

Obedience - The Way of Freedom

Message

Obedience is the way to true
freedom

God's law comes from His love

- Law (*torah*) = “teaching”
- Like what loving fathers and mothers teach their children (“teaching” in Prov 1:8; 4:1-4; 7:1-3, etc., is “*torah*”)
- Prov 3:11; Dt 4:35-40; 7:6-10; Heb 12:3-11
- *It is wisdom for living life well under God*

God's law comes from His heart

“even his sharpest and most demanding laws are not a stern imposition by external authority, but a paternal directive arising from love”

J. A. Motyer, *The Message of James*, p. 70

Christ's law is His gospel

- Change of priesthood, change of law (Heb 7:12)
- It is law of Christ (Gal 6:2)
- It is His “word of truth” that regenerates and saves (Jas 1:18; 2:21, 22-25)

Christ's law is our King's desire for us

- The royal law (Jas 2:8-9)
- Belongs to the King (Jn 4:46; Acts 12:20-21) and His “kingdom” (Jas 2:5, “royal”, “kingdom” same root)
- It is “a special concern of our King” (Motyer, p. 97) and His people (Eph 5:10)

Christ's law is the way to true freedom

- The law of liberty (Jas 1:25; 2:12)
- So obedience is actually freedom

God's law arises from His character

- Dt 4:12-15
- God's law "is the nature of God expressed in commandments" (Motyer, p. 101)
- God's purpose (Lev 19:2)
- Lev 18-19 "I am the LORD"

Law - God's perfection displayed

“The divine nature determines what shall be commanded”

“The brilliance of the diamond is the perfection of the holy God himself: the whole diamond is the law; the individual facets are the commandments”

(J. A. Motyer, *The Message of James*, p. 71 footnote, p. 100)



We were created in God's image, so the law was originally a perfect match for us

“The law of God is perfect, first, because it perfectly expresses his nature and, secondly, because it perfectly matches ours...In his commandments, the Lord has taken what is true about himself and has expressed that truth in a rule for us to obey”

(J. A. Motyer, *The Message of James*, p. 70)

Originally our hearts “fit” God’s law

- God’s law is in His image
- We were created in His image
- Thus, our hearts “fit” God’s law

God’s law



Man’s heart



Our old heart distorted by sin

- Heart of stone (Ezek 36:26)
- Heart is deceitful and desperately sick (Jer 17:9)

God's law



Our old heart



Our new hearts “fit” God’s law

- Love in freedom is the fulfillment of the law (Gal 5:13-15; 5:1)
- “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments” (Jn 14:15)
- “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart...You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets” (Mt 22:37-40)

God’s law



Our new heart



God's law arises from His character

“We live the truly human life when we express his likeness in our conduct”

“The law which is the perfect expression of the divine nature is also the perfect vehicle of expression for human nature”

Alec Motyer, *The Message of James*,
pp. 71

Christ's law: Path of true freedom

“God’s law describes
the life of true
freedom; obedience
opens the door into
the free life”

(Alec Motyer, *The
Message of James*, p. 102)



**Love one
another
Love your
neighbor
Love the Lord
your God**

Christ's law is the way to true freedom

- We experience true happiness and are the most fruitful when we obey Christ's commands (John 15)
- Freedom and the law (Gal 5:1; 13-14)
- Slavery to sin (Rom 6:12-16)

Christ's law safeguards our freedom

- “The law of God safeguards that liberty for us” (Alec Motyer, *The Message of James*, p. 71)
- As an ox to the slaughter (Prov 7)

Safeguarding our freedom

- Christ's laws are intended to keep us on the path of freedom
- They try to prevent us from falling into bondage to sin

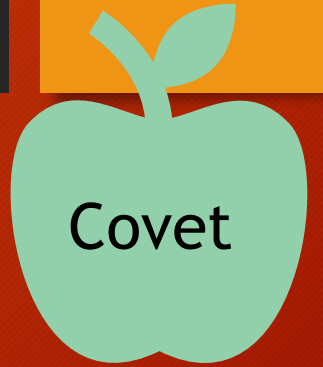


Law safeguards our liberty



Thou shalt not...

Freedom



Thou shalt not...