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## THE ORIGINAL, NATURE, PROPERTY, AND USE OF THE LAW

### Sermon 34

“Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.” - Romans 7:12

- I. The original of this law
  - a. Dating of it
    - i. Predates Moses (I.1) – *not bound to the Mosaic “dispensation”*
    - ii. Rooted in God (I.1) – *“finds its source in the being and character of God from all eternity*
  - b. Purpose of it
    - i. Given to intelligent beings (firstborn) so that he may render service to God (I.1) – *written on his heart by God’s finger (I.3) – only a free and intelligent moral being could be given a law and expected to keep it*
    - ii. model for all truth (I.2) – *the law summarizes reality, for holy love is ultimately real*
    - iii. provide a way for continual increase in happiness (I.2) – *men can experience greater bliss than original perfection, i.e. the bliss of obedience*
  - c. Made known to those who know God (I.6) – *God reveals his law in ever greater depth to those who know him and whose spiritual senses are awakened*
- II. The nature thereof
  - a. not the ceremonial law (II.1)
  - b. not the Mosaic law (II.2)
  - c. it is the moral law (II.2)
    - i. “an incorruptible picture of the High and Holy One that inhabiteth eternity” (II.3) – *the moral image of the invisible God*
    - ii. “It is the face of God unveiled” (II.3)
    - iii. “It is the heart of God disclosed to man” (II.3) – *declares his intentions and purposes*
    - iv. “the streaming forth or out-beaming of his glory, the express image of his person” (II.3) – *his character revealed*
    - v. “it is supreme, unchangeable reason” (II.5)
    - vi. “is a copy of the eternal mind, a transcript of the divine nature” (II.6)
- III. The properties of it
  - a. Holy
    - i. in its nature (III.2) – *since it finds its source in God’s being and character*
    - ii. immediate offspring and express resemblance of God (III.3)
    - iii. it is the expositor of sin (III.4) – *it sheds light on all sin and strips it naked for all to see*

- b. Just
    - i. “renders to all their due” (III.5) – *both good and bad*
    - ii. “prescribes exactly what is right” (III.5)
    - iii. “God is the cause of the law of God, but the will of God is God himself” (III.7) – *the law is not some external force that God submits to, but His will is indistinguishable from His being*
  - c. Good
    - i. “inferred from the fountain from whence it flowed” (III.10) – *because we know God is good we can declare with certainty that his law is good, contrary to how it makes us feel at times*
    - ii. mild and kind (III.11) – *it gently, although sometimes forcefully, draws us to God*
    - iii. “winning and amiable” (III.11)
    - iv. is good in its effects (III.12) – *even if the result is conviction, this is still good*
      - 1. as the tree is, so are the fruits (III.12)
- IV. The uses of it
- a. convince the world of sin (IV.1) – although the Holy Spirit can do it without the law – *although the law is his primary vehicle of conviction*
  - b. to bring the broken sinner unto life, unto Christ (IV.2) – *it guides the sinner to God, and it guides the believer to holiness*
    - i. schoolmaster (IV.2)
    - ii. drives by force rather than draw by love (IV.2) – yet love is the spring of it all
  - c. to keep us alive (IV.3)
    - i. how the Spirit prepares the believer “for larger communications of the life of God.” (IV.3) – *it is the language God uses to speak to his people, and obedience to it is the language his people use to speak to God*
    - ii. Christ is the scope of the law, and once brought to him is keeps us with him (IV.3) – *the law guides us to Christ and enables us to keep us with Christ*
      - 1. it convinces us of sin (IV.4) – *sin we know not yet of*
      - 2. “[derives] strength from our Head into his living members” (IV.4)
      - 3. confirming our hope (IV.4) – *shows us what we are yet to become*