Buying From the Lord

But then I do not want to just leave it at that. It is so easy just to point the finger and just say these things. But what is the antidote that the Lord gives us? Verse 18: "Therefore I counsel you to buy from me." In order to buy, you have to sell. Okay, in order to buy these most precious things that Jesus offers, the Laodicean church offers to us, we have to sell everything. And then we can buy from the Lord. Just remind us of the parables in Matthew 13 of the field that the merchant wanted, or the businessman wanted to purchase, or the pearl of greatest price that the merchant wanted to purchase.

I know you can look at that as that is the Lord that has given Himself fully, sort of sold Himself so that He could purchase the church. But you can also read that as the Christian: in order to obtain the most precious thing, I have to sell everything. Now, that does not mean literal selling of everything. That would be ridiculous to say something like that. But in our hearts can I say, Lord, I am willing to sell everything in order to buy

what You have to sell to me, to give to me. Lord, I will do whatever it takes. I just want that which is most precious, and I will sell everything. It goes on to say in verse 19, "Those whom I love." What a delightful—what a phrase that must have been to the Laodiceans after what Jesus has just said to them: "Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous."

Being Zealous and Repent

So be zealous, okay, get real. Be zealous. What does that mean? It means like Caleb. And I want to read a verse in Numbers 14:24 that so describes what our attitude should be, what our heart should be. The same as Caleb, who had to stand up against those ten men that gave the bad report. And man, they were ready to stone him, and Joshua and Moses and Aaron at that point in time. And man, it must have been tough to stand up against all of that, a whole nation that was against you. But it says about Caleb in 14:24 of Numbers: "But my servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit and has followed me fully." That is what the Lord is asking, is He not? How many times did Jesus repeat that phrase, "Follow Me, follow Me fully." Sell what you have to, do whatever it takes in your heart to shed yourself of the things that so easily beset us, and follow Me fully.

Be zealous, Laodiceans, fellow Laodiceans, be zealous, follow Me. And then finally He says, "Repent." As Jim knows, I do not put much stock into repentance as such, that somehow we feel bad for what we have done or what our attitude has been or whatever, and we feel bad about it and we make amends for it and we make promises that we are going to change. But II Corinthians 7 tells us so very clearly: repentance comes from godly grief. Let God's grief be a part of us. Let us see things, feel things from God's perspective. How He views these things, how He views hard-heartedness against the aliens and against those that are different from us, those that, you know, live on that Cary Street, you know, those other people, them and us. That is not the attitude that is in part God's heart.

Intercession and the Call to Mourn

And then finally, if you believe that God is dealing with the nations and the nations are important to the Lord, then look at Matthew 25 of course. Jesus, the Son of Man, returns to earth. Thank goodness He is finally back. He comes with His angels, and He sits on His glorious throne, and He is declared He is the King. And as it says, He brings the nations before Him. He brings the United States before Him. Okay, that is what you want to believe. But what did Jesus say? What is the standard? Verse 43: "I was a stranger and you did not welcome me." Jesus goes on, "You did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me."

I cannot get away from it. Please, let us lose that attitude of us and them. We are the church. This is my sixth point and final point. It is so easy to point the finger and to judge and to accuse and to say these things. But what shall the overcomer in the Laodicean Church do? What shall the overcomer in this fellowship do with all of this that is around us and all that has caused our hearts to be so hard and our blindness to be?

We do not even see the pressures and that which has beset us and has robbed us of the riches of the heart of the Lord, of God's character.

Daniel 9, not what Daniel prayed for spoke to my heart, but how Daniel prayed. And this is what the church should do. This is what the overcomers should do. Daniel 9:8-10, we could read all kinds of different verses to deal with this same thing. Daniel prays along with the rest of the exiles, Daniel not being one of the same character, the same heart as these exiles at all. But Daniel identifies himself with them. We identify ourselves with the Laodicean church. “To us, O Lord, [us, not to them, to us] belongs confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, [boy, if that is not the truth] because we have sinned against thee. To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness; [oh, how marvelous that word is] because we have rebelled against him, and have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God by following his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets.” We, we are all in this boat together. Pray. We need to pray. We need to pray intercessory prayer. Not that they, but that we. We would come to a place of repentance, of zealousness, of selling all and buying from the Lord.

It is as though I would define intercessory prayer as that which I used to think it was, that you took the—actually, you took the burden of the person or the grief of the person, and you put it upon yourself and you, in a sense, became one with the one that you were praying for. But now I kind of see it as we take the Lord's burden, the Lord's grief, godly grief. We take His burden upon ourselves, and we pray with His heart. Did not Dana tell us that we should see things as the Lord sees, being on Mount Zion and seeing things as He sees them? How does the Lord see us, the Laodicean church in this country?

Conclusion

And then, finally, a great promise has been given to us in Isaiah chapter 61. Again, these are verses that Dana had shared a little bit this last summer. Very interestingly, it is the same thing that Jesus quoted to the believer—I mean, to the synagogue there in Nazareth. Verse 1: “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me.” And then He goes on to say these many things: to bring good tidings, to proclaim liberty, to proclaim the year of the Lord. And then He stops. But Isaiah 61 continues, that the Lord in His ministry and who He is did that during His days on earth. But this is what He does now: to comfort all who mourn, to grant to those who mourn in Zion and to give them these various things, various accoutrements, various beautiful garbs upon those that mourn. Verse 4: “They shall build up the ancient ruins, they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.”

Those who mourn in Zion. Did not Dana say that we are to be ascending Zion these days? The overcomers in Laodicea are those that are ascending Zion and seeing things as the Lord sees them. And yet you are in the heights of glory and the heights of what the Lord has intended for you. Yet there is a mourning heart for our brothers and sisters, for those that are living with, again, hard hearts and with blindness.

Use an example illustration of being blind. I grew up in a city called West Covina on the outskirts of Los Angeles during the 50s and 60s and 70s. I lived in a little valley outside of LA, and it just happened that they called them an inversion layer. It would sit over our little valley, San Gabriel Valley, and all the emissions from the cars and everything else would just stew in that cauldron because the inversion layer would just sit on us, and it would just churn in that little valley. Nowhere to go, could not blow easily east, west, north, south, and just churn and just absolutely horrible.

We lived six miles from the base of the San Gabriel Mountains. Beautiful, up, 6,000, 7,000 ft right next to us, six miles from it. During the summertime we could never see the mountains. They were right there in front of us. But you cannot see it. There is a smog upon us. I think that for a lot of us we are in the smog. May the Lord open our eyes, open our hearts. May I tell you that the only reason the Lord would tell us these things is that such love He has for us, such a desire for us to go on to break loose of the Laodicean illnesses. And He has given us the remedy. He has given us the solution. I look forward to talking to you again in four years.

Let us look to the Lord in a word of prayer. *Lord, as I prayed at the beginning, it is only the Holy Spirit that can speak to our hearts. Who is this little runt up in front trying to tell me or tell us something or trying to act like A. W. Tozer? Lord, You know it is not. I am not going to convince anybody of anything, but Lord, I just leave it into Your hands. I stood on Your word, and I stood with what You had Me to share. And Lord, Your Holy Spirit is sovereign in our lives and our hearts. I thank You that my brother, every single brother and sister in this room has the fullness of the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of them. Thank You that You desire, so desire, to not wallow in the Laodicean atmosphere, but, Lord, to mount up, as it were, with the wings of eagles. Lord, to ascend Mount Zion and to take up the burden for the rest of our brothers and sisters that are just so laboring under false pretenses. Lord, thank You again. Thank You for Your great love. Thank You for Your mercy and Your grace, that You do speak to Your people and truly, Lord, the brothers and sisters here are Your precious people, Your flock. Amen.*

The Law and The Church ____ *1*

Introduction ____ **1**

The Law Is the Expression of God ____ **1**

Christ And the Fulfillment of the Law ____ **3**

Jesus And the Law ____ 3

Embodiment of the Word and the Law ____ 3

God's Heart for the Stranger in the Law ____ **4**

God's Heart in the Ordinances ____ 4

Care for the Sojourner ____ 5

Jesus' Heart for Strangers and Outcasts ____ **5**

Jesus' Love for the Stranger ____ 5

Jesus' Heart Was for the Foreigner ____ 6

We, the Laodicean Church ____ **7**

Our Selective Values ____ 7

Our Laodicean Conditions ____ 8

The Remedy ____ **9**

Buying From the Lord ____ 9

Being Zealous and Repent ____ 10

Intercession and the Call to Mourn ____ 10

Conclusion ____ **11**

Speaker	Linnebur, Jerry
Venue	Richmond, Virginia, US
Date	August 16th, 2026
Link	https://christiantestimonyministry.com/item/the-law-and-the-church
Bible Version	Revised Standard Version (RSV)