

I Love Thy Law

#0575

Study given by W. D. Frazee

There is one issue that is basic, and will become increasingly so as we get to the end. It is law-keeping.

“O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts. I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep Thy word. I have not departed from Thy judgments: for Thou hast taught me. How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through Thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way” Psalms 119:97-104.

We tend to think upon those things that please us. And in turn, the more we think about the law of God the more delight we find in it. There is nothing in these verses that suggests the idea that the law is a yoke of bondage. On the contrary,

“How sweet are Thy words unto my taste! Yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!” Psalms 119:103.

David tells us that he delights in the law of God (Psalms 40:8). The law is written in his heart. He loves it. He is not sorry that he has to do it. He is not feeling sad about what God requires. He is not wishing he could get into some other place where he wouldn't have to do this and that.

There are some people who are thinking all day long how to break the law of the land, the law of the institution they are connected with, the home, God's law, any law. The statement of one of the leaders of one of the youth's movement who was way out in the left field was very blunt. He said, “One of the first things young people have to learn today is to kill their parents, and I mean that literally, because they stand for the establishment.”

There is nobody here who would think in those terms. But there are ways of killing parents and teachers and pastors or leaders besides taking a gun or a knife or dynamite. There is many a parent or leader today who is dying because of the lack of love and respect and understanding.

Somebody says, “You are talking about the generation gap.”

Yes. And we must never forget who invented the generation gap. It is the Devil.

I am so happy to fix your mind on something as far removed from the generation gap as Orion is from hell. There is a wonderful privilege that the youth of today have to be entirely different from the youth of this world.

It is often remarked that the reason the youth of today are revolting is because the parents and leaders have not given them a good example. I don't question that it is true, but I don't think it is a good excuse. If the older people are ever going to walk those streets within the gates of pearl they must enter into the experience where they find actual joy in keeping the commandments of God. And one of the great reasons many young people today do not find a happiness in the law of God is because they have not seen very much happiness on the part of those who claim to be standing for the law. They have often seen inconsistencies that indicate that older people as well as youth are perfectly willing to find excuses for not doing all that the law of God requires. The two things are closely related.

One of the reasons older people have not found happiness in obedience to the law of God is that they have not obeyed. This is something that half-way surrender will never purchase. This experience of joy and happiness in the law of God calls for all that we have. The two philosophies of happiness in obedience or satisfaction in disobedience are as far removed as any two things can be. And if you and I are to be successful in demonstrating these principles, and thereby getting other people to unite with us in the law-keeping program, it calls for all we have. I thank God for our privilege.

Do we really want to get other people with us in this? An attorney and his wife have come to the five-day plan, and he and his wife have gotten the victory over tobacco. They are getting satisfaction in it. But he sees that the logical result of the whole thing is to lead him more and more into a path quite different from the one he has been on. He sees that it is a different way of life. He sees that it isn't just a matter of pulling out the cigarettes and keeping all the rest of the program he has been on.

This is just as true in every detail in the world's program. Take any life you want to out in the world and substitute postum for coffee, fruit juice for coke, Saturday for Sunday, or good music for the music of the world. Take any one of those items, or any one of a hundred others, and you have not accomplished very much. If people actually find pleasure in law keeping, they will want to keep all the law, for it is written:

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” James 2:10.

He who finds what he things is a thrill, and he who finds some sort of satisfaction in breaking some commandment, whether it be some physical or spiritual law, will very naturally be drawn on to break two or three or five laws. Why not? If stolen waters are sweet, why stop with a teaspoon full. If stolen waters are sweeter than those you buy, why stop with one tiny little melon in the corner of the field?

And this is exactly what we are seeing in this generation. Those who believe that the answer is in resistance, riot, revolution, in casting aside the restraints that decent society has accepted for generations, are led on to go further and further until there is no law in heaven or earth that is respected. And as far as sin can be consistent, that is consistency.

But the message I bring tonight is let us be at least consistent in carrying out what we believe—that the way of happiness is the way of obedience to the law of God. If that is so, then the better we keep it the happier we will be.

“O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day”
Psalms 119:97.

Notice David doesn’t say, I tolerate it. He doesn’t say, I keep it hoping I will get some recognition here and a crown hereafter. He says he loves it. No stronger verb could he have employed. His whole heart was drawn out in appreciation concerning these wonderful commandments.

Early this morning I was in the Atlantic airport. All around me were the sights and sounds of a world that knows little or nothing of these commandments. But it is a privilege that you and I have to shut our eyes and our ears and tune in to the TV of the eternal world. It is our privilege to meditate on the law of God. These ten precepts are worthy of going over again and again and again.

I can tell you truly, the more I meditate on them the more I love them. If you will allow me to put it this way, I wouldn’t know how to improve them. I wouldn’t know how to change them and make them better. None of us could do that. They are all right the way they are. As we meditate on them it is like chewing some good whole-wheat bread. As we chew the taste begins to develop. How sweet.

Are these commandments sweet? Oh, yes. Take the first one,

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me” Exodus 20:3

Do you know what that means? God is saying, you can be happy—you don’t have to be confused by the multitude of voices around you. There is just one voice you need to listen to. Isn’t that a comfort?

There are voices on the right and on the left. There is thunder on the right and on the left. But there is a still, small voice speaking to our hearts, pointing us to the law of God and saying, “This is the way. Walk ye in it.”

“O how I love thy law! It is my meditation all the day”
Psalms 119:97.

To multitudes today the concept of love and law are quite different things. To multitudes love is over here and law is over there. They are far apart and getting further apart all the time. But those who hold that view understand neither love nor law. The love they talk about is sentimentalism, or worse. And the law they look at has a concept of sternness that is put into their minds by the Devil.

To the child of God love and law are blended. They are not separate. The child of God knows that every commandment of God has been issued from love. And all our obedience is motivated by love.

“If ye love Me, keep My commandments” John 14:15.

The trouble with the concept that many people have with law is too hard. The concept that many people have of love is too soft. Their view of law is too rigid. Their view of love is entirely apart from requirements at all. It is mushy and soft. But when we put the two together as God puts them together, the solidity of the law will give form and substance to our love. And love will give life and inspiration to our views of law and response to it.

This is something that can be known only by experience. You know by experience what peaches taste like. So you know only by experience what the joy of obedience to the law of God brings.

I want to be practical tonight. I want to have you face up to the fact that there are many people who experiment with this and find out they have a problem on their hands. They find out that they have something in the mind and heart that seems to pull in a different direction. Have you ever been driving a car and find it pulls over, and you have to keep pulling it around to hold it on the road. It may be a tire that is low or something wrong with the front end. My point is do you find something like that in your life that as you seek to obey the law of God there is something pulling off? If that is so, you may say as you listen, "That is something I haven't been able to get hold of."

Let me be practical. Unless you are entirely ready for heaven or entirely ready for hell, you have two things that are pulling at you, seeking to draw you. And there is no way of avoiding that conflict. There is no way of getting away from the fact that no matter which one of these voices you yield to, the other will continue to pull you in the opposite direction. This is one of the facts of life that may be ignored, but can't be done away with.

If you go the way of the world and break the law, there will be loved ones who will pray for you and plead with you. There will be angels that will appeal to your heart. The Holy Spirit will add its earnest intercession. You will be followed day and night, and your conscience will be burdened because you are doing the wrong thing. You may cast aside all those holy influences. You may plunge into law breaking in an effort to silence it. But as long as you have life, and as long as there is hope in heaven, God and angels, and those who love you on earth, will follow you and seek to appeal to you to choose the way of life and obedience.

It is not an easy road to go down to hell. There is disappointment all along the way. This is why the Devil keeps up a continual hubbub seeking to drown the voice of conscience. This is why he seeks to have all kinds of entertainment and other activities that will keep us active so we will not have time to think.

Where you ever at an auction? Did you ever notice the atmosphere that the auctioneer fosters? He seeks to draw your mind to a certain object, and give you the feeling that it is important, and that you must get it no matter how much you have to bid. The successful auctioneer builds his success on that.

The Devil is trying to get you to bid in his auction. The best way to deal with that is not to attend the auction.

You say, "But look what I am missing."

Indeed. You are missing a lot of things, and they are not all wicked. They are not all lung cancer or heart attack. Many of them are lost leaders to get you into the store. The devil will ever borrow the vocabulary of the Bible. He will have so-called religious music, religious preaching, and religious entertainment, anything to get you in and excited with the idea—here is the thing that will satisfy my soul.

Listen, there is only one thing that can satisfy, and the Devil has nothing to do with it. It is accepting Jesus as your Savior, and the law of God as the rule of your life.

Somebody says, I have tried now for several years to walk the way of obedience, and there are times when I get a certain satisfaction out of it, but again there comes these restless cravings. What shall I do?

For Jesus' sake you can do right to please Him no matter how it makes you feel. And if you will do that, the time will come when all the restlessness will cease and you will be supremely happy in doing God's will.

Another thing you can do is just as important. Every day you can do what David says. You can meditate on God's holy law. We become like what we look at. If we look at the vain things of this world, we shall eventually want them. If we look at the things about us, we shall become like them. But if we will look to Jesus and His holy law, we shall eventually become all that we long to be. We shall eventually become fully restored to the image of Jesus.

Do not worry then if there comes to you experiences in which you recognize cravings contrary to this law. Every man in this world has them. Every woman, every boy and girl has them. It is written:

“For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh” Galatians 5:17.

Every Christian has this battle on his hands. The apostle said he died daily. Every day his wishes and feelings and inclinations conflicted with duty in the law of God. But he was so thankful that looking to Calvary he could gather the power to go on and do the right thing regardless of his feelings. And what a satisfaction it is to have the victory.

Somebody says, “But I have failed.”

Thank God, it is written:

“And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” 1 John 2:1.

This is not something that is done once and is all over. There are men and women and young people here tonight that are having a battle right on what we are studying about. Oh, I encourage you to persevere. But the weaker you are the more you need the strength that comes from looking to Calvary. And the more you recognize cravings in your heart and mind that leads away from the law the more you must put your mind on this law and meditate on it day and night. Memorize these commandments. Go over them. Look at them not merely as commandments, but as promises. Read every one of the “Thou shalt not” as a

promise that God will keep you from doing that thing which the law of God condemns. Cultivate the habit of rejoicing in what God says.

Years ago I had the privilege of having in my company for a time a man who was a very fine musician. He knew and loved the highest in music. Oh, how he could play. He took an interest in me. He used to play for my meetings. Sometimes he would sit down with me and we would study music together. He began to point out some things to me that were beautiful in music. He began to show me certain musical hymns and point out their beauty and why they were beautiful.

When he first began to do that I couldn't see in those things what he saw. But I took his word for it because I knew that he knew. I kept listening to those beautiful hymns. And the more I listened, putting my mind with his on the matter, the more I came to appreciate them, and the more certain other things sounded cheap.

This is the way it is with this holy law. If there is something in this law that cuts across your natural disposition, as you look at it you may not see much happiness in it. You may not see the sweetness that David talks about. But if you say, God knows better than I do. He loved me enough to give me life, and He loved me enough to give Himself and Jesus to redeem me, certainly He would not tell me anything but what is true and for my happiness. Lord, I will accept what You say whether I see it or not. I will live what you say whether I feel like it or not.

When we do that the time comes when we feel the way God feels about it, as well as choosing what God chooses. No matter how much a man is a slave to cigarettes, there comes a time when he is liberated from it when he thanks God for freedom from that slavery. It is so with everything else. In this crisis hour when all the world is lining up to either keep the law or to break the law, to exalt the law or to say down with the law, shall we not align ourselves fully with God and His program of law keeping? And remember, love and law belong together. Love without law is soft and mushy. Law without love is rigid and strict. But if you put law and love together and blend them into one experience, you have that which is satisfying, solid, and beautiful. Let's have more of it.

Don't think that half-way measures are going to be satisfying. The generations of this world are not satisfied with half-way measures in lawlessness. More and more they will be hauling down the flag and trampling on it. They will be finding their thrill in every kind of law breaking.

But the children of light will come closer and closer to God's holy ideal of having His law written in their hearts and finding genuine satisfaction in it. And in that they will need to crucify certain carnal desires, certain human tendencies, and certain weaknesses and deny them every day.

But that's all right. When we look at Jesus and see what He did for us, aren't we willing to do that? To be a man means to be able to say no to our inclinations, to the appeals of others, the temptations of the Devil, and the cravings of our own flesh.

Oh, to be a man for God. To be able to stand in God given liberty, intelligently choosing obedience to the law of God as our way of life, and accepting the righteousness of Christ to cover our past failures, and to give us what it takes to keep this law from now on.

Has God done anything for you in this direction? Is there anyone here who can honestly say that there is something in this law that once looked hard to you and now you love it. Thank God. All the rest can be the same way.

All through eternity we are not going to have to be denying our cravings. We are not going to have to be crucifying our desires. There will come a time even in this world when more and more we shall find our happiness in full obedience. And on through eternity we will have nothing but harmony with God.

It is a wonderful thing to witness concerning our faith in Christ, our love for Jesus, and our choosing to obey Him.

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