



January 8, 2023

Abounding Grace: The Grace of the Law
The Law is Good

Romans 7:12

For Discussion and Reflection (You will need a copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF), which you can find on the internet.)

1. We all need a refresher now and then regarding the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. Read the Westminster Confession, chapter 7. When was the covenant of works given to man? Before or after the fall? When was the covenant of grace given to man? How is the covenant of grace administered in the old and new testaments? Consider Paul's argument in Galatians 3:15-18.
2. Keep looking at WCF, chapter 7. Notice in section 6 the final sentence, "There are not therefore two covenants of grace, differing in substance, but one and the same, under various dispensations." The point of the authors is that Israel and the church share in one covenant of grace differently administered. Note Paul's argument in Ephesians 2:11-22 concerning the church's inclusion in the covenant community, not the creation of a new covenant community under a different covenant of grace. One way of expressing this is to say, "Israel is the stem, and the church is the bloom of God's covenant family."
3. How then did the Law of God function in the nation of Israel? Was it their path to justification before God? Since the fall, has the Law of God functioned as our path to eternal life? Consider Paul's answer to that question, Galatians 3:19-22. How would you summarize his teaching? Consider his similar argument in Romans 4:13-15. One of the primary functions of the law is to convince us of sin and our need of a Savior. (Romans 7:7-12)
4. Let's consider the Westminster Confession, chapter 19, Of the Law of God. Focus for a moment on section 6. Read it carefully. What spoke to you from this section? Notice the words informing, discovering, and conviction. How does the law do each of these things? Can you think of passages that express these truths? For a simpler explanation, consider the Larger Catechism Question/Answer 95.
5. So, if the moral Law of God (not the judicial or ceremonial) is still something we are called to learn from and (under the influence of the Holy Spirit) obey, what has Christ done for us in relation to the law? Hint: WCF, 19:6 alludes to two answers. One is stated as what believers are not under the law as; while the other refers to something we are freed from. Christ has handled both of these things for us: Romans 5:19, Galatians 3:13.
6. Finally, consider WCF 16:2,3. Section 2 speaks to the meaning behind our obedience; while section 3 speaks to our need of the Holy Spirit. What stood out to you from these two sections?
7. Pray together that as we study, God would use His Law to show you his goodness and grace in Jesus Christ.