

Name: _____

Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church Confirmation

Introducing the Ten Commandments

After completing the lesson, the student will be able to:

- Be able to define the following terms: Ceremonial law, Civil law, and Moral law.
- Be able to explain the two great doctrines of the Bible, Law and Gospel.
- Be able to explain why we need both Law and Gospel.
- Be able to explain why the Law cannot bring us to salvation.

THE LAW

For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law (for not the hearers of the law *are* just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves *their* thoughts accusing or else excusing *them*) in the day when God will judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel.

Romans 2:12-16 (NKJV)

So, he answered and said, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’ ”

Luke 10:27 (NKJV)

TEN COMMANDMENTS

God wrote the Ten Commandments on stone tablets and gave them Moses to share with all the Israelites soon after they left captivity in Egypt (Exodus 20:1-26). Moses again reminded the Israelites the commandments forty years later in (Deuteronomy 5:1-22) as the Israelites prepared to enter the Promised Land. Though They were written thousands of years ago the Ten Commandments still influence our society today. These laws were the foundation for society in the new Nation of Israel, they provided order and protection of personal and property rights and these rights are still found in our modern legal system. While there are more than Ten Commandment written in the Torah (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), There are actually 613, Jewish tradition says that all laws found in the Torah are summed up in the 10 Commandments. It is vital that we understand the purpose of the Ten Commandments and the Law in general. God has given three kinds of law in the Bible: The Ceremonial law, Civil law, and Moral law

Ceremonial law is law that governed how the Hebrew people were to worship God in the Old Testament. Examples of Ceremonial law would include the various special days for festivals and worship, circumcision, or the sacrifices and dietary restrictions which were given by God for the people to observe. They still have significant meaning for us because they often reveal things about God and Jesus, but they are not things we must continue to practice today.

The **Civil law** can be explained as that which tells the people how they were to behave and live amongst themselves in their tribes and families. Examples here can be seen in the how they were to treat slaves, how they dealt with those who stole or injured another, or how they cared for widows and orphans. While the details of these laws were specific to the Israelites, and do not necessarily dictate how we live today, they are still important for us. They help us understand God's character, like how the Israelites were commanded to treat orphans, widows, and outsiders shows God's love and compassion.

Third, is the **Moral law**. The moral law outlines our duty and responsibility to God and to our fellow human beings. In the New Testament we find that the Ceremonial and Civil laws are no longer in effect (Galatians 4:9-11; Hebrews 7:18-19; Colossians 2:16-17; Galatians 5:6). On the other hand, the Moral law remains to direct and guide us (Galatians 5:13-14; Matthew 19:16ff). So, how do we come to know what commands God has given to us in the Moral law? God has not only placed it upon our hearts through our human conscience, but He also left us a written record in the form of the Ten Commandments.

1. What are the three types of Law we find in the Bible? Describe each.

2. Read Romans 1:19-20 & 2:15. Where is the law 'written' in these verses?

3. Read Exodus 24:12, 31:18, Deuteronomy 4:13 & Deuteronomy 5:22. Where is the law written in these verses?

THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMANDMENTS

The purpose of the Law or the Commandments is to demonstrate God's Holy and Righteous standard. It is meant to show us, as sinful human beings, the depth of our sin and that there is no way in our own strength or power that we can do anything to measure up to that standard. The Law is meant to point us to the cross and to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. The Law has three main purposes.

1. **The first purpose of the law is to be a mirror.** On the one hand, the law of God reflects and mirrors the perfect righteousness of God. The law tells us who God is and shows us our own sinfulness. It highlights our weakness so that we might seek the strength found in Christ. The Holy Spirit convicts us with the law so that we repent and turn to God and ask forgiveness for our sins for the sake of Christ.

2. **A second purpose for the law is the restraint of evil.** The law, by itself, cannot change human hearts but it can help protect us from the unjust. The law allows for justice on this earth, until the last judgment is realized. This is why we have police offices and laws in our land to protect us from people that would hurt us.
3. **The third purpose of the law is to reveal what is pleasing to God.** The law tells us what God's expectation is of us, how we are expected to live. The Apostle Paul says in Romans 7:7, "What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." The law tells us what is right and wrong.

The Law is meant to convict us, in fact the law is meant to "kill" to destroy our own painfulness and drive us to submission to God and to drive us to terror of life away from Him. That is why the Gospel is such good news because our salvation is not based in how well we keep the law but because of what Jesus did with His life, death and resurrection.

LAW AND GOSPEL

The Law is one of the two great teachings of the Bible. The other is the Gospel. In the Gospel we are told of the good news of our salvation in Jesus Christ. The Gospel proclaims the glad tidings that sinful mankind has a Savior in Jesus Christ. The Gospel expresses God's will towards man (that all should be saved). The Law also expresses this, but its impact upon our lives is entirely different. The Law is the revelation and expression of the will of God. In the Law God tells us how we are to be and what we are to do and not to do. Yet, can anyone perfectly follow (obey) God's law and rules for our lives? We must always be mindful of the purpose of the Law, for many people are confused in it.

The Law is not given as a way of salvation; it is not given so that we may be saved by keeping the Law, even if we do so to the best of our ability. Rather, it is given as our instruction as to the will of God, so that we may be fully aware of how He desires His people to live. It is our guide for life, the way in which we should live. The Law also and most importantly makes us aware of our need for a Savior—only one person perfectly fulfilled God's Law, and that person is Jesus. Because of Jesus' perfect work on the Cross, we can be made righteous and holy (2 Corinthians 5:21). When we are made aware of our weaknesses and of God's wrath (anger) towards sin, we are driven to Christ who is the Savior of the world. In this we see then both the Law and the Gospel at work. In the Law we find what we are to do (and cannot), and in the Gospel we see what God has done for us in Christ.

4. Why is having a scriptural understanding of the difference between "Law" and "Gospel" crucial in regard to how we view baptism and teach its significance?

5. What are the three purposes of the law?

6. What are the two great doctrines of the Bible? Describe each in your own words.
7. How much of God's Law do we need to break to become guilty? Read James 2:10.
8. Can anyone perfectly obey God's Law? What do these Scripture passages tell us?

Genesis 6:5

Psalms 51:5

Romans 3:23

Ephesians 2:3

9. Is the Law intended to be a means of salvation? Why or why not?
10. How does the Law reveal to us our need for a Savior? Read the following passages and write down what they say about the purpose of the Law.

Romans 3:20

Galatians 3:24

11. Review questions 10-17 of your Catechism (pp. 33-35). Which of the questions stands out the most to you?

“The Commandments teach a man to know his illness, so that he feels and sees what he can do and what he cannot do, what he can and cannot leave undone, and thus knows himself to be a sinner and a wicked man.” -- Martin Luther

STUDENT & PARENT QUESTIONS: *for the student and a parent to discuss and answer together*

12. Review the 10 Commandments from Luther’s Small Catechism. Which of these commandments is one of the hardest for your family (or each of you as individuals) to keep? Why?

13. What steps could your family take to line up your life with the 10 Commandments God has given to you?

STUDENT & PARENT SIGNATURE:

By signing below, we affirm (1) this lesson is complete and that (2) we completed the “Student & Parent Questions” section together

Parent Signature: _____

Student Signature: _____