

God's Law and Our Sin

Text: What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? (Romans 7:7)

Intro: progress in sanctification

Guilt removed; growth in grace.

Another objection:

First thing: The Law Identifies or Exposes v7

Second thing: The Law Stirs Up v8

An Example v9

although I myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more: circumcised the eighth day, of the nation of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to the righteousness which is in the Law, found blameless. (Philippians 3:4-6)

Application 1: The Functions of the Law

1. convict
2. restrain
3. direct

The first part [of the law's function] is this: while it shows God's righteousness, that is, the righteousness alone acceptable to God, it warns, informs, convicts, and lastly condemns, every man of his own unrighteousness. For man, blinded and drunk with self-love, must be compelled to know and to confess his own feebleness and impurity. If man is not clearly convinced of his own vanity, he is puffed up with insane confidence in his own mental powers and can never be induced to recognize their slenderness as long as he measures them by a measure of his own choice.

But as soon as he begins to compare his powers with the difficulty of the law, he has something to diminish his bravado. For, however remarkable an opinion of his powers he formerly held, he soon feels that they are panting under so heavy a weight as to stagger and totter, and finally even to fall down and faint away. Thus man, schooled in the law, sloughs off the arrogance that previously blinded him. --Calvin

Application 2: God Humbles His People

But we will come again to this Valley of Humiliation. It is the best and most useful piece of ground in all those parts. It is fat [fertile] ground, and, as you see, consisteth much in meadows; and if a man were to come here in the summer-time, as we do now, if he knew not anything before, thereof, and if he also delighted himself in the sight of his eyes, he might see that which would be delightful to him. Behold how green this Valley is, also how beautified with lilies (Song. 2:1). I have also known many laboring men that have got good estates in this Valley of Humiliation for God resisteth the proud, but gives grace unto the humble, (James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5), for indeed it is a very fruitful soil, and doth bring forth by handfuls. Some also have wished, that the next way to their Father's house were here, that they might be troubled no more with either hills or mountains to go over; but the way is the way, and there is an end. --Bunyan