

Do we preach the Law of God?

Paper presented at the Reformed Congregational Conference, Sharon, Mass. 4-17-2013 by Tim Broberg, 49 Tookany Creek Pkwy, Cheltenham, PA 19012. brutefact@hotmail.com, 516-668-3945.

Savoy Chapter 19, paragraph 2

"This Law so written in the heart, continued to be a perfect Rule of Righteousness after the fall of man,¹ and was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai in Ten Commandments, and written in two Tab'les; the four first Commandments containing our duty toward God and the other six our duty to man."²

The short answer to the question, "Do we preach the Law of God?" is "Yes." This does not make us legal preachers³ because we preach, in addition to the Law of God, the grace and mercy found in Jesus Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit.⁴

The Law is a window through which we can see our shortcomings before God. The Law shows us we have failed, offended a Holy God who cannot endure anything

¹ Savoy differs slightly from the WCF here which says, "This Law after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness," The rest of Savoy only changes a few words, but here Savoy adds to the WCF the concept that the Law of God is written on our hearts which the WCF omits. *England and Scotlands Covenant with their God*, (Printed by Ed Husbands, Printer to the Honourable House of Commons, 1646.) p. 39.

² *A Declaration of the Faith and Order Owned and Practised in the Congregational Churches in England; Agreed upon and confesented unto By their Elders and Messengers in Their Meeting at the Savoy Octob. 12. 1658*. London: Printed for D. L. and are to be sold in Pauls Church-yard, Fleet Street, and Westminster Hall, 1659.

³ Thomas Brooks says in a marginal note in his book, *The Unsearchable Riches of Christ*, "Some men here be, that would have men better Christians before they come to Christ, then usually they prove after they come to Christ. Surely did legal Preachers *seriously weigh* the following Scriptures they would not so vehemently (I say not angerly) presse the absolute necessity of such and such qualifications before faith in Christ as they doe. Mark 16. 16. John 3. 34. Heb. 11: 6. Rom. 14. 23. John 5. 12. Mat. 7. 17, 18. Mar. 12. 33. Rom. 8. 2. Gal. 5. 6., p. 287.

⁴ In an article in *The Presbyterian Critic and Monthly Review*, Edited by Stuart Robinson and Thomas Peck, No. 10, Volume 1, October 1855, the un-named author of an article on preaching the Gospel to the poor says, "An intelligent and cordial reverence of the Word of God, and intelligent and ardent love of regulated liberty, a liberty regulated by law, a law free enough to allow the amplest scope for the development of all that is good and true and noble and exalted in our nature, strong and stringent enough to restrain and hinder all that is bad and false and low,....is a remedy for all." P. 464.

unholy in His presence. The Law leads us to despair of ever having a good or hopeful encounter with the Living God. The Law brings us down to the depths, but when we bring Jesus Christ into the picture, there is hope; His mercy, His grace, His atonement for sin, His free offer of forgiveness. There is hope for the same sinner, who, outside of Christ, can only despair. Thus, we preach both Law and Gospel from the pulpit. The Law shows us our unrighteousness and the Gospel tells of an alien righteousness, Christ's righteousness, which He gives (imputes) to His children who come to Him in repentance and faith.

The outline is as follows:

1. Making Conscience of Sin
2. Historical Example: The Marrow Controversy
3. The Law is to be Preached
4. The Law as a Means of Grace
5. The Liberty of the Law

1. Making Conscience of Sin

Christians are admonished to make conscience of their sins. One of the problems in the Antinomian (against Law) view of the Christian is that it teaches that the believer is so disconnected from the Law of God that whatever shortcomings believers have are not sins. The Puritans rejected this belief. When the Puritans spoke of "making conscience of sin," they meant that we measure our lives in view of the Moral Law of God. Anthony Burgess writes, "The sinnes of godly men cease not to be sins, though they are justified."⁵

Thomas Goodwin felt that believers sins, since they were sins of those who knew better, were more offensive to God. They were more brazen, heinous sins because the Christian knows better and has been given more. The more knowledge there is, the greater is the sin. The sins of believers are not only against the light and

⁵ Quoted in Ernest Kevan, *The Grace of Law: A Study in Puritan Theology*, (Morgan, PA: Soli Deo Gloria Publications, third printing 1999) p. 102.

knowledge God has given to all, but also against the light and knowledge God has given His children. The sins of believers are sins against mercy.⁶

It is right to preach the Law of God to believers. It is a reminder that repentance is an ongoing duty of every child of God, and of the high standard that God calls His children to. God's people need to be reminded of God's Law, and even admonished to seek His face in repentance and faith.

The unbeliever has been given an understanding of truth and of God. God says in His Word that this makes them to be, "without excuse," Romans 1:18-23. God has "revealed" things concerning Himself to the unbeliever. That "which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them." The unbeliever suppresses the truth that God has revealed to them. The things of God have been "clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." They have become fools while thinking themselves wise, Romans 1:22.

Preachers, must bring the unbeliever back to the Law of God, which they suppress, and pray that the Holy Spirit would unstop their ears, open their eyes, and take away their stony hearts, giving them hearts of flesh. Like the believer, the unbeliever needs to "make conscience" of his/her sin. None can accomplish that in themselves, but the preacher provides a means that the Holy Spirit can use to do so by preaching the Law of God.

The Puritans were serious about sin in the believer and unbeliever. All sin, to them, is willful rebellion against the Living, Creator God. To the Puritans, breaking God's Moral Law is a serious transgression. The call to both the believer and the unbeliever, is to tell them to cry out, "God be merciful to me a sinner," Luke 18:13, admonishing all to pray, "Cleanse thou me from secret faults," Psalm 19:12.

⁶ Ibid, p. 102, 103.

2. The Marrow Controversy

The Marrow of Modern Divinity, written by E. F. (Edward Fisher “an English Presbyterian barber-surgeon”⁷), during the time of the Westminster Assembly⁸ is a dialogue between four people: Evangelista (A Minister of the Gospel), Nomista (a Legalist), Antinomista (an Antinomian), and Neophytus (a young Christian). Thomas Boston found the book at a friend’s house and borrowed it to read, later buying it from him. He had it republished in 1718 with a preface by James Hog. It immediately stirred a controversy in the Free Church of Scotland. The book was condemned at the General Assembly in 1721 and ministers and church members were forbidden to read it.⁹

The controversy centered on God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility. The Marrow Brethren (James Hog, Ralph and Ebenezer Erskine, and Thomas Boston were among the 12 of them) emphasized God’s grace in saving sinners. The majority of Free Church pastors were focused on what must be done to obtain salvation. The Marrow brethren were on the Orthodox side of this controversy.

As an example consider this summary of James Hog’s position from David C.

Lachman’s dissertation, *The Marrow Controversy*:

In treating of the relationship of the believer to the law in the context of Covenant Theology, Hog teaches that we must leave our rootedness in and addictedness to a way of acting suited to the Covenant of Works, saying “that an effectual Divorce from the Law as our first Husband,” though difficult, is necessary to our “marriage with the Lord Jesus.” We must, when faced with the demands of the Covenant of Works, recognize our inability (sic) to comply with its just

⁷ *Dictionary of Scottish Church History & Theology*, Organizing Editor Nigel M. de S. Cameron (Downers Grove, Illinois, InterVarsity Press, 1993), p. 547.

⁸ *The Marrow of Modern Divinity: Touching both the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace: with their use and end, both in the time of the Old Testament, and in the time of the New*, by the author E. F. (London: Printed by R. Leybourn, for Giles Caddot, at the Black Spread-Eagle, at the West end of Pauls, 1646), second edition.

⁹ I once heard a lecture on the Marrow Controversy from a Free Church of Scotland minister. He said that 1721 act had never been removed, so as a Free Church minister, he couldn’t recommend the book. He then said, but Thomas Boston has written some very good notes to the book, and I urge you to read them.

demands and, recognizing this, flee to Christ. This does not mean, however, that we are no longer bound to the moral law. Hog maintains that there is an eternal moral law connecting the creature with the creator. This law is summarized in the ten commandments. Homage is due to the Lord by all men. But for the believer, who has found duties performed to be insufficient, the Covenant of Works no longer applies. This does not mean that the gospel is opposed to the law. The law is not hidden nor is its obligation diminished. Rather it, "both as to mandate and sanction, is owned to be full and untouched, and nothing impaired, but all kept intire in its accomplishment by the Surety." Christ has kept the Covenant of Works for us. The result of this in the believer's life is that it "is still engaged more and more to the most exact strictness of truly Spiritual and Evangelick obedience."¹⁰

James Hog argued that the Law of God is still in effect for mankind. It is part of the relationship between God and us. Thus it should also be an integral part of preaching to men and women. To not preach the Law would be to deny an entire area of how mankind relates to God – living in His world and under His rules. Not preaching the Law also ignores an entire area of how God relates to mankind, since He gave the world His Law.

The Marrow Controversy was about more than simply a book. The opponents of the Marrow were more of a legal mindset. The Marrow men were more focused on the grace and mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, they still felt that the Law had a place in their preaching. The opponents of the Marrow thought it was Antinomian in its bent, but that was because they had crossed the line into a subtle theme of works righteousness, which was much more common in late eighteenth century Reformed thought. The Marrow men were correct in keeping the Law in preaching while still focused on the imputed righteousness of Christ, His grace, His mercy toward sinners.

This section selection from the Marrow of Modern Divinity shows the Ten Commandments to be a rule of life that leads to the second Adam, and still to be a rule of life after the coming of the second Adam.

Nomista: But, Sir, why may not believers amongst the *Gentiles* receive the ten commandments as a rule of life, at the hands of *Moses* as well as the believers amongst the *Jews* did.

Evangelista: For answere hereunto I pray you consider, that the ten commandments, were the substance of the law of nature, ingraven in the heart of man in innocency; and the expresse *idea*, or representation of Gods own image; even a beam of his own holinesse: and so they were to have bin a

¹⁰ *The Marrow Controversy 1718 – 1723: An Historical and Theological Analysis*, by David C. Lachman, Rutherford Studies in Historical Theology. (Edinburgh: Rutherford house publishers, 1988), p. 131.

rule of life to him and his posterity (not being then the covenant of works) and then after they were become the covenant of works, and broken by the first *Adam*, and kept by the Second *Adam* and the rest of the believing Fathers by Visions and Revelations; they became a rule of life to them until the time of *Moses*, and as they were delivered by *Moses* unto the believing Jews from the Arke, and so as from Christ, they were a rule of life to them until the time of Christs comming in the flesh,, and since Christs Comming in the flesh they have been, and are to be a rule of life both to believing Jews and believing Gentiles, not as they are delivered by *Moses*, but as they are delivered by Christ, for when Christ the Son comes & speaks himselfe, then *Moses* the servant must keep silence....

3. The Law is to be Preached.

“By the Law is the knowledge of sin,” Romans 3:20. The Law brings conviction and guilt, enabling man to see more of his own sin. The Puritans often used the illustration of a looking glass or a mirror. The Law is a mirror which reflects the true and accurate condition of man’s heart and life. This mirror not only is a corrector of sin, but it is also a discoverer of sin. Samuel Bolton writes:

The Glass of the Law. A Glass which discovers sin in all its dimensionsSearch into the Law, and thou shalt discover Thousands of sins which fall under Any One Law of God. Oh! Here is a Glass...You can have No Magnifying Glass, to greaten sin about the Greatness of it.”¹¹

Most Puritans placed a high emphasis on preaching the Law of God. It brings an awareness of sin. True repentance is the result of the Gospel of grace applied to hearts by the Holy Spirit. The two belong together. Thomas Jacomb says in one of his sermons, “Gods correction and Gods instruction they usually go together: and where there is the chastenings of Gods hand, there is also the teaching of Gods Spirit.”¹² Edward Elton, in his commentary on Romans 7, says in his comments on verse 12:

Again, it is so, that the Law and vvord of God is a most iust and righteous Truth, a Truth that giues euery one his due, promising good to those that are good, and threatening ill to those that are wicked, and that vvithout respect of persons, and vvithout all partialitie? Surely, then it must in like manner bee deluered, the vvord of God is iust, it is vnpartialll, it respects no mans person; and it must be deliuered, it must iustly and vnpartially bee dispenced, the Minister of the Word, in preaching and dispencing the vvord of God to the people, must looke that he deale iustly, that he promise good to those that are good, and threaten ill to those that are wicked; hee must not make sad the hearts of those whom God hath not made sad, nor soothe vp any in their sinnes, nor *strengthen the hands of the wicked, Ier. 23. 14.* Nor *promise peace to those that walke after the stubbornesse of their owue hearts, Verse 17.* For

¹¹ Quoted in Earnest Kevan, *Grace of Law* p. 84.

¹² *A Compleat Collection of Farewell Sermons*, Dr. Jacomb on Job 8:29, preached August 17, 1662 (London, no printer named, 1663), no pagination.

fear or fauour, because they are rich, or great in the world, he must not humour men and please men: if he doe, he is not the seruant of Christ.¹³

Elton assumes that in preaching, Law and Word go hand in hand. Comfort those who need comfort, but offer no false comfort to those who are rebellious. Do not respect persons, but preach the Law and the Word. Give them the mirror of God's Law and show the hearers themselves. Expose the listeners to themselves by showing them the mirror of God's Law while preaching the Word.

When Thomas Ridgeley writes on question 93 of the Larger Catechism, "What is the Moral Law?" He is clear that the Moral Law shows a man or woman their need for Jesus Christ. A modern author might phrase it differently, but it would be hard to say it better:

From hence arises a clear sight of the need that persons have of Christ, and of the perfection of his obedience. When we find our selves condemned by the law, and that righteousness is not to be attained by our own obedience to it, then we are led to see our need of seeking it elsewhere; and when the gospel gives us a discovery of Christ, as ordain'd by God, to procure for us righteousness, or a right to eternal life by his obedience, this will shew us the need we have of faith in him, whereby we derive from him that which could not be attained by our own conformity to the law."¹⁴

This is why the minister preaches both Law and Gospel. He must expound upon God's Standard for the lives of His children so that both those that are His, and those that will be His, can know His rules, His holiness, His purity, and His hatred of sin in us. These are all significant for the preacher and for the hearer of God's Holy Word.

¹³ *The Complaint of a Sanctified Sinner Answered: or An Explanation of the seuenth Chapter of the Epistle of Saint Paul to the Romans, deliuered in diuers Sermons, Preached by Edward Elton.* (London: Printed by G. Eld for Robert Mylbovrne, and are to be sold at the great South doore of *Pauls*, 1622) second edition, p.260.

¹⁴ *A Body of Divinity: Wherein the Doctrines of the Christian Religion Are Explained and Defended being the Substance of several Lectures on The Assembly's Larger Catechism, by Thomas Ridgley.* (London: Printed for Daniel Midwinter, and Aaron Ward, at the *King's Arms*, and John Oswald, at the *Rose and Crown*, in *Little-Britain*; and Richard Hett, at the *Bible and Crown* in the *Poultry*, 1731), 2:224.

Charles Spurgeon is also clear on the need to preach the Law,¹⁵ "I do not believe that any man can preach the gospel who does not preach the law."¹⁶ If nothing else, Spurgeon puts it simply. While he clearly believed there was a need to preach the Law, Spurgeon was focused on grace, mercy, and forgiveness of sins found in Jesus Christ in his preaching. He knew that there was a need to preach the Law of God, and when he did so he did not come at his hearers with the demands of the Moral Law by name, but masked it in his discourse. Consider this rather lengthy excerpt from one of his sermons. He is clearly emphasizing our need for obedience, but he does so in a way that does not specifically focus on Law itself.

There was a member of a Christian church who had, on one occasion, fallen very shamefully through drink. He was very penitent, and he asked his pastor to pray for him, but he would not say what his sin had been. The pastor prayed, and then told the brother himself to pray. The poor man said, 'Lord thou knowest that I have erred, and done wrong,' and so on, making a sort of general confession, but that brought him no peace of mind. He felt that he could not go away like that, so he knelt down again, and said, 'Lord, thou knowest that I was drunk; it was a shameful sin that I committed, but I am truly grieved for it; O Lord, forgive me, for Jesus' sake!' and ere his prayer was finished, he had found peace because he had plainly confessed his sin to God, and had not sought to hide it any longer.¹⁷

We see here that Spurgeon deals with the sin of drunkenness without coming out and saying that we shouldn't get drunk, or condemning the sin itself. He provides an example on the topic that clearly communicates that getting drunk is a sin weaving it into his main topic for the sermon, which was on prayer. This is typically how Spurgeon did things. He weaved in the truth of the Moral Law, but did not come out and speak much about the Moral Law itself as the Moral Law of God. He did a round about, of sorts and still communicated the principles contained in the Moral Law.

In our churches today, despite the knowledge of the need to preach the Law, it is hard to do so because the minister feels compelled to encourage, build up, support,

¹⁵ Having read over 80% of his sermons, I can say that he does not preach the Law in the manner that many in the past preach the Moral Law – head on, straightforwardly. It may be one of the reasons his sermons were so popular. He was able to communicate the truth in a loving, non-confrontational way.

¹⁶ <http://john336.net/lawquotes.html>

¹⁷ *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, (Pasadena, Texas: Pilgrim Publications, 1979), Volume 56, page 102.

and not offend. For the Pastor this is neglecting one of the primary needs of his congregation. The Pastor must faithfully preach the whole Word of God including unpopular topics such as the Law. Contemporary Christians are prone to look for grace, or encourage one to seek forgiveness instead of confronting sin head-on. Ministers fear saying, "This is offensive to God!," or "A child of the Living God, cannot live as you are living."

Fear of empty pews makes the minister hesitate to confront sin. While encouragement of the saints is part of the minister's calling, pursuing comfort and accolades by neglecting to preach God's Law is foolish, at best, and a grievous error. True encouragement for God's people is only found in rightly discerning man's state before God through His Law and clinging to Christ's righteousness rather than our own. Without the Spirit and the Law, none can find the true comfort in Christ, and all comfort other than Christ is empty comfort.

Ernest Kevin relates the words of one Giles Firmin, a 17th century pastor who, in an almost prophetic record of the modern church, talks about not preaching the Law of God. Kevin quotes Firmin in his discourse: "Giles Firmin regretted that 'of late years this kind of preaching is laid by'. He knew that 'some Ministers' could be 'imprudent in their preaching of the Law', but held that "the Principle it self' still remained, 'that the preaching of the Law is necessary to make men know their sins....Men may be convinced of Sin without the Gospel, but not without the Law."¹⁸

Puritan minister Thomas Goodwin says, "...we are fain to make it the greatest of our business to preach the law, and come with that great hammer to break your bones in pieces first, that we may then preach the gospel..."¹⁹ It was clearly the thought of those who wrote the Savoy, essentially the second generation Puritans and Independents, that preaching the Law of God is imperative. They lamented that the practice was passing away in the late 17th century, and we should lament that it is

¹⁸ *Grace of Law*, Kevan, p.86

¹⁹ *The Works of Thomas Goodwin*. (Eureka, CA: Tanski Publications, no date) p.512. I originally found this quote in Kevan's book, *The Grace of Law*, but used a different source than he cites.

nearly gone in our day. Look at your people, look at the culture your people live in. My friends, look at yourselves -- we need the Law of God in our lives – preach it!

It is not just the Puritans who admonish us to preach the Law. Zacharias Ursinus, who died in 1583, said in his commentary on the Heidelberg Catechism, question 92:

Now the Moral law or Decalogue *is not abrogated as touching obedience*: but God always, even at this day no lesse than in ancient times, exateth as well at the hands of the regenerate as unregenerate, that they performe obedience unto his law.²⁰

Clearly, this use of the Moral Law was the line of thinking for the Puritans and the Reformed tradition. The Law of God is generally a small percentage of the content of a minister's sermon compared to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and His glory. A minister must not make the mistake in his sermons of neglecting the Law of God: it is not abrogated. It is a hammer upon both regenerate and un-regenerate when applied by the Holy Spirit.

4. The Law as a Means of Grace

The Puritans taught that the Covenant of Grace began in Genesis 3:15. The Fall is where Jesus Christ, as a Redeemer, first comes into the Biblical picture. The Covenant of Grace is central to both the Old and New Testaments and it is accepted upon the grounds of faith in Christ's atoning work. This Covenant, which was made with Adam, exemplified the grace of God towards fallen mankind.

The Covenant of Grace has continuity throughout human history. We see it more fully opened in Abraham, but what we understand by this Covenant can be summed up in one word: Gospel. It is God's grace to fallen sinners by sending Jesus Christ to redeem them from their sins and bring them salvation. The Jews in the Old Testament and the church in the New Testament are all under the Covenant of Grace. It is the "same Christ, the same faith, and the same recovery of sinners,"²¹ but

²⁰ *The Summe of Christian Religion, Delivered by Zacharias Ursinus, first by way of Catechisme and then...* (London: Printed by Robert Young, and are to be sold by John Rothwell, at the Sunne, in Pauls Church-yard, 1633.

²¹ Francis Roberts, quoted in Keven, *Grace of Law*, p. 121.

the administration of the Covenant varies. The circumstances are not the same, but the Covenant is. It is centered in Christ from Genesis 3:15 until the end of the world.

The Covenant of Grace is one of the reasons the Puritans felt that the Mosaic Covenant could not be cancelled. The Mosaic Covenant (Moral Law) had to be consistent with the Covenant of Grace. Fulfilling the Law is an essential aspect of God's grace in and toward His children. It is what we strive for. We are seeking to be perfect and like Jesus, who fulfilled the Moral Law. The Moral Law is not abrogated in Christ, but its fulfillment is the eternal purpose of being in Christ. When the saints are glorified they will have the righteousness of Christ and they will fulfill the Law of God perfectly. "The Lord has commanded his people to obey him, and to walk in his Statutes, *Jer. 24. 7.* And he has promised and engaged himself, that his people shall obey him, and walk in his Statutes, *Ezek. 36. 27.* And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them. So *Ezek. 11. 19, 20. Chap 37. 23, 24.*"²²

Consider this interesting response of Evangelista from the Marrow of Modern Divinity, "...for the arke was a notable type of Christ, and therefore the putting of them therein did shew, that they were perfectly fulfilled in him, Christ being the end of the Law, for righteousness to every one that beleeveth, the which was yet more clearly manifest, in that the booke of the Law was placed betweene the Cherubims and upon the mercy-seat, to assure beleevers, that the Law now came to them from the Mercy-seat, for there the Lord promised to meet *Moses*, and to commune with him of all things which he would give him in commandment to them."²³

The Moral Law is a partner with grace in the New Covenant. The tables of the law are placed in the ark, under the mercy seat and symbolically show that they are subordinate to grace but still consistent with grace, and a part of grace.

²² *A Cabinet of Choice Jewvells or, a Box of precious Ointment*, Thomas Brooks (London: Printed and are to be sold by John Hancock at the first shop in Popes-Head-Alley in Cornhil, at the sign of the three Bibles, or at his Shop in Bishops-Gate-Street, near great St. Hellins, 1669), p. 365.

²³ *Marrow of Modern Divinity*, p. 62.

5. The Liberty of the Law

Believers are freed from the Law in its condemnation, but not free from the commandments as a rule of life. We are rather inclined and disposed to willing obedience to the Law. The Law is still the Law and it is a continuing factor in a life of godliness. It is our delight to do God's Law because it has been written on our hearts. When we read in Romans 8:2, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ hath made me free from the law of sin and death," we understand that as the Law was in Christ, so it is also in the believer. It is the commanding power of the Spirit of Christ that commands the Law in the lives and hearts of His people. "I delight to do Thy will. O my God: yea, Thy Law is within My heart," Psalm 40:8. It is the privilege of believers to always be following their Lord.

Anyone who would suggest that liberty implies no Law, or that Law implies bondage has forgotten Psalm 119:45, "And I will walk at liberty: for I seek Thy precepts." The liberty of the Christian suffers nothing by the commandments. Obedience can also be the thing that is desired and as our goal is to conform to the image of Christ our desires should be to follow His Law. Samuel Bolton ask the question, "Whether this may consist with our Christian freedom, to be tyed to do dutie because God hath commanded," He answers:

It is no infringement to our Liberty in Christ to be tyed to the performance of dutie: It was the great end of our freedom and redemption that we might serve him He hath redeemed us from a slavish spirit in service, to a son-life; from a spirit of bondage, to a spirit of liberty.²⁴

Grace and condemnation are opposites, but grace and commanding function well together. Abiding by God's Law is freeing for the Christian because to be like Jesus is our goal, in this life, and Christ fulfilled the Law His entire life. The Law commands and directs us unto Christlikeness. It is not a burden to the child of God, but a director as a light that shines forward to show us how and where to go. Ideally our obedience to God's Law is not because of the command, but done out of our love for the Lord Jesus Christ.

²⁴ Quoted in Kevan, *Grace of Law*, p.246.

What shining and flourishing Christians should we have if these duties were performed? As we have a portion in the *Communion of Saints*, so we should labour to have *humility* to take good, and *wisdome* and *love* to doe good. A Christian should have *feeding* lips, and a *healing* tongue; the *leaves* the very words, *of the tree of righteousnesse* have a curing virtue in them.²⁵

The Law is the Law of God and it is an expression of His majesty. It stems from the Creator – creature distinction that exists between God and us. The Creator has authority and right to expect His creatures to follow His desires for them. It is important that the people in our churches understand this. It is important that they understand the freeing nature that exists in the Law of God. Many see the Law of God as bondage, but it is life to the child of God. Yes, we should preach the Law and with it the glorious redemption of Jesus Christ. The two belong together. The Law shows us that we are sinners in need of a Savior. Jesus Christ is that Savior. Thus, the Law points us, ultimately, to Jesus Christ.

I will end with another quote from Richard Sibbs

“Then be in love with the Ministry of the Gospell, and the Communion of Saints, who have their tongues and their hearts taught of God to speake excellently, their tongues are as refined silver, their hearts are enriched to increase the communion of Saints. Marke this one excellency of that excellent ordinance of God in Christ, whereof *Paul* saith, *Ephes. 3. To me is committed the excellent office to lay open the unsearchable riches of Christ*, such riches as may draw you to wonder, such as eye hath never seene, nor eare heard, nor hath entred into the heart of man to conceive, and so to draw the affections of people after them.

And because it is the speciall office of the Ministry to lay him open, to hold up the tapestry, to unfold the hidden mysteries of Christ, labour we therefore to be always speaking somewhat about Christ or tending that way, when we speak of the Law, let it drive us to Christ, when Morall duties, to teach us to walke worthy of Christ. Christ, or somewhat tending to Christ should be our theame and marke to ayme at.”²⁶

²⁵ *The Soules Conflict with it selfe and Victory over it selfe by Faith*, Richard Sibbs (London: Printed for R. D. and are to be sold by John Williams at the signe of the Crown in S. Pauls Church yard, 1652) 4th edition, p. 203.

²⁶ *Bovvels Opened: or, A discovery of the Neare and Deare Love, Union and Communion betwixt Christ, and the Chvrch, and consequently betwixt Him and every believing soule*, by Richard Sibbs (London: Printed by G. M. for George Edward in the Old Baily in Greene-Arbour at the Signe of the Angell, 1641), p. 402-403.