

## SINCE NO ONE CAN KEEP THE LAW, WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

**ANSWER :** That we may know the holy nature of God, and the sinful nature of our hearts; and thus our need of a Savior.

### **Bible Passage:**

Romans 3:19–20

### **Memory Verse:**

Romans 3:20

**Virtue:** Awe

### **50 minute Lesson Outline:**

- Catechism Recap (5 mins)
- Introduction to Question (5 mins)
- Teaching Outline (15 mins)
- Discussion and Question Time (20 mins)
- Virtue Vision (5 mins)

**Big Idea:** The law serves to reveal sin, to guide, and to communicate the character of God.

**Aim:** To understand that the law is valuable in the life of the Christian.

### **LEADER'S NOTES:**

The question of the usefulness of the law in the life of the Christian is a valid one. Why is the law necessary, when it has already been established that no human can live perfectly according to God's law? This lesson will be useful to encourage and excite us about the goodness of the law in the life of a Christian, and help us anticipate the law throughout daily living. **God's law is incredibly valuable to both non-Christians and Christians. To non-Christians it reveals their inability to live according to God's standards and exposes their need of a Savior. To Christians, the law helps them live in a way that is glorifying to God. The law also reveals the character of God, and that is beneficial for all people.**

#### **Things to remember:**

- Some people might be inclined to think that the law is superfluous in the life of the Christian; care must be taken to help them see the usefulness of the law.
- Be aware of the danger of nurturing legalism. Continue to explain that obedience to the law is a right response to God's saving grace.

## Question 14 Review

### Did God create us unable to keep his law?

No, but because of the disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, all of creation is fallen; we are all born in sin and guilt, corrupt in our nature and unable to keep God's law.

## INTRODUCTION TO QUESTION 15

*You will need a mirror and a dry erase marker for this introduction.*

Hold up the mirror and ask the group what they see in the mirror. Invite some to come closer and investigate their reflections in the mirror. Ask the group to explain what a mirror is used for. Tell them to imagine that they're explaining the concept of a mirror to someone who has never seen

Put the mirror down for a minute and write "THE LAW" across it using a dry erase marker. Explain to the group that the law of God functions like a mirror for the Christian. Tell them that as Christians look into the law, they see what they are really like. **Explain that the law does not show us our outward appearance as a mirror does. It shows us what our hearts look like.**

Introduce question 15: "Since no one can keep the law, what is its purpose?"

Explain that this question will allow them to understand the purpose of the law. They've already seen that it can act as a mirror and that it reveals God's character. Encourage the group to **consider how the law might be revealing something about their own hearts to them.**

## TEACHING OUTLINE

### Q.15: SINCE NO ONE CAN KEEP THE LAW, WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE?

Have you ever seen a bank teller or a store clerk check for counterfeit money? They use a special pen and light to identify the authenticity of each bill.

In a similar way, God's law reveals personal sin when applied to a Christians life.

**READ: Romans 3:19-20**

*19 Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God.*

*20 For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.*

Look at verse 20 and discover what Paul is teaching the Romans about the law. He is telling the Romans that through the law comes the knowledge of sin. When Christians read and reflect on the law, the Holy Spirit helps them identify areas of their lives that are not in step with God's law.

Reading the law can help Christians to understand their own hearts and see where they are not meeting God's standards. The law reveals sin, just like the UV light reveals the authenticity of paper currency. So one of the purposes of the law is to remind sinners that they will never be able to live up to God's standards, and because of that they deserve to be punished for breaking the law.

**The law essentially shines a light on the need for a Savior.**

For Christians, the law can also act as a guide to show us how to live. One of the ways Christians can glorify God is by obeying his commands. It's like the family rules for those who are members of God's family. Living by God's good commands helps his children glorify him and also shows the watching world what he is like.

One of the most significant things about the law is that it communicates what God is like; it reveals his character to the world. Each of the Ten Commandments reveals something about God. God's children can hear his voice through his Word to understand what he is like. No one needs to guess.

**The law is important because it reveals the sinful nature of man, it guides God's children in life, and it shows God's character to the world.**

**SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY**

Revisit the Ten Commandments and consider what the commandments teach about God's character.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

**SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION**

(Allow for several answers within your group before reading the provided response.)

- 1. How do I know if the law is helping me to understand my heart?** If we are conscious of our sin and have a desire to change, then the Holy Spirit is using the law to guide and make us more like Jesus.
- 2. Why do non-Christians describe the Bible as all rules and regulations and God as a grinch?** The world does not see the usefulness of the law in the way that Christians do, and they also do not know God in the way that Christians do. People who live away from God are fooled into thinking that they are free, when in fact they are slaves to sin. It is in and through Jesus that perfect freedom is found.

**More to consider:**

Do you think the law can help you glorify God?

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How would you try and explain the usefulness of the law to a non-Christian?

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How does the law expand your view of God?

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**VIRTUE VISION: Awe**

God’s law shows us his holiness. It also shows us how short of that holiness we fall. Look at your list of God’s character and attributes from the 10 Commandments on the previous page. Choose one attribute and commit to studying it in detail throughout this week. This simple exercise will help you love God more and may incline your heart to live for his glory.

**Memory Verse**  
**“For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.” (Rom. 3:20)**