

Series: Romans  
Title: What Things the Law Saith  
Text: Romans 3: 19-24  
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**Romans 3: 19: Now we know that what things soever the law saith,...**

**Subject:** What Things the Law Saith

What “law” does Paul refer to? He is not referring to the new law Christ gives to his people—we looked at Christ’s New Law Thursday night in John 13: 34-35. If you have not heard that message I encourage you to listen to it as an accompaniment to this message. Christ gives his new law to his disciples alone, that includes his disciples today. Christ said,

John 13: 34: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35: By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

It is a new law. It is not the law Paul speaks of in our text. This law is given by Christ. It is given to his disciples alone. Christ’s new law is given in the new spirit in the new birth. This rule of love is the fruit of God the Holy Spirit, taught and increased of God.

Galatians 6: 2: Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.

In Romans, we will see another time, the apostle Paul’s whole point is that believers are not under the law but under grace. Those in whom Christ abides are under the law of faith in Christ and the law of love to brethren.

1 John 3: 23: ...this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

Galatians 5: 6: For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

So in our text, Paul is NOT speaking of the grace of Christ which believers are under when he speaks of “the law.” Nor is Paul referring to the law of creation. He is not speaking of the civil law of nations. Paul is not speaking of the five books of Moses, the Psalms and the Prophets and all the Old Testament scriptures which is sometimes called the law.

Paul is speaking of the old covenant law of works which God gave by the hand of angels through Moses at Mt. Sinai—particularly, the ten commandments and the ceremonial law. Scripture never divides the moral and ceremonial law as men do. It is one law.

**Proposition:** Our text today declares to whom the law speaks, what it says to them and the end purpose for which God gave it. Those will be our divisions.

**TO WHOM DOES THE LAW SPEAK?**

**Romans 3: 19: Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law:**

The law speaks to “them who are under the law.” Who does God say is under the law? We will answer that by seeing who God says is NOT under the law.

None are under the law to whom Christ has come and given faith to rest in him for Righteousness and Holiness and All acceptance with God.

Galatians 3: 19: Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; [v16—that Seed is Christ]... 22: But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. 23: But before Faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto [until] the Faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24: Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto [until] Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25: But after that Faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26: For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

Romans 10: 4: For Christ *is* the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

None are under the law who are under grace.

Romans 6: 14: For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15: What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

None are under the law, for whom our old husband, the law, is dead so that we are now married to Christ and under his rule, as a wife is under the rule of her husband.

Romans 7: 1: Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 2: For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. 3: So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. 4: Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. 5: For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6: But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

None are under the law who are led of the Spirit of God.

Galatians 5:18: But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

Psalm 25: 5: Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou *art* the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.

None are under the law—who are in Christ—who are made a new creation—who walk by the rule of faith, which works by the constraint of Christ’s love.

Galatians 5: 5: For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. 6: For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.

Galatians 6: 15: For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. 16: And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

2 Corinthians 5: 14: For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: 15: And *that* he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

None are under the law who are made righteous in and by Christ.

1 Timothy 1: 9: Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

So who are under the law? Reviewing what we just saw, we see who are under the law.

- All are under the law to whom Christ has NOT come and given faith to rest in him for All their acceptance with God.
- All are under the law who are NOT under grace.
- All are under the law who are NOT married to Christ and under his rule, as a wife under the rule of her husband.
- All are under the law who are NOT led of the Spirit of God.
- All are under the law who are NOT in Christ—who are NOT made a new creation by the new birth—who DO NOT walk by the rule of faith, which works by the constraint of Christ’s love.
- All are under the law who are NOT made righteous in and by Christ.
- Also, all are under the law who profess to believe on Christ but are yet going about to establish their own righteousness and holiness by the works of the law.

Now, get what our text says. The law only speaks to them who are under the law. “*Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law.*” If you are not under the law but under grace then the law does not speak to you. But if you are not under the power of Christ then you are under the law and the law speaks to you.

## **WHAT DOES THE LAW SAY TO THEM THAT ARE UNDER THE LAW?**

**Romans 3: 19:...that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.**

The law says to all who are under the law, “Shut your mouth!” The first thing God teaches the sinner by his law is this number one rule.

Romans 3: 4:...let God be true, but every man a liar.

God is true.

Deuteronomy 32: 4: *He is* the Rock, his work *is* perfect: for all his ways *are* judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right *is* he.

Psalm 100: 5: For the LORD *is* good; his mercy *is* everlasting; and his truth *endureth* to all generations.

And every man is a liar. God's law shut our mouths as liars.

Psalm 62: 9: Surely men of low degree *are* vanity, *and* men of high degree *are* a lie: to be laid in the balance, they *are* altogether *lighter* than vanity.

Isaiah 41: 14...thou worm Jacob [maggot]

Isaiah 40: 6: The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh *is* grass, and all the goodness thereof *is* as the flower of the field: 7: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the LORD bloweth upon it: surely the people *is* grass.

God by his law teaches the sinner he is guilty before God. By the law, God brings the sinner to the place he brought David when David said,

Psalm 51: 4: Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest.

He does it no matter who we are—that “*all the world*” may become guilty before God. Not merely the profane, not merely the drunk and the harlot but “*all the world*” may become guilty before God.

Psalm 14: 2: The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. 3: They are all gone aside, they are *all* together become filthy: [stinking] *there is* none that doeth good, no, not one.

It does not matter who you are or what you are in all the world: the highly educated and the uneducated, rich and poor, Jew and Gentile, male and female. God makes every sinner he teaches in all the world to shut our mouth, declaring us guilty before God.

He shuts our mouths from trying to justify ourselves in condemnation of others and declares guilty:

Romans 2: 1: Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

He shuts our mouths as totally ruined in sin and guilty before God.

Romans 3: 10: As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:” (Ro 3:10)

He shuts our mouths and declares us guilty, “*That no flesh should glory in his presence.*” (1 Co 1: 29)

Sinner, if you are yet under the law, this is the only thing the law can say to you, “Shut your mouth, you are guilty before God!” Now, can you take your place at God's feet with your mouth in the dust, and confess yourself to be what God says you are? God saves no sinner until he brings us to confess we are guilty before God!

## **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH GOD GAVE THE LAW?**

**Romans 3: 20: Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law *is* the knowledge of sin.**

God never gave the law for a sinner to use it to justify himself or make himself holy—“*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.*” The old covenant law is a covenant of works.

God said, “*This do and thou shalt live.*” So to be justified before the law and have life thereby a sinner has to keep all the law perfectly with no sin, in thought, word or deed.

Romans 2:13: (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.

James 2: 10: For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all.

Galatians 3: 10: For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed *is* every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Therefore, God’s sinful people are justified one way, by Christ bearing our sin and curse under the law. When God gives us spiritual life, we attain the righteousness of the law only through faith in Christ our Righteousness who justified us by his blood.

Romans 3: 21: But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22: Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25: Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood,...

Romans 3:28: Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Galatians 2: 16: Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Galatians 3: 21: Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22: But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

And be sure to get this: anyone who professes faith in Christ then goes back to the law—moral or ceremonial—for justification or sanctification, Christ shall profit him nothing. He is a debtor to do the whole law: moral and ceremonial. That is what Paul’s whole letter to the Galatians is about.

Galatian 5: 1: Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. 2: Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. 3: For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. 4: Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. 5: For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Grace and works cannot mix. We are under grace and not under law or else we are under law and not under grace. A man cannot be under both.

So we see God gave the law to sinners, for one reason—“*for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*” It was not given as a code of moral ethics. It was not given as the believer’s rule of life. It was not given as a motive for Christian service. It was not given as a measure of sanctification. It was not given to be the grounds of

our assurance. It was not given as a basis for reward in heaven. The only purpose of God's holy law is to identify, expose, and condemn our sin, shutting us up to Christ alone for acceptance with God

Romans 5: 20: Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound.

Romans 7: 7: What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8: But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin *was* dead. 9: For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died...12: Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. 13: Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

So be sure to understand: all men are either under all the old covenant law of works and guilty before God or we are righteous through faith by the righteousness of Christ. We are under grace or under law. We are led of the Spirit or walk in our sinful flesh. We are taught of God in spirit looking only to Christ or we look to the letter of the law and to our flesh.

Believers place no hope whatsoever in our obedience to the law. We have neither salvation, nor sanctification, nor reward by our obedience to the law. We trust nothing but Christ alone. And we trust Him for all things: redemption, justification, sanctification, assurance and preservation.

Galatians2: 19a; For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 20: I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 21: I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

**Amen!**