

Christ Is the End of the Law

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes” (Romans 10:4)

Christ proclaimed through His public preaching while living the utter futility of obtaining salvation under Law (e.g. any law). Christ came to show us our sins and to put an end to the Law for our righteousness. A believer, to truly enjoy freedom, must realize Law officially ended in AD 70, forty years after Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection, as the sign that God brings salvation to *the world* through faith in Him. “*The totality of the ministry of Christ in the flesh was under the banner of the Mosaic system*” E.L. Martin. Jesus came to end the Law of Moses by fulfilling it (*fill it to the top*), becoming the Consummate Lawgiver.

“The Lord your God will raise up unto you a Prophet from the midst of you, of your brethren, like unto me; unto him you shall hearken... I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto you, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.” (Deuteronomy 18:15-19).

The real teaching of Christianity is dependent upon one central fact: there is a Savior to rescue man from his sins and the consequences of those sins. That Savior is Jesus Christ. The essential features we reckon today as the main teaching of Christianity taught by Peter, John, and Paul, were thoroughly absent from **Christ’s message to the Jews** when He was in the flesh. The disciples of Christ were all Jews, and in the beginning, they received a different message (Law) than what they would later receive (Law fulfilled). Jesus came to end the Law of Moses and establish a new Law (John 13:34-35), but the Law leads to Christ.

A. Jesus taught that any “blamelessness” by obedience to Law always fall short.

The Jewish religious leaders taught that one could be “blameless” under the Law (Luke 1:6; Philippians 3:6), but when the Messiah came onto the scene, He began to show how no person could possibly be considered “blameless” or righteous by observing the Law. Consider the following:

1. “Thou shalt not murder” vs. “Whoever is angry with his brother is guilty of murder” (Matt. 5:22).
2. Paul was “blameless” by the Law (Phil. 3:6), but compared to Christ, it was “dung” (Phil. 3:8).
3. The religious lawyers set compliance in Jesus’ day, but “your righteousness must exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, or you will not enter the kingdom” (Matt. 5:20).
4. The Law of Moses was given “to produce transgressions” (Gal. 3:19) to take one to Christ.
5. Before Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection, Christ emphasized lack of real righteousness in all.

B. Jesus taught that strict adherence to the sacrificial system was required.

1. Christ told a man healed of his sickness to “**show yourself to the priest and offer the gift (animal sacrifice) that Moses commanded for a testimony unto them**” (Matthew 8:4).
2. Christ kept and commanded all the clean food laws ordained of Moses, else Peter would never have objected to eating clean animals after Christ’s resurrection (Acts 10:9–16).
3. Christ observed and taught circumcision. Only later, as recorded in Acts 10 and 15, did the apostles understand that the ritual of circumcision was not necessary in the Christian system.
4. Christ made it clear that the religious authorities who were to be obeyed (throughout His entire earthly ministry) were “**the Scribes and Pharisees who sat in Moses’ seat**” (Matthew 23:1–3).

C. Jesus taught the Jews that only perfect obedience brought the blessings of God

Those first teachings of Christ while He was in the flesh were given only to the children of Israel. And though Jews were offered God's blessings if they kept the commandments, since no one could fully keep the Law, no one ever received the the full blessings and promises of God through their obedience to the Law. *But something better was coming.* It was a system of God's blessings given by faith (through grace) and not through Law. And, above all, this Good News was coming to the world!

"Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcised for the truth of God, **to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.**" (Romans 15:8) What were those promises to the fathers of Israel?

(Read Deuteronomy 29:8-29)

D. Jesus taught that He was the end of the Law and they were to others as He loved them.

The Sanhedrin served as the Supreme Court of Israel in the days of the Law. They pronounced judgment on people, including capital punishment. The Sanhedrin met in two places during the days of Jesus.

First, the Sanhedrin met in a building called The Chamber of Hewn Stone next to Temple on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem. It was to here that Jesus was taken from Caiaphas' house early on the morning of His crucifixion. At the Chamber of Hewn Stone, the Sanhedrin condemned the Messiah to death

The Sanhedrin then went with Jesus to Antonio's Fortress to obtain Roman permission to kill Him. They needed Pontius Pilate's permission to put Jesus to death because Judah had lost the ability of capital punishment *during Jesus' lifetime*, fulfilling the prophecy that "*the scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between His feet until Shiloh come*" Genesis 49:10. Shiloh, an ancient Hebrew name for the Messiah, had indeed come.

Second, the Sanhedrin also met at a place "outside the camp" of Jerusalem. On top of the Mount of Olives, in a little community of Jewish priests called Bethphage, the Sanhedrin met in a meeting hall where they would make judgments on the "unclean" who were not able to enter the Temple Mount. At Bethphage, the Sanhedrin met to pronounce judgment and death on all those unworthy of Yawheh.

Bethphage means "*House of the Unripe Fig.*" It was during Jesus' last visit to this city of Bethpage that He cursed the unripe fig tree and it died. It's no accident Jesus cursed the unripe fig tree at Bethphage.

Bethphage, "The House of the Unripe Fig," was the very place where the Sanhedrin met *to promote the Law and condemn the unclean.* When Jesus cursed the unripe fig tree at Bethphage, He visually portrayed what He thinks of religious people who take it upon themselves to condemn those they deem unclean and unworthy of God.

One should pause and seriously consider the consequences before choosing to take a seat among the Sanhedrin in the House of the Unripe Fig.

It's far better to endure the curse of the religious Sanhedrin for violations of Law than to be cursed by the relational Savior for violations of Love.

(Read John 13:31-34).