

# **Living in the Power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ**

**Romans 3:19-31 - Pastor Guy Gray**

## **A New Testament update on the Law of God**

Our study in Exodus has led us to the heart of the Law of God in the Old Testament, the Ten Commandments. We learned last week that these Commandments are a crucial summary of God's pattern of life for His people. We learned that above all this is to be a matter of the heart! It starts first and foremost with a heart that puts God in absolute first place priority and as the highest love. All flows from this. But we also learned that the Israelites were not able to live up to the life described in the Ten Commandments in their real life behavior. This should not come as a surprise, because we are aware that the sin that entered the world back in Genesis 3 left its mark on all human life, including the Israelites. This is why God promised that He would bring salvation to the world. The Old Testament is the unfolding of the story of salvation that God promised to bring into the world through Christ. The New Testament is the fulfillment of that promise. That is why this week we are going to go to the Book of Romans to get a New Testament "update" on the Law of God. Our goal is to truly understand and live in the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ—getting a more complete view of the Law of God is a crucial starting place.

## **Sin - What the Law of God reveals about our lives**

The Law of God is good. It is perfect. It sets the bar high—really high! When we take an honest look at the Ten Commandments and then take an honest look at our lives, we are left with only one conclusion: we each fall short. We are each sinful and guilty before God. Deep within our own conscience we know that this is true. Much of Romans 1-3 is devoted to exposing the reality of our sinful, guilty state before God and ultimately it is the Law of God that has the final word on this matter (Romans 3:19-20). Through the law we know we are guilty. But through the law we cannot change this situation. So the next question is "what now?" How will I resolve this problem? Can I resolve it? What is the solution? There are two solutions that people often turn to which are quite simply off target. The first false solution is to think that we can work our way back into God's favor by trying harder to live a moral life. This is simply going back to the law and trying harder. This approach could be called "moralism." The second false solution is to discount the severity of our sin, while at the same time convincing ourselves that God is so loving that He would never really hold anyone

accountable for their sin anyway. This approach is a distortion of the true Biblical picture of God.

### **Gospel – What God accomplished for us through Christ**

God has a different solution. God's solution is to give us the gift of righteousness "apart from law" (Romans 3:21). This is the message and the power of the Gospel. This approach centers on the cross of Christ and what Christ accomplished for us through His death. This approach avoids both of the false solutions we mentioned. It avoids the mistake of moralism because it provides a solution for our guilt and sin that bypasses our own efforts to earn God's favor. The solution is not a greater effort to live a moral life, the solution is Jesus' sacrifice received by faith. It also avoids the mistake of either minimizing the severity of sin, or distorting the reality of God, as if God's love could never allow Him to judge. He does judge—and He brought real judgment on Christ in our very place. ***This is the power of the Gospel!*** It tells you that you are forgiven, free and loved—right now and completely by the grace of God in Christ.

### **Where then is boasting?**

One of the great problems in the church today is that we fall back into moralistic thinking. We measure ourselves according to some moral standard that we have devised (whether based on the Ten Commandments or our own set of standards). We then fall into the twin traps of moralism. The first is pride in which we look down on others—and have a false sense of confidence before God. The other is fear and insecurity because we know we fail and feel that we never measure up before God, self or anyone else. The Gospel sets us free from both of these traps. The Gospel causes us to live in humble joy before God because we know that only through Christ's sacrifice can we be truly right with God. The Gospel also allows us to be joyfully secure in God's love—because God loved us so much that He would provide His son as the sacrifice for our sin. How powerful this is for our lives! To live in the power of the Gospel starts here, at the cross of Christ, where through the law of God we have been found guilty, but through the death of Christ our righteousness has been paid for. Now, above all, we need to learn to live in joyful, humble faith in Christ who is our very righteousness!

## Questions for Further Reflection and Discussion

Read Romans 3: 19- 31 again.

What did the Lord say to you this week through the sermon or through this passage?

### **The Gospel of Christ**

In your own words, explain the Gospel. Why did Jesus have to die? Couldn't God have dealt with sin in a different way? What does Paul mean in verse 25 when he says, "He (God) did this to demonstrate His justice...?"

### **The Gift of Righteousness**

Accepting a gift that we do not deserve can be one of the hardest things of all. Is it hard for you? Journal about this. To what extent do you tend towards moralism (rule keeping) in your Christian life? Or do you tend to question the gift of salvation because you feel unworthy? Bring this to the Lord Jesus, and remember; it is through *faith* in His blood that you are justified.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **TODAY**

Christianity 101 Begins  
10am, RWGT

### **SATURDAY 02/24**

Family Fellowship Event:  
Games & Hot Dogs  
5:30pm, RWLG

### **WEDNESDAY 02/28**

Israel Perspective  
7pm, RWLG

### **SATURDAY 03/03**

Church Work Day  
8am RWLG, RWGT

### **SUNDAY 03/04**

All Church Service  
10am, Lakeridge HS

### **FRIDAY 03/09**

High School Game Night  
7pm, Mt. Park Church

### **STARTING SOON**

Forgiven & Set Free Bible  
Study, Contact Sheri  
Harkavy at 887.7080