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All right, we're still Chapter 19 of confession.

Coming this week to Article 6. Uh, last week we noted that When Christ came he Did not come to end the law as a rule of light. For us that his gospel does not reduce or decrease Our obligation to the Lord but rather our obligation to the law. Uh, but rather strengthens Our obligation to the law and we know In a couple of different places.

The law is now called to us things like the Royal law. Uh, because it is the law of King Jesus or the law of Liberty. Because it describes that new life and character that we have in Christ that we have been freed. To walk. And a wonderful sweet view of the law.

That the Lord Jesus gives the believer. Uh this probably doesn't surprise us very much in God's kind and always interesting Providence to us to give us to have almost finished singing through and praying through and studying through Psalm 119 together. Uh, right. And then as we come towards the conclusion.

Of this wonderful Psalm in which Lord gives us the mind of Christ towards his law. Then he brings us in his Providence, to the study of The place of his law of his Commandments in the life of a Believer. Well, if Christ in the gospel does not Dissolve, but strengthen Our obligation.

To keep the Commandments of fraud, then the substance of article 6 isn't surprising at all. In Arctic for six reads. Although True Believers be not under the law as a covenant of Works. To be there by Justified or condemned. Yet, is it 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. Discovering. Also the sinful pollutions of their nature hearts and lives. So as examining themselves, thereby, they may come to further conviction of humiliation for and hatred against sin.

Together with a clearer site of the need they have of Christ. And the Perfection of his obedience. It is likewise of use to regenerate. To restrain their Corruptions and that it forbids sin. And the threatenings of it, serve to show what even their sins deserve. And what but even their sins deserve?

And what afflictions in this life they may expect for them. Although freed from the cursor of threatened in the law, The promises of it in like manner, show them God's affirmation of obedience, And what blessings? They may expect upon the performance thereof. Although not as due to them by the law as a covenant of Works.

So, as a man's doing good and refraining from Evil, Because the law encouragedeth to the one. And deterth from the other. There's no evidence. Of his being under the law. And not under grace. So, you can Uh, if you've got your copy of The Westminster standards with the scripture proofs, you can see that.

There are pages of these proof texts. And you can, Uh, read and feel a little bit of the context into which the situation into, which the pastors who are gathered at this. At this assembly. Wrote the confession, produced and wrote the confession. You can catch a little sense of it right at the end there.

That when a man does good and refrains from Evil in response to the law. So he does good and refrains from Evil because the law encourages us to do good and deters us from doing evil. That that is no evidence of continuing to be under the law. And not under grace.

Now, if you have loved God's law and if you have striven, if you have tried hard, To keep his Commandments. And you have interaction with other people who profess Christ and are part of the visible church. Then you almost undoubtedly have been accused of being a quote unquote legalist.

Of operating as if you are under the law. Uh, now this is of course, to completely under misunderstand, what it means to be under the law, everyone is under the law or under God, the law is the application to our lives of the implications of his character and what he has made us to be.

And so uh, there is no such thing as someone who is not under the law and that way Not under obligation to the law. And we covered that. Last week. But there are different ways of being under the law. There is under the law as an obligation which continues But under the law is a covenant of works as if we are able by obeying the law.

Uh, to Merit. Uh, God's favor to earn from him particular blessings. Or able. Disobeying the law. To somehow lose the benefits of the Covenant of Grace in Christ. That would be to be under the law as a covenant of And so, In that way, we are not under the law, we are under grace.

We are not under the Covenant of works or the Covenant of light. Um, but we are under uh the Covenant of Grace. We're not in the first Adam. Uh, in whom the and with him, the Covenant of Works was made. So every one of you in this room

Looking for the babies, the babies are not here. Maybe Bo is the youngest Or somewhere is Providence here, I don't see. Oh okay. Well even down to baby Providence. Every one of us was in the first Adam. And we were party then to the Covenant of work. Uh, and so the law in the Covenant of Works condemns And it sentences us, God sentences us to death.

By that Covenant and when we say we want to have no Gods before the face of the true God and we don't want to worship him in any way that we have come up with that are from the image and Nations of our hearts and we want to speak his name rightly and use his name rightly and we want to remember his day and and consecrate it as holy and entirely to him.

And To murder because he says not to murder. And Uh, we want to treat marriage as As holy for just between, Uh, one man and the one woman that God and in his Providence has assigned To him. And we don't want to steal because God's law says not to.

When we, when we You say all those things. Uh, we mustn't think that we are earning from God. Uh, Blessing by doing that or Uh, that we are. Or that we are able even. Uh to lose what Christ has earned by doing that, that would be to continue under a covenant of works.

Adam was able to earn from God. Everlasting life for him and for us. And he was able and he did. Earn from God. Everlasting damnation. Uh, for himself and for us. Uh, when he broke the Covenant, that's what it means to be under the law. Uh, to be under Grace, doesn't mean you stop obeying.

It means now Jesus has earned for us. All of the blessing that belongs to him in the Covenant of Grace, God himself, first and foremost, Uh, that's why. You know, if you ever uh, If you ever if someone ever asks you how you are and you say I'm good and they When they say nobody is good but God and you say, well, I'm good.

I trust in Jesus and he is God and he is good. And his goodness is mine, I'm good. In Jesus, not by what I do, that's what it means to be under grace, is to be United to Jesus Christ, and no longer condemned by the law, sentenced to death.

Uh, by the law. But surely, if you have Uh, talked much about obeying God's Commandments, you've Uh, you've run into another believer at some point or someone who professes to be. Uh, that doesn't want to hear anything about the Commandments of God. Those things just make me feel guilty.

Well. I'm thankful to be made to feel guilty. When I'm guilty. When I Think and feel and act in a manner that is guilty of breaking God's law. That doesn't mean that I have. Lost my salvation by it or that there is something incomplete and Christ is paying for all my guilt.

But I need the help of seeing what to hate, we'll get into that more. Uh, when we, uh, when we read the rest of the paragraph. Um, I just know that there are Several of you who have had that this sort of conversation this experience with other believers, And it's important to see that this particular article is written for that particular situation to answer that charge.

That loving God's Commandments is not a symptom. Of being under the law and not under Grace, or not understanding Grace. We had. We had a dear old lady. I guess she wasn't that old. She's pretty old now. Uh, in the in the church in Iowa. And she had. She had a daughter.

Uh, whose family left the, the church plant and went to one of the big happy clappy quote, unquote, reformed ish, Churches in town. And they had a family intervention, a few years later. Uh, because I guess it doesn't matter to any of you except for my family. Because sweet Miss Gretchen who loved Jesus?

With all her heart. She wasn't super theologically Um, Uh, she wasn't able to dawdle the eyes and cross all the t's. But there wasn't. You could hardly find a person in him. There was more of a Principle of Grace in their character. And the way they're really related to others and she loved to learn What God's word requires of her in whatever situation?

You know, she kind of Traded serving our family, almost like, Uh, household servant. Sometimes she was there so much. For asking, well what does the Bible say about this? And what does the Bible say about that every situation in our life? She She had been widowed and so she didn't have a husband to ask, and so it was a, it was a great blessing to her.

Well, she had this family intervention in, which her children, after going to one of those Um, Cheap Grace. Type churches in the quote unquote. Reformed World. We're concerned with her that she wasn't converted. Because she cared so much. About God's law and God's Commandments. And, I actually tried a little bit from West Westminster Confession, 1906 and and she did her best.

And at the end of the conversation, we just had to say, don't worry Miss Gretchen, there is no one in the world that I'm less worried about being an unconverted legalist. Then Than you, you keep you keep loving his Commandments. You keep loving to do what he says. It's not a symptom of being unconverted.

It is exactly the opposite. Um, So it's important for us in in real life situations uh, to get this correct. Although True Believers be not under the law as a covenant of works to be thereby Justified or condemned. The attention of great use to them as well as to others.

Okay, so I'm no longer no longer. You know, I I'm still under the obligation to the law and my obligation is even strengthened But it, it was so useful to the unbeliever. The unbeliever needs the law of God. You know, Romans 3 20 says, through the law, comes the knowledge of sin.

And what we're gonna hear, Lord willing and the, the sermon In the morning service today. Uh, we need to know ourselves as toiling and overburdened with our sin. Uh, that is The condition that when God is saving you, he gives you Acknowledge and realize that you are in. That you may know that though.

Welcome to Christ is for you. Uh, so it's the law is wonderfully useful to the unbeliever in that way. And so the question is, okay. If you're a Christian, Your cylinder obligation to keep the law. But is it as useful to you? As it would have been, if you weren't saved.

As it would have been before you came to Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Bible answer. And therefore the confession answer is it follows the Bible is That is, as of great use to you. Just as much as it is to others even more. 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. So think of uh, one of the most famous scriptures in the Bible. Uh, salvation. Being by grace alone, through faith alone. Right. For by Grace, you have been saved. Through faith and that not of yourselves.

It is the gift of God. Okay, so

Not of. Lest any man should boast for we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus. For good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. So if you know yourself to have been saved by grapes, if you know yourself to have been saved by this creation work of Jesus Christ, I don't know if any of you have.

Uh, ever in vain curiosity like my own not not I don't remember who the first person to tell it to me was, but I'm not pointing a finger without remembering that there are three fingers pointing back Um, And perhaps you have wished that you could have been there at the creation to see and hear You know, when God speaks and there's no one there yet.

But he does it by speaking. Why? Because he's going to come and he's going to speak to us. And he's communicating, even in the way that he created that the way that That he saves us. Is by the same power and the same word. And so when he says we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus and you know you might not have you not may not, you were not at the original creation.

But each of you were at your own New Creation, Created in Christ. Jesus. And some of you even remember the moment. That his word broke through. And others of you. And if you don't remember the moment, you know, it was by his word and here you are a new creature created in Christ Jesus.

Well, What did Ephesians 2 10 which we just read? What did it tell us about the purpose of or part of the purpose of our being created new in Christ Jesus? That we should walk. In good works, which were prepared beforehand. And so, the whole rest of your life lays out in front of you as this massive collection of good works that God has specifically Uh, planned devised

assigned to you prepared beforehand, each of you, none of us have the same exact good works to do.

Even those of us who are in the same household, even those of us. Who are in the same marriage, the husband has one set of good works and the wife has another set of good works. Specifically assigned by God as the fruit of our new creaturiness, in the Lord, Jesus who has done this Almighty work of saving us.

Doesn't that make you want to know what those good works are? Doesn't that make you want to discover? What? All of those things that you have been saved to do in this life and in this world are

Article, 6 of chapter 19 of the confession following, the Bible is saying Isn't this one of the great uses usefulnesses? Of the law of God to That he has given us Commandments, by which we may discover what those good works are. So, First great, continuing usefulness. Uh, that it directs.

Uh, sorry it, informs us of the will of God, and our duty, and directs and binds them to walk accordingly. Okay, so not only this is what he has created, you knew to do but he's also brought you into Covenant with himself as an he He said, I am your God and you are my people.

And so his commandment is a law to you. Not only as your creator, not only as the almighty but now is your Covenant. God. Never forget that the Ten Commandments were given. Not in the context of humanity, as a whole who had the moral law already from the garden in Adam, we had the moral law already, The Ten Commandments were given to the Covenant people.

Uh, and so It's very useful to us for informing us of God's Will and our duty and directing and binding us to walk accordingly. Uh, discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature hearts and lives. Okay, so it's an answer to one of the prayers. That the Holy Spirit puts in your mouth.

To pray and to sing at the end of Psalm, 19. You want you pray to God? Uh, to search your heart and to find out to you to expose to you. If there's any unclean thing in you, Well, doesn't James chapter 1 say that he has answered that prayer in great part by giving you his law, which is a mirror And so we look into the, the law of God, the way you look into a mirror.

And you say, oh, my beard is a mess, my beard might be a mess, I don't remember. Um, You know, anyway. Now, I feel like the man who looks in the mirror and is a hero only and not a doer and forgets, his natural face, he walks away and he doesn't do anything about it.

Don't do with God's law. Like I may or may not have done with my beard and now very self-conscious with this uh, don't do that with God's law. Look into this mirror that he's provided. As part of his answer to your prayer, show me. If there's any unclean thing in me and you'd go and you see unclean things.

Is law. And you know that it's not just a regular mirror but it's way better than any mirror and any Yeah, Ultra terrifying, and maybe not good for children or adults to read fairy tale. Which talks back and gives counsel. And those things God's law is way more active than that, and way better than that, Doesn't he tell us in Hebrews chapter 4?

That his word is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword. Dividing, Soul from Spirit, which And the human being. Um, Probably the same thing. And so it's a Um, it's using figurative language there and bone from marrow. Uh, there are those who think that. The use of the word soul and the use of the word Spirit.

We're not trichotomists, but then they want to locate the spirit and the Soul the same way. Um marrow is located in the boat. We don't need to get into but it it distinguishes for you and what does it really do? And this This is the main thing. Not can you divide Soul from Spirit?

But what are the thoughts and intentions in my heart? Because you don't know the thoughts and intentions of your heart, God's told you in Jeremiah. Your heart is deceitful above all things and he uses a Hebrew word that means tracked over Some of you have been Hunters. And maybe in other circumstances have tried to determine by track by tracking and by looking at tracks on the ground, Uh, which way something was going and how many of them and of what kind?

And And God tells us the spirit tells us in Jeremiah, our hearts are so tracked. Over is very difficult to distinguish. How many motives there are and which we're going in, what direction, and who is in the lead. And Determining the thoughts and intentions of your heart is very difficult, but praise God.

His word is not only a mirror, but it's a living and active mirror. And he sticks a knife in and he says, You're already naked and exposed before God to whom, you'll have to give an account that, you know, that's, we're continuing in the context there in Hebrews chapter 4.

But the law comes beforehand. And makes you naked and exposed to yourself. And throws you your own thoughts, and your own intentions. And so discovering also this inful pollutions of their nature hearts and lives. So as excuse me examining themselves thereby they may come to further conviction of humiliation for and hatred against sin.

Now, whether it was at your conversion or at some other point in your Christian Life, you you may have had a point at which you came under great conviction and humiliation before, God did you hate it you're sin and you laid hold of Christ whether for the first time or the thousandth time and rejoiced and you might have thought that you were done with having to be convicted for humiliated for Your sin before, God.

Well, as long as you have sin, you ought to as long as you continue sinning. You want to be convicted of their sins, you ought to be humiliated before. God for those sins, you ought to continue agreeing with God about them, which means hating your sins. And the law of God, which he sent to our Aid when he was bringing us to And through the law came, the knowledge of sin.

You remember the law that was written on, on the heart? They sometimes even excuse themselves, God's word didn't ever, excuse us. But that say the law, which he sent to your Aid to give you knowledge of sin, he continues to send you your Aid. To keep giving you conviction.

Of your ongoing sins to keep helping you to be humiliated before. God Uh together with a clearer site of the need, they have of Christ and the Perfection of his obedience. This was one of one of the wonderful things, dear children and I hope each of you has a very long life.

Walking with him in this world. Uh, but that as clearly as, you know, Jesus now and you know, those of you who are Children in your 60s and 70s. Um, as clearly as you know, the Lord Jesus now Uh, and you know, your need for him now and the Perfection of his obedience now One of the things that he uses his law to do, Is to continue clarifying, to us more and more.

Kind of like some of us have had glasses long enough that we thought they were working well. And then we went in for a new eye exam and we needed a new prescription, and we got the

new prescription and we were grateful before. For how much more clearly we can see with those glasses on you took them off and you know, the all the world was a blur.

Uh, well, the law is part of what God continues to give you with respect to the necessity that your need for the Lord Jesus and his perfect obedience. Not only on your behalf, but to which you are being conformed by his Spirit, And the law keeps acting for us, like a new prescription, a new prescription, a new prescription, you see more clearly.

How much you need him and you're more grateful. And you see how you see more clearly how perfect his righteousness is and you see more clearly how wonderful his love is that he gave himself to be your righteousness and that he's still giving of himself to make you more righteous like himself.

Uh, and so Uh, the law is a great help unto love for the Lord Jesus who first loved us. And it doesn't sound like legalism at all, doesn't, it doesn't sound like, it tastes. Like battery acid and makes people into grotesque monstrosities of what a Christian should be. Um, and so don't listen.

To people who have just a tiny bit of teaching, That is being laid hold of by their flesh, that does not like the Commandments of God and is twisting wanting to know and obey God's Commandments so that you so that they come to think of it or think of you for it as if it's almost some anti-christian thing.

Think about God's law. The way, the Bible teaches us about God's law. And you'll find that it is a great help to Christian love. And to Liberty. Uh, the Lord Jesus. It is likewise of use to the regenerant. To restrain their Corruptions. And that it forbid sin and the threatenings of it, serve to show what even their sins deserve.

Okay, so just because Jesus has paid for your sin once for all, Doesn't mean that your sins don't continue to deserve hell. This is one of the things that I think, all of us who have been Christian for any amount of time have, Been mercifully given by his Spirit to break our hearts.

Over our ongoing sin. The the cost to Christ. In in bearing the hell that even those sins deserve. And then you start to and probably, those of you who attend the prayer meetings have discovered this, you know, as we cycle through the Um, the different prompts for confession of sin, and we realize that sinning against knowledge and sinning against Grace and sinning against our promises to God.

And all of these things that there are ways in which the further along we get in Grace. And the more that we know the worse, our sins are and the the more costly to Christ to have atoned for them. And so we see what even our sins deserve and What?

Afflictions in this life they may expect for them. Although freed from the curse. Thereof threatened in the law. So remember that your your heavenly father, he chastens you. And he chastens you in accordance with how you conduct yourself with respect to his law. And so, the more that we Uh the more that we break his Commandments and the more severely we do.

So the more uh, fatherly disciplined, we should hope to have from him. And why would I put it that way? What would it mean children if you don't receive fatherly discipline from him?

That means he's not your father. And you're not actually his child. Because all the true children. Scourges, he gives her Wilkins as we say. Down here or swats as we. Very kind of sanitizedly cold, hold it and we'll continue to call it in our house. But his law tells you what to expect.

If you break Father's commands, Not because he's giving you what your sins deserve. But he's because he's giving you as a child as his child. What you in your sins need? In order to be made, holy In order to be made, like, elder brother. In order to come into that, seeing of him, and that knowing of him, that belongs rightly to Elder, brother, Jesus.

Because you can't go to heaven with your sin. Praise God. You can't take it with you. Uh, and he uh he loves us and he treats us in a way as to leave it behind. Just a minute or two. Well, we'll just not be able to go into much depth at the uh, on for the rest.

The promises of it in like manner. The promises of the law and like man are show them God's atrobation his approval of obedience and what blessings. They may expect upon the performance thereof. Uh, God is a good father. Also, grants to you. Uh, blessing in response to The Obedience of his law.

Not according to our fleshly desires, although often that blessing does come and many good things, he gives us in this life. But remember, the great blessings of the Christian in this world are peace of conscience and joy in the Holy Ghost. Um, The knowledge of him and enjoyment of him, even now Heaven on Earth.

You know, Heaven on Earth is not something that You can check your brokerage account balance to discover.

Although not do as due to them by the law as a covenant of works. So we must never come to God and say, why have we obeyed and you see not And beat with a wicked Fest. The way Isaiah 58, described the religion of the Jews at the time.

So, as a man's doing good and refraining from Evil, Oh, this is the part we started with we're done. We finished. Praise God. Right. So, I hope I hope this is either rehabilitated for you or further encouraged and enriched for you. Your understanding of the usefulness of God's law and the life of the Christian.

And Lord willing this coming week, will next? Lord say we'll finish, uh, chapter 19. Let's pray. Our Father in Heaven. We're so grateful to you. For your perfect fatherliness for. Your son being the perfect word to us and perfect prophet. In his office as mediator and your spirits Ministry of that word to us in your law.

Oh, how we love your law? Oh God. And we thank you that even your word even your law. And it was used by your spirit to increase. That right? And true and good love for your law, for your Commandments. So, please continue that work in us. And for us, we ask in Jesus name.

Amen.