

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE

RIGHTLY USING LAW AND GOSPEL

Luke 11:46 “Woe to you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.”

A lawyer, perhaps also a Pharisee, took umbrage at Jesus words (verses 42-45.) He felt Jesus was outrageous and insulting. As a lawyer, it was his profession to study the Old Testament and the rabbinical traditions and then teach them to the Jewish people.

In essence, Jesus said to the lawyer what He had said to the Pharisee previously. He was calling him a hypocrite. He said to him, “You load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.” Jesus was criticizing him because he, along with his fellow lawyers taught only Old Testament law and Jewish traditions. His teaching required perfect obedience by the people of all of God’s laws and strict adherence to all of the traditions and customs handed down over the centuries.

What Jesus was critical of was the lawyers did not teach the Gospel. Yes, the Old Testament was filled with Gospel promises that God would send the Messiah into the world as a substitute to take upon Himself the sins of the people and pay for them with the shedding of His blood. They ignored Isaiah 53:5-6 and countless other passages like it, “But He was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed. All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own. Yet the LORD laid on Him the sins of us all.” (Isaiah 53:5-6 New Living Translation)

Jesus’ point was the people needed to hear both God’s Law and Gospel. They needed the Law to tell them of their sins and need for a Savior. They needed the Gospel that proclaimed to them God’s gift of His Son to shed His blood as a sacrifice of atonement, making payment for the people’s sins. Properly teaching God’s Law and Gospel remains essential for you to know you are a sinner, the penalty God rightly applies to your sins and the substitution of His Son to pay the penalty for you on Calvary’s cross.

Prayer: Holy Spirit, work through God's Law to show me my sins and need for a Savior and the Gospel to show me that Jesus is the one God sent to remove the guilt and penalty of my sin by shedding His blood on Good Friday. Give me a love for both the Law and the Gospel. Amen.

The Law of God is good and wise And sets His will before our eyes, Shows us the way of righteousness, and dooms to death when we transgress. (LSB 579, v.1)

The Gospel shows the Father's grace, Who sent His Son to save our race, Proclaims how Jesus lived and died That we might thus be justified. (LSB 580, v.1)

Its (The Law) light of holiness imparts The knowledge of our sinful hearts That we may see our lost estate And turn from sin before too late. (LSB 579, v.2)

It (The Gospel) sets the Lamb before our eyes, Who made the atoning sacrifice, And calls the souls with guilt oppressed To come and find eternal rest. (LSB 580, v.2)

To those who help in Christ have found And would in works of love abound It (The Law) shows what deeds are His delight And should be done as good and right. (LSB 579, v.3)

It (The Gospel) brings the Savior's righteousness To robe our souls in royal dress; From all our guilt it brings release And gives the troubled conscience peace. (LSB 580, v. 3)

But those who scornfully disdain God's Law shall then in sin remain; Its terror in their ear resounds And keeps their wickedness in bounds. (LSB 579, v. 4)

It (The Gospel) is the pow'r of God to save From sin and Satan and the grave; It works the faith which firmly clings To all the treasures which it brings. (LSB 580, v.4)

The Law is good; but since the fall its holiness condemns us all; It dooms us for our sin to die And has no pow'r to justify. (LSB 579, v5)

It (The Gospel)(bears to all the tidings glad And bids their hearts no more be sad; The weary, burdened souls it cheers And banishes their guilty fears. (LSB 580, v.5)

To Jesus we for refuge flee, Who from the curse has set us free, And humbly worship at His throne, Saved by His grace through faith alone. (LSB 579, v. 6)

May we in faith its (The Gospel) message learn Nor thanklessly its blessings spurn; May we in faith its truth confess And praise the Lord, our righteousness. (LSB 580, v.6)