

Fight the Good Fight
1 Timothy 1:8-11 (Week 03) 09/21/2025
The Proper Use of the Law

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

⁸ Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, ⁹ understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹ in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted. (1 Timothy 1:8-11)

Introduction and Review

- Now that is quite a long sentence.
- Today we will continue our study through **Paul's first letter to Timothy**.
- As we saw last week, Paul had urged Timothy to remain in the important city of **Ephesus**,
- **Why?** Because the church there was facing **major difficulties**.
- So, following his **greeting in verses 1 and 2**.
- Paul immediately addresses the **main issue** that Timothy was facing.
- Beginning in **verse 3**, he reminds **Timothy** that he must...

³ ...charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, ⁴ nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies, which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith. (1 Timothy 1:3-4)

- The **issue in Ephesus** was that **certain persons** (almost certainly leaders, **elders** in the church) were teaching doctrine that **was different from what Jesus**, and **the apostle Paul** taught.
- Paul had ministered in **Ephesus for 3 years**, building up and **strengthening the church**.
- And after he left, he wrote the church a glorious Spirit inspired letter filled with sound doctrine that focused on the gospel (the good news) of Jesus Christ.
- You can read that letter in your Bible, **it's called Ephesians**.
- So, the church in **Ephesus** had received a **solid doctrinal beginning**.
- But in just a few short years, men **from within the church** began teaching a **different doctrine**.
- And this doctrine, **Paul says**, was leading **the church** into speculations and away from **their stewardship from God**. (which is the ministry God had given them)
- To be Ambassadors, God's representatives in this world.
- To made disciples of Jesus Christ.
- To love God and Love People.

- We see this in **verse 5** where Paul writes...

⁵ The aim of our charge (the purpose of prohibiting these certain men from teaching different doctrine) is love that issues from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. (1 Timothy 1:5)

- This **different doctrine** was promoting speculation, vain discussion, pride, distrust, etc....
- This served to **divert the people** from their call **to love**.
- And without love their (their stewardship from God) their ministry in the world **was being short circuited**.
- Because it is love of God and from God that enables and empowers us to genuinely love people and represent Jesus Christ in this world.
- And so, **Paul says to Timothy**, for the sake of Love...
- Charge **certain persons, not to teach a different doctrine**.
- And what was the **source of this different doctrine**, these **myths and endless genealogies**?
- Well, it seems these men were deriving their teachings from an ignorant yet bold interpretations of the Law, the Old Testament Scripture.
- We see this in **verse seven** which tells us these men were...

⁷ desiring to be teachers of the law, without understanding either what they are saying or the things about which they make confident assertions. (1 Timothy 1:7)

- **As so called teachers of the law**, they claimed the right to interpret **the law of Moses**.
- But their confident interpretation (their different doctrine).
- They didn't know what they were talking about.
- **Bottom Line: they clearly didn't understand the Law or its purpose,**
- **and therefore, they are using it improperly.**
- And that leads to our text for today.
- Paul (**in verses 8-11**) seeks to **inform Timothy and others** about the Law.
- The false teachers are using it improperly, so Paul focuses on **The Proper Use of the Law**.
- **He begins by declaring...**

1. The Positive Nature of the Law

- From the get-go **Paul wants to make sure Timothy** understands that the problem is with these **certain false teachers, not the Law itself**.
- So, **he quickly proclaims**,

⁸ Now we know that the law is good... (1 Timothy 1:8)

- The word **good in English** is somewhat **overused and a little bland**.
- **Your dog** can be a "**good** boy",
- A movie, or your dinner, or a sports team can be **good** but not great.

- When someone asks you, “How you’re you doing”, **a normal response is good.**
- **Not awesome, just good.**
- But the word **good** here in the Greek (*Kalos*) is a **bit more emphatic.**
- It includes the ideas of **excellence, beauty surpassing greatness.**
- Something that is **precious and praiseworthy.**
- So, the law is much **better than a well-behaved dog.**
- As Paul writes in **Romans 7:12...**

12 ...the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. (Romans 7:12)

- The law is holy, pure, **morally blameless.**
- The law is righteous, **upright and virtuous.**
- **The law is really, really good.**
- Which means, in Ephesus **the law is not the problem...**
- **However**, it’s being used improperly by these false teachers,
- So, Paul adds **this important provision** to the goodness of the law...

8 Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, (1 Timothy 1:8)

- There’s an obvious wordplay here,
- The **law** is good if used **lawfully, or properly** as the **NIV** translates.
- The **New English Bible** translates it this way...

8 We all know that the law is an excellent thing, provided we treat it as law. (1 Timothy 1:8 NEB)

- So, the Law is good, holy, righteous.
- But it must be **used lawfully, or properly.**
- It must be **treated (used) as God intended the law to be treated.**
- And that leads to a question that many Christians have asked about the Law.
- **What’s the proper use of the Law,**
- **or what’s the purpose or relevance of the Law after Christ?**
- And Paul **will address this question in verses 9-11.**
- **However**, in this passage, in **the context of these false teachers,**
- He will focus mainly on **one specific purpose of the Law.**
- So, before we get to **Paul’s point to Timothy about the Law.**
- I want to provide a foundation by looking first at...

2. The Purposes of The Law

- And even before we get to the purposes of the law,
- Let’s be very clear about **what the law was never meant to do.**

- The law was never meant to save anyone, **including the Jews.**
- When God gave **His law to Israel through Moses.**
- Its purpose included the establishment of a **distinct people for God** among the nations.
- The Law included rules to govern the nation of Israel (**the civic law**)
- The Law included rules to govern their religious rituals, sacrifices and festivals (**the ceremonial law**)
- And the Law also included rules (or timeless ethical principles) to govern their behavior, how they related to God and to man (**the Moral Law**)
- And the fact that Israel was never able to perfectly keep any of the Law, was meant to reveal **their need for a Savior.**
- Paul describes **this to the Galatians...**

²³ Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. ²⁴ So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. (Galatians 3:23-24)

- The law served as **a guardian.**
- That word includes the idea of a **"tutor" or temporary "schoolmaster,"**
- The law was meant to teach Israel how to live, defining sin, and pointing them toward the coming of the Messiah (Jesus Christ), **who would fulfill the law.**
- Justification by faith (and salvation) come not through **Law-Keeping** but through Christ alone.
- This is Paul's point in **Romans 8** where he writes...

³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. (Romans 8:3-4)

- The Law could never save, not because there is a problem with the law,
- But because there is a problem with **the flesh** that could never **keep or fulfill the law.**
- So, God sent his Son **to condemn sin in the flesh**
- and to meet the righteous requirements of the Law.
- To save all who trust in Him, all who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
- So, the purpose of the law (or keeping the law) has never been to bring about salvation.
- **So, then what is its purpose?**
- Well, again, For Israel, it governed them as a distinct nation,
- It defined their religious rituals, sacrifices, ceremonies.
- And it showed them the holiness of God and their own sin.
- It pointed them to the Messiah; it served as **a guardian.**
- **But what about us?**
- **But what about after Christ came?**

- Christians don't live **in OT nation of Israel**.
- **Therefore**, we need not obey the civic law (**although we learn from it**)
- We don't live under the **old covenant** with its rituals and sacrifices and ceremonies.
- **We live under the new covenant in Christ.**
- And **Christ's sacrificial death** for our sins ***fulfilled the righteous requirements of the law.***
- Therefore, we need not (must not) obey the **ceremonial law** (although there is much we can learn from it).
- But what about **the Moral Law** with its timeless ethical principles.
- **How does this law relate to my life?**
- Is it **irrelevant** to Christians or is there some sense in which we are still responsible for obeying it?
- Well as I studied this question, I **discovered** that sound Christian doctrine teaches that there are **three basic purposes** of the Law in our world today.
- As we look at the **OT Law** (including the civic law, ceremonial law, but especially the moral law)
- We find first that...

A. The Law Reflects

- The **law is like a mirror**.
- On the one hand, **the law of God reflects the perfect righteousness of God**.
- As it told Israel, **it tells us much about who God is**.
- Perhaps more important, the law reflects (or shows) human sinfulness.
- **Augustine wrote,**

The law orders, that we, after attempting to do what is ordered, and so feeling our weakness under the law, may learn to implore the help of grace. (Augustine)

- The law reflects our weakness so that **we might seek the strength found in Christ**.
- This is similar to what we saw in **Galatians...**
- The Law serves as a **guardian, a schoolmaster** who drives us to Christ.
- To the **Romans** Paul wrote...

²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight,

- Again, the Law cannot and has not saved anyone...

since through the law comes knowledge of sin. (Romans 3:20)

- We look at the law, then we look at our lives, and they do not match up.
- And we are made aware of our sin.
- And for those who have not trusted in Christ,
- the law makes them aware **of their condemnation before God**.
- **And can then drive them to faith in Christ.**
- And for the believer, who sees that they are not living in obedience to God's law.
- This knowledge of sin brings **about conviction**.

- **Simply put, the law reflects the holy standards of God.**
- And therefore, **when we fall short of those standards** we are convicted of our sin.
- And we know that, **without God's grace and mercy**, we are condemned.
- Paul experienced this very thing in his own life, in **Romans 7** we read...

13 Did that which is good (the law), then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. (Romans 7:13)

- The law hammered Paul down, so that he might see his own sin and open himself to the gospel.
- **John Stott quotes Martin Luther** in this respect:

[The Law] is a mighty "hammer" to crush the self-righteousness of human beings. For "it shows them their sin, so that by the recognition of sin they may be humbled, frightened, and worn down, and so may long for grace and for the Blessed Offspring [Christ]." It is in this sense that "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ." (John Stott)

- So first **the Law reflects both God's righteousness and our sinfulness...**
- Then **the second...**

B. The Law Restrains

- The law, in and of itself, **cannot change human hearts.**
- It can, however, serve to **protect the righteous from the unjust and evil.**
- This is how the law is used **in public life**,
- It is an external restraint on wrongdoers.
- This is true of our own laws **and even more the Old Testament Law.**
- **The OT** is filled with laws and punishments for those who break the laws.
- All in an effort to **protect sinful humanity from even more sinful humanity.**
- Just a few examples to be clear...
- **Exodus 21** we read...

16 "Whoever steals a man and sells him, and anyone found in possession of him, shall be put to death.

17 "Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death. (Exodus 21:15-17)

- And in **Leviticus 20** we read...

2 "Say to the people of Israel, Any one of the people of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn in Israel who gives any of his children to Molech shall surely be put to death. (Leviticus 20:2)

- Clearly these laws are meant to **restrain the behaviors of stealing, cursing parents and sacrificing children.**

- And the law when **given and enforced** does a great job of **restraining sin**.
- Of protecting the citizen from the criminal if you will.
- Without law, **everyday public life would be impossible**.
- The law allows for a limited measure of justice on this earth, until the last judgment is realized.
- So, the **Law reflects and restrains**.
- And finally...

C. The Law Reveals

- As children of God, the law **enlightens** us as to what is pleasing to our Father in heaven.
- Therefore, we must be like **the Blessed** man of **Psalms 1...**

² his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. (Psalms 1:2)

- As we take in and delight in God's law, his will and ways are revealed to us.
- And as we act on what we find, **we demonstrate our love for Him**.
- **Jesus said,**

¹⁵ If you love me, you will keep my commandments. (John 14:15)

- This is the highest function of the law,
- to serve as an instrument for the people of God **to give Him honor and glory**.
- By studying or meditating on the law of God, **we attend the school of righteousness**.
- We learn **what pleases God and what offends Him**.
- **Therefore, the timeless moral law that God reveals in Scripture is always binding upon us.**
- Our redemption is from the curse of God's law, **not from our duty to obey it**.
- AGAIN, we are justified, saved, **not because of our obedience to the law**,
- but in order that we may **become obedient to God's law**.
- To love Christ is to keep His commandments.
- To love God is to obey His law.
- What this means is that as we look to God's Law, (His Word)
- we find the parameters or boundaries that he has set up for a life of obedience to Him.
- And in that way as we, **in the power of the Holy Spirit**, seek to obey God's law.
- **Our sanctification, our transformation into the image of Christ takes place.**
- **This is how a Christian uses the Law.**
- We know that we are saved **by grace through faith**.
- We know that only **Christ has ever lived up to the Law**.
- But we recognize that the Law (as part of God's word, understood properly) reveals God's mind as to our moral and ethical responsibilities toward God and man.

- We see this clearly in **Christ's Sermon on the Mount**, where he says...

¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. ¹⁹ Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 5:17-19)

- You can see, in Christ's own words, the call to **know and obey the Law of God**.
- It is through **the Law** that we can learn God's will for daily life.
- As **John Calvin** wrote...

As we know and meditate on the law, we are aroused to obedience.... and drawn back from the slippery path of transgression. (John Calvin)

- So, we've seen the three purposes of the Law.
- To **reflect** God's holiness and our sinfulness thus driving us to the Savior.
- To **restrain** sin/evil in this world
- And to **reveal** the ways and will of God for our lives that we might grow in our relationship with Him.
- **And so with that as our background we can now return to 1 Timothy and see...**

3. Paul's Point About the Law

- Again, in **verse 8**, Paul said...

⁸ Now we know that the law is good, if one uses it lawfully, (1 Timothy 1:8)

- So, we understand the positive nature of the Law when it used lawfully or properly or as God intended.
- And then in **verse 9** Paul adds...

⁹ understanding this, that the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, (1 Timothy 1:9)

- Here Paul makes **his point about the Law**.
- And here we discover **which of the three purposes he's pointing to...**
- Notice he says, **“the law is not laid down for the just (those seek to obey the law) but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners.**
- So, the law is laid down/given for those who **would naturally and blatantly disobey the law.**

- So, obviously, he's not describing **the third purpose of the law**,
- The Christian purpose of revealing what is pleasing to God that we might grow in righteous living and bringing glory to God.
- And it doesn't seem like he's describing **the first purpose of the law**,
- Where the law **reflects God's holiness** and **man's sinfulness**,
- bringing about condemnation and conviction for sin.
- **There is no indication here of the internal workings of the law.**
- **Those described here are lawless, disobedient, ungodly sinners.**
- And so that leaves **the second purpose** of the law. **To Restrain Sin.**
- This is not for **the godly or the saints**,
- or even your run of the mill "law-abiding" citizens who knows how to behave themselves.
- **But for the lawless and disobedient.**
- For those who would gladly (naturally) rebel against God's laws,
- **if there were no consequences to their law breaking.**
- The law of the land is not for **saints, but for sinners.**
- Now some would argue that everyone falls in this category, **especially every unsaved person.**
- They rightly point out that the Bible teaches **none of us is righteous.**
- **We are all lawbreakers.**
- And this of course, is true, but it's not really the point of this passage.
- We like to say that **all sin is the same, and in one sense that is true.**
- All sin brings about separation from God, **all sin will be judged,**
- **and Jesus died for all sin.**
- But on the human level, which it seems Paul is talking about, **sins can be very different.**
- Would you rather someone steal **your phone or steal your child.**
- You get the point; **in society there are varying degrees of sin or law-breaking.**
- And that's **reflected in our laws** and **in the OT Law as well.**
- There are different punishments for **different levels of offense.**
- **Everyone doesn't get the death penalty for every sin.**
- So, in our daily lives, for us to function, for the good of society,
- There are certain kinds of sins that need to be restrained.
- And here in **Timothy** Paul isn't denying that the law has other uses,
- But he's mainly concerned about its restraining use against those who would blatantly disregard it.

- This is pretty clear from his list of sins...

⁹ ...the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who strike their fathers and mothers, for murderers, ¹⁰ the sexually immoral, men who practice homosexuality, enslavers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, (1 Timothy 1:9-10)

- Here Paul mentions some of the **most extreme forms of law-breaking**.
- And interestingly each **sin** listed **corresponds to breaking one of the ten commandments**.
- Part of God's timeless Moral Law.
- Now if you are familiar with the 10 commandments,
- you know that **the first four** deal with our relationship with God – **our love for God**.
- And Paul may have those in mind when he talks about the **unholy and profane**.
- But the specific sins he lists break the 5th through 9th commandments.
- And these commandments deal with our relationship with one another – **our love for man**.
- He begins with the **5th Commandment**...

¹² Honor your father and your mother... (Exodus 20:12)

- And He doesn't condemn the child for simply **ignoring or disobeying their parents**.
- He condemns **domestic violence** for the **one who strikes their fathers and mothers**.
- Then he goes to the **6th Commandment**...

¹³ You shall not murder. (Exodus 20:13)

- He doesn't condemn hating someone **but murder**.
- Then the **7th Commandment**...

¹⁴ You shall not commit adultery. (Exodus 20:14)

- This relates to **all sexual sin**.
- And Paul doesn't **condemn lust**...
- but **sexually immorality** (pornos, adultery, fornication, etc..)
- and he adds **men who practice homosexuality**.
- Then the **9th Commandment**...

¹⁵ You shall not steal. (Exodus 20:15)

- He doesn't condemn **shoplifting (or even stealing things)** but **enslaving**.

- The Greek is literally “**men stealing**” (kidnapping, stealing a human being for the purpose of slavery).
- Just a side note here, **the New Testament** is sometimes criticized for not coming down hard enough on slavery.
- For example, in **Ephesians 6** we read...

⁵ Bondservants (Greek *doulos*), obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, (Ephesians 6:5)

- But we should understand that in New Testament times, **as in all of history and even today**,
- There are different ways people become enslaved.
- Conquest in war, **inability to pay debts**, punishment for a Crime.
- And probably what is being referred to in **Ephesians as Bondservants**...
- Those who could not find work or provide for their family, would offer themselves as slaves in order to survive.
- But here in **1 Timothy** Paul clearly condemns **the worst kind of slavery**.
- Stealing people from their homes (their lands) and enslaving them.
- And finally, **the 8th Commandment**...

¹⁶ You shall not bear false witness... (Exodus 20:16)

- He doesn't condemn white lies, but a **liar and one who commits perjury**.
- Literally an oath breaker, one who breaks an oath that they have sworn to keep.
- So, Paul **lists 5** areas of sin that correspond to **the 5th – 9th Commandments** of God's Law.
- And notice that he doesn't say anything about the **10th Commandment**
- Perhaps because the **tenth commandment— You shall not covet**.
- Governs a sinful attitude **not punishable outward sin**.
- So, those are some of the sins **that the Law Restrains**...
- But to see Paul's point in this list of **broken commandments**.
- We need to read on; **the law is laid down for those who break these commandments....**

...and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine... (1 Timothy 1:10)

- **Now do you see the point? Think about the context of these false teachers.**
- The certain persons of **verses 3-7** who are not teaching sound doctrine.
- Not the doctrine Christ or Paul taught, not the doctrine of God's word, **but a different doctrine**.

- **And Paul is saying that these sins he has listed are part of a larger group of sins,**
- **all of which are contrary to sound doctrine.**
- These men want to **be teachers of the law,**
- But they **are abusing the law**, using it for their own purposes.
- Creating different/false doctrine, Jewish myths, focusing on endless genealogies.
- And their improper use of the law is leading people away from sound doctrine **and into sin.**
- Away from God's **the stewardship** (the purpose of God for his church),
- away from **Love for God and People - and into sin.**
- So, the point is this: **Law-breaking is contrary to sound doctrine.**
- **The Law** (which is part of sound doctrine), **restrains sin in this world.**
- But **different (contrary) doctrine**, far from restraining sin, promotes it.
- You certainly see the sin promoting effects of **different/contrary doctrine** in our western world.
- Especially in the area of **human sexuality.**
- People complain that the church focuses on **sexual sins**, pornography, fornication, adultery, **especially homosexuality** and ignores **other sins.**
- Some would say this is because we are **old-fashioned and up-tight.**
- We just need to **loosen-up and come into the modern world.**
- But just look at the list of **sins that Paul gives.**
- **IN GENERAL** No one is advocating for the rights of children to strike their parents.
- No one is asking for us to ignore murder (although many disagree with how it should be punished)
- No one is calling **for a return to slavery.**
- No one is **throwing parades for liars and perjurers.**
- In these areas, for the most part, at least for now,
- the law, **the sound doctrine of the Bible** agrees with the laws of society.
- We can agree that these offenses are wrong and should be punished.
- But that is not the case in the area of **human sexuality.**
- Sound doctrine (the Law) stands **against sexual immorality including homosexuality.**
- But **our culture tends to accept, advocate for and even celebrate these sins.**
- **Therefore**, if the church (**as God's representatives**) does not stand against such sins who will?
- And of course, there is a right and wrong way to confront or teach against any sin.
- In our words and our approach, we ***must speak the truth in love.***
- But often times, **speaking the truth of God's word about sin**, is never going to be seen by the **world as loving. No matter what we do or say.**

- As our society moves farther away from God and the sound doctrine of his word, **sin prospers.**
- **Sin is no longer sin.**
- **Sin is no longer restrained** because **we have bought into a different/contrary doctrine,**
- **a different law if you will.**
- And this is not just true for our society but for us as individual, the Ephesian Christians were being led away from sound doctrine and into sin.
- And that should be a warning for us.
- We must reject any teaching that is different/contrary to the sound doctrine of God's word.
- And that means we must diligently study the word ourselves and attend churches where the word of God (not man's opinion) is taught.
- **So, we've seen Paul's point about the law.**
- Again, the law (which is part of sound doctrine) is meant to restrain sin,
- But these false teachers are using the Law (improperly) to introduce a different doctrine,
- And thus, **removing the restraints that the law provides against sin.**
- Leading people away from love and into vain discussion, speculation, pride and worse...
- **And to this Paul adds one final thing....**

4. The Law and Gospel are Part of Sound Doctrine

- I know it's getting late, but you need to focus here.
- Following the list of sins, violations of the law Paul adds...

and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹ in accordance with the gospel of the glory of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted. (1 Timothy 1:10-11)

- **Follow along here... I think Paul is saying...** Law breaking is contrary to sound doctrine.
- Therefore, law-keeping (the law) is part of sound doctrine.
- And sound doctrine is in accordance with ***the gospel of the glory of the blessed God...***
- So, **the gospel** is part of sound doctrine and **sound doctrine promotes the gospel.**
- Therefore, **Sound Doctrine** includes **both the Law and the Gospel.**
- **It's all part of God's Word.**
- Which means that not only is **sin against God, against his law,**
- but sin is not in accordance with (fails to conform to) ***the gospel of the glory of the blessed God.***
- Sin is not only breaking the law but **is harm the gospel of God's glory.**
- Therefore, the gospel (the good news of Jesus Christ) ***for the Glory of God...***
- requires the same conduct that the law requires, not as a way to earn grace, or salvation – which again the law never did.

- But as a way to respond to what you've received from God.
- To engage in the stewardship of God, to represent God well in this world.
- To Love God and to Love People in God's power.
- It's sometimes argued that the **gospel makes the law obsolete**.
- It's true, as we saw earlier, that the gospel includes the fact that Jesus fulfilled the law and on the cross he certainly made the sacrificial system (ceremonial) obsolete.
- However, he did not do away with God's moral law.
- In fact, if anything he increased it...
- For example, Jesus said...

27 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall not commit adultery.' 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (Matthew 5:27-28)

- We need to understand that Jesus, or the gospel he preached and passed on to Paul and the other apostle, **never lowered God's legal standards**.
- In fact, **as we saw in Jesus words in Matthew**,
- the New Testament repeats and reinforces God's moral Law.
- The law remains useful **for reflecting God's holiness and man's sinfulness**,
- For driving some sinners to Christ.
- The law is useful for **restraining sin**,
- and most importantly for the Christian,
- **the law reveals how we ought to live for Christ, before a holy God.**
- Therefore, as **George Knight** explains,

When the law is rightly applied as an ethical restraint against sin, it is in full accordance with the ethical norm given in the gospel as the standard for the redeemed life. (George Knight)

- Not only does lawlessness fail to conform to the gospel,
- **but it is also contrary to sound doctrine.**
- Again, **we must understand the importance of sound doctrine.**
- I didn't mention this before but...
- The word for "sound" (*hygiainousē* **HOO-GEE-AYE-NOO-SAY**) is a medical term meaning, where we get our word **Hygiene**.
- It means **"healthy" or "wholesome."**
- Our actions cannot be separated from doctrine.
- **Unhealthy doctrine produces unhealthy conduct.**

- **Every sin comes ultimately from a failure to believe rightly about God.**
- So again, do not lessen the importance of sound (healthy) doctrine in your life.
- Into your mind and your heart, you must continue to **take in the sound doctrine of God's word.**
- **And reject the different doctrines of false teachers and of this world.**
- **Whis is a problem, because** our culture proclaims the doctrine of tolerance.
- We must be tolerant of every philosophy, religion, feeling of everyone.
- Except of course there is no tolerance for those who don't tolerate everything.
- And into this world comes the "sound doctrine" of God and his word.
- **It is significant** that the Greek text of **1 Timothy** describes **correct teaching as**

"sound doctrine" (1 Tim. 1:10). Singular.

- The NIV translates this **The Sound Doctrine**
- Because it is not one of many **sound doctrines**, but **the one and only sound doctrine.**
- Everything else is **contrary or different doctrine.**
- **Philip Graham Ryken** says it well in **his commentary on 1 Timothy...**

The Bible insists that there is one standard for Christian theology. This standard is the teaching of Christ and his apostles found in the pages of the New Testament, in full agreement with the prophetic witness of the Old Testament. (Philip Graham Ryken)

- In our culture people say, your beliefs (your theology) are just your opinion.
- Christianity (the Bible) may be true for you, but not for me.
- Besides that being illogical: something is either true, or it is not.
- It's also dangerous, **leading to people thinking that objective truth isn't as important as what they believe about the world or themselves.**
- **What they believe is true for them.**
- An example of this way of thinking comes from **Man Friday**,
- **a 1975** film based on Robinson Crusoe.
- The **original novel** published in 1719, written by **Daniel DeFoe** was a deeply Christian work,
- but in **1975 the film** Crusoe's friend Friday is a champion for **religious pluralism.**
- "Worship any way you like," he says, "as long as you mean it. God won't mind."
- **The truth is, however, that God does mind a great deal.**
- For his glory and your good God would want you to believe,
- not what is conjured up on the minds of men, **but the truth as only the Creator can reveal!**
- ***It's not tolerance, BUT As Jesus said, it is the truth that will set you free.***
- And so, the word of God is clear, there is only one true doctrine (theology).

- **Every other doctrine is false and must not be tolerated.**
- Here is how John Stott applies Paul's emphasis on the truth of sound doctrine to the contemporary Christian:

Contemporary culture is being overtaken and submerged by the spirit of postmodernism

- Postmodernism challenges the idea of absolute truths in religion or anything else for that matter.
- It promotes the individual's right to their own interpretation of what is true for them.

...The postmodern mind... declares that there is no such thing as objective or universal truth; that all so-called "truth" is purely subjective, being culturally conditioned; and that therefore we all have our own truth, which has as much right to respect as anybody else's. Pluralism is an offspring of postmodernism; it affirms the independent validity of every faith and ideology, and demands in shrill tones that we abandon as impossibly arrogant any attempt to convert somebody (let alone everybody) to our opinion. In contrast to this relativization of truth, it is wonderfully refreshing to read Paul's unambiguous commitment to it. (John Stott)

- Do you see then how different doctrine, the doctrine of Postmodernism, Pluralism, Tolerance,
- can lead to the sin of not proclaiming

the gospel of the glory of the blessed God in this WORLD.

- Sound healthy biblical doctrine says you must believe the gospel of the glory of the blessed God.
- You must trust in Christ's sacrificial death on the cross for forgiveness and the salvation.
- But contrary doctrine says, it doesn't matter what you believe about God,
- **what's true for you is what matters.**
- And the question I want to leave with you this morning is not which doctrine do you believe,
- Because I'm sure, most of us believe the sound healthy gospel doctrine.
- The question I want to leave you with is this... **Which doctrine does your life reflect?**
- Do your actions (your words to others) reflect that you believe the gospel of Jesus Christ and that those who don't trust in him are destined for a Christless eternity.
- Or do your actions reflect a doctrine of Postmodernism, Pluralism and Tolerance.
- Whether you believe these things or not.
- Do your actions, by not sharing the gospel because it may offend someone, reflect their teaching.
- Oh, that we would be a people that obeyed God's Moral Law.
- That we would love God and Love people enough to proclaim the truth,
- The sound doctrine in accordance with the gospel of the glory of Blessed God with which we have been entrusted.
- **Would you pray with me to that end!**