

On Evangelism

(2006)

Have no gods before Me
Do not make any graven image
Do not take the name of the Lord your
God in vain
Remember the Sabbath to keep it holy
Honor your father and your mother
Do not murder
Do not commit adultery
Do not steal
Do not lie
Do not covet

I hear far too many people saying that they make no normal effort to reach strangers with the Gospel but would prefer to simply live their lives in the hopes that people will see Christ in them and come “seeking.” They wait for an opportunity to present itself before they will act. Have I missed something? Is God now normatively transporting sinners to us, or are we still to go to them as originally commissioned? I’m writing this letter to share a few stories. I’m writing this letter because many have become overweight in theology burning no calories in evangelism. We love theology. We love it so much that we have systematic theology, but when it comes to our witness, the main earthly thing that we were saved for, many just want to kind of wing it. This probably contributes to a lack of enthusiasm in it. Our theology should be reflected in our evangelism. The evangelism of so many people today is often left in a realm of bizarre spirit-led individualized experiences or custom made cross-paths that they think should somehow fit themselves to each sinner like a fine tailor-made suit. I think this can be dangerous. They seem to speak of evangelistic opportunity as if it must always be a leading as it was with Philip to the Ethiopian Eunuch in Acts 8:26-28. I don’t believe that the Great Commission promises such situational set-up. It is certainly not anything that we can see or feel. I believe the model is thus: We go and preach indiscriminately to anyone we can. We know that God is always superintending, just like with Philip, but we cannot look for lights, breezes of wind or any particular angelic promptings as we go. That is not normative. We just go. I want structure. I want security. I want a sure Gospel communication built on solid foundation. I want to love people soundly by my witness. I want a systematic evangelism. I want to speak about sin before I speak about life. I want to take heed to build well on the foundation of Christ. I want to know how to honor God in my Gospel proclamation. I know that I’m not nearly the only one. There is only one Gospel and it does not ever change. Learning to proclaim it honorably is a huge responsibility. It will be the greatest pleasure of our lives to commit our hearts to God and our consciences to men in proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through Christ accurately. I believe that the Bible builds the understanding we should have as we seek to shine as lights in the world in evangelism. I believe it is systematically simple. In short I believe there’s a reason why Moses preceded Jesus and also why Abraham preceded Moses. Knowing some of why this is important to our evangelism.

This is a topical letter primarily about evangelism and one I pray you find blameless in light of the Scriptures as a whole. Scripture says, “Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart,” Psalm 37:4. My heart’s desire is to write a humble and historically attested letter defending what some may call an old-time style of evangelism. It is one that cuts. On the surface some will think it cold, but I don’t want coldness. I don’t want cold faith or cold evangelism, but I do think we need to soberly consider where we ought to begin with people when we share our faith, and why it is that we should start there. There is no one method in evangelism. No situation is identical to the ones before or after it because people are indeed different. A glory of the Gospel is that, though people are different, it never changes. It does not need to. It is always the forgiveness of sin. It is for your best no matter who you are or where you’re from. I’m not writing about using formulas or written scripts. We all see examples in the Scriptures that led to Gospel explanations and presentations in ways outside the norm. Our study should prepare us for the expected. We are not to plan for evangelism if we’re hanging on a cross with a repentant thief on one side. That is not the norm. Neither was it the norm for Jesus Himself. We are to prepare ourselves to witness as would normally be the case, understanding that it rarely always goes according to plan. Our wisdom in preparation for preaching the Gospel is how we would wish to present it. If we aim for such level-headedness in evangelism it is then that the unplanned, unscripted and unpredictable encounters and situations in our lives can be wisely addressed as God should desire. It is the sure foundation of wisdom behind the teaching that prepares us for anything. For example, the book of Proverbs does not address every individual situation that we’ll face in life. The wisdom of it, however, can be applied everywhere. This is the wisdom of the word of God universally. Basic training prepares Soldiers for fighting all over the world. That training always consists of essential core tasks for Soldiering that apply in any terrain. A person who learns how to fix your cable TV at a training center somewhere learns his trade there first. They then can take that learning and apply it in any style of home in any state anywhere, no matter how different that individual home’s set-up may be. He prepares for the task at hand, not every situation that he might encounter as he goes out to work. By preparing for the planned, he is best prepared for the unplanned. This, I believe, is how we should study the Gospel and its presentation. If this is the case then what we’ve learned can be applied anywhere and at anytime. We will be ready to give a defense instantly at any time, because the answer is always sure.

Principle

Let’s begin by asking ourselves how a person can find the joy in God that we want them to find for eternity. How do sinners become sons and daughters of the Most High? The fact that they must be born again is the answer. Unless they are saved there’s no peace with God. How do we best lead them to peace with God? They are enemies of God when we find them. How should we then plan to reason with the unregenerate in the state we find them in? I want to know why some Christians feel that they should wait till the situation presents itself before they witness of salvation. This isn’t to say that such things have *no* place in the church. They do, but I’m hearing it so much that the preaching of the Gospel seems to have become far too reactive in nature. Have you seen this as well? Our message should be more proactive; it should reach out and not *just* respond. Reconciliation to God is not an offer reserved for our friends; it is to be proclaimed to every creature under heaven. We should prepare well to go to them.

The only attitude, tone, or manner that befits our cause is a loving one. There is nothing so loving as that truth which delivers from death.
Love is in us, the message must be preached.

What is there that we as Christians do in life on a consistent basis that we don't try to process, perfect, or improve? Be it Bible reading, study, family devotions or prayer, we should seek to get better. It should be the same with the outreach of the Gospel. He is the same Savior for every man and woman on earth. For God so loved the world that He did not send a committee. Two people rarely ever agree on anything. Disagree with this and you're proving the point. The Gospel should not be left to just any open interpretation in presentation. While there is no one way to witness there are bad ways. It is not a custom made product. There is one Savior, one glory, one cross, one hill, one testimony, one Resurrection, and one good response. How He reveals Himself to us may vary in design for His pleasure but how we preach is to be by solid precept. Paul preached Christ crucified. This was true whether he was in a synagogue, a jail, a boat, a judgment hall or in the homes of strangers. It was principle and wisdom that remained consistent to preach about the Gospel throughout all the wildly varying circumstances of his life. The same could be said of the other Apostles as well.

Oh, tolerance where is thy sting?

There is nothing mysterious in evangelism. We need only speak the mystery plainly, 1 Timothy 3:9. I wish to speak about the infections of false toleration for a minute. This discussion bears repeating often. G.K. Chesterton once said that "Tolerance is a virtue for a man with no conviction." He's right, but there is good and bad tolerance as I'm rather certain he understood. It is one thing to say that people have the right to believe as they will. They do. This is good tolerance. It is something altogether different and false to say that tolerance means that a person must admit that all religions are correct or valid. That is a bad tolerance. We live in what's called a postmodern age of reason for sure. America has shunned God and elects anti-Christian leaders daily who represent the deadness of the people. Truth is so relative today that truth seems irrelevant to many. Just thirty minutes ago I shared the Gospel with a manager in a store. To justify himself before God he adamantly demanded to know about the sins of animals, and how God would deal with them. He would not believe in Jesus because there was no required atonement for the sins of animals. I'm not making this up. That man's beliefs are what theologians call "perfectus nonsenses." Would you say that his beliefs are ok as long as he is sincere in them? Oprah Winfrey would say yes. The spirit of this rotten age intoxicates with ignorance and tolerance deadens the consciences of men like leprosy deadens pain. As the leper first discovers his disease by the absence of pain, so men often discover their sinful tolerances by the absence of conscience. They work diligently to suppress the truth of God in unrighteousness, Romans 1:18. Many are non-thinking people believing only what they see. It is just as Blake once said: "This life's dim windows of the soul distorts the heavens from pole to pole and leads you to believe a lie when you see with, not through, the eye." – William Blake. We are wise to see "through" our eyes and not "with" them. One day sin loving sinners discover that sin does not bother them in the world anymore and they have no shame in it. This leads many men to think that the only religion *not* written by men is the one that they've discovered for themselves. I have spent many glorious and tedious hours in the past few days reasoning with many about whether or not truth itself even exists. People in our naturalist sex crazy culture seem to rarely

ask profound questions. Ichabod! People have been persuaded that there are no real answers and have therefore assumed that even the questions themselves are not worth their time. They are profane and have become disillusioned with truth itself. So many so called preachers have preached a fake tolerance for so long that there appears to be no more need for absolute truths in many young people. I see the fault, to the greatest measure, in the church. We have allowed it in many places. Not all, but many. I find one glaring reason for bad tolerance and the disillusionment of many today in the way the Gospel is presented. This has prompted this letter. In our age where idolatry is every man's PhD the Gospel makes no sense. It hasn't got the right context. In this letter I will attempt to show that The Ten Commandments are not to be removed from the New Testament and should in some way be used in evangelism. They bring the context needed even if it is just intellectual for a season. They cut through the new age just as they have in every age since they were first given. They do not make void the promises of God. On the contrary, by establishing Christ we make sense of the Law's purpose, Romans 3:31. The Law brings context to the cross of Christ, nothing more. They simply all-the-more show why the promises of God are the only hope for rebels. God has given them to His ambassadors as an instrument for all generations to cut through the "red-tape" and to show a person, by God's Holy Spirit, that he is undeniably, "...Condemned already," John 3:18. This cuts through the bad tolerance.

Conviction

Men are condemned without Christ because of their egregious hearts which are really nothing more than sin factories. This has not changed for all. The same John 3:18 condemnation still exists today because of sin. The very nature and severity of the message itself is why love is the only attitude that makes sense. We have been forgiven and so we freely forgive. I do not believe in hell-fire preaching alone, (it should always be accompanied by grace), but I do believe in a Christian worldview having soberly meditated hell's literal fire. I remember sharing the Gospel in a mechanical room with a young lady at work some time ago. She had in some measure understood her transgression before God and was expressing to me a great desire to now get herself right. She said she was going to go to church, read her bible, and work to clean up her life. In her eyes I saw a great burden come upon her as she confessed what even she knew was impossible, or desires that would likely fade soon after leaving the room. That is the burden of sin. I cried a bit as I told her that she need only go to Christ to get right.

Revealing the burden is the work of the Law;
relieving the burden is the work of the Lord.

I believe in telling people the truth. I believe in telling them that they're going to hell in a "pully" way, Jude 23. I believe that if I truly care for them I should look them in the eyes, love them, and kindly declare, when necessary, that I hate their idolatrous faiths with every good thing within me. I believe in Law to the proud and grace to the humble, *especially in our generation*. I believe that men will only come to Christ if they see His great love on the cross, and that Jesus is irresistible when the Father reveals Him. I believe Calvary begs context or else it is lost; that context is SIN. I believe that unless a man knows his sin he will never know Christ and since I want him to know Christ I must labor under the Spirit to help him perceive what sin is. Though this isn't always pleasant, what better way to begin with him than with the Law given through Moses? After all the Bible does say, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness," 1 John 3:4. This is the clearest definition of the problem anywhere. Why

not use it? We'll come back to this. The horror of the cross calls all of us to make plain why Christ suffered. Christ did not just die; He had to suffer, Luke 17:25. This is God's plan for His glory.

Quotation station

I will use an overabundance of quotations from the shoulders upon which I stand in support of the Biblical directive of using the Law [The Ten Commandments] in Evangelism. This is to add sure foundation to our warmth and care for people as we witness our faith to them in the love of Jesus Christ. The majority of these quotes used come from *The Evidence Bible* compiled by Ray Comfort. Those from *The Evidence Bible* include the page number, the quote and then the speaker's name. I've used a lot of quotes for two reasons: 1) The safety of multiplied counsel on the subject, Proverbs 24:6. 2) To show that what I'm writing about today is not really new. Please read these many quotes thoughtfully. They are a great treasure to me.

What is the Gospel?

Here's the first *Evidence Bible* quote:

1202: "It is true that [many] are praying for world-wide revival. But it would be more timely, and more scriptural, for prayer to be made to the Lord of the harvest that He would raise up and thrust forth laborers who would fearlessly and faithfully preach those truths which are calculated to bring about revival." – A.W. Pink.

I like this quote a lot. Calculated truths for honest laborers; that is what I hope we all want. The truth is that the Gospel is the forgiveness of sin. No matter what benefits may come in the Christian faith, though there are many and they're very precious, they are an accompaniment of the fact that Christians are delivered from eternally conscious torment. That's ground zero. God's presence itself *is* our true reward, but we would have none of it at any time if He did not first deliver us from the deadness of our sin. The Gospel is the forgiveness of sin.

The Law's intent

We will come back to plenty of quotes as we move along. I'd like to share with you one solid backdrop for the precedent I wish to present to you throughout this letter. There was a time in the Gospels that our Lord was approached and publicly asked the big question about heaven. Here it is: "Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one *is* good but One, *that is*, God. You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'" And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth." Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me. But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions," Mark 10:17-22. Jesus answered in this way for a reason. While I don't wish to speculate too far, I will perhaps do so a little within the bounds of liberty. Let us try to see what Jesus' reason may have been. Perfection is required to inherit this kingdom Mr. Young Ruler. Jesus' answer showed the man a

perfect and impossible standard. That's what Moses' Law does. Jesus essentially took this man to the widest part of the Grand Canyon and said, "hop across and you'll live." This kindness prevents many from jumping. To answer the question about how to go to heaven He said, "You know the commandments." What would be your reaction here if you were that young ruler? With what you know about Jesus, could you see yourself responding with something like this young man? Could you say, "Been there, done that, got the T-shirt?" Considering the answer he gave might help us to understand why Jesus continued the way He did. Folks, the Law causes the humbled heart to cry, "This is impossible, Oh Righteous God! If I must keep your Law, I have not. What else can I do?" This is its job. God did not give a Law which could bring about perfection, "...For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe," Galatians 3:21-22. The humbled admit the manifold impossibility of being righteous by the Law and God agrees. Perfection is the demand by it. Consequently, understanding this shows us all the more the glory of our Savior who was perfect by it. This was a reason for a 33 year long life. This is why we, through our faith in Christ, establish the Law. I digress. The humbled hearer of God's Law may then by grace see God's ultimate reason in giving it. The Law, the Ten Commandments, is primarily an expression of God's righteousness, and is not merely a guideline for life as some assert. The Bible says that it is the very transgressions detailed by the Law that Jesus must remove from the ledgers of His children, Colossians 2:14. That is the stain He washes as white as snow. The Law is a point for point outline resulting in the exact imputation of our sins if we die under its jurisdiction, Romans 5:13. To help us understand this let's look at the following analogy. Speed limits work as guidelines until the cop pulls you over as a violator, then it functions as something else all together. It *was* a guideline; it's now just a witness to your guilt.

Jesus said nothing new to the young ruler. He simply repeated what had been taught from Moses at that time for nearly 1500 years. Let me ask you my friends, do you think this young ruler had really kept all of the commandments from his youth as he said? Do you think he really understood who was asking the question and the perfection by the Law that He spoke of? Was he perfect? Of course not "...All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," Romans 3:23. Perhaps like Saul of Tarsus this blind young ruler thought that he was really blameless by the Law. Maybe the Law was, as with Saul, devoid for a time of the Spirit's illuminating intent that, "...By the works of the law no flesh shall be justified," Galatians 2:16. Paul came to understand this well in Jesus Christ. Anyone who by self-merit thought they were truly blameless and justified before God under the Law had fooled themselves. We now, in Christ, see that that was not its purpose or design. God is wise. Righteousness by the Law was not plan A. He knew no one could keep it. Abraham was long before and the promises made to him were not antiquated with the Mosaic covenant, Galatians 3:15-18. The Law served another perfect purpose. It is really that purpose we're looking at today. That purpose is for the world, not just for the Jew. The Law, even to David a man after God's own heart, bred a glorious hunger for righteousness. He wrote: "There is no soundness in my flesh because of Your anger, nor any health in my bones because of my sin"... "Do not forsake me, O LORD; O my God, be not far from me! Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation!" Psalm 38:3, 21-22. David knew where his righteousness came from. Paul confessed that he once thought he was alive by the Law but was ignorant to God's true righteousness behind it. This is my understanding of the righteousness of the Law: It was to show men God as God showed men that men were not God.

The Law then works as a lamp to a man's path. Folks, this is true whether that path leads to heaven or hell. Christ gave it, so should we.

Those made to see their sin are by grace-filled faith
placed in a cleft.
Like Moses they too want very much to see God's glory.
The better promise is yet the same –
“The pure in heart shall see God.”
Exodus 33:19-23; Exodus 33:11/John 15:15; Matthew 5:8.

The Law plays a purpose in the New Testament. It is not gone. It is used as a canon to reflect God's perfection and mankind's sin all throughout the New Testament epistles. Paul wrote to us about God's use of the Law in his own conversion. “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law,” Romans 7:7. He would not have known sin! What better tool can we use to help others see their sins? What Paul wrote was the same for me, and it's why I'm writing to you now. Here's a fantastic quote on this passage:

1570 “As that which is straight discovers that which is crooked, so there is no way of coming to that knowledge of sin which is necessary to repentance, but by comparing our hearts and lives with the Law. Paul had a very quick and piercing judgment and yet never attained the right knowledge of indwelling sin till the Spirit by the Law made it known to him. Though brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, a doctor of the Law, though himself a strict observer of it, yet without the Law. He had the letter of the Law, but he had not the spiritual meaning of it—the shell, but not the kernel. He had the Law in his hand and in his head, but he had it not in his heart. But when the commandment came (not to his eyes only, but to his heart,) sin revived, as the dust in a room rises when the sunshine is let into it. Paul then saw that in sin which he had never seen before—sin in its consequences, sin with death at the heels of it, sin and the curse entailed upon it. ‘The Spirit by the commandment convinced me that I was in a state of sin, and in a state of death because of sin.’ Of this excellent use is the Law; it is a lamp and a light; it opens the eyes, prepares the way of the Lord.” - Matthew Henry. Because we want a similar understanding in the hearts of the unregenerate, we should seek to use that Law in evangelism. It is loving to do so and is really quite simple. I think we make it hard.

I want to go back to the rich young ruler again for a bit and try to relate his story to Paul's personal testimony in light of the Law's role. In one of his many autobiographical accounts Paul said, "Though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless," Philippians 3:4-6.

Among several things this means that every time Paul sinned he offered the sacrifice that the Law required. Paul thought, as perhaps this young ruler did, that he was indeed blameless (or justified) by those “Works of the Law.” Jesus didn't waste time with the young ruler. He, knowing the hearts of all men, did not ask “Why are you saying you've kept the Law? I know better.” He was setting precedent for us all and for all those there that day. As for Paul, what was his turning point? Other than obviously being forcibly converted on the Damascus road by irresistible grace, what was Paul's recall of how God changed his heart? How did Paul recount

his own conviction and conversion from that day on? He echoes the following sentiment all throughout the beginning of Romans. “And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death,” Romans 7:10. That which was to bring life brought Paul death? How is that though? Paul taught that it was to condemn in Romans 3:19 and Galatians 3:10. The Law showed him his sin and then God showed him the consequences. This brings clear context to Christ. The Law shows the rebel his just dessert which is hell, but shows the obedient their justifier who is Christ. In Christ alone, Paul could then boast in the hope that “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus...For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death,” Romans 8:1-2. This is not Paul’s wisdom by the Law, but God’s. That Law, repeated to the rich young ruler by Jesus, would bring him death. It is this death, however, that brings life. The Law brings us to Christ to kill us that we might be justified *only* by faith. It truly shows us that we’re already dead. It awakens us, by conscience *in a sense*, to our deadness. By contrast it eventually brought Paul life and the rich young ruler, at least as far as we know, only death. It’s as the puritans once wrote: “Born once die twice, born twice die once.” We see two functions of the Law at work in these two men, and both were wrought by God alone. We use the Law in evangelism understanding such things. The letter kills, 2 Corinthians 3:6. We want it to kill them. It must kill them if they’re to live. We want it to kill them so that they might receive life.

Paul was literally the Jewish advantage on display. The Spirit Apostolically illuminated Paul’s mind during the three years he spent in Nabatean Arabia immediately following his conversion, see Galatians 1:15-18. His knowledge then shows the great profit of the Law in the wisdom manifest post-conversion.

For the last time, let’s again go back to the young ruler. There’s a bit more meaning I want to try to explain that I see in this story as it relates to this subject. Here’s a paraphrase to the story we read in Mark 10:17-22: “A man came up to Jesus and asked, ‘Jesus, you are bringing us great and new teachings and I’m enjoying them. Bless you! Of course I already know all about the Law given to my fathers, but I want to ask you, sir, how can I go to heaven according to this new teaching of yours?’” Was Jesus teaching some completely new thing when He came? Was it totally unexpected or untouched? No, the Messianic age had arrived and He was beginning that work. It was the promise of all of His prophets that was now coming to pass. It had a long and sure foundation. I think we can see a bit why Jesus used the Law for this man examined in this next quote.

789: “Ignorance of the nature and design of the Law is at the bottom of most religious mistakes.” – John Newton. This ignorance Newton speaks of was true of the rich young ruler to some extent. Let me try to explain. The Law always was and is still only pass or fail. Break one Law and God will judge. It’s like hanging from the bottom of a ten link chain and having any one of the links break. You’ll fall. This is not overly strict, God is holy and His Law is holy. “For whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all,” James 2:10. So here is Jesus’ in perhaps the biggest public chance to answer the million dollar question that others there were likely asking themselves. Here’s His chance to ask for decisions at the altar call. Why did Jesus not just plainly tell this young ruler about His death on the cross to come, and what it meant for the salvation promised in Him? Though I’m certain there are a hundred reasons that I cannot fully perceive why Jesus didn’t plainly explain His atoning work to him, I firmly believe that it was because, please hear me, *this man should have known!* I believe this is at least a part of why Jesus answered in this way. This is why it is written: “If they do not hear

Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rise from the dead," Luke 16:31. This man did not have ears to hear.

Do you think that Moses' Law only convicts the Jews? Do you think that is the full scope of its design? Negative. This verse above applies to all those in the world in every generation. Though the Moral Law may more strongly apply to those in Jesus' day from the heritage of Israel because they had more light, it does yet abide against the entire world as well. It is even written, by conscience, on the hearts of the Gentiles, Romans 2:14-15. If anyone rejects Moses and the prophets they will not see Christ because it was Christ in the truest sense who gave them those means to more fully and perfectly reveal Himself when He came. *Those who hear nothing are already blind to something*, Romans 1:18. Men first suppress all they know of God and then manifest all manner of sin. I am not saying that a man cannot be an unbeliever for a season and then be changed. We were all like that at some point. What I'm saying is that Moses and the Law given through him, if rejected, is a stumbling block to Christ because it was to lead its hearers to Him. To by sin silence the Law's tidings is to deny the only light on the path prior to Jesus' incarnation. This is why I believe Jesus said that if someone rejects the Old Testament which consists of Moses and the prophets "...they [will not] be persuaded though one rise from the dead." They may reject the fullness of God's revelation when they reject its parts. I believe that this passage also shows us God's sovereignty in salvation. Those who hear Moses only hear him by grace as well as those who hear Christ. One leads to the other. To deny the Law and its push towards Christ is to be, in some measure, led into sin. God uses the Law as a goad. I'm not trying to elevate the Law to the level of the Gospel; I simply believe that the same God had a solid and direct reasoning behind giving one before the other. This leads into our understanding of why we should respect that and seek to use that Law in our evangelism. This rich young ruler did not know the way to heaven according to the Law and the prophets as some Jews in his day did. Remember, "As many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God, to those who believe in His name," John 1:12. He did not seem to know the promises of God as many of his fathers did. The Law was not his schoolmaster, Galatians 3:24-25. Here's the point: for this rich young ruler to say that he was blameless according to the commandments and yet still be asking the question, "What do I lack?" illustrates something. This would almost be the same as any Christian professing maturity since youth and debating Jesus at the Second Coming about what he lacks for salvation beyond repentance and faith in Christ. This would show that he had *never* repented and put his faith in Christ. If he had he would not be asking the question. It's like he would be saying, "Yeah yeah yeah, I've repented and put my faith in You, Good Teacher, but what else do I need to do to be saved?" Such a statement would expose a false convert in the New Testament as the hypocrisy of the young ruler was revealed under his profession of the Old Testament. It would show that a person really never knew Christ if at the Second Advent he professed to know the way and yet manifested such a gross ignorance of it. That young ruler was ignorant of the Law at that time in a great way. Perhaps he later saw his sin and was brought to faith, but it was not yet.

Simeon, under the same Law as the young ruler, knew much about the promises made to Israel. See Luke 2:25-32. This is awesome. By a God given proper understanding of the Law and the prophets every godly Jew spoke similar to blessed Simeon. This is the work of the Law in the Israel of Israel, Romans 9:6-8. Simeon's heart was prepared and his eyes were sharply focused by the lenses of the Law and the prophets. "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path," Psalm 119:105. No matter which phase of redemptive history we are born under this is the truth and the hope of all the elect.

Jesus used the Ten Commandments in evangelism. This is not nearly the only time. This proud rich young ruler should have said something like, "Lord, if that is the way to heaven then I have surely missed it. I have sinned! What must I do to be saved?" Perhaps Jesus' open invitation to follow Him would have then meant something very different. Earlier we compared the Law's work between Paul and this young ruler. Paul said the Law drove him to the cross. It was a bar set too low for the rich proud young ruler. We see its work, however, in them both. Jesus gave the ruler five of The Ten Commandments. Why? What have they to do with Christ's teachings? What are they to a systematic evangelism?

The two testaments are hung one upon the other with their union in Christ alone.

Like the cross itself it takes both pieces.

The old stands vertical and supports the new.

Christ's Royal Law is hung upon

"...All the Law and the Prophets."

The relationship between the Law and the Gospel

Nothing I've written here is intended to deny that "There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; there is none who does good, no, not one," Romans 3:10-12. This is a fact and no right understanding of Christ is of the flesh. It is by God's grace in any covenant *and His grace* alone that any ever find Him. It is principle that I'm trying to build towards with you as we consider our message to sinners. The principle is that the Law has a function. It performs a duty. God gave it to do so. It plays a role. Jesus used it to do so. It is instruction towards sin. We should prepare to use it.

1338 "A wrong understanding of the harmony between Law and grace would produce 'error on the left and the right hand.'" – John Newton. It is because of this common misunderstanding today that I'm writing this letter. "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith," Galatians 3:24. It will always be this way for both Jew and Gentile. Jesus knew it and taught it. This is why His primary message is repentance, Mark 1:15. Without the previously established Law they might ask, "repentance from what exactly?" There is only one God. Jesus is the only way to heaven; the Law clearly shows all why. It brings us to the halls of eternal justice where there are no mistakes because this justice is *not* blind in the least. The Law is a sign much like any other. It takes you nowhere, but only shows the way. If you're traveling along the highway of life and you look to the side of the road and a sign clearly reads "STOP or die!" you might listen. That's like the Law. If there is death at the end of the road we'll keep the signs up.

Let's say you and I are at the foot of the cross when Jesus was suffering on it. You're a Jewish person who knows much of why He's there and you follow Him. I'm an Italian man on a trip without a clue. You're deeply troubled and in tears. I look at you and ask, "Hey, why are you so sad? Is that criminal your brother or something?" You reply, "That's the Messiah." I ask somewhat intrigued, "Who?" You look to the ground in humble shame and whisper in emotional exhaustion, "He's a King." I pause... Then I say, "Well what's the King doing up there?" Then you say, "It's because He loves you." I'd probably think to myself "...Loves me?" I would likely pause again for a moment and then say, "That's nasty!" If I have no context I won't get it. It's like a Soldier sprinting into the heat of battle shouting "I'm coming for you" for no apparent

reason. You'd think that strange until you saw that his best friend lay wounded twenty yards ahead. The deed would then make sense. The Law makes sense of Christ's death like nothing else. This is why we use it. This is true to both Jew and Gentile today. This need not always be harsh. It is the loving thing to do and should engender kindness and compassion. We use it to instruct.

The apostle James was under grace. He knew the Gospel. He showed us that the Royal Law is not separated from The Ten Commandments which is commonly and rightly called the Moral Law of God. In his epistle he talks about favoritism toward the rich. James taught that we are to give equal place to the poor in our churches. He writes, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," James 2:8. This is the Royal Law here and teaches how I ought to love, but please notice that James does not stop there. He hammers out an awareness of that Royal Law by using The Ten Commandments. He immediately goes on to say, "...If you show partiality, you commit sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. For (or because) whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all. For He who said, "Do not commit adultery," (7th Commandment) also said, "Do not murder." (6th Commandment) Now if you do not commit adultery, but you do murder, you have become a transgressor of the law," James 2:9-11. This is the use of the Law, The Ten Commandments, to help show what sin is even in the New Testament. He explains part of the Royal Law wisely by using part of the Moral Law. This is a solid principle.

James says, "So speak and so do as those who will be judged by the law of liberty," James 2:12. The Moral Law functions as a reflection of God's own nature. It is in effect because it reflects God Himself. Break even one Law and it's like ripping the canvas of a priceless painting; its perfection is lost. I pray we settle that it was not God's intention to save any man by the Law. That was not its intention or design, Romans 3:19. God didn't set out to establish a perfect righteousness by this Law and fail. See Hebrews 8:7. We are weak, not God or His wisdom. Jesus' death was not a plan B in the world because we failed to be perfect by a plan A. The righteousness of faith was established first with Abraham and the commandments were added for a reason. That reason was to show the faithful why the blessing was always through promise. This is the relation between Abraham and Moses and the role they play in God's redemptive history. The promises given to Abraham were not nullified or added to by Moses. The teachings given through these men were two gracious handrails that soundly guided the faithful to Christ. See Galatians 3:6-25 for a detailed description of this. The Law never saves, but brings men to Christ when God convicts by it. Why would we not then use it wisely? We must settle what the Law's intent was as best we can. We have the mind of Christ in the word. We know He was no plan B.

The Law had its purpose and it continues into the New Testament. John says, "If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen?" 1 John 4:20. Lying is a direct violation of the 9th Commandment. I can here again show that the fulfillment of the Royal Law of love is simply reflected by the Moral Law. Jesus says that unrighteous hatred in the heart is a violation of the 6th commandment, murder. "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, (6th Commandment) and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' shall be in danger of hell fire," Matthew 5:21-22. The Apostle builds on this. "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer

has eternal life abiding in him,” 1 John 3:15. Much of the New Testament writings are jealous to show us the spiritual nature of the Law.

I am not trying to blur any lines between the Old and the New Testament. One promise far surpasses the other. The New Testament is far superior to the Old Testament. Using the Law does not make us ministers of the Old Testament. We use it to instruct those under its power so that they too might be delivered from death.

The Royal Law of Christ never removed the requirements of the Law from those outside of Christ. The New Testament puts no sinner under any saving grace except when that sinner repents and puts their trust in Christ. Paul teaches: “Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law,” Romans 3:31. We establish the absoluteness of the need for faith in Christ over all men by testifying to His sovereign work to save us. Jesus’ perfect life establishes the validity of the Law. We establish the graciousness of grace as we magnify the glory of God in His Law! The Law shows us how Christ delivers us from judgment. The more we know it the more we see our deliverance. This is its work even in the Christian. There is a requirement removed from us by Jesus’ substitutionary death. We stand justified before God because He fully “...Wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross,” Colossians 2:14. A knowledge of sin firmly establishes our joy in the preserving gift of grace “That the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit,” Romans 8:4. It is grace, sweet grace! It’s amazing grace shown to a sin loving sinner. We must explain sin in its true light to this generation or they will never begin to understand this.

Charles Spurgeon said, “It is absolutely necessary to the preaching of the gospel of Christ that men be warned as to what will happen if they continue in their sins. Ho, ho, sir surgeon, you are too delicate to tell the man that he is ill! You hope to heal the sick without their knowing it. You therefore flatter them; and what happens? They laugh at you; they dance upon their own graves. At last they die! Your delicacy is cruelty; your flatteries are poisons; you are a murderer. Shall we keep men in a fool’s paradise? Shall we lull them into soft slumbers from which they will awake in hell? Are we to become helpers of their damnation by our smooth speeches? In the name of God we will not.”

This New Testament is a transfiguration within.

The mount all men must climb is Golgotha.

It is good to be there.

When by the Holy Spirit Jesus is revealed in a man
the Law and the Prophets happily take their intended leave.

Christ alone remains forever.

Consider your audience

We want people converted more than anything. Until this happens, however, we’ve got some really bad news: “Tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek,” Romans 2:9. As Christians growing in the full understanding of God’s progressive revelation we must clearly behold both the goodness and severity of God, Romans 11:22. The use of the Law in Evangelism only makes sense if we want the Gospel to

make sense. “The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law,” 1 Corinthians 15:56. The Law reveals the power of death in a person’s life.

1456 “A new and more powerful proclamation of [the] Law is perhaps the most pressing need of the hour; men would have little difficulty with the Gospel if they had only learnt the lesson of the Law.” – J. Gresham Machen.

1452 “The Law’s part in transformation is to make a person aware of his sin and of his need for divine forgiveness and redemption and to set the standard of acceptable morality. Until a person acknowledges his basic sinfulness and inability to perfectly fulfill the demands of God’s Law, he will not come repentantly to seek salvation. Until he despairs of himself and his own sinfulness, he will not come in humble faith to be filled with Christ’s righteousness. A person who says he wants salvation but refuses to recognize and repent of his sin deceives himself. “Grace means nothing to a person who does not know he is sinful and that such sinfulness means he is separated from God and damned. It is therefore pointless to preach grace until the impossible demands of the Law and the reality of guilt before God are preached.” - John MacArthur Did you catch that last sentence clearly? “. . . It is therefore pointless to preach grace until the impossible demands of the law and the reality of guilt before God are preached.” I could not agree more. That’s what I’m trying to get to in all this. The Law should precede the Gospel in evangelism. We must attempt to make their desired motive for coming to Jesus the forgiveness of sin. Let’s look at another quote from a man most of you know from a day long past.

1523 “Satan, the god of all dissension, stirreth up daily new sects, and last of all, which of all other I should never have foreseen or once suspected, he has raised up a sect such as teach. . . that men should not be terrified by the Law, but gently exhorted by the preaching of the grace of Christ.” - Martin Luther. This soft and evil flattery is easily one of the surest identifiers of a wolf in sheep’s clothing. (See Biblecia.com/articles/the *Word of Faith Religion* series.) This is true when self-styled Evangelists tell men foolish things like God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. Listen to Whitefield, one who was a part of the Great Awakening in America 1730-1745.

126 “First, then, before you can speak peace to your hearts, you must be made to see, made to feel, made to weep over, made to bewail, your actual transgressions against the Law of God.” - George Whitefield. I love this because it just sounds so different than the stuff taught today. You have an English Bible because of the work of the following man. Listen to his advice on Evangelism.

1511 “Be cold, sober, wise, circumspect. Keep yourself low by the ground avoiding high questions. Expound the Law truly and open the veil of Moses to condemn all flesh and prove all men sinners, and set at broach the mercy of our Lord Jesus, and let wounded consciences drink of Him.” - William Tyndale. John Wesley was also a part of the American Great Awakening. He said, “Preach 90% Law and 10% grace.”

1640 “The Law also shows us our great need our need of cleansing, cleansing with the water and the blood. It discovers to us our filthiness, and this naturally leads us to feel that we must be washed from it if we are ever to draw near to God. So the Law drives us to accept Christ as the only Person who can cleanse us, and make us fit to stand within the veil in the presence of the Most High. The Law is the surgeon’s knife that cuts out the proud flesh that the wound may heal. The Law by itself only sweeps and raises the dust, but the Gospel sprinkles clean water upon the dust, and all is well in the chamber of the soul. The Law kills, the Gospel makes alive; the Law strips, and then Jesus Christ comes in and robes the soul in beauty and glory. All the commandments and all the types direct us to Christ, if we will but head their evident intent.” -

Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon cites the book *The Pilgrim's Progress* by John Bunyan, a book I highly recommend. When these men use the word "Law" they are speaking most directly of the Ten Commandments. This principle of the function of the Law truly is the heart of this letter. The Law can only take us to the cross and most definitely no further. Why not therefore use it? God was not unwise to set His Son up in the Gospel: "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ," John 1:17. One testament followed the other for a reason. This truth is no different today! We would deprive the sinner of the greatest lesson when we forsake the Law in our witness? Do you want to preach the sovereignty of God, the glory of heaven, the joy of the Lord, the fellowship of saints, or any other precious Christian truth to someone without ears to hear? If so you are in danger of casting pearls before pigs, Matthew 7:6.

When we preach the Gospel to sinners we must remember that
we're ambassadors between opposing armies.
You're not to negotiate a truce but to call for surrender.

Why is it that many people today seem to preach God to the unregenerate as a friend? The truth we should have in mind when we approach a person who is not a Christian is that they are God's enemy, Colossians 1:21. Jesus minced no words here, John 8:44. They are children of wrath, Ephesians 2:3. Leave out the Law, sin, hell, and death and it is very easy to create an idol. God is a God of absolute justice and uncompromising righteousness. I love Him for that, Jeremiah 9:23-24. I think people today have retreated from presenting God in truth simply because they're cowardly. So many today just want a philosophy. I enjoy some philosophy and I know that it has its place in apologetics but faith in Christ is not philosophy. The word translated as faith in the NT is the Greek word "Pistis" and means to be persuaded. Faith is being persuaded by God and His truth. It is not blind faith.

"The Bible says faith is a gift; it is not the gift of stupidity." – Michael Ramsden. The Law of God works even in the carnal mind that cannot even think spiritually. That is another obvious reason why wise evangelists employ it. Carnal men cannot save themselves by decision, but they can reason that they need a Savior.

1419 "Some have used the terrors of the Lord to terrify, but Paul used them to persuade." - Charles Spurgeon. Paul clearly and consistently preached "...From both the Law of Moses and the Prophets..." Acts 28:23. We should incorporate some of the same. This makes sense of judgment and the truth that God "...Commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead," Acts 17:30-31. By the knowledge of sin and fear of the judgment of God confirmed in us by Christ by the Law and all the prophets we can know and teach why we "Wait for His Son from heaven...who delivers us from the wrath to come," 1 Thessalonians 1:10. This is brilliant of God to design it this way. 719 "There's probably no concept in theology more repugnant to modern America than the idea of divine wrath." - R.C. Sproul.

This is because we as a church have cast God's Law behind us. It is the forgotten key. 1360 "The moment God's law ceases to be the most powerful factor in influencing the moral sensitivity of any individual or nation, there will be indifference to divine wrath, and when indifference comes in it always brings in its train indifference to salvation." -A.N. Martin. This begins in the church, brothers and sisters. Why do many think that the sinner today is not accountable to God's Moral Law, The Ten Commandments? Scripture has always shown that

there are two ways to heaven. One way is to be completely perfect from birth according to God's standard and the other way is through Christ. Obviously only one of those is possible. Moses, in speaking about righteousness from the Law, says it in this way: "The man who does those things shall live by them," Romans 10:5. This must mean more than just breathing while on earth. After all, sinners will breathe while hating the Law of God and God Himself. What I believe he means is that in the spiritual sense saints will live *forever* by the Law if they're perfect. That is the righteousness of the Law that Paul has in mind in Romans 10. It is an impossible one that he contrasts with the righteousness of faith immediately following. If any one of us was perfect, then we wouldn't need to be forgiven before God and we'd just saunter into heaven without fear, but this is impossible. We come to God with a righteousness that is not of ourselves. I cannot hammer it out enough. The Gospel is the hope of the imperfect; hypocrisy is the only other religion on earth.

The Law was given to Israel to show them how to live as God's peculiar people. It was given to them *after* God delivered them from Egypt. Jesus went to His own and said, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," Matthew 11:28. They rejected Him. For the nation of Israel it was like having a picture of someone you love and haven't seen in a long time in your hand and adoring it when that person in the picture walks in the door. You'd drop the picture and go to them but they didn't do that. Their problem was that they fell so in love with their ideas of the promise itself that they didn't want the promise the way He came. They did not seek Him rightly. The Law presents Christ as the fix of the problem. Since the Law excludes every man born of Adam from heaven's glory there is but only one way to eternal life and that is through Christ's forgiveness. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me," John 14:6. Why then would an evangelist not labor to show the sinner this simple truth? The Law is the clearest of communicators in this area. Let Moses preach!

Isn't this what Paul was doing in the fourth chapter of Romans when he taught about works, grace and debt with God? The sinner must therefore be perfect still if he is to be with God. This has not changed.

When the darkness gives way

Sinners appreciate their Savior. "I'm a great sinner and Christ is a great Savior."- John Newton. A desperate woman once came to Jesus. Her story can show us much about ourselves if we've come to Jesus for the right reason. I won't site the whole story here but it's found in Luke 7:36-50. The point I wish to make from the passage comes from Jesus' reflection on it: "Therefore I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little," Luke 6:47. In my beginning God suffered me to study under many bad teachers. I have a degree in heresy. It was the word-faith movement, folks. I faithfully went to meetings run by a man who called himself The Holy Ghost Bartender. Yikes! Consequently, I learned a great deal of deranged theology. I was pampered by a deadly view of God's love and covetous of His supposed temporal benefits before I knew anything about His holiness. I came to Him for the wrong reasons. I therefore developed a view of God that made Him more like my homie or CEO than my Creator. He was someone I could command by my faith and utterly thwart by my lack thereof. I did not know a thing about Him rightly. After conversion I naturally left such foolishness and have now been convinced of much greater things.

The point of this section is what Jesus taught us through the example of that blessed woman in Luke 7: “To whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” I thought I was a pretty good person back then. I believed that I was a little god and so I loved God very superficially. I was only slightly lower than Him anyway. I had no gauge to even perceive my sinfulness. It was not taught and I did not care to know. I suppressed everything I knew of it in my unrighteousness and the word-of-faith movement was simply fuel for the fire. Forgiveness was cheap. It was achieved by decision and lost just as easily, as if eternal life can be anything other than eternal! Now that I’ve seen what I’ve been forgiven of and what I’ve been saved from I love much more. Do not deprive the sinner as many false prophets do. Lovingly speak of their sinfulness by the perfect standard of the Law. It is a canon even to the profane. It stops the mouth. They are not fully aware of their sin; they just think they’re less than perfect. Jesus, at best to them, came to make up the small difference between them and God, and I’m not just talking about the people in the word-of-faith religion. One night at the University of South Florida I was sharing the Gospel with a young man in a parking lot. He asked me about a Scripture in the Bible. I opened up my sword but it was too dark to read it so we moved into the headlights of my truck. We couldn’t see the words in the dark. The sinner is the same way spiritually. Until he comes to the light he cannot see the Savior. The Law is like headlights on the path. All it can do is light the way to grace. It is not that light, but it came to bear witness to that light, just like all the other witnesses. We should hope to take sinners into the light with the Moral Law of God. This is modern America: “There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, yet is not washed from its filthiness,” Proverbs 30:12. Likewise, “All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirits,” Proverbs 16:2. The Ten Commandments are the most visible instruments to hammer out how much that sinner, upon conversion, will love. It’s simple: “To whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” All things being equal, the more a person understands their sin, the more they understand their Savior. If you think you’ve only been forgiven for being “less than perfect” then it’s maybe good news. If you know you’ve been forgiven as a filthy, rotten, stinking, worthless worm hanging on a spider’s web above a hell with no bottom, grace is really good news. The Law makes men see the height and depth of their corruption.

The truth behind this is one major reason why I believe so much of American religion remains vain. Brothers, we don’t hammer on sin. People actually want Osteen, for example. This is because they don’t know Christ. They’re simply less-than-perfect people entitled to a better life now. Many have never been shown a true Christian cause for rejoicing. The “faith” of many is simply a mood oriented buzz conjured up by a musically accented homiletic hypnosis until the preacher/showman/life-coach tells them they can sit down. This is worth mentioning because the hearts of so many have grown so cold. How amazing is grace in you? What is its true foundation, beloved? What excites you in the faith? What causes you to sing? Can that amazing-ness be reproduced by the gods of other religions? What if the Jehovah Witness is more excited about God than you? Is it simply a measuring meter for excited-ness that divides truth from lies? Is that all we’ve got? No, it isn’t. It’s the forgiveness of sin that makes our grace amazing. That’s what makes the believer sing. It’s not that Jesus is more exciting than a Hanna Montana concert; it’s that we see we’re not going to hell anymore. It’s that we’re invited to know God forever. We’ll get to see Him one day. Our sound shows and bands are not more amazing than our preaching. People don’t come to our churches because of the kids programs, the sound systems, or the padding in the pews. They come for the Gospel. Examining the Law shows everyone why the cost was Christ. What a Gospel! “To create God only had to speak, but to redeem He had to

suffer.” - D.L. Moody. It’s the same in evangelism. We must bring them Jesus with the right motive- the forgiveness of sin. “What we win them with is what we’ve got to keep them with.”- Mark Dever. I witnessed to a group of four young people today. One was a Wiccan, one a Roman Catholic, one a false convert to Christ (by the sound of his testimony) and the other an ex Jehovah’s Witness. What a catch, huh? The young Wiccan girl smiled scoffing that she wasn’t going to hell because she didn’t believe in it. As if what we believe matters when we disagree with God. Step out onto a hot battlefield and say you don’t believe in bullets. You’ll get shot. Those young people listened closer as we went through the Law. It cut through the philosophical whims of the day. They shook my hand at the end and I got to share the Gospel with them all. Let’s go back to the story of the woman who came to Jesus again.

1359: “The wrath of the Law brought this woman to the feet of the Savior. That’s the function of the Law: to condemn. Some may say that we shouldn’t condemn anyone, when all the Law does is reveal to the sinner that he is “Condemned already,” John 3:18. The Law shows him his danger and therefore his desperate need for the Savior.” - Ray Comfort. This is why I said earlier that revealing the burden is the work of the Law; relieving the burden is the work of the Lord. “To whom little is forgiven, the same loves little.” As by the Holy Spirit the sinner takes measure of the abundant grace given to him he will by result be more engrossed with his Redeemer and remain more gracious to those who are without remembering with the apostles that, “... We have Spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries,” 1 Peter 4:3. We were just like them. Jesus teaches the same principle again elsewhere: “There was a certain creditor who had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing with which to repay, he freely forgave them both. Tell Me, therefore, which of them will love him more?” Simon answered and said, “I suppose the one whom he forgave more.” And He said to him, “You have rightly judged,” Luke 7:41-43. This truth works in measure in all of God’s children. The more you know you’ve been forgiven, the more grateful you are to the God Who forgave you. The simplicity of understanding that the Law can only aid a person’s conversion therefore and sweeten the offer of grace in their eyes should not be hard to see. I wonder how large a role this truth played in the Apostle Paul. Did he have cause to forgive more than others? I wonder how much the prodigal son loved his dad as opposed to his brother after his father received him back in the home. When a man knows that he has been forgiven for the capital offenses of not loving God above all things and not loving his neighbor as himself he will see clearly what curse his blasphemy, idolatry, disrespect to parents, irreverence, unjust anger, thieving, lying, stealing, and covetousness has put him in for eternity.

God is in control.

He sometimes works in mysterious ways; we shouldn't.

Folks, it’s God we want people to know. Our use of any principle is no guarantee that they’ll ever know Him. This letter is simply a plea for wise witnessing. God alone can convert the soul. Our motives are simply the means to His end. He has chosen the foolishness of the message preached to save many. We should be wise in the presentation of that message, that’s all I’m saying. Let’s continue.

School is in session

Here's a quote regarding Romans 3:19.

1458: "Every unredeemed human being, Jew or Gentile, is under the Law of God and accountable to God. The final verdict, then, is that unredeemed mankind has no defense whatever and is guilty of all charges. The defense must rest, as it were, before it has opportunity to say anything, because the omniscient and all-wise God has infallibly demonstrated the impossibility of any grounds of acquittal. Absolute silence is the only possible response." - John MacArthur. The Law [The Ten Commandments] should precede the Gospel. No sinner says, "I thought stealing was the right thing to do." The Law stops *every* mouth. Romans 3:19. Here's the prince of preachers with two of his most insightful quotes on the subject:

1308: "I do not believe that any man can preach the Gospel who does not preach the Law. The Law is the needle, and you cannot draw the silken thread of the Gospel through a man's heart unless you first send the needle of the Law to make way for it." - Charles Spurgeon.

People sure disagree with this today. He's speaking of the Decalogue, the Ten Commandments.

1528: "Lower the Law and you dim the light by which man perceives his guilt; this is a very serious loss to the sinner rather than a gain; for it lessens the likeliness of his conviction and conversion. I say you have deprived the Gospel of its ablest auxiliary [its most powerful weapon] when you have set aside the Law. You have taken away from it the schoolmaster that is to bring men to Christ...They will never accept grace till they tremble before a just and holy Law.

Therefore the Law serves a most necessary purpose, and it must not be removed from its place." - Charles Spurgeon. This is why we use the Law in evangelism. We don't want to deprive the sinner of anything. We want to set them up for success.

Even for those redeemed from the curse of the Law, the Law serves great purpose.

1594: "While [every true believer] cries out, O what love have I unto thy Law" All the day long is my study in it; he sees daily in that divine mirror, more and more of his own sinfulness. He sees more and more clearly that he is fullness a sinner in all things that neither his heart nor his ways are right before God, and that every moment sends him to Christ. Therefore I cannot spare the Law one moment, no more than I can spare Christ, seeing I now want it as much to keep me to Christ, as I ever wanted it to bring me to Him. Otherwise this evil heart of unbelief would immediately depart from the living God. Indeed each is continually sending me to the other-the Law to Christ, and Christ to the Law." - John Wesley.

In the life of the believer The Law can function as a tool of grace. "The branch with the most fruit hangs lowest to the ground." - Charles Spurgeon. The Law still speaks. School is still in session. Please think on the following quotes and listen for the common thread. "The first word John the Baptist preached to Israel was "Repent." However, it must be remembered that Israel had the Law and therefore had the knowledge of sin. Romans 7:7. Unregenerate humanity needs The Moral Law to show them what sin is, 1 John 3:4. Without the knowledge that the "Schoolmaster" brings, they remain in ignorance about sin's true nature and therefore their need for biblical repentance." - Ray Comfort.

This is why false converts "Give their hearts to Jesus" at ages 10, 16, 20, 24, 27, 30, 37. The Law has never been applied to the heart. They just said a prayer and asked Jesus into their heart while some unlearned and careless "preacher" assured them that this all powerful Protestant sacrament called decision has just earned them a mansion next to Elijah's. No, friends, this is not the message we should preach. Salvation is not a decision. It is a vagabond begging for

mercy. We are best evangelizing when we are “Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,” Acts 20:21.

1655: “Before I can preach love, mercy, and grace, I must preach sin, Law, and judgment.” - John Wesley.

1457: “The purpose of the Law is to stop the sinner’s mouth of justification. The Law tells him what sin is (see 1 John 3:4) and stops him proclaiming his own goodness. Its intent is to drive him to the cross.” - Ray Comfort.

816: “It is imperative that preachers of today learn how to declare the spiritual Law of God; for, until we learn how to wound consciences, we shall have no wounds to bind with Gospel bandages.” - Walter Chantry.

The following is from the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563. Question 115: “Why will God then have the ten commandments so strictly preached, since no man in this life can keep them?” Answer: “First, that all our lifetime we may learn more and more to know (a) our sinful nature, and thus become the more earnest in seeking the remission of sin, and righteousness in Christ; (b) likewise, that we constantly endeavor and pray to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, that we may become more and more conformable to the image of God, till we arrive at the perfection proposed to us, in a life to come.” They certainly got that one right. The Law has a role even in the lives of those dead to sin. It shows Christians that there is certainly a fullness of life to come after death. I believe this wholeheartedly because I’m not yet free from sin. I am as Calvin said “*Simul iustus et peccator*.” I’m justified and at the same time I sin. If anyone thinks that we are *in fullness* the righteousness of Christ in this life then I reply that Christ must not be that righteous. No, He is wholly righteous and one day Christians will bear that fully in heaven. We are now justified, but not yet fully delivered. One day we will be delivered from even the presence of sin. It will not even be an option in heaven. That is the fullness of grace. Though the Law has a reminding role in the life of Christ’s body, its primary role is still to those without.

1458: “The trouble with people who are not seeking for a Savior, and for salvation, is that they do not understand the nature of sin. It is the peculiar function of the Law to bring such an understanding to a man’s mind and conscience. That is why great evangelical preachers 300 years ago in the time of the puritans, and 200 years ago in the time of Whitefield and others, always engaged in what they called a preliminary Law work.” - Martyn Lloyd-Jones. This is what I believe the Bible instructs us to do, my friends. It is sound, loving, sure, hell aware, God glorifying evangelism in our day (similar to any other, but perhaps even more today) to first establish what sin is with a person before we seek to preach Christ crucified. Paul had a very different audience and this in no way negates that we are resolved only to teach Christ and Him crucified. It is again the needed context to our preaching. We teach about sin first so that the grace of Jesus Christ is not heard in vain at least as far as we can know. The utter lack of the knowledge of sin and the absence of shame in our culture is a down-right virtue for many. This only takes us further and further from Jesus Christ. We now find ourselves in a context requiring Law more than Gospel. People have heard the Gospel enough that they’re sick of it. They don’t know why they need it.

1458: “The first duty of the Gospel preacher is to declare the Law and show the nature of sin.” - Martin Luther. I agree with this. This is the first duty, not of a minister of the Old Covenant, but of a New Covenant Gospel preacher.

I want to write a bit today about the blessed wisdom of God in the succession of His special revelation. As time went on God revealed more and more to His servants; the Bible is therefore a progressive revelation. I will divide God’s comprehensive progressive revelation, for

the purposes of this section, into three parts: Abraham [~2188 BC], Moses [~1445 BC] and Christ Jesus our Lord [~5BC--AD 28]. It is with Abraham that the Christian revelation specifically begins and continues all the way through the New Testament. The Christian faith really begins with Adam, but specifically begins in Ur and ends on Patmos. I think, since all things are related Biblically, that progressive revelation plays a part in a right understanding of evangelism. Not so much in what we say, but in what we take with us as we go. Moses [~1445 BC] received the Law before Christ was born for a reason, as I've said before. The grace that God freely bestowed on Abraham [~2188 BC] was to show us that the righteousness we receive in Christ today is as much a gift of faith *alone* as it was for him, see Romans 4:22-25. Abraham had the type; we have the fullness. It is a received righteousness before *all* works. It is a gift of God. The Law [received by Moses] came 430 years after Jacob the patriarch went to Egypt [~1875 BC]. Both Jacob and his father Isaac had the promise of Abraham reiterated to them by God. If the promise, which is truly the Gospel, is established long before Moses then Moses obviously cannot be its source. It's also equally obvious that the keeping of the Law given him cannot be a prerequisite to it. You must follow this. Paul is jealous to show us this in his writings. He says that this shows both Jews and Gentiles the truth of grace through faith *alone* in no uncertain terms, Galatians 3:15-18. The promise was given to Abraham long before Moses and God did not renegotiate that promise at any time. The promise given to Abraham had several parts, but the greatest of it was Christ Himself Who came, according to the flesh, from Abraham's bloodline, Matthew 1:17. The New Testament explicitly tells us that Jesus Himself is the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham by God, Galatians 3:16. So Moses then is in between Abraham and Jesus. The gift of righteousness did not begin with grace [in Abraham] and end or even find a sustainment with works [in Moses]. Paul then anticipates the common first century Jewish objection by adding, "What purpose then does the law [of Moses] serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made..." Galatians 3:19. The Law was added to the promises made to Abraham. It was added to them for a reason, but it did not alter them. The promise always remains of grace. It assures the elect that their righteousness is not a result of Law keeping while their propensity towards Law breaking assures them that the righteousness they have is of God alone. This leads the hearts of God's flock to long for and rejoice when their Messiah finally arrives to destroy the works of the devil. Oh, my friends, God is untouchably and incomprehensibly brilliant! The Law simply proves, *by our manifest transgressions of it*, Romans 4:14-15, that righteousness could *never* be achieved by keeping it. It is but by the faithfulness of God alone that we can have hope in Christ. This is why one revelation must precede the other. The Law only brings about wrath. This Law was not a prerequisite of the promises given to Abraham. Righteousness is something we see freely bestowed on Abraham who Paul calls the father of us all, Romans 4:16. It is by grace through faith *alone* that Christians receive their faith and walk in the steps of their father Abraham. Knowing Romans 4 is essential because the understanding of justification is essential. Christ's righteousness to sinners is a free and sovereign gift. This is the only righteousness that excludes all possible boasting in us, Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 3:5-7.

This systematizes our evangelism in a fundamental way following God's progressive revelation. We know that people are not saved by the works of the Law so we use it to show them why they must cling only to Christ. Are you beginning to see why so many great preachers spoke so clearly about the need to use the Ten Commandments in evangelism? If it was true in the days of many of these writers, my friends, then it is only all the more true in our own. Again, we are not talking of legalism or some strict methodology. We are talking about how best to

present the Gospel. We wish to honor God and speak truth. We use the Law because it is still the schoolmaster that leads men to Christ.

We must use the Law. It pointed the Jew under Moses to the faith of their father Abraham, and it points both the Jew and the Gentile in Christ to a perfect understanding of the alien righteousness that he or she now has within. Regarding the Law's perpetual use in evangelism, Martin Luther stated:

1653: "This now is the Christian teaching and preaching, which God be praised, we know and possess, and it is not necessary at present to develop it further, but only to offer the admonition that it be maintained in Christendom with all diligence. For Satan has attacked it hard and strong from the beginning until present, and gladly would he completely extinguish it and tread it under foot." I wish to maintain this truth in Christendom in any way that I can.

1464: "To slay the sinner is then the first use of the Law, to destroy the life and strengthen wherein he trusts and convince him that he is dead while he lives; not only under the sentence of death, but actually dead to God, void of sin, it is still not against the promises of God but is, in fact, for them. For in its true proper work and purpose it humbles a man and prepares him-if he uses the Law correctly-to yearn and seek for grace." - Martin Luther.

All of these men have contemplated why Paul wrote to Timothy instructing him that "We know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully," 1 Timothy 1:8. They sought to use it as such. We therefore use the Law, not as a means unto justification, but as a means to show our desperate need of it. Christ gave this world the Law. It shows them their need for grace in a way not previously possible.

1458: "Sin is like smog. It is not visible while you are in its midst. The Law takes the sinner above the smog of his own perspective and shows him heaven's viewpoint. It gives the sinner knowledge of his sin. John Bunyan stated, 'The man who does not know the nature of the Law cannot know the nature of sin.'" - Ray Comfort.

Oh, I pray you see this. It is so important. We don't want to produce false converts like the cheap grace preachers in the world today. Why is it that men think they know better than God how to instruct souls? "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple; the statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes; the fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether," Psalm 19:7-9. 128: "No man knows the brightness of the Gospel 'till he understands the blackness of those clouds that surround the Law of the Lord." - Charles Spurgeon.

Was Spurgeon wrong? He could be, but ask yourself why you think so. We must learn to use the Law lawfully. Christ was holy. He was born of the Virgin Mary and is completely sinless. His holiness and purity is demonstrated when the Law is presented. We establish the Law because it establishes Jesus, our head. It shows us that He is indeed holy. He alone is good. He is something "other" than we. He is God. God cannot sin. God cannot sin at all.

Objection

I've heard some Christians say in fear of legalism that we shouldn't use the Law in evangelism today. In integrity some confuse the issue saying that God, "...Made us sufficient as ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life," 2 Corinthians 3:6. This does not negate the use of the Law in the New Testament,

however. If it did then nearly every New Testament writer was in error because they reiterated the Law. Jesus did not destroy the Law at all. He fulfilled it, but even this was not for all men. He fulfills the Law on your behalf when you are born of Him, when you repent of sin and are forgiven. The Law without the Spirit always killed. That is its design. That's why we teach that the Law is never what saves. It simply brings, in the clearest way possible, knowledge of sin to dead men who need to be raised to life, Romans 7:7. We can reason with people about their need for Jesus. "Jesus did not come to make bad men good, He came to make dead men live."- Leonard Ravenhill. We don't use the Law apart from the Spirit's permission in the New Testament. No one can even savingly perceive their sin by the Law without the Spirit of God at work in them. Pelagianism is a joke. It is the Spirit of God that applies the Law to the heart. He uses us as the verbal means of preaching. Sinners are nonetheless ultimately without excuse, but godly repentance is a gift like all gifts. It is not a work or anything to boast of. We use the Law because it is sin that God convicts sinners of. It was not written for the Old Testament that "When He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment," John 16:8. This was written for today as well. Do we imagine that God's definition of sin has changed in the twenty-first century? This is not the case at all. The Law still issues the warning on the street that there is a Day of Judgment to come. Ministers of the New and better Covenant must understand this or indeed they may fall into legalism and a snare.

Being born again is each person passing from the Old Testament
to the New Testament in a very real sense.

The schoolmaster's preemptive work of unarguable condemnation, Galatians 3:24, was not just an advantage to the true Israel of Israel, (by showing them their sin,) it was for the Gentiles as well. "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," Romans 3:19. All not in Christ are under the Law without exception, without argument and without hope, Romans 3:9. The Law was not just for those before Christ. It is for the man you meet today in your local Wal-Mart. Use it well. Love him and use it. All are under the Law already, Romans 3:23. Jesus delivers men from the sting of the Law which is death, 1 Corinthians 15:56. Jesus is our ransom, Mark 10:45. He is the only way to heaven for anyone on earth, John 14:6. He did not merely suffer for sin as some devilishly assert, He paid for it, Romans 8:4. The Law brings a true context to Christ and under girds the Christian's faith in a very old and established covenant. Those in Christ who know the Law well know Christ better. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work," 2 Timothy 3:16-17. This letter is about equipping men properly for the greatest work which is bringing Jesus the reward of His suffering. Christ rose for the salvation of men and women from every tribe and nation under heaven.

What advantage then has the Jew?

I'll let Paul ask the question I want to ask next. "What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision?" Romans 3:1. Paul says that there is an advantage. Moses' Law is not useless by any means at all. What is the advantage that they had? Simply put: they knew, unlike any other nation, why Messiah was coming. They had the revelations of the Old

Testament. Today, we can give all men a crash-course type of this advantage in evangelism by showing them why the Messiah came by opening up the sharpest point in the Mosaic Law. We use the Law to instruct them. We should plead with them to turn from sin and trust in Jesus. In my opinion some of the greatest words ever spoken of Christians is: "Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God," 2 Corinthians 5:20. We go as representatives of the God of heaven. "There is not one square inch of this universe which does not belong to Jesus Christ."- Abraham Kuyper. What a glory it will be to see the God of heaven in all His triune fullness knowing that we were messengers of His glorious grace! Oh, to see God and cast our crowns at His feet like those in heaven today. Oh! To be as the servant in the parable before our God: "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord,'" Matthew 25:21. Christians, we have to get this thing right. We have to evangelize faithfully. Forget about decisions. I think that's sin. We'll be judged for our works of what sort they are. I warn you to take heed how you build on Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians 3:10-15.

1592: "No sinner looks to the Savior with a dry eye or a hard heart. Aim, therefore, at heart-breaking, at bringing home condemnation to the conscience and weaning the mind from sin. Be not content till the whole mind is deeply and vitally changed in reference to sin." - Charles Spurgeon.

Can this be right? I thought we were to revel in front of the sinner about the glories of heaven or about how good it is to be a Christian because Jesus guarantees to give you a better life. No, friends, we are to bring them to the cross. This should never change. I love you all and I testify that this should never change.

I know of no better way to magnify all of God's immutable, perfect, and equal attributes than to exposit Calvary in the context of sinners.

We should battle self righteousness by the Law

Jesus says people go to hell because, "of sin, because they do not believe in Me," John 16:9. Sin *is* the transgression of the Law be it those called moral or royal. We've established this previously. I like the way the KJV puts 1 John 3:4 best. It says, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." If this is true, how can I talk about the King on that cross in evangelism without mentioning sin? How can I even mention sin without mentioning Scripture's clearest definition of it? That would be ridiculous. See, we don't want sinners making up their own definitions of what sin is either. That can be dangerous. We want them to know the Bible's definition of sin. Give it to them. This leads to the Bible's definition of grace. This information is to be given on a need to know basis and they desperately need to know. If I want to be used of God to see a sinner humbled before God I must use the Law. I've heard some say that people, "already know that they're sinners." They say this to teach that we don't need to talk about sin with them, but only grace. I wish I lived in their world. To know that you're a sinner by a biblical definition is *not* something the world agrees with as I've seen it. The people that I meet most days are just humble and poor less-than-perfect victims of a lack of love from God in their own eyes. In short they're just like I used to be. They're quick to confess that they're less than perfect, but even this is twisted into a self-righteous affirmation of wisdom and piety because they, by their own moral rectitude, can admit it freely, Proverbs 20:6.

They feel safe in joining all people in their humble only slightly less than perfect “perfection.” Because everybody sins they feel that sin must go unpunished. They say that they’re good people. They’re wrong. They sing kumbaya in rebellion against God seeking to establish their own righteousness being ignorant of God’s righteousness, Romans 10:3. Isn’t this the sin at the heart of all idolatry? This is nothing new, but the Bible says, “Though they join forces, the wicked will not go unpunished...” Proverbs 11:21. “The goodness of God will be the very thing that condemns sinners on the Day of Judgment.”- Ray Comfort. It is because God is good that we’re condemned. God will punish sin. He is good.

Shouldn’t we as Christians get this more than anyone else? Shouldn’t we know all too well that “...by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin,” Romans 3:20. Let me try to paraphrase this verse: “You’ve seen the Law. You have no excuse for thinking you have a chance of God’s mercy by your performance under it. Sin, by your exceeding sinfulness, has now been made clear.” The Law, as we previously discussed, was given to confirm the faithfulness of God to His own throughout redemptive history. Truly, the greatest lesson of the Law is found in the Christian in that it teaches grace alone in a spiritual fullness! In Jesus Christ, by being born again through repentance and faith, the requirements of perfection are removed and true righteousness is fulfilled *in the justified* by faith. We receive Christ when He receives us. It is imputed righteousness. We are credited with His righteousness. Our account is settled forever in heaven. The balance for our sin debt is brought to zero. That’s good news! Jesus literally “...Wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross,” Colossians 2:14. This is the beginning of the Gospel in our individual hearts. This passage undoubtedly speaks of the Law, The Ten Commandments. This is how Paul here makes sense of the cross. It was to remove the requirements that the Law clearly demands. The Law demands a full recompense to the level of the glory of its authority. This debt is still owed by the sinner today. “For the wages of sin is [always] death...” Romans 6:23. This means that the Law is still the reason sinners die. You are not imposing the Law on them when you use it in witnessing; you’re merely exposing it. The epistle to the Colossians, cited just above, was written around 60 AD to a city called Colosse. Colosse was a city in Phrygia, a Roman province in Asia (modern day Turkey.) The congregation there was composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Colosse was predominately a Gentile city. Paul proclaimed to them all that the Law’s righteous penalty was removed from the believer in Christ’s death, Resurrection and ascension. Indeed, whether you’re a Jew or a Gentile, whosoever will may come, John 3:16. We want them to come, but it must be for the right motivation. We want them to come for the forgiveness of sins. Folks, they do have to die. It’s like I quoted long ago from the puritans on page 10: “Born once die twice, born twice die once.”

There is much joy and need for thought in the faith after the cross, but nothing before it.

It’s at the cross that people can find joy in God’s great grace. It is all for His glory, you and I get no credit. It is as Asaph cried: “Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name; and deliver us, and provide atonement for our sins, for Your name’s sake!” Psalm 79:9. How can we show men their sin? Let’s seek the counsel of one of the finest theologians in American history:

120: “The only way we can know whether we are sinning is by knowing His Moral Law.”- Jonathan Edwards. The attitudes of many flattering pagans in the pulpits today seem to respond

to truths such as this with ideas like, “Come on Mr. Edwards, surely there is some greater way by now? After all, people don’t like to hear about sin anymore. That doesn’t sell. The forgiveness of sin may have been a Gospel acceptable in your day, sir, but our people are far advanced. We need another one. We need something more exciting. Surely there must be some new provision or more glorious method to salvation today. We believe people can be saved by grace through ignorance. Maybe we can get them drunk in the spirit. Maybe we need miracles or prosperity. The forgiveness of sins is so last century.” It is not enough for a preacher to merely say he believes that sin is real; he must hammer it out routinely to be a faithful minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. There is no other Gospel, beloved. Any other is of the devil and we curse it as Paul did, Galatians 1:8-9. It always begins with genuine repentance. What a gift it is to hate your sin. Repent and trust in Jesus. That is the Gospel’s call. “...unless you repent you will all...perish...” Luke 13:3.

Using the Law in Evangelism is a loving act. People are sick in their self righteousness. “They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance,” Mark 2:17.

1200: “Sinners that think they need no physician will not endure the healer’s hand. The Law is therefore necessary to give knowledge of sin, so that proud man, who thought he was whole, may be humbled by the discovery of his own great wickedness, and sigh and pant after the grace that is set forth in Christ.” - Martin Luther. Couldn’t have said it better myself.

God uses the Law to show sinners their fleshly sickness *which is spiritual death*. We are born spiritually flat-lined, we’re dead to God. Our actual sins unanimously and universally confirm the propensity to SIN that we all inherited from our greatest grandfather Adam. Go and call them to Christ. Speak to the dry bones in your world. They too can live. Show them their sin. If you must, lift up your voice like a trumpet to show their evil, Isaiah 58:1. It will divide your families, Luke 12:53. You will lose friends, Matthew 5:11 and you will suffer reproach for it, 2 Timothy 3:12. Use the Law as the primary focus until the way is made for grace.

1457: “Ask Paul why [the Law] was given. Here is his answer, that every mouth may be stopped and so that the whole world may become guilty before God, Romans 3:19. The Law stops every man’s mouth. I can always tell a man who is near the kingdom of God; his mouth is stopped. This, then, is why God gives us the Law to show ourselves in our true colors.” - D.L. Moody. No, you 80s freaks, it was not Cindy Lauper who first said this, it was D.L. Moody.

I had the joy of showing a young Muslim man his sins today. You should have seen his face when I got to tell him the good news. He was silent and his lips even kind of quivered. This can be a good thing to look for, by the way, when you’re out witnessing. There is no written formula. No script. No verbatim prayers we should have men pray. There is only a broken and obedient preacher to tell them how they can be saved. I believe in a systematic evangelism. The Bible has built the system in perspicuous simplicity. God is the Savior. He has chosen men from before the foundation of the world. We preach the Law simply knowing it is the Holy Spirit’s place to, “...Convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment,” John 16:8. We preach the Gospel knowing it is the Holy Spirit’s place to call the dead “...out of darkness into His marvelous light,” 1 Peter 2:9. Sin is by the Law, righteousness is of the Law, and judgment is according to the Law. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” Romans 3:23. Folks, use the Law. Use your testimony, but we must preach the demands of God’s perfection and justice to bring them the Gospel rightly. This puts Jesus in context to a culture devoid of conviction and shame.

1464 “Never, never let us despise [the Law], it is the symptom of an ignorant ministry, and unhealthy state of religion, when the Law is reckoned unimportant. The true Christian delights in God’s Law.” - J.C. Ryle. Amen, sir.

The god of the godless

Here’s the main reason why I use the Law before I share the Gospel: “The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good,” Romans 7:12. It is what it is. The stumbling block for many today is found here. They despise the cross because they see it is an affront to their divine natures. I’ve heard self-serving sinners yawn out the story of the cross in a false assurance because of former prayers while pictures of orgies, bestiality, and drunkenness flashed behind them on their dormitory computer screens. I’ve seen drunken homosexuals openly declaring in the streets that God loves them and would never judge them. I’ve seen women dressed like prostitutes professing godliness. I’ve witnessed to porn shop owners (not in the porn shop, of course) who say that they’re servicing their communities for the honor of God. I’ve seen things that show the depths of sin in a perversion of God’s love more than anything else. I say that the greatest idolatry in the heart of our culture today is a wrong understanding of the character and nature of God. They have a God who never hates. They make their understanding of His love His defining characteristic to the eclipse of any other to suit their sin. God hates sin and sinners are condemned to hell. Sin is not condemned apart from them, they are condemned, Psalm 7:11. Most of these people have never read the Bible at all, but they can tell you why they think it’s wrong. This is nothing new. Idolatry is every carnal man’s PhD.

I was once right there with them. I knew my god better than anybody else due to the fact that I designed and sustained him in my own image. When you challenge a man’s sinful idolatries towards his god you tread in an area that every man thinks is unwarranted. After all, who knows a man’s idol better than he? They may see it this way, but we must know different. There is only one true God, men are saved according to the perfect revelation of the Scriptures *alone*. Jesus did physically, literally and historically rise from the dead. He is the only way to heaven. He was virgin born and sinless His whole life, men are only justified by faith in Him without any works. This is the faith delivered once for all time to the saints. You cannot separate Jesus from the Bible and still have Jesus. “...The Word became flesh...” John 1:14. Idolatry is an old sin and this is why God gave us the Ten Commandments. It cuts through the argument and goes directly to the conscience in *every* generation. Sinners are living in a dream world. They have no idea why they’re going to die. Do you love them enough to tell them why every person on earth is going to die? Can you tell them? Have you prepared yourself? God says “The soul who sins shall die...” Ezekiel 18:20. This is why we die. Tell them this in love and you may see God win them for eternity.

We don’t need to be rude. I trust that I’ll see many people who hate me for what I’ve said to them in heaven. They’ll no longer hate me there, of course. I am but a sower and a waterer and God may win them still. I don’t seek to offend, but I know that Christ’s message is offensive, Romans 9:33, so perhaps maybe I do. When used lawfully the Law directly combats the sickly and deficient character of the god of the idolatrous. It strips away false pretenses well. It wakes people up and sobers them to the reality of the weight of truth. We focus on this so that God may shine in His holiness and righteousness. It is the righteousness of God that people hate, John 3:19-20.

843: “The vague and tenuous hope that God is too kind to punish the ungodly has become a deadly opiate for the consciences of millions. It hushes their fears and allows them to practice all forms of iniquity while death draws every day nearer and the command to repent goes unregarded. As responsible moral beings, we dare not so trifle with our eternal future.” - A.W. Tozer.

Jeremiah says, “But let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD, exercising loving kindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth. For in these I delight,” says the LORD,” Jeremiah 9:24. We must tell sinners that there is wrath to come *because there is!* God delights to be just. The Law makes sense of this judgment to come very well. The cross, in context, is the best way to tell the world that there is surely wrath to come. It is both a warning and an invitation. Because of sin the Bible says the wrath of God is coming upon the world, Ephesians 5:1-7. Christ’s Gospel is not of man’s design. The cross is not high philosophy. God has chosen the *seeming* foolishness of it on purpose, 1 Corinthians 1:18. Can you explain this to the world without talking about sin? You shouldn’t look to. God didn’t. Can’t you see how the Law levels the playing field throughout the world? It puts Jews, Gentiles, fools, wise, rich, poor, males, females and every other category on one single slippery footing. It funnels us to Christ because that’s its function. Jesus didn’t mince words regarding the consequences of sin: “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” Matthew 7:22-23. What are they guilty of practicing? They are guilty of living lawlessly. They’re sinners who’ve never been delivered from the power of the Law. Brethren we must use the Ten Commandments in our evangelism. We don’t know what people have heard before us. We have no idea. We must labor to ensure that they come to see Jesus rightly as best we can and as much as it depends on us.

1641: “The most terrible warning to impenitent men in all the world is the death of Christ. For if God spared not His only Son, on whom was only laid imputed sin, will He spare sinners whose sins are their own?” - Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon says this in the understanding of Scripture: “...He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him,” 2 Corinthians 5:21. Jesus is our model. We must use the Law as He did. It was never a means of justification. It pointed to Him. He is the Gospel.

God gave us an Evangelism strategy to use in every age. God knew that this post-modern age would come. The Law cuts through it all and stops the mouth. Truly it has done so in every age. Remember “...The law is good if one uses it lawfully,” 1 Timothy 1:8. It is not a means to attain heaven; it is a means to perceive guilt. We Christians are all in the lowest position. We have no room for boasting or for condemnation towards others.

What becomes us is to be at ground zero at Calvary’s *now vacant* cross
with sinners at the place of our birth.

It becomes us to bear witness purely how Christ here gives life.

Personal reflection

Friends, for years in the word of faith cult I was taught that Christianity was all about me and my future. I wish I could show you all the framed picture that I had that I thought was a sign from God. Let me describe it. It was a page I took from a magazine many years ago. It shows a

cityscape near sunset. Every thing is very small except this one building in the center that is literally about one hundred times larger than anything else in the picture. It alone is still bathed in sunlight while the rest of the city is sort of eclipsed by it. Atop this monstrous building are two words in large red neon: **“YOU, INC.”** Back then I read it as a sign that God was going to make me a billionaire and was building me up. There was no shortage of personal prophets to bear witness to this fact on TV and in our church. I was educated from the Bible that I, as a little god, had the ability to call forth the things that be not as though they were. At its worst this is heresy, at its best it’s just dumb. I learned all manner of unbiblical oddities. I shared this picture with many people. It was my own little special revelation. Cults are often full of this kind of goofy style revelation. My point is that it is not our own special revelation that we are to share with the world; it is the Gospel. It is very public. It just doesn’t sound right to say, “Go into all the world and tell them what you think of Me.” We go with the Gospel and that Gospel is the forgiveness of sin. We do not go into the world with our take on things. We bear witness to Christ at our best. We are His witnesses and are led, if necessary, as lambs to the slaughter, Romans 8:36. I am a westerner, born in northeast Ohio in a little town called Mineral Ridge. Though I don’t live there now and have not for quite some time I often like to look at maps or globes and trace the steps of my life. I do this in sequence while vivid images of homes, work places, cars, mountains or people flash in my imagination. I’m an American. For now, the worst I deal with daily on account of the Gospel is that non-believers don’t really like being around me too much and that my unsaved family members don’t talk to me. I’ve driven through much of the Middle East in Iraq and Kuwait. I’ve wondered what would happen to me over there if God sent me to preach in that place. It is sobering to hear from those who have gone there. While moving through many of those remote places I’ve felt the temptation of many a missionary, though I’m not one. As I’ve looked at how very different people are, I’ve thought how I might reach them with the Gospel. How would I begin with them? Would I begin by building homes, repairing roofs, building porches, digging wells or cooking them meals? Perhaps I would but not as a replacement to the Gospel. I would do it as a means to deliver it. I’ve felt the temptation that has led many to switch strategies and compromise the message, but our Gospel must not change. Whether it’s Hollywood, CA, or the Gaza strip the message is the forgiveness of sin. It must ever remain the forgiveness of sin in Jesus Christ. It can be nothing else. Yes we become all things to all men for their sake, but this does not alter what we present, only how and when we present it. The Gospel is not tailor made for anyone. It is one Gospel for all time. I often think of what I’ve read regarding William Carey’s pulpit in Calcutta, in eastern India. William Carey was a fantastic missionary who lived from 1761–1834. There was a sign placed in his pulpit in a location that was not visible to anyone except for the preacher sitting in the chair just behind it. The sign’s inscription read, “Sir, we would see Jesus.” This is from John 12:21 KJV. This reminded Carey not to take his own opinions into the pulpit. The Gospel is no different in any other country or language because the people are no different. We’re all sinners born from Adam. At Babel God scattered our tongues, but sin remains a universal language. We have the Gospel for a spiritually dead world. It is good news only when preceded by the quickening of the Spirit in the heart of a sinner. Let’s look at some more quotes showing how we should approach the irksome task of witnessing.

The conscience

The conscience can be a troublesome thing sometimes, but it was given by God for just that reason. It is one main reason why all men are without excuse before God, Romans 1:20. When we use the Law in evangelism we appeal to the conscience on a very powerful level. It never argues. We may speak to someone's brain by facts and figures in apologetics and this surely has its place, but the conscience is addressed when we speak of morality. God has spoken about the standards of His morality best in one particular place in Scripture. I bet you can guess where. That's right. It was in the Moral Law. When we use it we show men, by their own innate conscience that they've sinned grievously. I wish to write on this for a bit with you.

1595: "The Law cuts into the core of the evil, it reveals the seat of the malady, and informs us that the leprosy lies deep within." - Charles Spurgeon.

1246: "In my preaching of His Word, I took special notice of this one thing, namely, that the Lord did lead me to begin where His Word begins with sinners; that is, to condemn all flesh, and to open and allege that the curse of God, by the Law, doth belong to and lay hold on all men as they come into the world, because of sin." - John Bunyan.

This has not changed. Are men better today? Or is there still "...nothing new under the sun"? Ecclesiastes 1:9.

1117: "Awaken their conscience and prepare the soil of their hearts for the life-giving seed of the Gospel." - Kirk Cameron

Ray Comfort once said something like the following in regards to the conscience: "Do you know that we as Christians have an ally behind enemy lines with the sinner? A mole has been planted in their camp by their enemy. This mole has always been impartial and cannot be bribed. He is always quick to present the evidence and is available to expose the enemy at any time. Do you know what that faithful ally is? It is the sinner's conscience. Don't underestimate it. It has well been described as the impartial witness in the courtroom of the mind. It never takes sides! It is there to aid you, but you must make contact." I have seen this to be very true. The conscience speaks to people, even after they've worked hard in sin to shut it up it can be awakened in a moment. The Law awakens it best so use it. All men "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..." Romans 2:15. Let the conscience do its job and address it strongly with the Ten Commandments. It will condemn the sinner and take the side of the judge. The work of the Law to love God and man is written clearly in the hearts of all men forever. If a person gets upset that's o.k. It should be expected. Spurgeon once said that "Anger is a thousand times better than apathy." Amen.

1455: "Conscience is the internal perception of God's moral Law." - Oswald Chambers.

1596: "It is the ordinary method of the Spirit of God to convict sinners by the Law, it is this which, being set home on the conscience, generally breaketh the rocks in pieces. It is more especially this part of the Word of God which is quick and powerful, full of life and energy and sharper than any two-edged sword." - John Wesley.

1601: "The beginning of repentance consists of that work of the Law by which the Spirit of God terrifies and confounds consciences... Just as the Christian life must certainly begin with the knowledge of sin, so Christian doctrine must begin with the function of the Law." - Phillip Melancthon.

God is to be feared

The Law of God helps the sinner to see that judgment is severe. It seems to multiply the offenses committed as it magnifies them. “The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom, and before honor is humility,” Proverbs 15:33. This is why I believe that the entire Bible lays out the principle of Law to the proud and grace to the humble. This is the principle that I’m laboring to convey. This is systematic evangelism. The Gospel of Jesus did not come before the Law for a reason. This principle prepares us well for any situation no matter how unusual it may be. This frees us from written formulas to simply keep the sinner’s best interests at heart. When a man expresses his concern about judgment you can tell him about the Gospel, but not before, all things being equal. The Law makes sense of God’s severity against humanity. “Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light,” Ephesians 5:14. “Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and He will lift you up,” James 4:7-10. Jesus pronounced woes on entire cities not just on the teachers of the Law, Matthew 11:20-24. This is “...Because they did not repent,” Matthew 11:20. They knew much of what they should have repented for.

Today I don’t believe that we should discard the Ten Commandments in evangelism because they show each of us our direct and personal need for the literal and personal Christ to ransom us. They bring reverence to the cross rather than emotion. That reverence can then perhaps give way to good emotion, but I’m so tired of emotional pleas. If we’re wise in evangelism we’ll first begin by using that spiritual Law (Romans 7:14) given to natural minds to make sense of judgment as a reflection of God Himself. Then we move to the Gospel. God uses the Law to wake people up. It shows us all the futility of the god of our own creation to save us. It is black and white. A pinnacle Scripture in the NT says that God sacrificed His Son “To demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus,” Romans 3:26. The Law honors this truth when presented faithfully. God is both just in that He does not excuse sin, but He is also the justifier of all those in Jesus Christ. This is a Gospel with light and fire. It rings of truth and strong convictions resound. Biblical faith is not credulity it is persuasion.

The Day of Judgment makes sense
when it is shown for what it is –
a courtroom where heinous crimes against God and goodness are condemned.

Sin is seen best for what it is when we teach on the nature and character of God. The Law reflects that glorious nature. It shows the sinner a God much higher than them. It is His highness and absolute glory that exposes sin with penetrating light. As we make sense of sin we make sense of judgment. This may lead to a sense of grace. We have to speak against sin in its relation to God’s own nature to gauge it properly. Todd Friel once put it something like this: “If I lie to my wife I’m probably sleeping on the couch tonight. If I lie to my boss I might lose my job. If I lie in court I could go to jail for perjury. It’s the same crime, but the one against whom the crime is committed becomes higher in authority. It makes the crime more severe. It is because all sin is against God directly that it becomes so egregious.” If men begin to see God’s holiness they begin

to see their un-holiness in rather equal degrees. They begin to see sin as “exceedingly sinful.” Using the Law in evangelism brings men face to face with this horrifying truth. It is as one preacher said, “Outside of Christ, God is terrible.” The Law of God is a warning to rebels. God is not unjust who inflicts wrath, Romans 3:9-18.

1416: “Few, very few, are ever awakened or convinced by the encouragements and promises of the Gospel, but almost all by the denunciations of the Law.” - Timothy Dwight.

1454: “I never knew but one person in the whole course of my ministry who acknowledged that the first motions of religion in his own heart arose from a sense of the goodness of God...But I think all besides who have come within my notice have rather been first awakened to fly from the wrath to come by the passion of fear.” – Isaac Watts.

1416: “The very first end of the Law [is], namely, convicting men of sin; awakening those who are still asleep on the brink of hell....The ordinary method of God is to convict sinners by the Law, and that only. The Gospel is not the means which God hath ordained, or which our Lord Himself used, for this end.” - John Wesley.

118: “Secure sinners must hear the thundering of Mount Sinai before we bring them to mount Zion. Every minister should be a Boenerges, a son of thunder, as well as a Barnabus, a son of consolation.” - George Whitefield. This I believe is part of becoming all things to all men.

1569: “I have found by long experience that the severest threatenings of the Law of God have a prominent place in leading men to Christ. They must see themselves lost before they will cry for mercy. They will not escape from danger until they see it.” -A.B. Earle. God does the convicting and convincing. We must be obedient to faithful means.

What about you?

Now on to the most important part of this letter: I want us to share our faith correctly. I do not want to create false converts or give people false assurance. The blood of Christ is not applied randomly, but directly to the humble. Do you regularly share your faith in the world with others? Absolutely nothing will make you study your Bible more or pray harder than to feel the winds of persecution blow in your run with Christ, 1 Peter 4:14.

1568: “Have you no wish for others to be saved? Then you are not saved yourself. Be sure of that.” - Charles Spurgeon.

1459: “I would sooner bring one sinner to Jesus than unravel all the mysteries of the Word, for salvation is the thing we are to live for.” - Charles Spurgeon.

C.T. Studd said: “Some wish to live within the sound of a chapel bell; I wish to run a rescue mission within a yard of hell.”

1197: “The number one reason people don’t share their faith is that their walk doesn’t match their talk.” - Mark Cahill.

“The LORD is well pleased for His righteousness’ sake; He will exalt the law and make it honorable,” Isaiah 42:21. Jesus did this wonderfully on the Sermon on the Mount by making the Law personal and showing it in its grand spiritual nature, Matthew 5:21-30. I labor to do the same in evangelism. I believe it is the most loving thing I can do.

An example or two

I have nothing new to share. I’m borrowing from Ray Comfort just as he borrowed from someone who borrowed from someone else who borrowed from someone else who borrowed

from Christ and His Apostles. We're all authorized reproducers of this grace. Just the other day two young men came to my own front door. They were selling what we might call soft pornography (magazines like Maxim, FHM, Shape, Cosmopolitan, etc.) I listened to them first and then had the privilege of sharing the Gospel with them for about an hour. They were nice guys. They were eighteen and twenty-one years old. One boy named Dennis was from Michigan and the other, Joe, was from Indiana. I went into my house and grabbed a visual prop. I have a plaque of The Ten Commandments in my home right inside the front door. I found it in a little Indian shop in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico for like five bucks. I asked them if they had any kind of Christian background. Dennis did. Joe didn't. I asked them both questions about what they thought would happen to them when they die. I then asked them the most decisive question I know to ask. Remember, I'm talking about a systematic evangelism. I talked to them about a few things showing them that I was a human first, and then I asked them, "Would you consider yourself to be a good person?" They, of course, answered with a quick, "yes," Proverbs 20:6. I asked them if it would be alright to ask them a few questions to see if that was true, to see if they really were good people? They said, "sure." I grabbed my plaque and asked them about a few of the Ten Commandments, Exodus 20:1-17. I asked them ones that require no theological explanation. They're just so simple. I asked them if God is their God and first in their lives? I asked if they've ever lied, stolen, blasphemed God's name, or looked with lust therefore committing adultery in the heart? I exalted the Law telling them, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not commit adultery.' (7th commandment) But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart," Matthew 5:27-28. They both admitted that they were lying, thieving, blasphemous, idolatrous, adulterers at heart. They also were fornicators (having sex outside of marriage) and murderers because they had unrighteous anger in their hearts. I told them how Jesus says, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, (6th commandment) and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment..." Matthew 5:21-22. This took about ten minutes or so. All I was doing was holding up the mirror of God's Law to show them how God sees them. All along I kept it as light as possible as we laughed and they asked question after question about various things like tattoos, other religions, my own sin, etc. It was my joy to answer their questions as best I could because they were very reasonable. I did my best to keep things on track all throughout. All the while I had my eyes on the cross. I so wanted to get there with them. I told them about their appointment with God and that "...It is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment," Hebrews 9:27. They both knew that they were guilty before God and that they would be in hell if they died that night. They understood it because we looked at the Law together. They were nodding as I went through the commandments because their consciences were on my side. They both said something like, "Yes, if the Bible is true then I am concerned." Remember, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom," Psalm 111:10. In all of this I was aiming to do two things. #1 – I was not allowing them to form a god to suit themselves which would be a violation of the second commandment. #2 – I was sending the needle of the Law to make the way for that silken Gospel thread. See Spurgeon quote #1308. They truly appeared concerned. I burst in joy to tell them about how God became a Man, lived a perfect sinless life, and suffered and died taking the punishment that they deserve for being like the rest of us as lying, thieving, blasphemous, adulterers at heart. I shared "...That for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the Day of Judgment," Matthew 12:36. They saw the spiritual nature of God's Law in lust and anger. I told them that, "Nothing is secret that

will not be revealed, nor anything hidden that will not be known and come to light,” Luke 8:17. While considering myself all along the way that, “There is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account,” Hebrews 4:13. I told them that if they’ll repent (turn from their sin) and place their trust wholeheartedly in Christ alone for their salvation then they can be forgiven because He paid their fine. I told them how this Christ rose from the dead and showed us His glory over all things. I showed them how God is glorified in the power of the cross. I pleaded with them to get into their Bibles and see if that Day of Judgment is coming upon sin. I told them to see if Christ came to pay the fine. Here is the Gospel in one sentence: You and I broke the Law and Jesus Christ came to pay our fine. “He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all,” Isaiah 53:5-6.

Through Isaiah we foresee how God “Has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel,” 2 Timothy 1:9-10. These boys took some Bibles that I had to give them and left telling me that the Gospel now made sense and that they wanted to go read the Scriptures and think about it. I gave them some Gospel tracts and told them to check out the Gospel of John. I told them I’d be praying for them. They shook my hand, and thanked me for my time as I thanked them. I got to give them the Gospel because their mouths were stopped. I tell you this for certain. One great advantage to preaching regularly is that you yourself get to hear the Gospel over and over. 1438: “As you witness, divorce yourself from the thought that you are merely seeking “decisions for Christ.” What we should be seeking is repentance within the heart. This is the purpose of the Law, to bring the knowledge of sin. How can a man repent if he doesn’t know what sin is? If there is no repentance, there is no salvation. Jesus said, “Unless you repent, you shall all likewise perish,” Luke 13:3. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9. - Ray Comfort.

1221: “My grand point in preaching is to break the hard heart and to heal the broken one.” – John Newton. Use the Law. It is active and powerful. Consider the writers I’ve sited here today. The preaching of sin must precede the Gospel in solid evangelism in some way and this is not just the quoting of Romans 3:23 in passing. Sin should be made personal. We are representatives of the most powerful Army calling for surrender of an un-calculably inferior force that does not stand a chance. God is no friend to the unregenerate.

Yesterday I was sharing the Gospel with a man raised a Muslim. He heard the Gospel and said “Whoa, that’s something I want to believe in!” He said this when I explained to him that God Himself died for sin so that it may be a gift showing forth His humble glory. You never see Jesus, or any disciple for that matter, giving the Gospel pearl to someone with a proud heart. That young man yesterday was open. Tell them they need Jesus, yes, but please plainly tell them why. You don’t have time to befriend the world. Go and tell all you can about Christ. “No one has the right to hear the Gospel twice, while there remains someone who has not heard it once.” - Oswald J. Smith. In one day in America I can speak to twenty people from ten different nations under heaven. The great commission requires no money here; you can preach to nations at McDonalds.

The conclusion

For a moment I'd like to speak to anyone reading this that has not been born again. "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God," John 3:3. Do you have a conversion story? Are you growing in God? Here is the best and simplest analogous explanation of the Gospel that I've ever heard. Understanding and applying this simple analogy as multiple fix points for our theology and how we understand the chief article of redemption made through Jesus Christ is simply fantastic. To the non-believer this may help you see Christ. To the believer, this may help you see why the use of the Law is paramount in evangelism. This is just an analogy, but one that I strongly declare.

Imagine a confessed criminal is standing in a courtroom guilty of serious multiple crimes. All the evidence is there and the judge says to the criminal, "You have a five million dollar fine or else you're going to jail." The criminal says, "I can't pay the fine." As they're leading him off to prison somebody he doesn't even know steps into the courtroom and pays the required payment in full. The judge can now receive the payment and then set the criminal free. The law is satisfied and justice is served. He can say, "You're free to go because of what this man has done for you." That's the Gospel. God Himself became a Man in Christ Jesus and paid the fine for our sin, 2 Corinthians 5:21. In His life's blood Jesus took the punishment for sin for all those who would trust in Him. God is angry with sinners because they break His commandments. Examine yourself for some time by that standard. If the Bible is right there are consequences to your actions. Christ is the only answer to the problem of sin. Because Jesus came to die for sin, John 18:37, it was said of Him, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world," John 1:29. God Himself, the only One who was good enough, died to save us. This is His plan for His glory and it includes many men. Jesus lived a perfect and sinless life to honor the Law Giver and died to initiate a New Covenant in His own blood, Hebrews 9:16. It is His living will and testament. There is a Day of Judgment coming. "Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death," Proverbs 11:4. Please examine yourself by God's Law. Don't be a fool. "What will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?" Mark 8:36. What should God do with you if you die tonight? Should He reward you for your sin or punish you? He is good and so He will punish you if you die in your sin. Sin is not a small issue to an infinitely holy God. Have you repented of your sin and put your trust in Jesus Christ alone to save you? Have you acknowledged your sin, wretchedness and helplessness before God? The reason anyone should come to Christ is because of His amazing kindness to save us from hell. Have you broken the commandments? See them written in (Exodus 20 & Deuteronomy 5.) God will release you from the death sentence you so richly deserve if you'll obey the Gospel. Forsake your sin. Put on Christ as if He were a parachute and trust Him to deliver you from the penalty of sin when you die like you'd trust a parachute to deliver you from gravity when jumping from a plane. He rose from the dead and has power over death. He says, "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life," John 5:24. Man, is that good news to those who know they're dead. His word says, "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him," John 14:21. You can actually know where your soul sits before God. Jesus Christ is self authenticating. "No man ever spoke like this Man!" John 7:46. Read the Bible. Begin in the Gospels, perhaps best would be John's Gospel. It's the fourth book in the New Testament. Think about your sin and think about the cross. Take

some time and go through the commandments. Think of every time you've broken them. How many times have you lied, stolen anything, or looked with lust committing adultery in your heart? If you've done these horrible things then God sees you as a lying, thieving, adulterer at heart. You're not good in God's eyes, Romans 3:10. All of the Bible's prophets assure us that His judgment is certain. Try to get a picture of how you'll do on that Day when you stand before God being judged for even every secret thing that is brought out against you. Your conscience should not let you shut it up. Listen to it. Now try to consider this: God knew you would do those things against Him but He came and died for sinners such as us anyway. "...God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us," Romans 5:8. Christ died for His enemies, not His friends. It was also clearly not for good people as Romans 5:8 tells us. It is the kindest thing anyone has ever done. He was tied to a stump and beaten half to death for sin. Are you going to make a mockery of that?

If you are not a child of God (born again) then you are, without exception, a child of wrath and the devil, Ephesians 2:3, 1 John 3:10. Ever had sex out of marriage? That's called fornication. If you are living in such sin then there is a zero percent chance that you belong to God. I'm not talking about sinless perfection here, but the Bible makes it very clear that if we continue in sin we are of the devil, 1 John 3:8. That means a willful consistent lifestyle of sin. Are you warring against the ever-present sin in your life? Oh, look to Christ and be saved. God will change you. He'll give you a new heart with new affections. He did it for me according to His word. Christ does not just change what you do; He changes what you want to do. Please do not trifle with God. Consider your sin and put your trust in Christ. Confess and forsake your sin. Call out to Jesus. Get into the Bible. Read it daily. Get into a good church. I tell you, "...Everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened," Matthew 7:8. Why would you not ask? Seek Him. He is your only hope. If you neglect the salvation that is in Christ, there will be no hope for you on the Day of Judgment. You have God's word on it.

I pray you now see a common thread throughout history for using God's Law the Ten Commandments in evangelism. We want warmth and compassion that leads men to Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins. Don't be silent, Christian, that would be a sin. Spurgeon once said, "Have you no desire for others to be saved? Then you are not saved yourself, be sure of that." We should want to witness. We should learn how and get to work with God in people's lives. By His grace I hope I've helped some of you consider your role in evangelism. I pray you find strength and encouragement to share the faith of Jesus Christ. If you're not a Christian, I hope you've seen why you should be. I pray you have your sins forgiven and that you come to know God as a Father and a Friend, John 15:15. The inspiration for this letter is almost entirely from the teaching of Ray Comfort and the team from Way of the Master. God is the one who converts. We need to be wise in what we say. We must reason with the world regarding sin, righteousness and judgment to come if we love them. This is one solid way to do that, but of course not the only way. I pray you see the wisdom behind it and why it is spoken of so passionately by those quoted herein in their generations. I have prayed for all of you who read this. I cannot speak equally for the theology of everyone quoted in this letter, but they share many of these truths in common. Study the Scriptures and see if these things are true, Acts 17:11. Use the Law, let God do the converting.

If you haven't yet, go to www.livingwaters.com and watch the free video called "Hell's Best Kept Secret" and/or listen to the message called "True and False Conversion." Also check out www.wretchedradio.com. Check out Biblecia.com and the articles section for my

recommended listening list. Using the Law before the Gospel and understanding how the Bible makes this necessity plain in the whole of its wisdom is what I call systematic evangelism.

God bless you.

Thank you for your attention to this letter.