

“Master of Ceremonies”

THE STARTING LINE: Jesus demonstrated his authority by challenging some of the accepted interpretations of Old Testament laws AND

The first part is easy to see: “he taught with authority and not as the scribes”

Mark 2:23-28 One Sabbath he was going through the grainfields, and as they made their way, his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. And the Pharisees were saying to him, “Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the Sabbath?” And he said to them, “Have you never read what David did, when he was in need and was hungry, he and those who were with him: how he entered the house of God, in the time of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and also gave it to those who were with him?” And he said to them, “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. **So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.**”

Mark 7:18-19 And he said to them, “... Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.)

THE STARTING LINE: Jesus demonstrated his authority by challenging accepted interpretations of Old Testament laws AND by actually changing some of them.

It is hard for us to grasp how revolutionary this was! We are talking here about “the law OF GOD”!!!!

NOTES:

1) Jesus changed some Old Testament laws because he had the authority to do so.

“So the Son of Man is lord even of the Sabbath.”

Q. Who does he think he is? A: He thinks he is the Lord! “

(The Son of Man” = “the Son of God” the Ultimate Human Being ~ “the image of God” ==> “God Himself”!))

Isaiah 33:22 For the Lord is our judge; the Lord is our lawgiver; the Lord is our king; he will save us.

To believe that Jesus is Lord is to believe that he is the “law-giver”(= “law-changer”)

2) Jesus changed some Old Testament laws because their purpose was to preserve the people to whom he would be born and to prepare the people for whom he would be born.

Galatians 3:24-26 So then, the law was our guardian (NASB: “tutor”) until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

(e.g. Food laws, blood sacrifices, Sabbath laws: to protect their health and **to separate them** from outside influences)

3) Jesus didn’t change all of the Old Testament laws because they reflect the character of God to which his people are to become conformed.

Romans 8:29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

Romans 12:2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Here, the “will of God” = “the law of God” *“Oh how I love your law...”*

Psalms 19:9-10 ... the rules of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, even much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and drippings of the honeycomb.

Note 4) A MIND-STRETCHING, FAITH-BUILDING QUESTION: Are we obligated to obey only those Old Testament laws that are repeated in the New Testament or are we obligated to obey all of the Old Testament laws except those that the New Testament revokes? (*Think about it!*)

ACTIONS:

a) Let's focus on "the heart of the matter" => "the loves and the hates" required

It was not complicated to answer a question about the most important commandment: **Mark 12:29-31** "The most important is, 'Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

To miss this point --- and the point of the Law --- and so to ignore "the heart of the matter" is a serious thing:

Mark 3:1-5 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a withered hand. And they watched Jesus, to see whether he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man with the withered hand, "Come here." And he said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do harm, to save life or to kill?" But they were silent. And he looked around at them with anger, grieved at their hardness of heart, and said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

Matthew 23:23-24 "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: **justice and mercy and faithfulness**. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!"

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

What a mess we make of things when we lose our focus on these three things!

Vanauken on good and bad evidence of Christianity.

We must hate "unrighteousness and anxiety and gloom" when they show up in our hearts!

b) Let's submit "our hearts" to Christ that he might change them regarding all the laws he has no intention of changing.

Romans 5:5 ...hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

FROM JANUARY 11: REQUIREMENTS FOR REALLY KNOWING THE REAL JESUS:

1. knowing what Jesus loves and hates, and why.
2. knowing that God is able and willing to change peoples' loves and hates
3. the experience of being changed in this way.

c) Let's plan to live lawfully from the heart.

James 1:22-25; 2:8 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.... If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well.

Whole-heartedly *loving what God loves* and *hating what God hates!*

Let us approach "the two ceremonies" that way: baptism and "communion"

Something to eat and something to drink that is good for your heart!