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Subject: Perceptions of the Law...

Posted by [william](#) on Sat, 14 Dec 2013 17:52:09 GMT

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Awhile back I put this in my "todo" list and I haven't done anything with it. At the time I was probably going in some other direction and didn't have time to reflect too much on it.

Here is the entry:

Quote:Just a thought to research further at some point in time...

Was the law primarily given as a prohibition against practices of the heathen or was it given primarily to teach the Hebrews truths concerning God's nature?

The way we perceive a particular thing often has implications that go beyond the particular, it can affect way bigger issues.

For instance, if we think of the Law as being only a safeguard against worldliness, we will react to it differently than we would react if we thought of the Law as a revelation of something more than some dos and don'ts strung together. If the Law is viewed more as a revelation of God's attributes/nature, maybe our reaction toward the Law would be different.

How we perceive things isn't limited to just the Law (proper) but it can be extended to the whole of the biblical revelation.

It's like the difference between looking at the bible as a regulatory manual where we look to find specific regulations/verses telling us to do this, or don't do that, or looking at it from the standpoint of a book that seeks to give us an understanding of God in order that we might use the principles to develop our Christian philosophy/way-of-life.

Hopefully someone else might be able to explain it better, please jump in!

Blessings,  
William

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Subject: Re: Perceptions of the Law...

Posted by [james](#) on Sun, 15 Dec 2013 00:07:17 GMT

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Quote:

Hopefully someone else might be able to explain it better, please jump in!

Blessings,  
William

This isn't an attempt to explain it better, and more reflection will probably bring out more 'perceptions', but the first thing I think of is that The Law brings the knowledge of sin (Roman 3:19-20) and that it acts as a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ. (Galatians 3:24) We see we can't keep/obey it so it leads us to The Cross and Jesus. But I think this is more the 'purpose' of the Law and you're speaking of 'perceptions'. John 1:17 comes to mind, the Law came through Moses but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.

Guess I'd better sleep on it and see what my 'perceptions' are tomorrow. Maybe Jman will be interested in this discussion. Sure been peaceful on here today...<grin>

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Subject: Re: Perceptions of the Law...

Posted by [Gary](#) on Sun, 15 Dec 2013 12:46:11 GMT

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Quote: William asked this question: Was the law primarily given as a prohibition against practices of the heathen or was it given primarily to teach the Hebrews truths concerning God's nature?

After a quick scan over the book of Romans, I have to agree with James it was given to reveal "sin".

I realize after reading what Paul wrote in Romans there is no quick pat answer.

Quote: William wrote again: For instance, if we think of the Law as being only a safeguard against worldliness, we will react to it differently than we would react if we thought of the Law as a revelation of something more than some dos and don'ts strung together. If the Law is viewed more as a revelation of God's attributes/nature, maybe our reaction toward the Law would be different.

Don't you think though there are some do's and don'ts in scripture? When we say we're obeying Christ, what then are we obeying? We cannot just do what we want. I'm not disagreeing nor arguing here\*, only trying to get a better perspective, as I think there are "restrictions", if that is not a better word to use than using the term, "keeping the law/rules".

Gary

\*I think I have to add this now and then because its so easy to take what someone is writing the wrong way.

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Subject: Re: Perceptions of the Law...  
Posted by [Gary](#) on Sun, 15 Dec 2013 12:52:18 GMT  
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Quote:James wrote: Guess I'd better sleep on it and see what my 'perceptions' are tomorrow.....Sure been peaceful on here today...<grin>

I was reading Andrews newest article and it seems there are a lot of Christians who are confused and bewildered. Many do not understand the Bible.  
We have a lot to be Thankful for.

Gary

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Subject: Re: Perceptions of the Law...  
Posted by [william](#) on Sun, 15 Dec 2013 19:33:13 GMT  
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Gary wrote on Sun, 15 December 2013 06:46

Don't you think though there are some do's and don'ts in scripture? When we say we're obeying Christ, what then are we obeying? We cannot just do what we want. I'm not disagreeing nor arguing here\*, only trying to get a better perspective, as I think there are "restrictions", if that is not a better word to use than using the term, "keeping the law/rules".

Yes, most definitely. We are to DO good to one another, and we DON'T imitate the Pharisees. That's just a couple out of probably hundreds that we could come up with.

I'm not saying that the bible doesn't contain admonitions and exhortations, it most certainly does.

Here are a few more:

Don't... be angry, take revenge, divorce, swear, exasperate God with long prayers, attempt to serve two masters, cast your pearls, blaspheme the Holy Spirit, cause a child to stumble, judge, etc., etc..

Do... forgive, be wary of false prophets, give to those who ask, feed the hungry, take care of the sick, visit prisoners, pay your taxes, love your enemies, have faith, etc., etc..

So when I say things like the bible is not a dos and don'ts book I don't mean that it doesn't contain a lot of things that we should do or don't do, but that it is a book that primarily reveals the character and attributes of God Himself.

Let me illustrate by examining the first "don't" in the Bible. Don't eat from the tree...

Now did this mean that the fruit from the tree was poisonous (like poison oak/ivy) and if they ate of the tree they would be harmed irreparably? Well yes, that would be one way of looking at it... here we have the first regulation for our manual of regulations. Don't eat of the tree.

Think about this: God created these amazing creatures in His own image and gave them brains... but why? Was it because He wanted to establish control over His creatures by getting them to obey commands? If so, a rule book would be the best thing to do -- "hey guys, just obey the book and all this stuff will work out!

We can get dogs to obey commands. Monkeys obey commands. Even more amazing is the fact that we can get them to ALWAYS comply with our commands. Puppies like to chew up shoes but if you are persistent in your training, you will never have to worry about your shoes again. They are easily trained.

If we view Christianity as puppy training for humans (...so we'll never, ever, eat of the fruit of that

tree again!) then I think we miss completely the reason for the revelation.

God's creation was never "out of control". God never, at any point, had the notion that He might need to use a more firm hand for His obedience training to be a success. Obedience was NEVER the end-game for God.

This is what I mean about how we perceive the revelation (the law, the bible)... we can view it as an obedience manual or something else... I say that we ought to view it as something else.

If we can train animals to do this or don't do that, and be pretty effective at it, do we really think that God would have a problem doing the exact same thing for us, if that was His goal?

My point is that God's purposes go way beyond getting us to follow the regulation manual. Until we perceive that grandiose (bigger!) purpose, all of our efforts are merely pharisaical efforts. Even if we view the law as a school-master, that teaches us about sin, we haven't gotten very far in understanding His purposes.

I've got to run now, but maybe others will offer some thoughts?

Blessings,  
William

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Subject: Re: Perceptions of the Law...  
Posted by [james](#) on Mon, 16 Dec 2013 15:05:23 GMT  
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Ever heard the expression, "that dog can't hunt"?...Maybe as a puppy it wasn't trained properly and although it's now a grown dog it still doesn't know how to do what it was created to do...hunt! Can anyone 'see' the analogy?

Maybe too many people never get the proper understanding of the Law (or of God either) and always view God as a 'Do'...'Don't do' God and never see Him as our Father who loves us and did everything He's done(Jesus/Calvary) to show us His love and restore fellowship with Him. Could we be too busy concentrating on do's and don't's to learn to see His Grace? Thereby many are unable to show that grace to others.

I've been guilty of this, I'm learning. Share what He's shown you...Maybe 'this ole dog' can learn to hunt yet. <grin>

Subject: Re: Perceptions of the Law...

Posted by [william](#) on Mon, 16 Dec 2013 15:12:57 GMT

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james wrote on Mon, 16 December 2013 09:05Ever heard the expression,"that dog can't hunt"?...Maybe as a puppy it wasn't trained properly and although it's now a grown dog it still doesn't know how to do what it was created to do...hunt! Can anyone 'see' the analogy?

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I've been guilty of this, I'm learning. Share what He's shown you...Maybe 'this ole dog' can learn to hunt yet. <grin>

<grin>

Yep, that's a good assessment... you might need to explain it a bit more to THOSE PEOPLE WHO HAVE NEVER HEARD OF SNOWCREAM!!!<grin>

Blessings,  
William

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Subject: Re: Perceptions of the Law...

Posted by [Gary](#) on Mon, 16 Dec 2013 19:09:39 GMT

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Quote:Share what He's shown you...Maybe 'this ole dog' can learn to hunt yet.

If you were a Hoosier you'd know the saying; "You can't teach an old dog new tricks". LOLOL

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