Dear Reader,

I am new to producing reading sermons. So, if you have any suggestions as to how I might improve my format or what I include – please email me at cdanielwilson@gmail.com. **I will warn you, that I do not use short sentences**. I will endeavor to work on this over time, but I don’t naturally write that way. However, you can easily break most of my longer sentences into 2 or 3 smaller ones where I have “…” or “–“ or commas. If you do the work on making it into smaller sentences – feel free to email it to me, and I am happy to share your work with others. I do have some of these available which people have sent me. I will eventually make them available as part of the normal manuscripts.

I have left my sermon manuscript formatted the way I normally write and read my sermons. They are colourful and written in conversational English. If you are a grammar nazi – then you will be frustrated with my punctuation and phrasing. However, once you read it out loud, you will normally be able to tell what I meant to say. SERIOUSLY, READ IT OUTLOUD. You will also see that I use a good bit of bold, italics, underlining and different colours to signal what are the most important things to say, and also to make it easier for my eye to pick up my place in the middle of paragraphs. I would recommend that you keep as many of those things as possible to help you keep your place. However, you will probably want to increase the spacing between lines. I highly encourage you to commit as much of the introduction or children’s illustrations to memory as you can, so that these can be delivered to the congregation with maximum eye contact.

**Where possible, I highly recommend that you listen to the sermon as I preached it at either the Nelson website or the website of North Shore.** I recommend that because that will also help hear the places where I added or skipped over material in the manuscript, and the places where I clarified my meaning. I have edited bits and pieces which I thought most important, but I have not sought to include all the additional material that comes to me while in the pulpit. I would practically have to use a transcription service for that. However, I hope and pray that this sermon will be a blessing to you and to your congregation. To God be the Glory!

Blessings in our Lord, Pastor Daniel Wilson

**My Suggestions for the Order of Service**

Song before the service: #509

Bro & Sis: ***Our only Hope is found in the Lord our God, the Creator & Sustainer of all Things & Savior of those who trust in Him!*** Grace be yours in abundance, with Mercy and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

We will sing: Ps. **#138 “With Grateful Heart my Thanks I bring” *God commands you to praise, you can do so even if you don’t feel like it! These words will even propel and motivate you to praise the Lord as you dwell on His glory and grace!***

***We will profess our faith using HC Q&A 26 & 28*** *pg. 21-22 Forms and Confs Please be seated*

***NOW FLIP OVER TO PAGE 39 as we Read Heidelberg #86, 90 &91* Prep for the Law**

**Further Readings: Luke 7:38-50 and 24:13-27**

**Song of dedication: 119:73-80: Your hands have fashioned me…** *A prayer to God for understanding of His word/law*

***NOW WE COME TO OUR CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER***

**God has given us such a great salvation - so** let us respond to His grace, by generously giving to support God’s kingdom work through His tithes and our additional Free-will offerings! ***( Deacons)***

*Let’s cont. to worship as we sing* **Our Song of Prep: Sing Psalm #1b "Blessed is the man"**

***Sermon Text:* Ex. 19:3-6, Deut. 4:32-40 + 5:32-6:3 *Sermon Title: Balancing Law and Gospel***

***Let us now sing a* song of Response*–*#441 “Now what my hands have done”**

***May God the Father*** *bless you & keep you,* ***May God the Son*** *turn His face toward you & be gracious to you,* ***May the Holy Spirit*** *lift up his countenance upon you & give you peace!* ***Amen***

***Doxology*: Psalm #106 *vs.1+19***

# **Evening Sermon: “Balancing Law and Gospel” Heidelberg #40 Law #1**

Text: Read Deuteronomy 4:32-40; 5:32-6:3 (Exodus 19:3-6 + reading of the Law)

Reading: Luke 7:38-50 (forgiven much) Luke 24:13-27

**Introduction:** Children, have you ever played on a see-saw at a playground? They can be a lot of fun… But have you ever tried to get the two sides of the see-saw to balance perfectly in the middle? IT is really hard to do! Whenever I go to a playground with my brothers-in-law, I almost always find us doing something kinda silly like that… trying to get the exact balance by moving forward or back along the bar of the see-saw. Normally, you don’t get more than a couple of split seconds that the two sides were completely balanced at any given time… but if you were to take the average of the whole time that we try to balance it… then we average out balanced.

Balancing the demands of the Law and comfort of the Gospel sometimes **SEEMS** just like that! It is hard to get a proper balance at any one moment, for any one congregation member… One of you will always wonder if I have gone too far one way or another! And so, it is important to make sure you keep an eye to the overall balance between the two over the years of ministry or even throughout all the sermons in a given series! ***That balance is important.***

***My purpose tonight is to prepare you for our series through the Law.*** In particular, I want to explain why it is good to focus on the Law, and focusing on the law is not necessarily a neglect of grace. However, it is important to preach the grace and mercy of Christ whenever we look at the law, lest we end up disturbed and burdened by the laws demands.

So, tonight, we will explore the ***biblical balance*** between the Law and the Gospel. There isn’t actually such a dichotomy between them! They are very much connected!

We will explore this by asking & answering the question: ***How do the Law and the Gospel Work together?***

**We will answer that in 2 ways, and then we will close with some practical applications…**

*First off, when asking how the Law and the Gospel work together, we need to realize that :*

# **They (**The Law and the Gospel**) Have ALWAYS been Closely Related (REPEAT)**

*We see that in the original context and purpose of the Law…*

* 1. **Now perhaps that statement surprises you… *How could the Law and the Gospel be related?***

Very quickly and Simply: When I say Gospel – **I refer to the good news of God’s salvation through the Messiah.**

The Gospel given to the Israelites who were slaves in Egypt, was that God Himself was sending Moses to set them free, and bring them on eagle’s wings to Himself! *They were saved* ***physically****, and then God revealed Himself to them spiritually, … they didn’t have it as clear as we do, but Moses was a type/figure of Christ, and he taught them how to trust/rest in the coming Messiah through the sacrifices they made.*

**NOW** **LISTEN CAREFULLY –** THERE WAS NEVER A TIME WHERE OT ISRAEL KEPT THE LAW AS THEIR JUSTIFICATION! NEVER! The OT Sacrifices **NEVER** gave salvation to anyone… they all prefigured and pointed to the Messiah – Jesus Christ! As the Writer to the Hebrews points out so powerfully in chapter 10: ***The Blood of bulls and goats could never pay the price for sin***!

 This is important because it means that there was never a TRUE God-Given dichotomy between the Law and the Gospel… There was never a time when the Law was used to earn salvation, and then God decided to be nice to the NT church and just forgive us in Jesus. ***That sort of idea of a contrast/conflict between law/grace was always based on a misunderstanding of God’s Word and Salvation of Israel!*** We see this illustrated for us in Deuteronomy 4, because Moses impressed upon the people of Israel the glory of their salvation and their relationship with God… HE pressed on them the glorious riches of God’s grace… ***What other nation ever received such grace…***The Israelites were shown the mighty works of God for a particular reason stated in Deut.4:35ff **VS 39 is the call to faith in God! *READ:***

**That came first, THEN they were given the purpose of the Law as God’s redeemed people! (40)**

* 1. **And Moses gives the people 3 reasons/purposes for the Law**

We read the summary of those purposes in chapter 4 and 5, and then Moses gives them to us individually in chapter 6, vs 2 and 3. ***READ 6:1-3*** (***The Law did not have a purpose of salvation, it had the purpose of PRESERVATION and blessing***). Proverbs and Deuteronomy show that the general use of the Law results in benefits and blessings for the believer!

Deuteronomy 5/6 show us the same thing! The 3 OT purposes of the Law are these:

1. The Law was meant to Hold people faithful to God (keep them from straying after idols etc),
2. The Law was given to Prolong their lives, (because sin leads to death!), and
3. Thirdly, the Law was given to positively Bless/Prosper God’s People.

Like Wisdom of Proverbs – those who obey and are wise… generally… are successful in this life. FOOTNOTE HERE… When a person is rich, does that mean that they were wise and obedient? No, not necessarily… Psalms 37 and 73 both lament the power and wealth of the wicked. God doesn’t bless wickedness, but he does occasionally set them up for a fall… thru riches and power = As Psalm 37 says, He puts their feet in slippery places!

So, We have seen that the Law and the Gospel have always been closely related… indeed the Law was NEVER an avenue for salvation, FAR from it, the Law was given in the context of God’s Gospel Message of salvation from Egypt. In fact, on the road to Emmaus, when Jesus explained to His disciples how and why He had to die to save sinners… where did He turn? We are told that He began with Moses (with the Pentateuch and the Law) and explained how He was always supposed to suffer and die for sinners! The Gospel of Jesus Christ (however obscurely) ***was taught*** to OT Israel!

*We have seen that The Law and the Gospel were always closely related, but* ***Secondly EVEN in the New Covenant****:*

# **The Law and the Gospel STILL Must Work Together (REPEAT)**

* 1. **NEITHER the Law, nor the Gospel, work alone!**

If I preach God’s Law, with no reference to the original redemptive context or to God’s grace in Christ – No one would be saved! I would simply send people to Hell well-informed of their guilt before God. At best, I would be legalistic or moralistic – making “nice” people without leading them to Christ.

However, I can’t do the other extreme either! If I only preached God’s grace and love with no reference to What you are saved from – Sin and the curse and condemnation of the LAW – then no one will be saved either. “Submitting your life to Christ” or “Following Jesus as your example” without understanding your sin, or Jesus’ work of taking your punishment for sin **does not save!** Just believing that Christ loves you somehow, without understanding His requirements/obligations on your life – is not saving faith! Such is anti-nomianism and easy-believism …

 You see Preaching God’s Offer of Salvation through Christ without including God’s command to Repent of Sin and Follow Christ (ie the Law…) is a false Gospel, JUST AS preaching the Law all the time without God’s grace is just moralistic legalism!

 A solo ministry of EITHER Gospel or LAW (one without the other) will lead many to Hell!

* 1. **So How does the Law and the Gospel work together, you Ask?!**

The Reformers outlined this by listing 3 purposes for the Law:

The Law Restrains Evil, The Law shows the sinner their need for Christ, and The Law leads the Christian in sanctification.

**From the view point of the believer’s daily life, the order should be:**

* 1. The Law Drives you to Christ – every day you and I are sinners in need of Christ our Savior! Ongoing connection to the Gospel – the staff of Our Shepherd to urge us back to Him!
	2. The Law works like the Mirror of God. It shows us Christ’s image and how we fail to reflect His image… where we fail to measure up. This is the Law for Sanctification, making us look more like Christ’s Redeemed people. ***The Law simply reveals the nature and character of Christ, and we are being conformed or transformed to look like our savior by the power of the Spirit each day!***
	3. Finally, as a Social/Political Guide – the Law shows where society should be restrained/resisted (abortion, porn, blasphemy, corrupt politicians etc!) – It helps define the Gospel Citizen if you will…
	4. **Therefore… Practically … How should we proceed through these sermons on the Law?**

*Well, let’s take those 3 purposes for the Law and apply them to ourselves! (in reverse)*

1. As we go to each commandment, look around you to see where you can be involved as a Gospel Citizen – restraining wickedness to the Glory of God – *Just in the first table of the law… Avoid any occasions which tempt you to idolatry or sin. This might mean Culling books, movies or artwork around the house which do not depict/represent God as He is revealed in the Word… Speak to co-workers who take God’s name in vain – stand up for God’s honor, cull books or movies which contain blasphemy! AND LOOK FOR HOW YOU CAN ENCOURAGE OTHERS IN GODLINESS, Standing up for God’s priorities in life.*
2. As we go to each commandment look for where you do not yet look like Christ (use the mirror!). Where are you not bearing the fruit of the Spirit? Actively start working on conforming your life to the image of Christ. This is where we use the Law to work on being more fruitful, more productive and pleasing to the Lord! ***NOT EARNING Anything with God, but expressing your faith through your actions!*** *This purpose of God’s Law is to make God’s people Look like God’s People!*
3. Finally, and most importantly, as we go to each commandment – look for your sin, ***that being forgiven much you might love much!*** For that is the greatest benefit of the Law to the Believer! The Law shows you how great the Love of God really was in saving wretches like us! Don’t be like the Pharisee who didn’t think he was as wicked as the “sinful woman”… Rather, seek to be honest with yourself before God, so that you understand just how much you need the righteousness of Jesus Christ in the Gospel!

Those of us who most dishonour Christ in our lives, do so because we don’t love Him much, because He is not so dear to us – because we don’t know how desperately we need His salvation!

Please hear me on this… **Don’t look at the Law and say –** *Oh Woe is me, I am such a wretched sinner, I am going to feel bad about myself and be depressed and ignore church and stay at home!* –**NO!** – To do that is to despise the glorious grace of Christ! INSTEAD, when you see your wretchedness, when you see just how often you sin against God, Turn to God in AWE & say, ***God, you love ME?!* You sent Your only Son to die for ME! Oh, the Grace & Power of God!**

This is WHY it is ok to be reminded of God’s mercy even when preaching the Law – because as useful as the law is for sanctification – IT’s PRIMARY USE IN YOUR LIFE MUST ALWAYS BE TO FURTHER YOUR RELIANCE ON CHRIST!

**The OT practice proves this, because every time they broke/violated a law of God what were they to do?**

Go to the Temple and offer a sacrifice … and those sacrifices (according to Hebrews) always pointed to Christ – so the Law was constantly driving the Israelites to depend on Christ in faith thru their sacrifices! ***Isn’t that beautiful!*** Thankfully we don’t have to offer so many bulls and goats now because The Lamb of God has come – and so as we see our sin in the Law, we turn to Christ in faith – repenting/confessing our sin and changing our behavior. *So, when I preach on each commandment, I will be seeking to lead you to see your own sin, but I will also be directing you to God’s grace in Christ, because you can’t begin with Christ and finish on your own steam… You CAN’T!*  It was Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones who said we need to preach the Gospel as if we are Antinomian – ANTI-LAW! And that is so true! And yet the other side is to preach the LAW as if we are required to keep every jot and tittle…. For that drives us to see the wickedness and unworthiness of our sinful hearts! ***Beautiful tension…***

And… When you see your wickedness in stark contrast to God’s Love and Grace you will explode with Joy and Praise… as we will sing in a moment: ***I bless the Christ of God, I rest on Love divine, and with unfaltering lip and heart I call this Savior MINE! Tis He that saveth me, and freely pardon gives, I Love because He loveth me, I LIVE because He Lives!***

As we continue in this series, Let the Law wrench that song of Praise from your heart – to the Glory of Christ! **Amen.**