



The Voice Of Truth

A weekly publication of the

Hillcrest church of Christ

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313
(920) 499-5677

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com

August 12th, 2007

PURPOSE OF THE LAW

By Jimmy Pettigrew

First, I want to say we are no longer under the Old Law. That Law was done away," having blotted out the bond written in ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us: and he hath taken it out of the way, nailing it to the cross" (**Col. 2:14**). "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished" (**Matthew 5:17-18**). When this fulfillment came, the law was then blotted out. The Old Law is done away, all its ordinances and laws and worship is done away! People have a hard time understanding this fact, just like the Jews had a hard time understanding this. Notice what Paul said, "but their minds were hardened: for until this very day at the reading of the old covenant the same veil remaineth, it not being revealed (to them) that it is done away in Christ" (**2 Cor. 3:14**). How can you be under that which was done away?

Second, I want to say that the law had a purpose. The law was given because of sin: "What then is the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise hath been made; (and it was) ordained through angels by the hand of a mediator" (**Galatians 3:19**). This law was given,

then, to demonstrate the true nature of transgressions. The law, thereby, did not reveal a way of justification; instead it made known sin for what it was. Since the law could not justify, why was the law given? The law was added because of transgressions, or it was given to make man better aware of the seriousness of his sinful course. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. . . . for I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (**Romans 7:7**). "Did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good;-- that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful" (**Romans 7:13**). Through the law sin was seen in all its ugliness; it was brought out into the open. "Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound" (**Romans 5:20**). Paul means that the law brought sin out where it was recognized for the terrible disease it really is. God introduced the law to increase knowledge of wrongdoing. Men will never see their sin or feel their need of a Savior till they see how horrible their sins really are. So the law was given that man might know his sinfulness and his need for the mercy of God. The Ten Commandments reveal their own purpose: they were enacted in order

to repress the worship of false gods, idolatry, blasphemy, Sabbath breaking, disobedience to parents, murder, adultery, theft, false witness, covetousness. These sins prevailed before the law, but by pronouncing them to be definite transgressions it called in the fear of God's wrath to reinforce the weakness of the moral sense and educate man's conscience.

“So that the law is become our tutor (to bring us) unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (**Galatians 3:24**). The goal of the law was Christ; so, the law was given by God until the coming of Abraham's offspring in whom the promise made to Abraham was crowned. This is shown in the "tutor" image in which the law served until Christ should come. Then would the promise be fulfilled in that there would be justification by faith (**Gal. 3:24**). Not only, however, was Christ the goal of the law, he was also the end of the law. The law became no longer authoritative when it was no longer needed; thus, it served well its purpose, but its purpose was ended as law when the promise was fulfilled. We first knew that the old law was going to be done away because of prophecy. God said through Jeremiah, “Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah” (**Jeremiah 31:31-32**).

The law shut men up under sin, but at the same time it had a real and grand purpose in keeping men in touch with the reality of sin and with the reality of God. It is then that the blessing of the fulfillment of promise can be truly meaningful. One receives this blessing of the promise when by faith one sees in Jesus Christ the fulfillment of it. This now has been revealed in the Gospel. The law thereby had been completed and was no longer in effect.

WHAT MY ABSENCE DID

- IT** made some question the reality of religion.
- IT** made some think that I was a pretender.
- IT** made some think that I regarded my spiritual welfare as a matter of small concern.
- IT** weakens the effect of our worship service.
- IT** made it harder for the preacher to deliver his message.
- IT** discouraged the brethren, and thereby, robbed them of a blessing.
- IT** caused others to stay away from church.
- IT** made it harder for me to meet the daily temptation of the devil.
- IT** gave the devil more power over lost souls.
- IT** encouraged the habit of my non-church going.
- IT** makes the brethren to wonder how faithful you are.

Forsaking the assembling of the saints does much harm to the cause of Christ.