

LAYERS OF THE LAW

Part Two

By Pastor Shane Vaughn, First Harvest Ministries

Turn with me to Psalm 119:18-20.

Psalm 119:18-20

Open my eyes, that I may see wonderful things in your law. I am a stranger on earth. Do not hide your commands from me. My soul is consumed with longing for your law at all times.

You know that sounds a lot different from the message we hear preached in today's church, that the law of God is done away with. Here was a man after God's own heart. Do you know why? Because God's heart is God's law. Because the law is the revelation of his justice and his righteousness of the ways of doing right.

David said, I want to know the ways of doing right. When you begin to look at the law in these lessons that I'm going to be teaching, I want you to think about a jigsaw puzzle. A jigsaw puzzle is made up of a myriad of pieces. They're just all over the table and it's just confusing to see all of these pieces. And the moment you begin to try to understand the law of God, you will see that jigsaw puzzle in your mind. You will think you've got it figured out. And then all of a sudden, it's confusing again. I've been there, yeah.

And then we try to categorize the law as well. The 10 commandments and then not Moses law. And then we try to categorize this...we say why we can wear linen and cotton, why we can keep the Sabbath day but we don't pay the tithe...etc. I tell you what, when you start this journey, you'll get bombarded with the confusion. You'll see some scriptures that seem to tell you to 'forget the law' — it's all grace, it's all faith. And then you'll see scriptures that scare you to death because you're not keeping the law good enough.

It can be so confusing. It can be a jigsaw puzzle. But be very careful that you don't give up because the pieces are confusing. Because as you come to the understanding of the bottom layer of the law which is the lovingkindness of God and as you begin to understand about some basic principles about the law, those jigsaw pieces will begin to just come together corner to corner, nook to nook. They'll just begin to connect.

What will connect it all? The basic understanding of the character of God, and therefore, the character of the law. Let me explain something about logic and the law. When you look at this puzzle, you try to force pieces together because they should fit together. If you're not careful you will try to force the law to fit into your own doctrine, in your own thinking. But the law is smarter than you are and it will always trip you up until you get the basics right. And in these lessons, we're going to teach you basic layers of the law.

Every human child on planet earth is born with logic. That's what separates humans from animals. We don't have to be taught logic. For example, the child eventually figures out how to hold the bottle. Now what taught him that? His logic. He saw with his eyes...mama holding that bottle a certain way and eventually one plus one begins to equal two in his mind ... it separates him from an animal. He has logic.

We're born with logic—hard-wired into our minds. We are logical creatures. And this is the system that all men operate on. So we start out in life with a mind that is logical—but...it is untrained. This is something I want to teach you about the law today. You must be *trained* in the law of God. It is a lifelong training that begins when you come to know Christ as your savior.

The logical mind of a human, even though it's logical, must be trained. The apostle Paul didn't use the language of logic, but he came to the same conclusion. Let's go to Romans 2:14-15.

Romans 2:14-15

Indeed when gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature (or by logic) things required by the law, they are a law for themselves. Even though they do not have the law, they show that the requirements of the law are in their minds and their thoughts, now accusing, now even defending them.

This is called the law of human nature. When you're born, the primordial basics of the law of God are hard-wired into the human mind. That's why a human, if they murder someone, is going to run just like Cain did with Abel. There is something hard-wired into us that gives us the basics of logic. And, therefore, every man has a measure of the law of God written into their human understanding.

Now, the human mind operates according to that system of logic. It is remarkable that man in the absence of the revelation of the law of God can come to a pretty good estimation between right and wrong. Who told the child, when they steal the chocolate candy out of the store, to run and hide? Who told him that? Who?

Did you teach your child that? No. There is something hard-wired there that tells him...you shouldn't have done that.

You see, this is the logic that all human beings are born with. But, the mind of a human alone will not bring you to *righteousness*. Nope. It'll bring you to *morality*. But there's a difference in morality and righteousness. Morality is the basic human interaction in a society. But righteousness is going all the way into the mind of God...which is higher than a human mind—it's greater than right and wrong. It teaches you the very character of your God. It causes you to come up higher than your human mind and your human understanding. Because the human mind will not get you into righteousness. Just *not stealing* won't get you into righteousness. There's so much more to it than that.

Everyone knows there's a difference between right and wrong. But they often fall out of sorts in determining which is which. Or, how many people have ever said to you— who knows what's right and what's wrong? Who says what's right and what's wrong? Everyone knows that a child needs exercise, and yet that child is born with an innate nature to go out and play, climb trees, jump on the bed and get that exercise. The human nature tells that child he needs to exercise because he's growing and that muscle needs to begin to form so those joints begin to move. And as he's growing, something is happening in his body that transcends to his mind.

Now, Hebrews 5:12-14.

Hebrews 5:12-14

For when for the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God, and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For everyone that uses milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe.

Remember that! Everyone that uses milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness. Remember, babies in Christ—babies in the Spirit, are on the milk of the Word. And what does it say about those who are on the milk of the word? They are unskillful in the word of righteousness...which is the Law of God. They're saved, spirit-filled, many of them speaking in tongues, casting out devils, running the aisles, singing on the praise team, declaring their blessings — they've got it all, they're doing it.

But they're unskillful. The word unskillful means they have no training, no practice. They've not been working the “muscles” ... they're unskillful in the word

of righteousness. Or as we discovered earlier, the Hebrew word “tsedakah” - which is the right way...the God way of doing things.

Now, why is he unskilled in the word of righteousness? The apostle Paul says because he is a baby. Now, I want you to be very careful, those of you that are watching me that love the law of God — you’ve been on a journey discovering the law for yourself. If you’re not careful, you will literally ‘throw the baby out with the bath water’. Because you judge your brothers and sisters in Christ that are not walking in the law as you are. But you see, you’ve got to understand...if they are babies, they are still your brothers and sisters even though they are babies. You get that? Don’t throw the babies out. You just stay on your journey, and let God do what he’s going to do with those babies.

But because they don’t understand the law of God, they are babies. We’re continuing in Hebrews 5:14.

(verse 14) But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern right and wrong.

This is a powerful verse. Babies in Christ have no desire to know the law of God. They have a desire to be *saved*. Now what’s going to happen as you begin to grow in God? You’re going to begin to exercise beyond faith. You’re going to do what Paul says, you’re going to add to your faith *knowledge*. Knowledge of what? The law of God, or the right ways, or the God ways of living your life.

Paul said that they have used their senses to discern good and evil. Now, the human mind can discern on some level the difference between good and evil. I’ll give you an example. The human mind can discern... you don’t steal! ...we get that! But I’ll tell you what the human mind cannot discern... giving to those less fortunate... giving to those who have done you (wrong)... you see, I’m showing you the levels. There are some humans who do give to charity.

But here’s another level... are you ready? Give to those who have done you wrong. You see, as you begin to grow in the character of God, you will come up higher than even human logic. There’s a law among humans, but the law of God is higher than even that law.

Discerning good and evil is a logical design of the human mind. But, if those senses are not exercised... remember what Paul just said... go back to Hebrews 5 and read verse 14...

...who by reason of use...

In other words, because they continually exercise their discernment. Here's what he said... you might have the logical understanding of not to steal, but until you begin to exercise that logic by the word of God, then the human mind is just like the human body... it will become flabby, it will become lazy, and it will get by with as little as it can. Your mind, your logic which you were born with, will do the same thing. Without the law of God, you become lazy in righteousness.

You were born with bones and nerves and muscles and tissue. You were born with all of that. What happens if you don't use it? You lose it. You were born with the ability to know the difference between right and wrong, but let me tell you what happens to that logic when it is not exercised daily by the reading of the word of God. What begins to happen is that you begin to lose your barometer of what's right and what's wrong.

At one time you may have known that it was wrong for two men to be in love with one another, for two men to be married. But because you have slipped away from the daily exercise of reading the word of God, you've slipped away from your own logic. Use it or lose it. This is why David said...on thy law will I meditate (not just everyday), but every day and every night. Because the moment you quit meditating... sin slips in.

The moment you quit meditating upon what God says is right and wrong, is the moment that you begin to lose your own soul. Your own mindset of godliness will begin to drift away.

I'll give you an example. Many years ago when I was a child, I grew up in the old Pentecostal church, everything was a sin including breathing the wrong way. But there was one sin that all those old-time preachers harped on day and night. Every time we went to church, we heard the preachers preaching against television. Oh God, they preached on it every service, every day, every night. Some of you might remember... television, television, television. But now? I have to admit... I get it. I get it. The more we watch television and the less we study the word of God, the more we think Ellen is funny. The more we think cussing is an acceptable way of life. Because why? Because we're not exercising our minds in the word of God... the law of God.

Now why am I spending so much time on these seemingly shallow areas of the law? Because before I can take you into the law of Moses, and the other nuances of that, you've got to get the basic element of why we have the law of God to begin with. Let's read in 1 Peter 2:2.

1 Peter 2:2

As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that you may grow thereby.

There is something the apostles wrote about, saying for us to be rooted and grounded in the faith. We're rooted in the faith by grace alone, by unmerited favor. When we believe on our Messiah, we have received the very root of our salvation. But there's another part called rooted and *grounded*.

Grounding is not an act of faith. Grounding is an act of exercise. Grounding is an act of daily exercising your mind by the dictates of the word of God !!! Or else you will not stand in the fiery trial of your faith! The Bible said, like a tree planted by the rivers of water, I will not be moved. Why? Not because I got saved, but because I got grounded in the law of God. The right ways of living according to the law of God.

We're born with that system of logic that slowly begins to slip away when it's not exercised. So what is the tool that God gives you and I to keep that from happening? His Word. His Law. His Commandments which are holy, which are good. The church will tell you that his commandments are a burden... they're heavy... they're a yoke. Oh, yet he said they were something completely different.

He said thy burden is light. It's a burden. Why? Because exercising is always a burden. But would you call it bondage? No. The lack of exercise will bring you into bondage of a gut and a double chin! You see, what you think is hurting you is there to help you. Go with me to Psalm 119:9-16.

Psalm 119:9-16

How can a man keep his ways pure?

You see, God doesn't just want you to get saved. He wants you to get sanctified. By keeping your ways pure. And here's your answer.

(verses 9-12) ...by living according to your law. I seek you with all of my heart, do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your law in my heart (or my mind) that I might not sin against you. Praise be unto you oh Yahweh! Teach me your laws.

It's totally different than what the church says today. They say forget the law. David said, teach me your laws that my ways might remain pure. Do you want your ways to be pure before God? You can only do it by studying his law. Day and night. Let's keep reading.

(verses 13-16) With my lips I recount all the laws that come from your mouth. I rejoice in following your statutes as one rejoices in great riches. I meditate on your precepts and I consider your ways. I delight in your decrees. I will not neglect your law.

Now does David's walk with God sound anything like your walk with God? Think about it. You were told to come to the altar and get saved. But now, how do I keep my ways pure before thee oh God? You've got to exercise your mind. You've got to change your mind from just the human logic into the higher law. Instead of the law of nature, the law of God. It's a much higher way.

How did David exercise? He tells us in those verses how he did it. Number one, he concentrated on the law. Number two, he was attentive to the law. Then he said he memorized the law...because what did he say? I recount all your laws... that's memorization. I remembered your commandments (thou shalt not...) ...I memorized them, I say them. You see, he's telling you how to exercise.

I say your laws, and then I meditate on your laws. I do more than say them and I do more than repeat them. I think about them that I might understand past the letter of your law. Now we're getting somewhere. And these next few videos that I'm going to make, I'm going to bring you into the meditation of the law. Until you meditate on the law, you will be a Pharisee by keeping the law. Keep that in mind.

David said, I memorize them. I quote them. I meditate on them. I think about them. And I constantly concentrate on them. Without internalizing the precepts of the law, you can't meditate on the law—you cannot remember the law.

I would dare say, not to be ugly, but I would dare say that some of you watching this video right now—you could not repeat the 10 commandments if you had to. Why? It's okay. You were told they weren't important. You were told Jesus fulfilled them—all lies. That's all lies. And if you keep watching, I'm going to do a video specifically on those verses that seem to say that he did away with the law.

Now, we run into a problem when we're studying about the law. The main problem we run into is called *legalism*. Legalism is one of the greatest enemies of the church. Legalism is a horrible temptation that you must avoid at all cost. And it's very easy to do because once you begin to study the law without meditating on the law, once you've memorized the law without understanding the law...you'll become a legalist. You'll become a pharisee. You'll kill people with the letter of the law. The Bible says that the letter killeth.

But the principle behind that law...the spirit...will give life! ...everywhere it goes. Don't be a legalist. Don't be a pharisee. And I'm going to teach you in these videos how to keep from doing that. It's a very very bad temptation.

Legalism is a perspective, a mindset, that sees the law as an absolute requirement from God! The law is written, and therefore, we have to do it. Thinking about it is not required or even encouraged. Understanding it? Don't even try. Just DO IT !!! Who are we to second guess God? The letter of the law controls us. That, beloved, is what has turned so many people away from the beautiful law of God.

When you stop to meditate on the law, something begins to happen that takes you out of legalism. The law begins to shine a new light on your problems, your headaches, your challenges. Decisions become easier because you understand the mind of God because you have a logical framework in which they can be placed and by which your decisions can be judged.

Legalism is unemotional. It's packed down. It's locked in. But meditation upon the law of God opens the pathway to understanding the light and walking in the beauty of the light of the law of God.

You and I have to be very careful when we begin to study the law to make sure we are studying what's behind the law rather than just what's in front of the law. Let's read what David said in verses 17-20 of the same chapter in Psalm 119.

Psalm 119:17-20

Do good to your servant, and I will live, I will obey your word. Open my eyes that I might see wonderful things in your law.

Now, if our focus should just be on the written law of God only ... if that's where our focus is to be—just read the law for what it says, and obey it, then why would David say, open my eyes that I might see wonderful things in your law?

Well, just read the law, what it says, and there it is, it's wonderful. But that's not what David said. He knew there was something beyond the letter. He knew there was a principle beyond the plainness of the written word. That's what he prayed for... Father open my understanding of what's hidden behind the veil.

As you begin to pray that prayer about the law of God, it will never take away the requirement of obedience—don't get me wrong. But it will bring forth an obedience that comes from a glorious light that will never allow you to “kill people” with the law of God, especially your baby brothers and sisters in Christ.

He continues...

(verses 19-20) I'm a stranger on earth, do not hide your commands from me. My soul is consumed with longing for your law at all times.

The law of God is so much higher than most people think. They see it as black and white. They see it as a list of 10, or 613, and that's the law of God. No brothers and sisters. That is the basic unit of human communication that tries to convey in our understanding some of the greatest principles that the human mind can ever try to comprehend.

It's not a matter of a heavy burden that we've got to bear. But it's rather a matter of a man in business facing a decision that requires sound judgment and discernment. And when you've got to make that decision and you want to make the right decision, the decision that God would make, you've got to go to his law. And now all of a sudden, you know what to do! Whether you do it or not is a different thing, but you know. You know what to do.

You know to love your neighbor as much as you love yourself. So if you're trying to make a decision — what should I do oh God, you go to his law, and there it is. That's the beauty—this is not a burden. The law gives us our freedom to walk in the light.

It is that system of logic that's higher than human logic where all the answers to your problems lie. It makes all the difference in how you think about the law of God. It is a *divine logic* that transcends the human logic. Let's read verses 29-32.

Psalms 119:29-32

Remove from me oh God the way of lying, and grant me your law graciously. (I want more of your law Father, more and more and more of your law) **I have chosen the way of truth.**

Notice the way of lying and the way of truth. This world is selling you the way of lies. The serpent in the garden, remember? Your television screen is giving you the way of lying. They're telling you God's okay with all of this when his word over here is telling you something different. David said, I don't want this way anymore—I want the way of truth.

I've chosen the way of truth. Some of you watching me today...you've made a choice...you have chosen the way of truth. It's a narrow way.

(verses 30-32) Your judgments I have laid before me. (I've laid your word before me.) **I have stuck to your testimonies, oh Yahweh, put me**

not to shame. I will run the way of your commandments, when you will enlarge my heart.

Oh my, I will run to your commandments! Because you've enlarged my understanding. Listen to me. As you begin to watch these video lessons on the law, the layers of the law, you'll begin to run into his commandments. You won't buy any more of those lies of the church that tells you the commandments are a burden. Oh, no. You'll see their beauty and you will run to them.

Two roads lay before you today. The road of lies. The road of truth. But how do we know the lies from the truth? Once you choose truth—this is not a decision that you can just lay down—it is a lifestyle that you participate in, that you partake in. Every child in this world is born with a lie detector. Every human has a lie detector. We're able to discern between a truth and a lie. But here's what happens. The world, the moment you're born, begins to erode that lie detector.

First of all, once you tell a lie, and tell another lie, you begin to erode your own lie detector. And then you can't tell what lies are anymore or what truth is anymore because the world has stolen your innocence from you that you once had when you were in the church of the living God. Hearing the preaching of the word day and night, but the moment you leave God's church, the moment you leave the preaching of his word is the moment when your lie detector begins to lose its efficacy. The moment it begins to lose its control in your life, and the Bible said... you would rather believe the lie than the truth. I've seen it happen so many times. I've seen it happen in my own life. Paul warns us of this.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refuse to love the truth...

David said earlier, I choose the way of truth. If you're listening to this sermon today and you've stuck with me this long, it's because you're choosing the way of truth. Congratulations! It's a life that you'll never regret. Let's keep reading.

(verses 11-12) For this reason God sends them a strong delusion so that they will believe the lie, and that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth, but have delighted in commandment breaking.

When you leave truth, you walk in the lies and then you can no longer tell the difference. Oh, you've got that 'human reasoning' — you know, not to kill anybody, no, not to shoot anybody — but the way of truth which is higher than

logic, you've lost that way. You think it's okay to rob God of his tithe now. You think it's okay to not go back to the house of God. You think it's okay but because the more you get away from truth, the more truth gets away from you.

They perish because they refuse to love the truth. People believe the lies and they prefer them. Why? For one thing, they want the lie to be truth—because the lie's the easy way, it's the broad way. Amen? The broad way's the easy way. The way of truth's the hard way because it goes against the human nature.

There's so many things in this world conspiring against you, to blind you to the truth. Listen to what the psalmist David said in Psalm 119:36-37.

Psalm 119:36-37

**Incline my ear to hear your testimonies, and not to covetousness.
Greed for money or power will blind a man to the truth.**

That's why if you're preaching about the Sabbath day, you can't get anybody to listen because Saturday is the biggest money-making day of the week! You see, he said, Father, incline my ear to truth and not to greed because once you get greedy, you can't afford to hear truth.

(verse 37) Turn my eyes from worthless things, and preserve my life according to your law.

These two requests tie the law of God to the ability to know what is valuable and what is not. To know what is truth and what is not.

What would it be worth to you, as I get ready to close, to know when a man is lying? What would it be worth to you to know what the truth is? Here's what David said. Verses 43-45.

Psalm 119:43-45

Do not take the word of truth from my mouth, for I have put my hope in your law. I will always obey your law forever and ever. I will walk about in freedom for I have sought out your commandments.

Did you notice that one line? I will walk about in freedom because I've sought after your law. Yet the church, your church maybe, teaches that if you're in the law, you're in bondage. David said, I'm going to walk around in freedom because of the law.

The word of truth is the only pathway to freedom. Galatians 5:1.

Galatians 5:1

Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Do you know how the church interprets that verse? They think that it's referring to the law when it mentions the yoke of bondage. But here's what he said in that verse. Christ has made us free, not to be entangled again with the yoke of bondage. Paul spoke of not becoming entangled with something that takes us away from liberty and freedom. And here's what James said, the brother of the Messiah.

James 1:23-25

For if anyone is a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like a man who looks in a mirror. For once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it (not just looks at it, but abides...keeps the commandments) not having become a forgetful hearer of the law, but a doer of the law, this man will be blessed in what he does.

Are you blessed? Have you wondered how your life could be more blessed? Keep the commandments of God, every one of them. Uh, that's impossible brother Vaughn, I can't do that. I know. But there's a little scripture that your church loves to quote. All things are possible to them that believe. There's another one. I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me.

No, you can't keep the law of God, but he did. He can. He lives in you. Paul said, it's no longer I that live, but Christ that lives in me. If Christ is living in you, you've got a law keeper living in you beloved. You might ought to let him work out your salvation—work it on out of you with fear and trembling.

There's no argument between Paul and James or David. They all agree that the law is what brings us liberty. As a matter of fact, David said in Psalm 119:63-71...

Psalm 119:63-71

I am a friend to all who fear you, to all who follow your precepts. The earth is filled with your love oh Yahweh. Teach me your decrees. Do good to your servant according to your word oh Yahweh. Teach me knowledge and good judgment for I believe in your law. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word. You are good, and what you do is good. Teach me your decrees. Though the arrogant have smeared me with lies, I keep your law in my heart (or my mind). Their heart's are callous and unfeeling, but I delight in your law. It

was good for me to have been afflicted so that I might learn your decrees.

That's my testimony by the way. For many years of my life, I ignored the law of God. I felt like I was special, that those laws were done away with and I was saved no matter what I did. That lead me down a very bad path...the path of affliction. It afflicted me and everybody that I loved. If you know my testimony, you know what I'm talking about.

David said, I went astray before I was afflicted. So did I. I went astray and then I got afflicted by God. But David said that it was good that I was afflicted. Because that affliction taught me that I needed your law in my life. If you're watching me, if you're not careful, you will be afflicted many times if you don't submit to the word of God and to the law of God.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

In the next lesson, we're going to go so much deeper, and we're going to get into the purpose of the law. You don't want to miss it. Oh, I tell you...what we learned in this video was the basic principles of the logic of man coming up to the next level of the law of God. And how that that law sets of free. But now we've got to answer the question...which laws? The ten commandments? Moses' law? Or just the two laws that Christ mentions—loving God and loving... What laws? We're going to deal with all that. Thank you for watching. Would you please, please share this. God bless you.

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