

## The Law and the Gospel

John Colquhoun (1815)

### Chapter 1c (Lesson 3)

(review) **Section 3-The law as coming to the saint from Christ, the \_\_\_\_\_, to be a rule of life**

Christians are said to be under the “law of \_\_\_\_\_” in the New Testament. What is the law of Christ and is it a different law than that which the whole of humanity is under?

*“The authority and obligation of the law of nature, which is the same as the law of the Ten Commandments, being founded in the nature of God, the almighty Creator and sovereign ruler of men, are necessary, immutable, and eternal. They were the same before the law received the form of a covenant of works. That they are after it has received this form, and that they are and will continue to be after it has dropped this form.”*

The law of Christ is nothing new or different from the law of nature (the Ten Commandments). The law that believers are under and are called to obey is the \_\_\_\_\_ law that all of humanity is called to obey. The difference is in the \_\_\_\_\_ that this law comes to us in. Before Christ this law comes to us as a covenant of works. After salvation this law comes to us from Christ as a rule of life.

*“Now that it is taken in under the covenant of grace and made the instrument of government in the spiritual kingdom of Christ, it retains all the authority over believers that, as a covenant of works, it has over unregenerate sinners. It is given to believers as a rule to direct them and as an authoritative law to bind them to holy obedience. It has the sovereign and infinite authority of Jehovah as a Creator as well as a Redeemer to afford it binding force...The law as a rule, then, is not a new law but the old law, which was from the beginning, issued to believers under a new form.”*

The \_\_\_\_\_ of the law has not lessened nor has the obligation to obey it diminished for the Christian. The law of Christ still carries with it the full authority of our Triune God and still obliges men to obey it. The difference is that before the fall this law came to humanity from God Himself. Now, because sin has separated us from God this law must come anew to us through a \_\_\_\_\_. God cannot directly deal with sinful humanity—a Mediator is necessary.

*“When the divine law was at first given to man, he was a friend of God, and so he could receive the law immediately from Him in a manner consistent both with the honor of God and the safety of his own soul. But now that man has sinned against the Lord and has become an object of His infinite wrath and that God has assumed the character of an offended sovereign and an avenging judge, now that the law as a covenant of works has become the dreadful instrument of divine indignation on account of sin, the guilty sinner cannot regard either God or His righteous law but as an object of the greatest terror to him. It was requisite, then, that a Mediator should interpose both between the offended Lawgiver and the sinner and also between the violated law and the sinner, who, by satisfying the justice of the one and by answering the demands of the other, might obtain free access for the guilty criminal to both.”*

The law came from God to sinless man at \_\_\_\_\_. The law of God must now come again to sinful men who have been made new (those who are part of the new creation in Christ) but now through a Mediator. In Christ the beginnings of a \_\_\_\_\_ creation are at hand. The law of creation comes again to man from the Mediator as part of the new creation. It is the same law.

*“When they obey it (the law of creation) in its relation to Christ and the covenant of grace, their conformity of heart and life to it is true holiness, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.”*

*“The precepts of the law as a rule of life to true Christians are the same with those of the law as a covenant of works, and they require the same perfection of obedience. The Ten Commandments are the precepts of the divine law both as a covenant of works to the unregenerate and as a rule of duty to the saints.”*

*“If the saints are obliged as creatures, they are still more firmly bound as new creatures to keep these commandments. If they were formerly under firm obligations to obey them in their covenant form as the precepts of God out of Christ, they are now under additional obligations to yield obedience to them as the commands of God as their own God and Father in Christ.”*

Christians have a \_\_\_\_\_ obligation to obey the law of God because of who He is and what He has done for them. Obedience to the law is not to be taken lightly or rejected but the saints are to press on after righteousness of life. However, as they do this, they will become more aware of the \_\_\_\_\_ and continued presence of indwelling sin. This will then lead them to humility and sorrow for sin which will then bring them back to Christ.

*“Accordingly, real believers, instead of resting satisfied with sincere obedience to the law, consider their want of absolute perfection in obedience as their sin and bewail it as such.”*

*“The law as a rule of life to believers, especially in this view of it, is very different from the law as a covenant of works. The precept of the law as a covenant is ‘Do and live,’ but the command of the law as a rule is ‘Live and do’...By the former, a man is commanded to do in his own strength, but by the latter he is required to do in the strength that is in Christ Jesus.”*

*“Although the law as a rule of duty to believers requires perfect obedience from them, yet it admits of God’s accepting their sincere obedience performed in faith, though it is imperfect.”*

The law as a rule of life coming to us from the hand of Christ does not bring with it the promise of life nor the threat of eternal death. Judicial \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have been done away with.

*“Eternal life is promised to them not in consideration of their sincere obedience to the law as a rule of life but on account of Christ’s perfect obedience to it as a covenant of works received by faith and imputed by God.”*

*“Because the whole penal sanction of it was wholly endured by Christ, the surety of those who believe on Him, and because His infinite satisfaction for all their sins is placed to their account—the law, being satisfied, cannot now condemn them.”*

The law under the covenant of grace does come to the believer with the promise of \_\_\_\_\_ rewards and the threat of fatherly \_\_\_\_\_.

*“A promise of gracious rewards, or rewards of grace, to believers in the way of their obedience is annexed to the law in the hand of Christ. In order to dispose and encourage them to obedience, God promises, on Christ’s account, gracious rewards to them, such as the light of His gracious countenance, sensible and comfortable communion with Him, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, the assurance of their personal interest in Christ, freedom from trouble of mind, hope in their death, and degrees of glory in eternity, corresponding probably to their degree of their holy activity in time.”*

*“These chastisements are, to a believer, no less awful and much more forcible restraints from sin than ever the prospect of vindictive wrath would be. A filial fear of them will do more to influence him to the practice of holiness than all the slavish fears of hell can do.”*

*“As long, indeed, as they are imperfect in holiness and their temper and practice subject in change, such promises and threatenings are necessary. But it is manifest that their necessity is occasioned by the remainder of sin in the saints, who require to be treated as children underage...When believers become perfect, they will perform obedience as freely as the angels in heaven do, without being in the least influenced to it by promises or threatenings. And the nearer they come to perfection in holiness, the freer and more disinterested will their obedience be. But as long as they are in a state of imperfection, it is their duty, in order to advance in holiness, to have respect in their obedience to what the law of Christ promises and threatens to them.”*

There is a difference between mere \_\_\_\_\_ (natural religion), \_\_\_\_\_ (covenant of works), and true \_\_\_\_\_. The law remains for the believer, therefore, antinomianism is not an acceptable option.