

From Law to Gospel and Gospel to Law

Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 16:14-18



Big Idea

The law of God, when it leads us to the gospel of Christ, as it well should, becomes a way of life flowing out from a new and regenerated heart. Far from being discarded and nullified, the Law of God now in the gospel era is finally fulfilled and even amplified. Such is the very essence of our freedom as the children of God—we finally have hearts to obey and, hence, look like our Father!

(1) Distorting the Law of God (vv. 14-15)

There is an impulse we see in these Pharisees here that we all have in one way or another—and that is this impulse to justify ourselves. Interestingly, even people who claim to care not a lick for the things of God still feel the need to do this. Because they've been made in God's image, and His law has been written into the very fabric of their being, they still feel the need to justify themselves, to make the case for why they're right in the things they do or don't do.

(2) Tracing the Law of God (v. 16)

If you read your Old Testaments carefully what you begin to notice is that it's not complete in itself. The Law and the Prophets are always pointing beyond themselves, anticipating something yet to come off in the future. There's a sort of dissonance on every page that only finds resolution with the arrival of Jesus and the kingdom of God. Consequently, it was never to be assumed that the Old Testament revelation of things was sufficient for man's salvation. And it certainly should never have been assumed that man could justify himself by simply muscling up and following what's found therein. The Law and the Prophets come in, but they can't change human hearts. They can simply prepare us for and point us towards the only One who truly can.

(3) Fulfilling the Law of God (vv. 17-18)

Grace does not render the Law of God pointless for us, it renders the Law of God possible! Did you catch that? The point of grace is not to nullify the Law, but to help us fulfill it. If you like grace because you think it means that you can stay safely in your sin while on your way to heaven, then you have missed the point of grace, and I would say you've probably never truly encountered it. The gospel's goal isn't just to get us into heaven but to get more of heaven into us—to get us looking more like our heavenly Father, acting more like our heavenly Father, holy like Him, loving like Him. Sin is not a pleasure to be coddled, it's a cancer to be cut out. And therefore, grace would not be grace if it did not immediately put us at odds with sin and help us grow in godliness, in conformity with the Law of God.

Reflection Questions



- Describe the last time you attempted to justify yourself in a manner like the Pharisees here. Why did you do it? What were you hoping to gain? What were you afraid to lose? Why is it so hard to humble yourself and say sorry for your part in the mess? How does the gospel lead the way forward for us in this?
- How do you understand the OT's relationship to the NT and the arrival of Jesus? What verses in Scripture help you with this? Read Galatians 3:21-24 and Romans 3:19-25 carefully. What do you notice? What questions do you have? How does Paul describe the Law's function in God's redemptive plan? How have you experienced this work out personally?
- How do you understand this idea that everyone is forcing his way into the kingdom of God (v. 16)? Is this a good or a bad thing, do you think? Why? If you agree with Nick that this is a good thing, what would forcing your way into the kingdom of God look like for you this week?