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# Sermon Notes

June 19, 2022

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Why the Law? Galatians 3:19-26

### Extra Pieces?

- ❖ “Some assembly required”
  - what to do with those leftover screws and plastic pieces?
  - the “junk drawer”!
- ❖ After defending the doctrine of justification through grace alone by faith alone in Christ alone, Paul must answer the question: “So why did God give the law?”
  - is the law a leftover piece that doesn’t fit into the “finished product”?
  - should we overlook it, ignore it, junk it?

### Why Then the Law?

- ❖ God adds the law into His revelation of Himself and His way because of sin
  - God wants us to be painfully aware of how desperate our condition is
  - the law has a way of making people want to break it (Romans 7:7, 5:20)
  - there are times and ways in which the law works to stimulate sin

- Philip Ryken: “God did not give the law to reveal the way to be justified; He gave it to disclose the evil power of sin.”
- ❖ The law does this so we will turn to God and seek the only solution there is to heal our sin sick souls
- ❖ Verse 19, the law *was ADDED because of transgressions*
  - the “on-ramp” of the law feeds into the “main highway” of the gospel
  - the law was put in place until *the offspring*, that is Jesus Christ, *should come*
  - God utilizes a chain of command to pass the law on to His people (angels, Moses, people)
  - the use of “middlemen” distinguishes the law from the promise
- ❖ The covenant God makes through Moses has no power to save

### Are Law and Promise Opposites?

- ❖ Law and promise are not opponents!
  - law and promise are teammates that work together for the salvation of God’s people
  - law and promise have two totally different purposes
- ❖ The law can prove we are sinners, but it cannot make us right with God
  - the law is not life-giving, it is death-producing
  - the law is like chemotherapy
  - the law makes us worse so Christ can make us better

- what the law can do is drive us to faith which **DOES** justify!
- ❖ By showing that it cannot save, the law forces us to look for a Savior
  - the law is a prison warden that keeps us locked up in sin's penitentiary
  - God's mercy is the only way out
- ❖ When the law is used properly it is not opposed to the promise
  - the law is complementary to the promise
  - the law points to the promise
- ❖ The law is a guardian who delivers us directly to Christ
  - guardians administered discipline to those in their charge and made sure that they made it to and from school
  - the law served to watch over the Jews from their infancy as a nation until their adolescence
- ❖ The law was never intended to be a teacher that taught the people how to get better and better until God finally accepted them
  - the law was preparing God's people for the quantum leap that would take place when Israel came of age and was no longer under its guardianship
  - the law is also our guardian that refuses to let go of us until it can hand us over directly into the arms of Christ
- ❖ The law has great value in the lives of believers as they cooperate with God's Spirit to work out their salvation with fear and trembling

- rather than being a sin-producing, death-dealing power in our lives, for those who are in Christ, the law serves to teach what conduct pleases our heavenly Father
- love is the end purpose of the law
  - love God
  - love your neighbor as yourself
  - Jesus: "If you love me, you will keep my commandments."
  - Paul: "The only thing that matters is faith expressing itself through love."
- ❖ For the true believer, the law is no longer about "I have to" but is all about "I want to"
  - *the law is good, if one uses it lawfully*, (1 Tim. 1:8)
  - the purpose of guardrails... an illustration from bowling

### Personal Application

1. After hearing this message and studying this text, how would you answer the question, "What is the law's purpose in the life of a Christ-follower?"
2. What role does God's law play in your life? Are you more likely to say: "I have to" or "I want to"?
3. How do God's law and God's promise work together to enrich your life, deepen your faith and increase your love for God and for others?