

Law 6: How do Reformed teachers avoid NT teaching that the Mosaic Law has been cancelled?

They do this by an arbitrary division of the law into three sections: moral, ceremonial and civil. They then claim that the ceremonial and civil aspects were cancelled but not the moral. This is utterly unbiblical. There is not the least shred of evidence for this claim. Furthermore, every Jew understood that the law was a whole. The Bible frequently unites ceremonial and civil law within the moral law; many verses have bits of each within them.

In fact, the 10 Commandments are never isolated in scripture as the moral law, but form the essential bedrock of the Old Covenant (Ex 34:28; Deut 4:13), thus they were placed in the Ark as the symbol of the Old Covenant. If the Old Covenant is abolished and replaced by the New, then the 10 Commandments are included in this abrogation and are replaced by the Law of Christ (Gal 3:23-24; Heb 8:7,13, 9:10, 10:9; 2 Cor 3:11-13).

Another method is by claiming that disputed verses in the NT about sanctification are about justification, and thus mean that the law does not justify. It is true that the law was never meant to justify. However, careful examination shows that the verses usually claimed to be about justification, are really about the Christian walk and thus are teaching that the law does not sanctify and is not the focus of our walk; for example: Rm 6:14; Gal 5:18.

The Mosaic Law is not part of salvation but points to it.

The key is to understand that the promise of the Gospel (based on divine decree and fulfilled in Christ), announced most clearly in the OT to Abraham (before the law formally appeared), is the unifying feature of salvation history, not the law. The Mosaic Law (Ten Commandments) heightens our understanding of God's desire for behaviour and condemns man's failure to reach it.

After the cross, Christ is the standard of human perfection of behaviour, not a system of written regulations. Through the Gospel believers receive grace to be justified by faith and are definitively sanctified so that they are able to stand holy in heaven as saints; the law has no part in this. On Earth they are progressively sanctified by the work of the Spirit and are made like Christ by degrees. The law has no positive part in this either. However, as with all aspects of the Old Covenant that point to Christ, there is much to be learned by studying the law since it illustrates the person and work of the Messiah.

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