



World Christian Fellowship

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The Law in its Proper Place

Introduction: The Law — The Most Misunderstood Gift!

1 Timothy 1:8-11, *But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, ⁹ knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, ¹⁰ for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine, ¹¹ according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.*

No teaching in the entire Bible has been more consistently misunderstood and misused than the doctrine of the law of God.

In every generation, the church has made one of two errors:

- Either dismissing the law as irrelevant in the age of grace (**antinomianism**), or
- Using the law as the means of earning standing before God (**legalism**).

Both errors are theological disasters with devastating pastoral consequences.

Paul, in just four verses, navigates between these two errors with surgical theological precision.

- He affirms the goodness of the law.
- He defines its lawful use.
- He identifies those for whom it is designed.
- He pivots from the law's diagnostic function to the Gospel's redemptive function.

Concluding with one of the most breathtaking phrases in all his letters: *the glorious gospel of the blessed God*.

This is the architecture of biblical theology in miniature, and it is essential equipment for every believer and every minister.

The background to this passage is the false teachers' misuse of the law. They wanted to be teachers of the law (V 7) but understood neither what they said nor what they affirmed.

They were using the law as a vehicle for speculation, genealogy, and self-promotion.

Paul corrects this by returning to the law's intended function and showing how it relates to the Gospel.

I. The Law is Good — The Foundational Affirmation.

A. Against Antinomianism

Paul begins with a bold affirmation.

V 8, *But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully*,

This is a direct counter to a persistent error in Christian thinking.

The idea that because we are not saved by the law, the law is of no use to the Christian. This error, known as antinomianism (against the law), was already present in Paul's day and caused him.

Paul did address this explicitly to the church in **Rome**.

Romans 6:1, *Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not.*

- The law is God's law.
- It reflects His holy character.

- ✓ The Ten Commandments are not an arbitrary list of rules.
- ✓ They are a transcript of the character of God Himself.

- ❖ The command to have no other gods before Him reflects **His uniqueness and supremacy**.
- ❖ The command to honour the Sabbath reflects **His claim on time and our need for rest**.
- ❖ The command against murder reflects **the sacredness of human life as image bearers of God**.
- ❖ To dismiss the law is, in a sense, to dismiss the character of the God who gave it.

Romans 7:12, *"Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good."*

B. The Three Traditional Uses of the Law

The Protestant Reformers, building on Paul's teaching, identified **three lawful uses of the law**. These are important to understand because Paul's argument in **V 8-11** implicitly draws on all three.

The Civil Use:

The law functions as a restraint on evil in human society. Even those who do not know God are restrained from the worst forms of wickedness by their awareness (however distorted) of moral law.

Romans 2:14-15, *for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)*

The Gentiles who do by nature the things in the law, showing the work of the law written in their hearts. The civil use of the law makes ordered society possible.

The Theological Use:

The law functions as a mirror that shows us our sin and our need for a Saviour. This is the use Paul primarily has in mind in **V 9-11**.

The law was designed to stop every mouth.

Romans 3:19, *Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

To make sin exceedingly sinful.

Romans 7:13, *Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.*

To function as our tutor to bring us to Christ.

Galatians 3:24, *Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*

Without the law's convicting work, the Gospel has no ground to land on.

The Normative Use:

For the regenerate believer, the law functions as a guide for holy living.

This is the aspect that antinomians reject. While we are not under the law as a means of justification, the law still expresses God's will for human conduct and serves as a guide for those who have been set free by grace to live in a way that pleases God.

C. The Condition: If one uses it Lawfully

V 8, *But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully,*

The Greek word is **Nomimos**, from **nomos (law)** — lawful use of the law.

This is a word play that carries significant irony. The false teachers who wanted to be teachers of the law were using the law unlawfully. They had taken a good gift and misapplied it,

producing speculation instead of conviction and self-promotion instead of repentance.

Unlawful uses of the law include:

- using it as a means of earning or maintaining justification (**legalism**),
- using it as a vehicle for spiritual speculation divorced from its moral content (**the false teachers**),
- using it as a tool of social control or self-righteous condemnation of others (**Pharisaism**), or
- dismissing it entirely as irrelevant to Christian living (**antinomianism**).

The lawful use is the use God designed it for to expose sin, to convict of guilt, and to drive the sinner to the Gospel.

II. The Law is for the Lawless — A Catalogue of Human Rebellion.

A. The Principle

V 9-10, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,¹⁰ for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers

A foundational principle: *the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate.*

This does not mean the righteous person has nothing to do with the law. It means that the law's convicting, restraining, condemning function is not needed by someone who is living in conformity with God's will.

The person who **never speeds does not need to worry about traffic laws**. But for those who do speed, the law is essential.

The application for Timothy is clear: The false teachers in Ephesus, with their elaborate law-based speculations, were using the law as a tool for intellectual achievement, not as the mirror it was designed to be.

If they had used the law lawfully, they would have seen their own sinfulness reflected in it and would have been driven to the Gospel, not away from it.

B. The Catalogue of Sins

Paul now lists a series of sins in a pattern that closely mirrors the Ten Commandments, moving from sins against God to sins against humanity.

This is not random but a deliberate demonstration that the law covers every dimension of human rebellion.

The first three pairs are not simply parallel synonyms, they are couplets, each a negative disposition paired with the visible result it produces.

Lawless, having no commitment to any standard, produces **disobedient**, since a person who acknowledges, no law will not submit to authority.

Ungodly, having no reverence for the sacred, produces **sinner**s, since a life lived without regard for God inevitably goes out and sins.

Unholy, indifferent to one's duty toward God, produces **profane**, trampling underfoot what should be treated as sacred.

Each couplet traces a single root sin to its inevitable fruit.

The catalogue includes:

- the lawless and insubordinate (general rebellion against authority),
- the ungodly and sinners (religious rebellion against God),
- the unholy and profane (violations of the **first and third commandments**),
- murderers of fathers and mothers (violation of the **fifth commandment**),
- manslaughter (**sixth commandment** — the Greek word here means murder, not the accidental taking of life our English word can suggest),
- fornicators (**seventh commandment**),
- sodomites (**seventh commandment**),
- kidnappers (**eighth commandment** — in the first-century world this was no abstract category; stealing

- children to sell into slavery was a common and lucrative trade, which is why the law treats it with such severity, cf. **Exodus 21:16, Deuteronomy 24:7**),
- liars and perjurers (**ninth commandment**), and
 - anything contrary to sound doctrine.

This list is not exhaustive, but it is representative.

Paul ends with the open-ended category and if there is ***any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine***.

The law condemns everything that departs from God's revealed character and will. There is no category of sin that lies outside its reach.

Romans 3:19-20, *Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ²⁰ Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

It is worth asking why Paul reaches for this particular list rather than a shorter or more generic one.

Given the context, false teachers in Ephesus hiding behind a claim to teach the law but it is reasonable that this catalogue is not purely illustrative.

Paul may be quietly holding up a mirror to the very men he is opposing, men whose public religious credibility concealed private vice.

This is not a comfortable thought, but it is a sobering and necessary one for anyone in ministry: **a polished public presentation of doctrine is no guarantee of a clean private life**, and the most dangerous deception is the kind that fools the deceiver as much as the deceived.

C. The Mirror Function — Luther's Hammer

Martin Luther famously described the law as a hammer that breaks the hard rock of the human heart.

Jeremiah 23:29, *Is not My word like a fire, says the LORD, and like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?*

Before the Gospel can do its saving work, the law must do its convicting work. The person who has never felt the weight of their sin does not genuinely understand what they are being saved from.

*A man must be convicted that he is a sinner before he will seek a Saviour. And the instrument that God uses to produce that conviction is the law. The law is God's diagnostic tool, His X-ray machine, His blood test. It does not cause the disease; it reveals it. And the revelation, painful as it is, is the mercy of God, because it drives the patient to the only physician who can cure. **John Owen, the Puritan theologian.***

The great evangelist **George Whitefield** was once asked why he preached so much on sin and judgment.

He replied: *Because my hearers must feel their sickness before they will value the cure.*

I give them the law until they are trembling, and then I give them the Gospel until they are rejoicing.

The law precedes the Gospel not because God delights in condemnation, but because genuine repentance requires genuine self-knowledge, and genuine self-knowledge requires the honest mirror of God's law.

III. Contrary to Sound Doctrine

A. The Connection Between Sin and Sound Doctrine

Paul concludes his catalogue of sins with the phrase and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.

This connection between **sin and sound doctrine** is theologically crucial.

Sin is not merely a behavioural deviation, but it is a theological failure.

Every act of sin is, implicitly, a denial of something true about God.

- When a person **lies**, they deny that **God is truth** and that truthfulness matters.
- When they **murder**, they deny that **human life bears God's image** and is therefore sacred.
- When they **commit adultery**, they deny the **covenant fidelity of God** and the sanctity of the marriage covenant He created.

Sin and false doctrine are related not accidentally but essentially wrong belief produces wrong behaviour, and wrong behaviour expresses wrong belief.

This is why the Pastoral Epistles connect sound doctrine so consistently with godly living.

Titus 2:1-10 is the classic passage.

V 1, *But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine:*

Followed immediately by instructions for how old men, old women, young women, young men, and servants are to live.

- ✓ Sound doctrine is the foundation.
- ✓ Godly living is the building.

You cannot have one without the other.

B. Hygiainouse Didaskalia — Healthy Teaching

V 10, *if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine,*

The phrase sound doctrine (***Hygiainouse Didaskalia***) appears here for the **first time in the Pastoral Epistles**, but it will recur throughout.

The word ***Hygiainouse*** is the root of our English word **hygiene**. Healthy teaching is teaching that produces spiritual health.

- Conviction of sin,
- Genuine repentance,
- Faith in Christ,
- Transformation of character,
- Love for God and
- Love for neighbour.

The diagnostic value of this term cannot be overstated.

We assess the health of a teaching not primarily by whether it is intellectually sophisticated or emotionally moving, but by **whether it produces the fruit of genuine spiritual health** in those who receive it.

- Teaching that leaves people puffed up but unchanged is not healthy.
- Teaching that produces humility, repentance, faith, love, and holiness is.

IV. The Glorious Gospel of the Blessed God.

A. The shift from Law to Gospel

After cataloguing the sins that the law condemns, Paul makes a glorious shift.

V 11, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.

He says the law serves as the standard against which all sin is measured, but this standard is according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

- The law condemns.
- The Gospel saves.
 - The law shows the disease.
 - The Gospel provides the cure.

Put simply: the law is good, but the law alone is not good news.

The Law and Gospel work together, but they are not the same.

This shift is the heartbeat of biblical theology.

Paul makes a similar move in Romans.

Romans 3:19-26. The law stops every mouth and makes all the world guilty before God. But then the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, through faith in Jesus Christ.

The law ends in silence every mouth stopped, no defence possible.

The Gospel begins where the law ends, offering a righteousness that is not our own.

B. The Glorious Gospel

The phrase ***the glorious gospel*** (literally the gospel of the glory) is remarkable.

The Gospel is not merely good news in a generic sense, but it is the news of glory, the manifestation of God's radiant character in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 4:4, *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

Paul speaks of the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

The Gospel radiates the same glory that filled the tabernacle.

Exodus 40:34, *Then the cloud covered the tabernacle of meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.*

Moses sought to see same glory.

Exodus 33:18, *And he said, “Please, show me Your glory.”*

The seraphim declared over the whole earth.

Isaiah 6:3, *And one cried to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!”*

The word glory here emphasizes that the gospel is not merely information about God but a radiant disclosure of His majesty and character.

To preach the Gospel is not simply to relay information, but to allow the glory of God to break through into the hearing of those who are spiritually blind, so that they see and are transformed.

2 Corinthians 4:6, *“For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”*

C. The Blessed God!

Paul closes this section with a phrase of extraordinary beauty and theological density: *the blessed God*.

The Greek word ***Makarios*** (blessed) is the same word used in the Beatitudes. It means supremely happy, fully satisfied, overflowing with well-being. It is the word used for those who are inwardly content because they are in right relationship with God.

This is startling when applied to God Himself. God is ***Makarios***, supremely blessed, overflowing with well-being.

- ✓ He is not a grim enforcer of moral law.
- ✓ He is not a reluctant provider of mercy.
- ✓ He is the blessed God who, from His own fullness of joy and satisfaction, determined to create, to redeem, and to glorify creatures made from dust.

The Gospel is not an emergency plan for a universe that went wrong. It was the purpose of the blessed God from eternity.

Jonathan Edwards, in his essay **Concerning the End for Which God Created the World**, argued that God created the universe as an overflow of His own blessed fullness, and that redemption is the supreme expression of that fullness flowing toward a people who will share His blessedness forever. The Gospel is, at its deepest level, an invitation to share in the joy of the blessed God.

VI. The Law and Covenant Theology.

A. The Covenant Context of the Law

To understand Paul's teaching on the lawful use of the law, it is essential to understand the covenant context in which the law was given.

The Mosaic law was not given as a ladder by which Israel could climb to God, but as the covenant stipulations for a people whom God had already redeemed.

Exodus 20:1-3, *And God spoke all these words, saying: ²“I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. ³“You shall have no other gods before Me.*

Redemption precedes law. God saves first, then gives instructions for covenant living.

This sequence is the same in the New Covenant.

God justifies through faith in Christ (**Romans 5:1**), then calls the justified to walk in a manner worthy of the Gospel (**Philippians 1:27**).

Grace precedes law in both covenants, not because the law is unimportant, but because no one can keep the law who has not first been redeemed.

Obedience to God's commands flows from gratitude for God's grace, not as the means of earning it.

The **Westminster Confession of Faith** captures this succinctly in its treatment of the law (**Chapter 19**): *Although true believers are not under the law as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified or condemned; yet it is of great use to them, as well as to others; in that, as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly. The law no longer condemns the justified; it now guides the sanctified.*

B. New Covenant Continuity and Discontinuity.

One of the most debated questions in New Testament theology is the relationship between the Old Covenant law and the New Covenant believer.

Three major positions have been held within orthodox Christianity:

- **The Theonomic position** (all the Mosaic law remains in force except what is explicitly abolished),
- **The Lutheran two-kingdoms position** (the law functions in the civil sphere and as a theological mirror but not as a guide for Christian ethics), and
- **The Reformed position** (the moral law continues as a guide for Christian living).

Paul's statement in **1 Timothy 1:8**, *we know the law is good if one uses it lawfully*. Assumes that the law does have a lawful use for the believer.

His catalogue of sins in **V 9-10** mirrors the Ten Commandments, suggesting that the moral content of the Decalogue continues to define the boundaries of Christian conduct.

Hebrews 8:10, *"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."*

Describes the New Covenant in terms of the law written on the heart, not the law abolished.

Jeremiah 31:33, *But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*

The New Covenant promise is the internalisation of the same law, not its elimination.

C. The Law of Christ

Paul speaks of the law of Christ. **Galatians 6:2**, *Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

1 Corinthians 9:21, *to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law;*

These phrases describe the New Covenant relationship to moral obligation: not the old form of Mosaic covenant obligation, but the deeper reality to which the Mosaic law always pointed love for God and neighbour, fulfilled and modelled by Christ Himself.

Jesus's own teaching in the Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 5-7**) is the supreme exposition of the law of Christ.

He repeatedly takes the Mosaic commandments and deepens them.

You have heard that it was said... but I say to you. He is not contradicting Moses, but He is revealing the full depth of what Moses always intended.

The law of Christ does not reduce the demands of the law, but it intensifies and internalises them. And it is fulfilled not through external compliance but through the transformation of the heart by the Spirit.

VII. The Gospel and the Transformation of Society.

A. The Gospel's Public Implications

Paul's reference to *the glorious Gospel of the blessed God* is not merely a personal or ecclesiastical statement.

The Gospel has public, cultural, and social implications that flow naturally from its content. If Jesus Christ is Lord, **Kyrios**, the divine name applied to the risen Christ, then His lordship extends over every dimension of human life and society.

He is not merely the Lord of private religious experience, but He is Lord of history, culture, government, economics, and every human relationship.

This does not mean the church should pursue political power as its primary strategy. The New Testament is clear that the church's primary mission is the proclamation of the Gospel and the making of disciples (**Matthew 28:18-20**).

But it does mean that the Gospel, wherever it is genuinely received and lived, will produce transformation that has visible public effects.

- The abolition of slavery,
- The dignity of women,

- Care for the poor,
- Justice for the oppressed,
- The sanctity of human life from conception to natural death.

Throughout church history, the greatest social reforms have been driven by people who had been genuinely transformed by the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.

- The **hospital movement** in the **Roman Empire** began with Christians caring for plague victims.
- The **abolitionist movement** was led by evangelical Christians like **Wilberforce, Clarkson, and Newton**.
- The early **feminist movement** drew heavily on the Christian conviction that in Christ there is neither male nor female (**Galatians 3:28**).
- The Gospel produces citizens who understand human dignity because they understand the image of God.

B. The Law as the Foundation of Justice

The civil use of the law its function in restraining evil in human society is the theological foundation for the concept of justice.

A society without a transcendent moral standard has no basis for calling anything unjust. If morality is merely cultural

convention, then what the majority approves is by definition right, and the concept of injustice becomes incoherent.

The biblical law, particularly the Ten Commandments, provides the transcendent standard that makes justice possible.

- **You shall not murder** establishes the **sacredness of human life** as grounds for condemning every act of genocide, torture, and abortion.
- **You shall not steal** establishes the **right to private property** as grounds for condemning exploitation and corruption.
- **You shall not bear false witness** establishes **truthfulness** as the foundation of **every legal and judicial system**.

When Paul says the law is good if used lawfully, he is making a statement that extends far beyond individual spiritual experience.

The law is good for society, for culture, for governance, for the ordering of human relationships at every level.

The church that understands and teaches the law lawfully is contributing to the flourishing not only of its own members but of the wider society in which it is planted.

VIII. Makarios — The Blessedness of the Gospel God.

The Greek philosophical tradition, from **Plato to Aristotle to the Stoics**, spent considerable intellectual energy on the question of human blessedness.

What is the highest good?

What constitutes the blessed life?

Their answers ranged from the contemplative life of the philosopher to the virtuous life of the citizen to the **tranquil life** of the **Stoic sage**.

Paul's answer cuts through all of this with theological precision: blessedness is found not in a human philosophical achievement **but in God Himself**, and participation in God's blessedness is the gift of the Gospel.

The blessed God, full of His own joy, satisfied in His own perfections, overflowing in His own love has determined to share that blessedness with creatures made from dust, through the costly grace of the cross.

The Beatitudes in **Matthew 5:3-12** are the human face of divine blessedness.

Matthew 5:3-6, *“Blessed are the poor in spirit, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 4 Blessed are those who mourn,*

For they shall be comforted. ⁵ Blessed are the meek, For they shall inherit the earth. ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled.

These are not descriptions of admirable human character traits, but they are descriptions of people who have been conformed to the character of Christ and who are therefore beginning to share in the blessedness of the God who is Himself supremely **Makarios**.

Conclusion.

*In the late **eighteenth century**, a young **English nobleman** named **William Wilberforce** was at the height of his social and political success. He was witty, wealthy, a **close friend of Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger**, and one of the most promising politicians of his generation. By every measure of the world, he was blessed.*

*But in **1784 and 1785**, through a combination of reading **Philip Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul** and a series of conversations with his old friend **Isaac Milner** during a long coach journey across Europe, Wilberforce found himself confronted by the law of God.*

*He wrote in his diary: **I was filled with sorrow. I am sure that no human creature could suffer more than I did for some months. I even wished myself dead.***

*The law had done its work: it had shown him, with devastating clarity, that despite his charm, his intelligence, and his social standing, **he was a sinner before a holy God.***

*He considered entering the ministry to flee his public responsibilities. But **John Newton**, the **old slave trader turned pastor**, counselled him otherwise.*

***Newton** told him: God has raised you up for the good of His church and for the good of the nation. Maintain your public character.*

*Newton said to him essentially what Paul says in these verses: **the law has done its work in you. Now let the glorious Gospel of the blessed God equip you for the work to which you have been called.***

Wilberforce returned to Parliament.

*For the next **forty-six years**, sustained by the grace of the Gospel and convicted by the law of God about the monstrous injustice of slavery, he fought the most important legislative battle in British history.*

*In **1807**, the **slave trade was abolished throughout the British Empire.***

*In **1833**, three days before his death, the **Slavery Abolition Act** passed, freeing over **800,000 enslaved people.***

The law broke him.

The Gospel equipped him.

The blessed God used him.

This is what the law and Gospel do together, when they are used lawfully and received faithfully.

The law shows us what we are.

The Gospel shows us what we can become by grace.

And the blessed God, who is supremely happy in Himself, invites us to become instruments of His justice and His joy in a world that desperately needs both.

APPLICATION FOR DAILY LIFE

1. Read the Ten Commandments slowly this week (**Exodus 20:1-17**). For each one, ask: **In what specific way have I fallen short of this command?** Then bring each answer to the cross in prayer.
2. Study **Romans 3:19-26** as the biblical exposition of the relationship between law and gospel. Journal the transition from silence (verse 19) to justification (verse 24). This is the architecture of the Gospel.
3. Practise using the law when sharing the Gospel this week. **Instead of beginning with God loves you and has a plan for your life,** begin with the character of God and the standard of His law. See how it prepares the soil for the seed of grace.

4. **Galatians 3:24** describes the law as our tutor to bring us to Christ. Thank God this week for every experience of conviction you have felt — it was the mercy of God using the law to lead you to the Saviour.
5. The gospel is described as glorious. Spend time this week meditating on **2 Corinthians 4:4-6**. Journal what it means to you personally that the Gospel radiates the glory of God.
6. The blessed God delights in redemption. Read **Zephaniah 3:17**: The LORD your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness. Let this image of a rejoicing God transform how you approach your own repentance and restoration.
7. **Is there an area of your life where you are using the law as a means of earning God's approval rather than as a diagnostic tool that drives you to grace?** Identify it, confess it, and receive the freedom of the Gospel.