

## THE FUNCTIONS OF THE LAW

### 1. To create moral accountability

- **Romans 4:15** *And where there is no law there is no transgression.*
- **Romans 5:13** *for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law.*
- **Silenced/held accountable**
  - On **a job application** one question read, "Have you ever been arrested?" The applicant printed the word No in the space. The next question was a follow-up to the first. It asked, "Why?" Not realizing he did not have to answer this part, the "honest" and rather naïve applicant wrote, "I guess it's because I never got caught." (John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Thos. Nelson Publishers, 1993), 35.
  - **No excuses; no rationalizations.**
    - **Cf. Adam**
      - **Genesis 3:12** *The man said, "The woman you put here with me-- she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.*
    - **Cf. Saul:**
      - **1 Samuel 15:14-24** *But Samuel said, "What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? What is this lowing of cattle that I hear?"*
        - <sup>15</sup> *Saul answered, "The soldiers brought them from the Amalekites; they spared the best of the sheep and cattle to sacrifice to the LORD your God, but we totally destroyed the rest."*
        - *"But I did obey the LORD," Saul said. "I went on the mission the LORD assigned me. I completely destroyed the Amalekites and brought back Agag their king.*
        - <sup>21</sup> *The soldiers took sheep and cattle from the plunder, the best of what was devoted to God, in order to sacrifice them to the LORD your God at Gilgal."*
        - <sup>24</sup> *Then Saul said to Samuel, "I have sinned. I violated the LORD's command and your instructions. I was afraid of the people and so I gave in to them.*

### 2. To provoke sinning

- **Romans 5:20** *The law was added so that the trespass might increase. But where sin increased, grace increased all the more,*

### 3. To create consciousness of sin

- **Romans 7:7** *What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet."*
- **Romans 7:10-13** *I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. <sup>11</sup> For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. <sup>12</sup> So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good. <sup>13</sup> Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.*

### 4. To lead us to Christ (schoolmaster)

- **Galatians 3:23-25** *Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. <sup>24</sup> So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.*

### 5. To restrain sinning

- **Galatians 3:19** *What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come.*

### 6. To enhance society

- **Galatians 5:14** *The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."*
  - **Romans 13:10** *Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.*
7. **To witness to Christ's reality**
- **Hebrews 10:1** *The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming-*

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