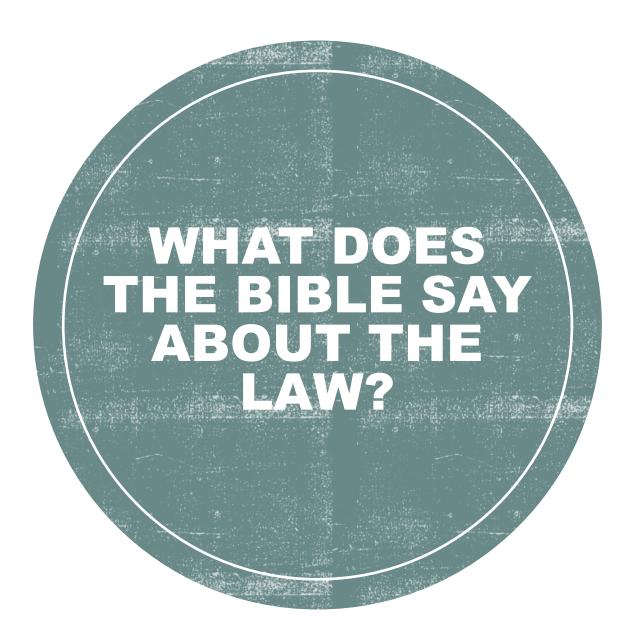


Using the Mosaic Law in Ethics

An Approach to Understanding and Using the Law



The Law is Good (and Useful)

- Scripture unabashedly speaks positively about the Law in both OT and NT
- "My soul keeps your testimonies; I love them exceedingly" (Ps 119:167)
- "the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good" (Rom 7:12)

The Law is Abolished

- "You are not under the law but under grace" (Rom 6:14)
 - Cf. "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law" (Gal 5:18)
- "But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code" (Rom 7:6)
- "Christ is the end of the law" (Rom 10:4)



The Law is Abolished cont.

- An analysis of Rom 14:1–15:6 indicates the law is no longer normative for the believer
 - Law forbids eating certain foods (Lev 11:1–44; Deut 14:3–21)
 - Rom 14:2 indicates only weak believers obey those stipulations
- Circumcision and the Sabbath (the Heart of Israel's Covenant) are Obsolete in the NT
 - Circumcision no longer necessary (Rom 4:9–12; 1 Cor 7:19; Gal 5:2–4, 6; 6:15)
 - Sabbath no longer necessary (Rom 14:5–6; Col 2:16–17)



Summary Thoughts

- The Law was inherently tied to the Mosaic legislation as part of God's covenant with Israel at Sinai.
- Scripture is clear that the new covenant has replaced the Mosaic covenant (2 Cor 3:7–18; Heb 7:12, etc.).
- The Law stands or falls as a whole unit (James 2:10; Gal 5:3).
- If the Mosaic covenant has been abrogated, then the entire Law has been abrogated.





Why does it seem some laws retain their authority in the NT?

How can Paul and Jesus quote the Law authoritatively?

How can the Law help us make ethical choices?

4 Major Views on the Believer's Relationship to the Law

- Traditional Reformed Approach (Tripartite)
- Christian Reconstructionism (Theonomy)
- Lutheran (Law/Gospel)
- Principlism



Foundations of Principlism

- The Law reflects the character of God
- The Law reflects God's creation design
- The Law also has a temporal application to a specific cultural context experienced by Israel
- The Law remains applicable as a didactic lens through which the believer is able to learn about God or His creation design



3 Steps of Principlism

- 1. Determine the original meaning, significance, and purpose of the law in question.
- 2. Trace the theological significance of that law, drawing connections from Law structure.
- 3. Determine appropriate application and implication for the theology of that law in contemporary context.



Law Structure - Exodus

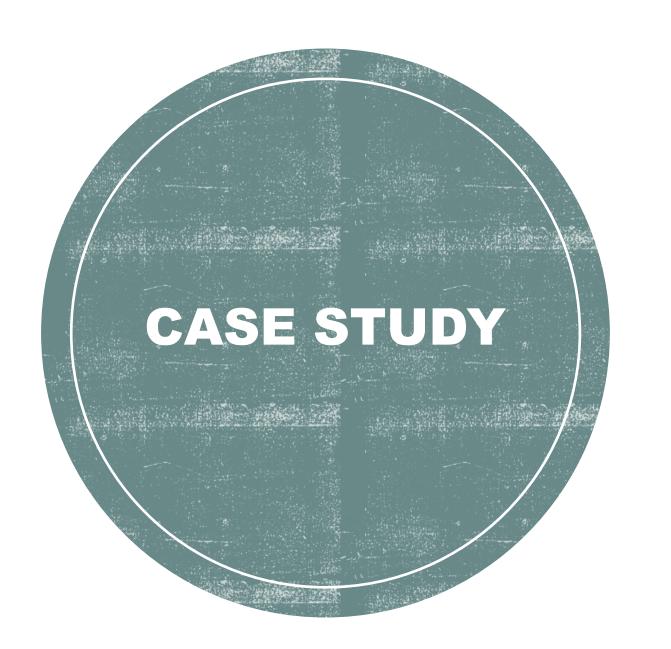
Historical Prologue	Exod 19:1-4	
Preamble	Exod 19:5-6	
General Stipulations	Exod 20:3-17	
Specific Stipulations	Exod 21:1–23:19	
Provisions for Reading	Exod 24:4-7	
Blessings and Curses	Exod 23:20-23	



Law Structure - Deuteronomy

Preamble	Deut 1:1-5	
Historical Prologue	Deut 1:6-4:49	
General Stipulations	Deut 5:1-11:32	
Specific Stipulations	Deut 12:1–26:19	
Blessings and Curses	Deut 27:1–28:68	
The Witnesses	Deut 30:19; 31:19; 32:1-43	





Deuteronomy 22:8

"When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if anyone should fall from it."

Law Structure - Deuteronomy

Preamble	Deut 1:1-5	
Historical Prologue	Deut 1:6-4:49	
General Stipulations	Deut 5:1-11:32	
Specific Stipulations	Deut 12:1–26:19	
Blessings and Curses	Deut 27:1–28:68	
The Witnesses	Deut 30:19; 31:19; 32:1-43	



Commandment/General Stipulation	Deuteronomy Text	
Commandment One – No other gods	Deut 12:1–31	
Commandment Two – No images	Deul 12.1–31	
Commandment Three – Do not take name in vain	Deut 13:1-14:21	
Commandment Four – Keep Sabbath	Deut 14:22-16:17	
Commandment Five – Honor father and mother	Deut 16:18–18:22	
Commandment Six – Do not murder	Deut 19:1-22:8	
Commandment Seven – Do not commit adultery	Deut 22:9–23:14	
Commandment Eight – Do not steal	Deut 23:15-24:7	
Commandment Nine – Do not bare false witness	Deut 24:8–16	
Commandment Ten – Do not covet	Deut 24:17-26:15	



Tracing Deuteronomy 22:8

- "Make a fence around roof" (Deut 22:8)
 - → "You shall not murder" (i.e., value life) (Deut 5:17)
 - → God Created Man in His Image

Creation Principles

- → General Application
 - → Specific Application

Genesis 1–3

- → Ten Commandments
 - → Specific Commandments

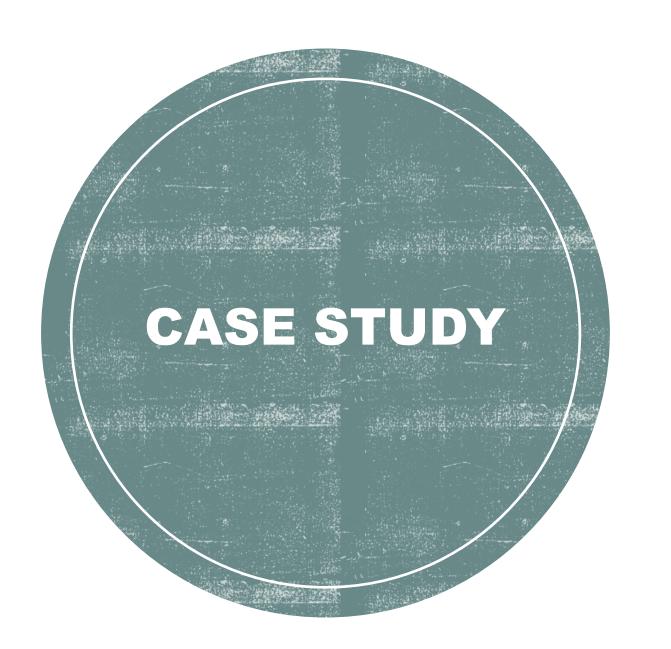


The Example of Jesus

21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' 22 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; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire.

Matthew 5:21–22





Exodus 22:1

"If a man steals an ox or a sheep, and kills it or sells it, he shall repay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep."

Tracing Exodus 22:1

- "Make Repayment for Theft" (Exod 22:1)
 - → "You shall not steal" (i.e., recognize other's posessions) (Exod 20:15)
 - → God created man and has given him real ownership

Creation Principles

- → General Application
 - → Specific Application

Genesis 1-3

- → Ten Commandments
 - → Specific Commandments



Further Study

- My Blog/podcast biblesojourner.com
- David A. Dorsey, "The Law of Moses and the Christian: A Compromise," JETS 34, no. 3 (Sept 1991): 321–334.
- Thomas Schreiner, 40 Questions about Christians and Biblical Law (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2010).
- Brian S. Rosner, Paul and the Law: Keeping the Commandments of God (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013).

