

How Does God's Law Apply to Me?

Crucial Questions

R. C. SPROUL

How Does God's Law Apply to Me?

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Chapter One

Oh, How I Love Your Law!

Where should a study of God's law and its role in the Christian life begin? Some might consider the Ten Commandments the place to start, while others would turn to the book of Deuteronomy. Perhaps very few people might think of starting in the Psalms, but that is precisely where our journey begins.

Psalm 119, the longest psalm in the Psalter, is a magnificent celebration of the law of God. It is an acrostic, meaning that it is divided into twenty-two stanzas, one

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for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, with each line of a given stanza beginning with the same letter. The idea is that of an exhaustive celebration of the law—from A to Z, we might say. This notion of celebrating God's law may seem completely archaic in our day because we are familiar with the teachings of the New Testament. We rejoice in being redeemed from the law. As Scripture says, "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

As a result, we tend to consider the Old Testament law completely irrelevant to our Christian lives today. Against this modern-day backdrop of rampant disregard for the Old Testament law, we do well to consider the words of the psalmist:

Oh how I love your law!

It is my meditation all the day.

Your commandment makes me wiser than my
enemies,

for it is ever with me.

I have more understanding than all my teachers,
for your testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the aged,
for I keep your precepts.

Oh, How I Love Your Law!

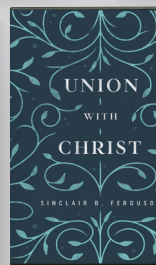
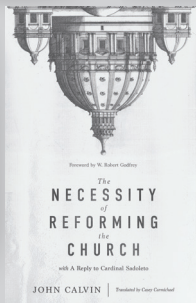
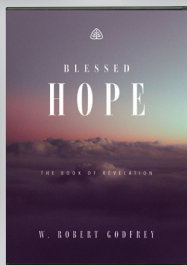
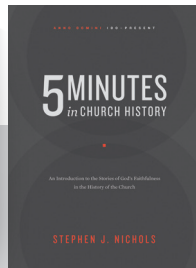
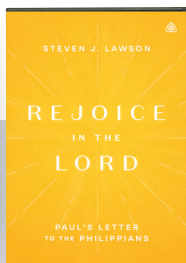
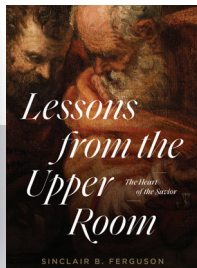
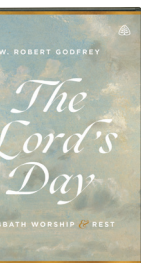
I hold back my feet from every evil way,
in order to keep your word.
I do not turn aside from your rules,
for you have taught me.
How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!
Through your precepts I get understanding;
therefore I hate every false way.
(Ps. 119:97–104)

This section of Psalm 119 does not begin by imparting information but by voicing an exclamation. The word “Oh!” expresses a sigh of profoundly deep feeling, and in this case, the feeling is one of affection.

Do we often hear Christians say, “The thing I love the most about my Christian experience is the law of God”? Do we hear people in the church today celebrate the depth of their affection for the law of God? The obvious answer is no. But as we explore the law of God in these pages, we should begin to ask why Christians don’t have a greater appreciation for God’s law.

What is it about Christ and His work that would cause us now to despise or ignore what was the focal point of

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