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DO CHRISTIANS REALLY NEED THE LAW?

Nowadays there is a novel idea afoot! According to the promoters of this idea, the Law (that is, the 10 Commandments) should be completely removed from the Church. This is nothing else but deplorable and irreverent.

The entire Bible teaches that it is the Law which must initiate repentance. Logic as well as experience teaches us this. That is why Scripture says: “The wicked shall return to Sheol, all the nations that forget God” (Psalm 9:17); and: “Put them in fear, O Lord! Let the nations know that they are but men!”(v. 20); “Let them be put

to shame and dismayed forever;...that they may know that you alone, whose name is the Lord, are the Most High over all the earth” (Psalm 83:17); and “The wicked are snared in the work of their own hands” (Psalm 9:16).

In that we are human beings, we encounter sin and death before we encounter righteousness and life. We do not sin and die because we are righteous and alive. Rather, in that we are by nature sinful and die because of Adam, we must be made righteous and alive by Christ. The doctrine of Adam (that is of sin and death) must be taught before that of Christ—whom Adam prefigures (1 Corinthians 15:47).

Sin and death are not exposed by a Word of grace and comfort, but only by the Law. Experience proves this as well. Adam was first rebuked as a breaker of the Law,

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and then restored through the promised descendant of the woman (Genesis 3:15). David also was first killed through the Law, when Nathan said to him: “You are the man!” He was then

restored by the Gospel, when Nathan said: “You will not die” (2 Samuel 12:7,13). Paul was first struck down through the Law, and heard: “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” Then he was made alive again through the Gospel: “Get up” (Acts 9:4, 6).

And Christ Himself said (Mark 1:15): “Repent, and believe the Gospel, for the Kingdom of God has come among you!” And afterwards (Luke 24:46f): “The Christ

must suffer etc. and allow preaching of repentance and the forgiveness of sins in His name.”

The Spirit first rebukes the world because of sin (John 16:8) so that He can then teach faith in Christ, that is, the forgiveness of sins. Paul in Romans held to this way of teaching when he first taught that all people are sinners and then afterwards, that they must become righteous only through Jesus Christ (Romans 3:23, 28). Luke as well asserts in Acts that Paul taught both the Jews and the heathen that no one can become righteous, except through Christ alone (Acts 13:38).



1. What “novel idea” was being promoted in the Church of Luther’s day?
2. Is that same idea being promoted today?
3. If so, in what way is such an idea being promoted?
4. According to the Word of God, what is it that must cause a person to begin to repent?
5. Do we, as Christians, still encounter sin and death?
6. Do we encounter sin and death before or after righteousness and life?
7. Luther gives three examples of people in the Bible who were first exposed to sin and death, and then righteousness and life. Name them:

8. Did Christ preach about sin and death, or only about righteousness and life?
9. Which person of the Trinity convicts the world of sin?
10. Why does He do that?