

Sunday,
December
11th of, 2022

Law & Gospel

A Topical
Study

An Overview

According to CFW Walther, how do we understand the Law?

Both are equally necessary because both have for their final aim... mankind's salvation.

Law, ever since the fall, cannot lead us to salvation; it can only prepare us for the Gospel. Furthermore, it is through the Gospel that we obtain the ability to fulfill the Law to a certain extent.

The Law has nothing to say about forgiveness, about grace. It issues only commands and demands. The Gospel, on the other hand, only makes offers. It contains nothing but grace and truth!

Wherever in Scripture, you come across a threat, you may be assured that that passage belongs in the Law.

The Law is to be preached to people who are secure in their sins. The Gospel is to be preached to those who are alarmed of their sins.

When the law convicts a person, immediately present the Gospel.

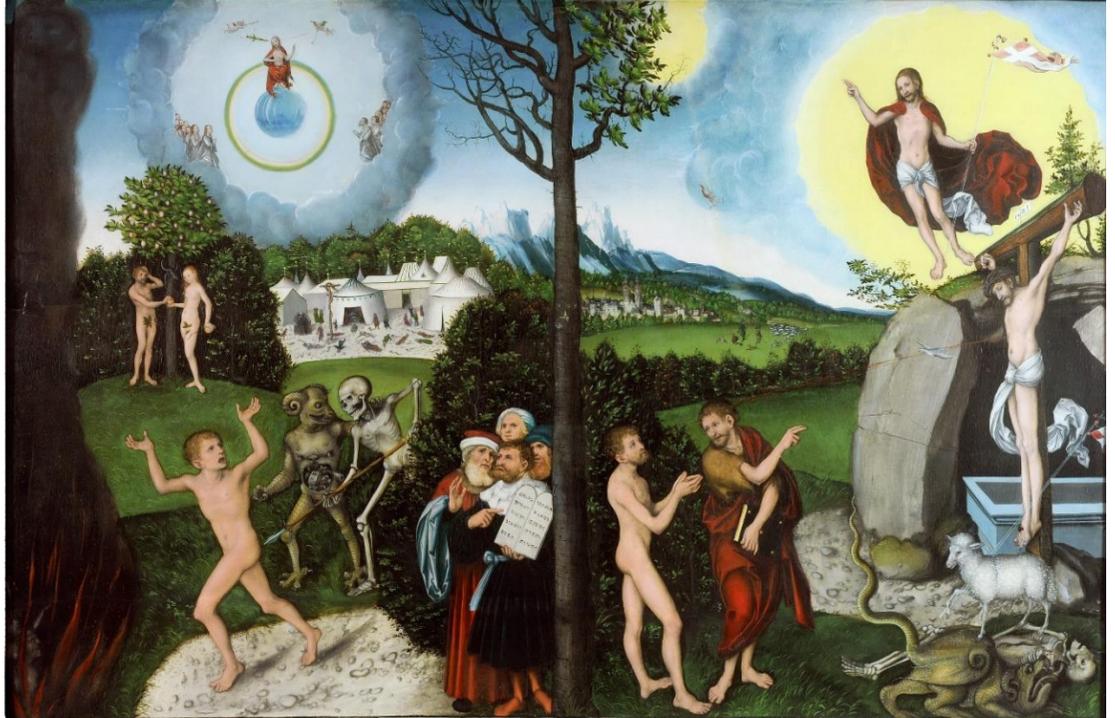
No Gospel element must ever be combined with the Law. Anyone sharing the Law shamefully perverts it by injecting grace into it.

When sharing the Law there must remain in it nothing pleasant to lost and condemned sinners

Even if you were to quit your habitual cursing, swearing, and the like, that would not make you a Christian.

The Law must be proclaimed before the Gospel otherwise, the Gospel will have no effect.

Secure sinners must be preached into hell before they can be preached into heaven. They must be made to realize that they are sick unto death before the Gospel can restore them to health. The Law must first reduce them to nothing in order that they may be made to be something, to praise of the glory of God, by the Gospel.



Lucas Cranach, *Law and Gospel*, Herzogliches Museum, Gotha, Germany.

CFW Walther

How do we understand the Gospel?

Taken from "God's No and God's Yes"

Salvation is not a question of what man must do but what Christ has done.

Feelings follow faith, not faith from feelings. If a person's faith comes from feelings, it is not genuine faith; for faith requires a divine promise which faith lays hold of.

Love must not be added to faith but grow out of it.

The way of salvation is this: We are doing nothing, absolutely nothing, towards our salvation, but Christ has already done everything for us, and we must merely cling to what He has done and draw from His finished work of redemption.

First, a person is saved then he becomes godly.

As long as a person has not been reduced to the state of a poor, lost, condemned sinner, he has no serious interest in the Savior of sinners.

The trouble is that people frequently do not really go to Jesus; they call themselves poor sinners but are not; they want to bring before God some works of their own.

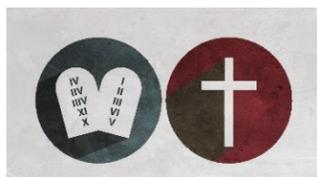
All we can offer God is our sins, nothing else! We deny Him if we come to Him offering Him something for what He gives us (grace).

The Law kills, but the Spirit, that is, the Gospel, makes alive.

The ultimate aim in our proclaiming the Law must be to preach the Gospel.

What makes a person a Christian is this believing knowledge, that he/she is a miserable, accursed sinner who would be lost forever if Christ had not died for him/her.

A Christian must regard him/herself as a lost and condemned sinner, or all his/her talk about faith is worthless.



Law

Examples:

Advent
John the Baptist
Mt. Sinai
Lent
Cain
Pharisee

Gospel

Examples:

Christmas
Jesus
Mt. Calvary
Easter
Abel
Tax Collector

Compare and Contrast:

Law	Gospel
1) Tells us what to do, but does not enable us to comply with its commands	1) Offers and gives us faith. It plants love into the heart and makes him/her capable of all good works
2) Law uncovers man's sin and offers no help to get out of them.	2) Takes all terror, all fear, all anguish, from him/her and fills them with peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
3) Law produces remorse. It brings forth the terrors of hell, death, and wrath of God. It eventually drives them to desperation.	3) Does not require anything good that mankind must do: not a good heart, not a good character, no improvement of his/her condition, and no godliness. It issues no orders, but it changes man.
4) Says "Do"	4) Says "Done"