

WEDNESDAY

August 20

Different Functions of God's Law

The law of God reveals God's character, who He is. As God is holy, righteous, and good, so also is His law. Paul confirms: "So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good" (Rom. 7:12, ESV).

In the Bible, the law of God is seen in a very positive light (Matt. 5:17, 18; John 14:15; 1 Cor. 7:19). One may create poems on the law (like Psalm 119), sing about the law (Psalm 19), and meditate on it day and night (Ps. 1:2, Josh. 1:8). The law helps keep one from evil and gives wisdom, understanding, health, prosperity, and peace (Deut. 4:1-6, Proverbs 2-3).

1. God's law is like a fence that creates a large free space for life and warns that, beyond a specific point—danger, problems, complications, and even death await (Gen. 2:16, 17; James 2:12).
2. The law is also a signpost pointing to Jesus who forgives our sins and changes our lives (2 Cor. 5:17, 1 John 1:7-9).

In this way, it leads us as a *paidagogos*, a custodian/
guardian, to Christ (Gal. 3:24).

**Read James 1:23-25. What is he saying, and how do these
words help us realize what the function and importance of the
law is, even though it cannot save us?**

23 For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer,
he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass:

24 For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and
straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

25 But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty,
and continueth *therein*, he being not a forgetful hearer,
but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his
deed.

A mirror can reveal your defects, yes. But there is nothing
in the mirror that can cure them. The mirror points to the
problems but offers no solution to the problems. It's the same
with God's law. Trying to be justified before God by keeping the
law would be like staring at the mirror in hopes that, sooner or
later, the mirror will make your defects go away.

Because salvation is by faith and not by works—including works of the law—some Christians claim that the law is done away with, and that we no longer have to keep it. Of course, considering that the law itself is what defines sin— “I would not have known sin except through the law” (Rom. 7:7, NKJV)—this claim is a gross misinterpretation of the relationship of the law to the gospel. The existence of the law is precisely why we need the gospel.

1 TIMOTHY 1:8-11 - FOR THE LAWLESS

ROMANS 3:19 - THAT ALL THE WORD MAY BECOME GUILTY
BEFORE GOD

1 JOHN 1:8-10 - TO LEAD US OUT OF DECEPTION TO
FORGIVENESS AND CLEANSING

ROMANS 7:7 - TO IDENTIFY HIDDEN SINS

No Exodus texts but Parallels - EX 19:4/ REV 12:14-17 -

How successful have you been in your attempts to obey God's law? Well enough to base your salvation on it? If not, why do you need the gospel?

