

How the Bible Fits Together: LAW

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[0 : 0 0] Well, as many of you will know, we recently began a study whereby we are looking at the big question as to how the Bible fits together. We are looking across the whole of Scripture, but in particular we were looking at Genesis 1 and 2 and Revelation 21 and 22, so that's the first two chapters and the last two chapters of the Bible. And even though these were written about 2,500 years apart, the same themes, the same emphases, the same things come up again and again. And we made a diagram of these, how you read in the beginning, you've got the themes of land, family, temple, law, covenant and kingdom, and these same six themes are evident at the very end. And we're looking at how these themes run through the Bible and how the whole Bible fits together. And so tonight we are looking at the fourth theme, law. And in particular we are going to turn to Jeremiah 31, 33. But of course as we do in these sermons we really are going to lots of locations across the Bible. But Jeremiah 31 is a great text in terms of God's law. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord. I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

And we are asking three simple questions. What happened in the Old Testament in terms of law? What happened in the New Testament? And what does it mean to us? Now there's a lot of ground to cover but we'll do our best to get through it and all be well we'll be finished at seven. So what happened in the Old Testament? That's our first question.

Well if you go back to the Garden of Eden, God gave Adam many, many wonderful privileges. If you look at Adam he had everything. He had provision, all that he could have wanted, all the food, all the needs that he had were met. God provided for him. But not only that, God gave Adam purpose. He had a role to play. He had a meaning for his life. He was there as God's representative and he was there to look after the earth, to rule it, to care for it and to fulfill this wonderful destiny. And he also had God's presence with him. They walked together in the garden. He had provision, he had purpose, he had God's presence. So Adam had these wonderful privileges right back at the very beginning. But God's way is always that with privilege comes responsibility. And this is true in every part of life and it was true in the Garden of Eden. And we look at our own lives, we see it's true. You look at marriage, an amazing privilege, but a great responsibility. You look at parenting, an amazing privilege. It's so wonderful to have children, but what a responsibility.

You look at your work, what a privilege it is to have a job, to be paid, to be employed. But yet there's responsibility. With privilege comes responsibility. And one of the big problems of life today is the fact that people want privilege without responsibility. And that's where so many things are going wrong in our nation. God's way is that when we are given privileges we have responsibilities. And if you think about it, responsibility is actually part of our dignity as human beings. It's wonderful to have responsibility because when you look at a child, when you give them responsibility, it means everything to them. You say to a child, you stand here and you keep that door open for everybody. And you make sure that everybody gets in and then you close the door. The child thinks, great, I've got responsibility.

Because it's part of our dignity as human beings. It's a great sense of fulfillment in having responsibility. So back at the very beginning when everything was perfect, God gave Adam responsibilities. Now there were general responsibilities. He had to take care of the garden, he had to fill the earth, he had to exercise dominion, that means to care for the earth, to look after it. And the husband and wife were to help each other and to love each other in a perfect marriage. So there was general responsibilities, but there was also a very specific commandment or law given to Adam. The Lord God commanded the man saying, you may surely eat of every tree in the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat. For in the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die. So right then at the very beginning, Adam is given God's law. But notice the vital point here that law is part of the perfection of Eden. Everything was perfect at the start and there was law there because law is good. And it's so important at the very start that we realize this because so many people think that law is bad. People want to rebel against it and especially the law of the Bible or God's law. They think it's awful. Law is something we don't need. It's restricting. It's oppressive. We don't want it. But that negative view of law is one of the biggest lies that the devil has infiltrated into the human race because law is beautiful. And at the heart of that law that God gave to Adam, it's not that God wants to keep Adam pinned down there or that God wants to oppress him or that God wants to restrict him. It's that God wants Adam to trust him and God wants Adam to obey him and God wants Adam to be faithful to him because they have a relationship. And any meaningful relationship has law at its heart. If you think about marriage, there are a lot of laws that apply to marriage. You get married, there are laws that you are under. It is law that you never go off with somebody else. It is law that you never hurt your wife. It is law that you are not to be selfish. It is law that you are never to lie to one another.

[6 : 53] Now these are laws. But tell me this, will the marriage be happier if the laws are broken or if they are kept? The answer is obvious. The law is a beautiful thing. God's law is perfect and it was part of the perfection of Eden. And the other thing we have to remember is that law is also a means of revelation. Now what does that mean? Well, the law teaches us what God is like. In fact, the law teaches us what God is like and what God likes. In other words, these are the standards that God lives by. This is the way he operates.

This is the kind of God that he is. And this is the kind of behaviour he likes. This is the kind of thing he wants us to do. The law reveals God to us. And so when we read the Ten Commandments, we should say, oh, thank God that this is the kind of God we have.

Not a God who is just happy to pick people up and put them down, a God who is happy to destroy people at a whim, a God who is driven by all sorts of selfish, crazy desires like the Old Testament God or the Greek Gods or the Roman Gods. Our God is righteous. Our God has laws that he keeps. So in Eden at the very start, God gives humanity his law and God expects obedience. But of course, Adam did not obey, Adam disobeyed. And when Adam sinned, when God came to him, he immediately questions Adam on the basis of his law. Look at what it says in Genesis 3. Who told you you were naked? Have you eaten of the three which I commanded you not to eat? You see the link? God has commanded him not to do it and God immediately interrogates Adam on the basis of his law. Did you do the very thing that I told you not to do? And of course, Adam was guilty. God's law was broken and the whole reality of sin came bursting into humanity's experience. And that's exactly what sin is, going against God's law, going against everything that God is. So we can diagram this to see what's happening at the very start. Law is given in Eden, but God's law was broken by Adam. What happened after that in the rest of the Old Testament? We'll go through this as quickly as we possibly can. God comes to Abraham, to Isaac and to

Jacob and he promises various blessings to them. And as we've seen these blessings are in terms of land, the promised land. These blessings are in terms of family. God is establishing his people as this great family of Israel. And God promises his temple. He is going to dwell with his people. And I hope we've been able to see that basically all God is doing is putting things back towards what they were in Eden. He is restoring what went wrong.

Adam and Eve had everything perfect. It broke. He fell and God starts a work of restoration. God comes and promises these things. And all of that is partially fulfilled at the Exodus.

[10:15] God brings his people out of Egypt. They entered into the promised land. They are given, they're established as God's family and God himself will dwell there in his temple, in his tabernacle and ultimately in his temple. So you see what was lost at Eden is being put back. And alongside that, God comes once again and gives them his law. Re-establishing God's law is part of this great restoration project. So I hope that's clear. God's law broken in Eden, but as God works out his plan of restoration, he brings people into their land, the promised land. He delivers them, he establishes God's family and he gives them his law again. But now the situation is much more complicated because the sinful state of Israel means that there is an extensive body of commandments required, not just one command, don't need the three of the knowledge of good and evil, but many commands because the nation is in such a mess. And these laws affect the land, how God's people are going to be politically organized, that's what we call the civil law. These laws affect the family, how people are to behave towards one another, that's what we call the moral law. And these laws affect the temple, how God is going to be approached by his people, that's what we call the ceremonial law. So these three categories of law, civil law for the land, moral law for God's family, ceremonial law for the temple, God has to establish all of these requirements. And without going into any more detail with that, I wanted to just emphasize that these laws did two great things. Keeping these laws had two main purposes. One, it showed God that the people loved him. These laws were based on a relationship and they were to obey these laws because they loved God and they were so thankful to him for what they had done. That's why the 10 commandments begin with these words, I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. These laws are to be obeyed because God has been so good to the people. And Gen. J.D. Army 6 as we read, God, it says, at the hero Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. And these words I command you today shall be on your heart. God wants his people to obey his law because of the loving relationship that they have. The law expressed to God the gratitude and love of the people. So the law said something to God. But the law also said something to the whole world because keeping God's law showed the world that the Israelites were different. It showed the world that the Israelites were God's people. And so the law did not make them God's people, it was not and never was the way of salvation, but it identified them as God's people. They stood out, people could see, the world could see that they were different. But of course, as the Old Testament went on, the story of the law is a negative story because the people did not keep God's law and ultimately Israel lost everything because of their disobedience to God's law.

Jeremiah gives us a summary of that. Here O earth behold, I am bringing disaster upon this people, that's the Israelites, the fruit of their devices because they have not paid attention to my words. And as for my law, they have rejected it. They disobeyed the law, they lost the land, they lost the temple and the family fell apart. And so our diagram can summarize this. You see how the law was given at Eden broken by Adam, the law was given again at Sinai broken by Israel and they lost the privileged status that they had.

So Israel messed up, but God did not give up and God never gives up. Now always remember that just I'm going to pause and say that always remember, you look in the Old Testament, it's a story of failure after failure after failure after failure in terms of God's people, but God never gave up. And God will never give up on you and never think that he has, God does not give up. And in terms of the law, God in the Old Testament promised a glorious future for God's law. And at the heart of it is this wonderful phrase, God's law is to be on our hearts. Now this has come up, I hope this will become clear. Remember we read Cheetah Dona Me, there it said, this law is to be on your heart at the core of your being. But of course Israel failed. But look what Jeremiah says, at the midst of all this destruction, Jeremiah was a prophet when Judah was destroyed, when they lost everything.

And look at what he says in version chapter 31, behold, the days are coming to clear the Lord. When I will make a new covenant in the house with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband declares the Lord, that's the law that they broke.

For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days declares the Lord, I will put my law within them and I shall write it on their hearts. Now Jeremiah is pointing towards what the New Testament is going to fulfill. And I will be their God and they shall be my people. God has got plans for his law. And Ezekiel also tells us something about God's law. He tells us that God's law is related to God's spirit. Let's see what Ezekiel 36 says, I will take you from the nations and gather you from the countries and will bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness and from all your idols. I will cleanse you and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and I will give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers and you shall be my people and I will be your

[17 : 29] God. So even though God's people failed in the Old Testament in terms of law, God has a plan for his law. And that brings us into the New Testament. Now this is interesting because a lot of people think that the New Testament is all about abandoning the Old Testament, that the New Testament is replacing the Old Testament and that when Jesus came he came to do away with God's law. Now a lot of people think like that, maybe you've heard people talk like that, maybe you think like that yourself. It is absolutely not true. The New Testament is not abandoning the Old Testament. The New Testament is not doing away with God's law. It does something far, far more amazing. Jesus himself made this abundantly clear. Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets.

I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I say to you until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot will pass from the law until all is accomplished.

Jesus has come to fulfill the law. Now what does that mean? What does Jesus do? Well Jesus does two great things in terms of the law. One, he fulfills the law in terms of practical application and two, he fulfills the law in terms of penal implications. Practical application, penal implications and I'll explain what these mean right now. So first of all, he fulfills the requirements of the law in terms of practical application. The whole of Jesus's life was one of obedience. We looked at this a little bit in the morning. Adam disobeyed God. Jesus is the second Adam and he obeys God. He listens to what God commands and he perfectly keeps God's law, applying it to every part of his life. But alongside that, Jesus also explains God's law to us and he explains how God's law is to be practically applied in our lives.

Now there's various places where he does this but in particular we have this at the Sermon on the Mount and the Sermon on the Mount is a big law moment in the Bible and so that's why it's on our diagram here. Here Jesus gives vital teaching about God's law and that is because the Sermon on the Mount is the great instruction manual as to how Christians are supposed to live. This is what the kingdom of God should look like. This is how Jesus wants his people to live. The Sermon on the Mount is not about how to become a Christian.

The Sermon on the Mount is how to live as a Christian. And what does Jesus do with the law in the Sermon on the Mount? Does he abandon it? No. He actually broadens it. For example, you've heard that it was said of old, you shall not murder. Whoever murders will be liable to judgment. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment. Whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council, whoever says you fool will be liable to the hell of fire. Jesus is broadening the commandment.

[21 : 00] He's saying murder is not just a case of stabbing somebody or beating them to death. He says murder can be committed inwardly by your thoughts, your attitudes, your emotions towards other people. He says the same about adultery. He says the same about generosity. Jesus is expanding the application of the law. And in particular, Jesus is challenging the obedience of the Pharisees because the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, they saw themselves as being the perfect embodiment of obedience to God's law. But their obedience was only outward. All the Pharisees cared about was the outside. How they looked, how they were seen, how they came across, I'm doing this, this, this, this, this. I'm not like him, her or them. It was all outward obedience. And Jesus is saying, I want more than just outward obedience. I want more than just this outward external obedience of the Pharisees. That's why he says, I tell you unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. And do you see what Jesus is doing? Jesus is making the law an inward matter, as well as an outward matter. In other words, Jesus is emphasizing that

God's law is a matter of the heart. Jesus is putting into place exactly what Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied. God said in the Old Testament, I'll put my law on your hearts.

Jesus is saying, this is how I want you to live, obey my law from your heart. Jesus is fulfilling everything that the Old Testament prophesied. And one of the big issues that Jesus had to deal with was the fact that the Pharisees had added to God's law. And this is where Jesus highlights for us the fact that we must make a distinction between law and tradition. Jesus tells us that tradition must never be given the status that belongs only to God's law. We see an example of this in Matthew 15. The Pharisees and the scribes came to Jesus from Jerusalem and said, why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? For they do not wash their hands when they eat. Jesus answered them, why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? For God commanded, honour your father and mother. And whoever reviles father and mother must surely die. But you say if anyone tells his father or his mother what you would have gained from me is given to God, he need not honour his father. So for the sake of your tradition, you have made void the word of God. Now this is an incredibly important thing to think about because churches often have many traditions, don't they? And many of these traditions are wonderful. Many of them are just brilliant. But we must never put tradition at the level of God's law.

Now that raising of tradition to the level of God's law is a Roman Catholic doctrine. The Roman Catholic Church teaches that tradition is equal to God's law. Now we protest against that as Protestants, we do not agree with that because we do not follow that Catholic doctrine, that Roman Catholic doctrine. But all too often it happens because I have heard of people who have stopped going to church because they don't like sing songs or because they don't like the ESV or because they don't like the way they have to sit, perhaps because pews have been removed or something like that. And I'm sure you know of people who have done that as well. I know of people across the island who have done that. And the vital thing to recognise is that none of these things are part of God's legislative requirements. But the command to worship together and the command to not neglect the fellowship with God's people, that's a law. That is part of God's law. And so if somebody refuses to come to church over a matter of tradition, are they doing the right thing? Or are they deliberately disobeying the law of God for the sake of their tradition? Now I just want to highlight this because we must never play down the seriousness of this. God's law is to be obeyed. And we must never put anything at the level of God's law. Now in all of this I am not saying that tradition is bad. I'm a fan of a lot of traditions. And many of our traditions are so precious.

And we must never be insensitive to traditions as well. Every church across the whole world has all sorts of traditions. And that's a good thing. But what I am saying is that the question that really matters is what does God's law say? Jesus is making it very clear to the Pharisees that we must have a right view of God's law and that tradition should never be treated as God's law. And if you think about it, the reason for that is very simple.

[27 : 07] Because we decide what a tradition is, don't we? But only God writes his law. So Jesus gives us a fuller, clearer explanation as to how God's law is to be applied. He fulfills it in terms of practical application. But he also fulfills the requirement of the law in terms of penal implications. And what I mean by that is the fact that he took the penalty of the law. That was part of his work on the cross. He bore the punishment that our sins deserve. Paul explains that beautifully for us in Galatians 3. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. For it is written, cursed is everyone who's hanged on a tree. So that in Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles. So that we might receive the promised spirit through faith. Paul is saying that Christ bore the curse of the law for us. He bore the penalty of the law. Our sins were placed on him. So that means that the cross is also a key law moment. Because there the penalty of the law was poured out upon Jesus. But notice what Paul says again.

I'm going to read it again for you. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. So that's what that's saying. He redeemed us by taking our punishment. Then verse 14, so that in Christ Jesus, the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles. So that we might receive the promised spirit through faith. So what Paul is saying there is because Christ has done that, we can receive the promised spirit. So that means that the next big law moment is Pentecost. Because there the Holy Spirit was poured out upon God's people. And ever since then, every single believer has the Holy Spirit dwelling in their hearts.

And what is the Holy Spirit going to do in your heart? Well, Jeremiah and Ezekiel have told us the Spirit is going to write God's law on your heart. This is the covenant that I will make with them in the house of Israel after those days declares the Lord. I will put my law within them and I will write it on their hearts and I will be their God and they shall be my people. And as Ezekiel explains how that's going to happen, I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

Pentecost was a big law moment because there the Spirit was poured out and there the Spirit began its work of writing God's law on our hearts. That's why a spirit filled Christian, a spirit filled Christian is not somebody who says, I don't think about God's law, I don't need God's law. A spirit filled Christian is the one who says, oh, how I love your law.

And that's what Paul is saying in Romans 8. And I'm going to read these verses because it's really important. There's therefore no condemnation, now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus for the law of the spirit of life has set you free in Christ from the law of sin and death. For God has done what the law weakened by the flesh could not do. Now that's saying, that's Paul saying, you cannot be saved by obeying the law. We're not saved by works impossible by sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin. He condemned sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

[30 : 58] He's saying it's through what Christ has done Christ taking our place Christ becoming one of us that sin is dealt with. For those who live according to the flesh set their minds to the use of the flesh. But those who live according to the spirit set their minds to the things of the spirit for to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the spirit is life and peace. For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law. Indeed it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. You however are not of the flesh, but in the spirit, if in fact the spirit of Christ dwells in you. Now do you see what Paul is saying there? He's saying the flesh, the sinful life, our old ways, our unconverted state, that is the state that disobeys God's law. But when the spirit comes and dwells in us, we obey God's law and God is writing his law on our hearts. And that means that God's law is incredibly important for us as

Christians. Jesus did not say, if you love me, then you can forget about the law. Jesus said, if you love me, you will keep my commandments. Now there are two big mistakes that the church has made many times in its history. The first mistake is the mistake of the legalist, which basically elevates the law to say that we must obey God's law in order to be saved. That is not how we are saved. As Romans says, by the works of the law, no human being will be justified. We are not saved by good works. Impossible. That's legalism and it's not the gospel. But the other mistake is known as antinomianism, which basically is like against the law, which basically says if you're saved, do what you like. You're forgiven.

Doesn't matter what you do. God will save you. Live as you please. That also is totally wrong. Jesus saves us by his grace, but he wants us to live a life of obedience in response.

So the New Testament does not do away with God's law, rather it emphasizes that as we live as God's people, we are to do what God wants. In other words, the law is not a way to life. In other words, not a way of salvation. The law is not a way to life. It is a way of life for those who have been saved. So Jesus is fulfilling what the law commands.

Now I just have to say a couple of words here just to clarify a point. Remember back in the Old Testament, we said that you had the ceremonial law, the civil law, the moral law. The Old Testament has lots and lots of laws and many of them we no longer apply.

[34 : 21] And the reason for that is because Jesus has fulfilled the law and that brings practical implications. Jesus has made you and me his temple. So therefore we no longer need the ceremonial law and the sacrificial system. Jesus is making the whole world into his land. That's why we no longer need the specific political laws for Israel, the civil law, but we need the principles of that law which should be applied to all our nations. But Jesus is also making us his family. And there in his family, the moral law still applies.

And that's why we still must obey the Ten Commandments and that's how we are to live as God's children. And as we said, Jesus is making the whole world into his land. But at the moment God's law is not honoured across the whole world. But one day it will be. And that brings us to the last law moment of the New Testament, the new creation. At the very end when God makes all things new, when God makes a new heavens and a new earth, his law will be perfectly obeyed. Will there be laws in heaven? Yes there will. There will be God's law. But the wonderful thing is that because our nature has been completely regenerated by the Holy Spirit and because we are united to Christ by faith, it will be impossible for us to break God's law anymore. And that's why when Revelation 21 describes God's new creation, it says nothing unclean will ever enter it. Not anyone who does what is detestable or false, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Lawbreaking and lawlessness will never be in the new creation. And I hope you can see that this is where we've come back to everything that we should have had in Eden. Back in Eden, God's law was to be obeyed. And now God's ultimate plan is that his law will be perfectly obeyed once again in the new creation. Now we can easily stand back and think, well how am I going to be able to do that? This is where we go back to Romans 3 where it reminds us that by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemns sin in the flesh in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us. We will be able to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law because we won't be walking according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. In other words, in heaven, in the new creation, there will be no more sin, no more law, no more lawbreaking, no more disobedience. That's

God's ultimate plan. So that's what happened in the Old Testament, that's what happened in the New Testament. Law runs right through it all. What does this mean for us? I'm going to say two things very, very briefly and again you've been so, so patient with all of this.

I'm going to say two things briefly. Remember when we said in the Old Testament that there were two great principles for the law in terms of the Israelites. The first was that obedience to the law showed them that showed God that they loved him and it also showed the world that they were God's people. These two principles still apply. At the heart of God's law is love and in particular love for God. We obey God's law because of our relationship with him. He has loved us, he has blessed us with immense privileges and we obey our responsibilities towards him because we love him, because we want to thank him, because we want to live the way he wants. That's why Jesus said the most important commandment is this, love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength. Love for God is our number one priority. But alongside that is the second most important command, love for one another. And that's also at the heart of God's law.

Paul summarizes that brilliantly in Romans 13, oh no one anything except to love each other. For the one who loves one another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not covet and any other commandment are summed up in this word, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.

[39 : 25] Love does no wrong to a neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. We owe each other love and we are to constantly show this. And so do something this week that shows somebody in this community that you love them. Go for it, do something that will show that you love them. As Jesus said, this is the second most important commandment, love your neighbor as yourself. So at the heart of God's law is love for him and for our neighbor. But secondly, and last of all, it's 6 59, I was trying to get finished by seven, I'm very nearly there. Obeying God's law is at the heart of our missionary work. Remember in the Old Testament, obedience to God's law identified the Israelites as God's people.

The same principle applies. How is the world going to know that you're a Christian? If you keep God's law. And that has practical implications for me and for everyone. But at the heart of that again is love. And that's why when people look at us as Christians, they should see first and foremost that we are a loving people. That's why Jesus said by this all people will know that you're my disciples if you have love for one another.

And that's why every unloving act between Christians is utterly wrong and incredibly damaging and desperately serious. And I don't want you to ever, ever, ever play that down.

An unloving act between Christians is appalling, appalling. Because we are to love, love, love one another. And that's what makes us stand out in a world that is selfish, in a world that is greedy, in a world that puts number one first in a world that exploits people on the other side of the world for our benefit, in a world that couldn't care less, who hurts us as long as I'm okay, we are different. We love one another. And people should see this incredible transformation in their lives if we are Christians. And I hope that the one thing that Carla, we thinks about this church, whatever other things they think, I hope the one thing they think is that we are a loving people. Because that is what God wants us to be. And this is where I hope you see that God's law is not a dry or a harsh or a cold doctrine, it is the foundation of joy and of peace and of love and of closeness.

It's a family thing. God's law will always lead you to love. That's why if God's law is really written on our hearts, we will be the most openly and actively loving people that the Isle of Lewis has ever seen. Because that's what God's law is all about. And oh, how we want God to write his law on our hearts. But I'm going to say one thing in conclusion.

[42 : 54] And again, I'm just so thankful to you for being so patient because there's so much in all of this. On the day of judgment, we will be judged. And the standard for judgment will be God's law. A lot of people think that God will ask them the question, did you believe in me? And maybe many ministers have asked that, I've said it that way, I think I've said it that way myself, that God will say to you, did you believe in me? But I don't think God will actually say that. I don't think the New Testament teaches that he will say that. The New Testament teaches that God will ask you the question, did you obey my law? And every single one of us hears that question and thinks, no, I haven't. Because we cannot. And the only difference between the Christian and the non Christian on that day is not that the Christians can say, yeah, I've kept your law. The Christian will simply say, no, I haven't kept your law. But I haven't advocate Jesus Christ, who will stand on my behalf and who took the punishment in my place. That's why we all need Jesus more urgently than anything. Please ask yourself that question. Did you keep my law? Amen.

Ladies and gentlemen, you may now begin the address.