

LESSON 11

CHAPTER 19. “Of the Law of God”

The 1689 Confession adheres to the classic covenant theological view of the law.

Three views of the law: Dispensational, Covenant, and New Covenant

Three theological divisions of the law: moral, ceremonial law, judicial law

I. Paragraph 1: “Moral” law prior to the fall (pre-lapsarian)

- A. God’s law of obedience was placed in Adam’s heart.
 - 1. God explicitly warned Adam about the tree of knowledge of good and evil.
- B. God gave Adam the power and ability to keep the law.
- C. Complete obedience necessary for life. Any disobedience results in death.
- D. Adam held responsible for humankind (i.e., the federal head of the covenant of works).

II. Paragraph 2: “Moral” law after the fall (post-lapsarian)

- A. The moral law continued in force after the fall.
- B. The law written in Adam’s heart was the very same law given to Moses.

III. Paragraph 3: Ceremonial laws of the Israelites

- A. Ceremonial laws prefiguring Christ and his work were added for the Israelites.
- B. Ceremonial law annulled by Christ and the New Covenant.

IV. Paragraph 4: Judicial laws of the Israelites

- A. Judicial laws, also given to the Israelites, while still practical today, were annulled by Christ and the New Covenant.

V. Paragraph 5: Perpetuity of the “moral” law.

- A. The moral law has been and will continue to be in force.
- B. The gospel does not annul the moral law. But rather, commands our obedience and renews our strength to keep it.

VI. Paragraph 6: Uses of the law in the life of the believer

- A. The law is not a means of justification.
- B. The law is a rule of life and revealer of sin.
- C. The law shows our need for Christ.
- D. The law restrains sin by showing what sin deserves.
- E. Obedience to the law brings blessing, but not as a wage.
- F. Obedience to the law is not evidence of being under the law.

VI. Paragraph 7: The law and gospel (grace) not mutually exclusive.

- A. Abiding by the moral law and working to keep the law does not diminish grace.
- B. On the contrary, working to keep the law is evidence of saving grace.

Discussion Questions:

Should the law be part of a gospel message?

In relation to what Biblical character does Jesus say that the law ended?

How does the moral law relate to “good works”?

What does Jesus say about Himself in regard to the moral law?

Does the indwelling of the Holy Spirit guarantee that we will keep the law?

Why do you think Jesus said He would send us the Comforter?

Book Suggestions:

Dispensational View

Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism*

Covenant View

Patrick Fairburn, *The Revelation of Law in Scripture*

William S. Plumer, *Law of God*

Ernest C. Reisinger, *The Law and the Gospel*

New Covenant View

John G. Reisinger, *Tablets of Stone*

John G. Reisinger, *But, I Say Unto You*

Chris M. Scarborough, *The New Covenant and the Law of Christ: A Biblical Study Guide*