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PAUL ON CHRIST AND THE LAW

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How does Paul view the status of the law now that Christ has come? To this question a quite considerable variety of sometimes mutually exclusive nuanced answers has been given. The answers have ranged from Luther, who denied the *usus normativus,* to Lutheranism, which affirmed it; from Calvin, who claimed that Christ abrogated the ceremonial law but not the moral law, to the modern view that the law is indivisible; from Albert Schweitzer, who saw the law as belonging to the natural world and the rule of angels, to C. E. B. Cranfield, who believes that Christ is the ultimate goal and innermost meaning of the law.

Contributing factors to this spectrum of opinions are (1) the extraordinary variety of ways in which *nomos* is used, (2) the remarkably negative and positive affirmations concerning the law, and (3) the ambiguity of the phrase *"telos . . . nomou Christos."*[1] Those who understand Paul's view of the law to be essentially positive usually believe that *telos* means "goal," while those who believe his view to be essentially negative usually believe that *telos* means "termination."

I. VIEWS

Views on Paul and the law center around *telos . . . nomou Christos.* There are those such as Cranfield, Howard and Kaiser[2] who hold that *telos* means "goal." Others such as Bruce, Barrett, Drane, Hellbardt, Schneider and Bring[3] believe that *telos* means "termination and goal." Still others claim that *telos* means "termination." Those who hold the latter position can be divided into at least five categories: (1) the messianic-age view—the law ceases when the messianic age

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[1]Rom 10:4.

[2]C. E. B. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," *SJT* 17 (1964) 42-68; *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to The Romans* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975, 1979), 2. 515-520; G. E. Howard, "Christ the End of the Law: The Meaning of Romans 10:4ff.", *JBL* 88 (1969) 331-337; W. C. Kaiser, Jr., "Leviticus 18:5 and Paul: Do This and You Shall Live (Eternally?)", *JETS* 14 (1971) 19-28.

[3]F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to The Romans* (London: Tyndale, 1963) 56, 203; "Paul and the Law of Moses," *BJRL* 57 (1975) 59-79; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans* (HNTC; New York: Harper, 1957) 197-198; J. W. Drane, *Paul: Libertine or Legalist?* (London: SPCK, 1975) 133; H. Hellbardt, "Christus das *telos* des Gesetzes," *EvT* 3 (1936) 331-346, esp. 345-346 (cf. G. Delling, *"Telos," TDNT* 8, 56 n. 51); E. E. Schneider, "Finis Legis Christus," *TZ* 20 (1964) 410-422, esp. 420; R. Bring, *Christus und Das Gesetz: Die Bedeutung des Gesetzes des Alten Testaments nach Paulus und sein Glauben an Christus* (Leiden: Brill, 1969) 35-72. For Bring Christ is the end of the law in that he puts an end to law-righteousness and the condemnation that the law brings. He is the goal of the law in that all that the law is aimed at is summed up in him.

begins (Schoeps, Fitzmyer);[4] (2) the cosmological view—the law belongs to the natural world and the rule of angels (Schweitzer);[5] (3) the salvation-history view—the law is abolished with regard to the attainment of salvation (Conzelmann, Sanders, Hahn);[6] (4) the end-of-a-misused-law view (Hübner);[7] and (5) the existential view (Bultmann).[8]

The view that will be advocated here is that *telos* means "termination," but in the special sense that the condemnation and enslavement that the law brings is ended for the believer.

II. THE USAGE OF *NOMOS*

Nomos can refer to the OT as a whole, the Pentateuch, the decalogue, the OT prophets, and perhaps the creation narratives.[9] "In the law it is written" (1 Cor 14:21) refers to Isa 28:11-12. The commandments "Thou shalt not commit adultery . . . kill . . . steal . . . covet" (Rom 13:9) are references to the decalogue. 1 Cor 9:9 (cf. Gal 3:17; Rom 5:13a, 20) explicitly refers to the Mosaic legislation. In the phrase "the law and the prophets" (Rom 3:21) "the law" refers to the Pentateuch, but in the clause "whatever the law says" (Rom 3:19) the reference is to the whole of the OT (cf. also the catena of quotations adduced in Rom 3:10-18 from the Psalms and Isaiah).

Not all references to *nomos* need to refer to the OT or Jewish law. In Rom 3:27; 8:2 it is often taken to mean "principle" and "rule" respectively. It will be seen, however, that good sense can be made of passages like these if they refer to the OT law.[10]

[4]H. J. Schoeps, *Paul* (London: Lutterworth, 1961) 171-175; J. A. Fitzmyer, "Saint Paul and the Law," *The Jurist* 17 (1967) 18-36.

[5]A. Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (New York: Henry Holt, 1931) 177-204.

[6]H. Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1969) 223-228; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977) 496-497. F. Hahn, "Das Gesetzesverständnis im Römer- und Galaterbrief," *ZNW* 67 (1976) 50, says that Christ is the end of the law "sofern es um das Gesetz der Werke geht."

[7]H. Hübner, "Das Gesetz als elementares Thema einer Biblischen Theologie," *KD* 22 (1976) 250-276, esp. 266-267.

[8]R. Bultmann, "Christ the End of the Law," in *Essays Philosophical and Theological* (London: SCM, 1955) 36-66. For him Christ is the end of the law in that he gives man "the freedom to live on a future basis and to live for the future released from his past and from himself" (64).

[9]Cf. *ho nomos legei* (1 Cor 14:34). See F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* (London: Oliphants, 1971) 136.

[10]In the last century in particular, certain scholars argued that when *nomos* is used without the definite article Paul is referring, not specifically to the Mosaic law, but to law in general. In Britain this position was held by J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* (1865; repr. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957) 118; E. H. Gifford, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans* (London: Murray, 1886) 41-48. On the continent it was held, according to P. Peter Bläser, *Das Gesetz bei Paulus* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1941) 2 ff., by C. Holstein and G. Volkman. That such a distinction is present has been refuted by Bläser, *Gesetz* 1-31; E. Grafe, *Die Paulinische Lehre von Gesetz nach den vier Hauptbriefen* (Freiburg/Leipzig: Mohr [Siebeck], 1893) 2-11. Grafe points out (5-6) that the equation of the two forms is seen in the usage of *hypo nomon* and *ho nomos* (Gal 3:23-24), and in Rom 2:23-27 where what the Jew breaks is *nomos* and what the uncircumcised person keeps is *ho nomos* (vv 26-27). Howard, "Christ the End" 331 n. 2, also points out that in such passages as Rom 2:17; 13:8; Gal 6:13; Phil 3:5 the contexts require that *nomos* refer to the law of Moses. I would add that at Rom 2:14, 23, 27; 7:1-2, 7; Gal 4:21 *nomos* appears in the same verse both with and without the definite article with no apparent difference in meaning.

III. Positive and Negative Aspects of the Law

1. *Positive Aspects.* The law is of no mere human authority (cf. 1 Cor 9:8) but is "the law of God" (Rom 7:22, 25; 8:7). Given by God (Rom 9:4; cf. 3:2; *prosetethē* Gal 3:19 = divine passive) and written by God (1 Cor 9:9; 14:21; cf. 14:34), it contains the will of God (Rom 2:17-18), bears witness to the righteousness of God (Rom 3:21) and is in accord with the promises of God (Gal 3:21).

The law is "holy," "good" and "of the Spirit" (Rom 7:12, 14, 16); its essence is love (Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14), its embodiment is "knowledge" and "truth" (Rom 2:20). Through faith rather than works it is established, not destroyed (Rom 3:31). Its "just requirement" is fulfilled by the one who walks "according to the Spirit" rather than "according to the flesh" (Rom 8:4).

2. *Negative Aspects.* The law brings a curse (Gal 3:3), wrath (Rom 4:15), sin (Rom 7:7-8) and death (Rom 7:9-11; 2 Cor 3:6-7; cf. Rom 5:12-13). The law gives sin its "opportunity" (Rom 7:8, 11) and its power (1 Cor 15:56), and it allows sin to be charged against us (Rom 5:13). It produces transgressions (Rom 4:15; cf. Gal 3:19), makes the trespass increase (Rom 5:20), enslaves (Gal 3:23; 4:5, 21-31; Rom 6:14-15; 7:4-6, 23-25) and condemns to death (2 Cor 3:9; Rom 2:12; cf. Rom 8:1, 3; Col 2:14). It so stands at the root of sin and death that it is called the law of sin and death (Rom 7:23, 25; 8:7).

To live *en nomō* (Gal 3:11; 5:4), *ek (tou) nomou* (Rom 4:14, 16; 10:5; Gal 3:18, 21; Phil 3:9), *dia nomou* (Rom 3:20; 4:13; Gal 2:21) or *hypo nomon* (Rom 6:14-15; Gal 4:21; 5:18) is fatal.

For the Christian the law is in some sense over and done with. For him Christ is the "end" *(telos)* of the law (Rom 10:4). Christ has redeemed him from the curse of the law (Gal 3:13); he has died to the law (Rom 7:4, 6; Gal 2:19), is freed from the law (Rom 7:6), is no longer under the law (Rom 6:14-15).

These negative and positive aspects are expressed, I believe, within a coherent total view of the law.

IV. The Problem: Flesh

The fundamental problem with the man outside of Christ with his enslavement to the law is that he is "in the flesh" rather than "in the Spirit" (Rom 7:5, 14). At Rom 7:5 while we were in the flesh we had our "sinful passions," which were *dia tou nomou* at work in our members to bear fruit for death. At Rom 7:14 the law is "of the Spirit" but "I" am "of the flesh," "sold under sin." The man in Christ, however, is not in the flesh but in the Spirit (Rom 7:5-6; 8:5-9)[11] and the law is no longer a problem for him because it is of the Spirit. As a Christian, therefore, he walks not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit and is able to fulfill the just requirement of the law (Rom 8:4).

[11]Gal 4:23, 29; 5:24; 6:8 also imply that the non-Christian is in the flesh, and Gal 3:2-5, 14; 4:6, 29; 5:5, 25; 6:8 imply that the Christian is in the Spirit.

V. The Solution: The Death and Resurrection of Jesus

It is through Christ's death and resurrection that the life of man in the flesh, the life of man under the law, his bondage to sin, and his destiny of death are all broken and reversed.

1. *The Death of Jesus.* Four passages (Rom 7:4-6; 8:1-3; Gal 2:19-21; 3:13) confirm the fact that man is freed from the law by the death of Jesus.[12,13] In Rom 7:4-6 the Christian has died to the law through the body of Christ so that he belongs to another (= Christ). While he was in the flesh his sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in his members to bear fruit for death, but now he is discharged from the law, dead to that which held him captive (= the law), so that he serves "in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter."

In Rom 8:1-3 the Christian has been freed from "the law of sin and death" because Christ has become incarnate, has become a sin offering, and as a result sentence has been passed and executed on sin.[14]

In Gal 3:13 the Christian has been redeemed from the curse of the law because Christ has become a curse for him. This text agrees with what Paul says about the believer's freedom from sin. Just as all men—both Jews and Greeks—are "under sin" (Rom 3:9; cf. Gal 3:22), so all are "consigned to disobedience," "consigned under law" (Rom 11:32; Gal 3:23). They are under the law (Gal 4:5) and under the curse of the law (cf. Gal 3:10, 13).[15]

[12]By the death of Jesus man is also freed from sin (Romans 6). The believer has died with Christ (6:8), has been united with Christ in the likeness of his death (6:5), has been baptized "into Christ Jesus," "into his death" (6:3). His old self was crucified so that the sinful body might be destroyed (6:6). Thus the believer, because of his identification with Christ, will not be lorded over (6:14) by sin, has died to sin (6:2), is no longer enslaved to sin (6:6), is freed (6:7, 18, 22) from sin. W. Sanday and A. C. Headlam, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; 5th ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1902) 159, argue that here the sense of *dedikaiōtai* is forensic: The idea is that of a master claiming legal possession of a slave. When the slave has died the claims of the law are satisfied. The slave is no longer answerable, and sin thus loses its case. The enduring character of the believer's death to sin is indicated by the perfects *gegonamen* (6:5), *dedikaiōtai* (6:7) and *synestaurōmai* (Gal 2:20). The once-for-all nature of the believer's death to sin is indicated by the aorists *ebaptisthēmen* (6:3), *apethanomen* (6:2), *synestaurōthē* (6:6) and *katargēthē* (6:6) and by Christ's death to sin *ephapax* (6:10). It is on the basis of the believer's freedom from sin that the Pauline imperatives not to act as a slave to sin (6:11, 12, 13, 15, 16) make sense. Only a freed slave has any choice in the matter.

[13]I believe that the law as a *paidagōgos eis Christon* (Gal 3:24) is to be understood in this vein. It is not a "schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ" (*KJV*). This ignores the temporal contrast in vv 23, 25. In context, as Betz, Oepke and Schlier (among others) have pointed out, *paidagōgos* seems to be a taskmaster rather than an educator, and *eis* seems to have a temporal rather than a final sense; H. D. Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979) 177-178; Oepke, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater (THKNT;* 3d ed.; Berlin: Evangelische Verlaganstalt, 1957) 86-88; H. Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater* (MeyerK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965) 124-126.

[14]See Cranfield, *Romans,* 1. 379-383.

[15]"We" (Gal 3:13, 23) and the universal context of the work of Christ (3:13; 4:5) indicate that even the Gentile is under the law and therefore under the curse of the law. Also, at Rom 2:14-16 the Gentiles who do not have the law show the work of the law written in their hearts. Unlike the Jews they do not have the written law, yet they know enough of it to be "accused." At Rom 1:18-32 there are Gentiles who know both God (v 21) and his decree (v 32), yet high-handedly they disobey and consequently are worthy

Christ's purpose is thus to redeem all men, for all are under the law and its curse.[16] The redemption involves both our identification with him (Gal 3:13; cf. Romans 6) and his identification with us (Gal 4:4, 5). He was born of woman; he was born under law; he became a curse for us (Gal 4:4; 3:13).

Finally, the Christian "through the law has died to the law" (Gal 2:19). The Christian has died to the law (Gal 2:19; Rom 7:4) just as he has died to sin (Rom 6:2; cf. 6:10). And just as he is dead to sin (Rom 6:11), so by analogy he is dead to the law. He has died to the law because he has been crucified with Christ (Gal 2:20). Just as being crucified means that he is no longer enslaved to sin (Rom 6:6), so by analogy it means that he is no longer enslaved to the law. He has died to the law and thus belongs to Christ (Rom 7:4).

Furthermore, this dying to the law takes place "through the law." This phrase does not mean that since the law cannot be fulfilled what it does is expose man to his sinfulness and point to the grace of Christ.[17] Nor does it mean, by analogy with Rom 7:9-11, that the law leads to sin, which in turn causes the death of man, and that through death man is absolved from the law.[18] Nor can law be understood in two different senses here.[19] Under this view *nomō* would refer to the Mosaic law and *nomou* to "the law of the spirit" (Rom 8:2) and "the law of faith" (Rom 3:27). Rather, the believer's death to the law takes place *dia nomou* because Christ was "born of woman, born under the law" (Gal 4:4), and by becoming a "curse" he has redeemed those who were under the "curse" of the law (Gal 3:13). Since this death to the law *dia nomou* thus involves the incarnation and death of Christ, he can also say that it takes place "through the body of Christ" (Rom 7:4).[20,21]

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of death (v 32). Finally, at Rom 3:19—after a catena of quotations from the Psalms and Isaiah to show that all are sinners and all are without excuse (vv 10-18)—we are told that the law speaks to those who are in the law "that every mouth may be stopped and the whole world may be held accountable to God." For further support see Hahn, "Gesetzesverständnis" 32-35; against Sanders, *Paul* 474 n. 2; 509.

[16]Cf. Oepke, *Galater* 74.

[17]Against Lightfoot, *Galatians* 118; E. D. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* (ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921) 132-134; T. Zahn, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater* (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1907) 113.

[18]Against Schweitzer, *Mysticism* 188 n. 2.

[19]Against M. J. Lagrange, *Saint Paul Epitre aux Galates* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1950) 51.

[20]This is the view of Schlier, *Galater* 98-101; F. J. Ortkemper, *Das Kreuz in der Verkündigung des Apostels Paulus* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1967) 20-22; A. vän Dülmen, *Die Theologie des Gesetzes bei Paulus* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1968) 26.

[21]In Col 2:14 the clause *exaleipsas to kath' hēmōn cheirographon tois dogmasin ho ēn hypenantion hēmin* is problematic—especially the force of the dative *tois dogmasin*. E. Percy, *Die Probleme der Kolosser und Epheserbriefe* (Lund: Gleerup, 1946) 89-90, argues that it is to be taken with the following clause in order to avoid superfluous repitition of *kath' hēmōn*. A second view is that of Bengel, Theodoret and Chrysostom (cf. G. Kittel, *"Dogma," TDNT* 2, 231), who take the dative as instrumental and link it with *exaleipsas*, thus making the *dogmata* the new command or edict of God. A third view, however, seems preferable. J. A. T. Robinson, *The Body* (SBT; London: SCM, 1952) 43 n. 1, interprets *to . . . cheirographon tois dogmasin* as "our superscription to the ordinances." Thus it would be an example of a noun with a dative attribute; cf. N. Turner, *Syntax* (1963) 3. 219, in J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (4

2. *The Resurrection of Jesus.* By baptism into Christ's death (Rom 6:3-4) "we have died with Christ," and according to this logic "we shall also live with him" (Rom 6:8). The believer in fact is already "alive to God in Christ Jesus" (6:11). Thus the believer's ultimate participation in the resurrection is future,[22] but there is also a present aspect. Believers, then, "should yield" themselves "to God as men who have been brought from death to life" (6:15). Just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, the believer too is to walk "in newness of life" (Rom 6:4). In Christ he has "the gift of God," which is "eternal life" (Rom 6:23; cf. 5:21; 6:22). Having been crucified with Christ, Christ lives in him (Gal 2:20). He has died to the law, that he might live (Gal 2:19) to God and bear fruit (Rom 7:4) for God. No longer captive to the law he serves not in the "written code" (Rom 7:6), which kills (2 Cor 3:6), but serves "in the new life of the Spirit" (Rom 7:6). The Spirit gives life (2 Cor 3:6).[23,24]

These texts indicate that it is the believer's participation in the resurrection of Christ that imparts life to him.[25] Furthermore, in Paul righteousness and life are correlative. One cannot have life without having righteousness or righteousness without life. This inseparable link is thematized in several passages. In the pre-Pauline faith formula cited in Rom 4:25—"who was put to death for our trespasses and raised for our justification"—the vocabularies of "raise," "resurrect" and "righteousness" are already conjoined. This correlation calls for us to exploit the Pauline themes of righteousness in order to grasp Paul's theology of the resurrection and the role of the resurrection in breaking man's bondage to sin, death, flesh and law.

Thus in full accord with the thought of Rom 4:25, but going beyond it, Paul declares in Gal 3:21 that "if a law had been given that could make alive, then righteousness would indeed be by the law"—that is, if an A (law) had been given that could produce B (make alive), then B (righteousness) would have been by A (law). Thus "make alive" and "make righteous, justify" are correlated.[26]

To say that righteousness could come through the law is to say that Christ died "to no purpose" (Gal 2:21). Those who would be justified by the law are severed from Christ (Gal 5:4) because that implies the denial of a status they

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vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1906-1976). The *cheirographon* is, then, "our written agreement to keep the law, our certificate of debt to it." Our failure to keep the law has turned this certificate into a bond held against us to prove our guilt. Therefore it is the charge that the law brings, rather than the law itself, that is cancelled by Christ.

[22]This future aspect is stressed in such passages as Rom 6:6, 8, 10, 11; 1 Cor 15:20, 22; 6:14; 2 Cor 4:14.

[23]On the believer's present possession of life see Col 2:12; 3:1, 3.

[24]These texts (Rom 7:4-6; 2 Cor 3:6; 1 Cor 15:45), as well as others (e.g. Rom 8:2, 10-13; Gal 5:25, 6:8), indicate that for Paul if one has eternal life he also has the Spirit and vice versa. That being a Christian is correlative with having the Spirit is also indicated in such passages as Rom 2:29; 5:5; 8:4-6, 9, 14-16, 23; 14:17; 1 Cor 6:11; 12:13; 2 Cor 5:5; Gal 3:2-3, 5, 14; 4:6, 29; 5:5, 16, 25; 6:8.

[25]This is in direct opposition to the Jewish view that eternal life comes through the Torah; see Betz, *Galatians* 174.

[26]There are other indications that righteousness and life (or salvation) are correlative in Paul. The phrase *eis dikaiosynēn* is contrasted with *eis thanaton* (Rom 6:16) and compared with *eis sōtērian* (Rom 10:10).

already have in Christ. God has made righteousness and life available in Christ because no law could be given that could give life (Gal 3:21).

In order to obtain righteousness and life through the law one must obey the law. In Rom 2:13 it is not the hearers of the law but the doers of the law who will be justified.[27] In Rom 10:5[28] (= Lev 18:5; cf. Gal 3:12)[29] it is the one who practises the righteousness that is by the law who will live by it. But the point is that no one is able to obey the law. In Gal 3:10 (= Deut 27:26) those who rely on the works of the law are under a curse because they do not "abide by all things written in the book of the law and do them." In Gal 6:13 those who receive circumcision do not themselves keep the law. The man of Romans 2 endorses God's law, believes he obeys it, and would instruct others in it (vv 17-20); yet he does not obey the law (vv 1, 3, 21-24). The man of Rom 7:14-25 delights in God's law and yet knows that even when he tries his utmost he is powerless to obey it (vv 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25). The man who is in the flesh cannot submit to God's law (Rom 8:7); for him the law is impotent (Rom 8:3). Through the law comes only the knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20).

VI. ROMANS 10:4

"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Rom 10:4) correlates with the preceding exposition.

In Rom 9:30-10:10 as in Romans 1-8[30] Paul is contrasting salvation by works and by faith and, I would add, nothing essentially new is added to the argument

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In Rom 5:12-21 (cf. 1 Cor 15:21 ff.), a passage in which Adam brings death but Christ brings life, the *dik-* word group appears six times (*dikaios*, 5:19; *dikaiōsis*, 5:18; *dikaiōma*, 5:16, 18; *dikaiosynē*, 5:17, 21), twice in connection with *zōē* (5:18, 21). *Dikaiosynē*, however, is also connected with the legal term *katakrisis* (2 Cor 3:9) and with such ethical terms as *adikia* (Rom 6:13-14; cf. 3:5), *anomia* (2 Cor 6:14; Rom 6:19), *akatharsia* (Rom 6:19) and *hamartia* (Rom 6:18, 20; 8:10).

[27]Romans 2:13 is in the context of everyone being condemned (1:18-3:20). It is also a general statement similar to 2:6 ("he will render to every man according to his works"). 2:6 is amplified in 2:7-10: those who do good get life and its corollaries (2:7, 10), and those who do evil get death and its corollaries (2:8-9). The point is that no one is righteous (3:10), no one does good, no one obeys the law (2:17-29).

[28]On the textual and grammatical difficulties of this verse see B. M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (London/New York: UBS, 1971) 524-525; E. Käsemann, *An Die Römer* (HNT; (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1973) 272-273. The context of Rom 10:5 hardly allows for the view that Christ is the one who obeys the law and therefore earns eternal life for himself and those who believe; against Cranfield, "St. Paul" 49-50; Bring, *Christus* 67.

[29]*Zēsetai* in vv 11-12 must refer to the same thing. In v 11 Paul is undoubtedly making reference to the life of the age to come. Therefore in v 12 *zēsetai* cannot mean that the one righteous through the law shall live—i. e., receive strength and be preserved in life—through his obedience to the law. See R. Bring, *Commentary on Galatians* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1961) 136.

[30]Romans 1-8 is an exposition of 1:17 (= Hab 2:4). Romans 1-4 establishes that it is the one who is just by faith as opposed to works who will receive eternal life. Romans 5-8 states the consequences of this fact for the believer. Romans 9-11 applies 1-8 to Israel and its unbelief. 9:30-10:21 explains that Israel in refusing to accept the gospel is following a pattern set repeatedly throughout her history.

of Romans. In 9:30-33 the goal of both Jews and Gentiles is *dikaiosynē* (in the sense of "salvation"). The Gentiles did not pursue *dikaiosynē* and yet attained it, whereas Israel pursued *dikaiosynē* and yet did not attain it. Gentiles received it "by faith," but the Jews tried to attain it "by works" (v 31). They pursued the law that promises righteousness[31] but did not meet the requirement of the law because they did not obey the law. They, in contrast to the Gentiles, refused to believe in Christ the "stone of stumbling and rock of offense" (v 33).

In 9:30-33 *dikaiosynēn de tēn ek pisteōs* (v 30) is thus contrasted with *dikaiosynē (de tēn ex ergōn)* or perhaps with *nomon dikaiosynēs* (v 31). In 10:3 *tēn tou theou dikaiosynēn* is contrasted with *tēn idian (dikaiosynēn).* This raises the presumption that in 10:5-6 *tēn dikaiosynēn tēn ek tou nomou* is contrasted with *hē de ek pisteōs dikaiosynē.*

In Rom 10:6-8 Paul gives a *pesher*-like Christian interpretation to Deut 30:11-14[32]—an interpretation facilitated by the association of this passage with wisdom in ancient Judaism.[33] One who bases his righteousness on faith does not say in his heart "Who will ascend into heaven?" because that would mean that Christ had not yet come down and become incarnate (Rom 10:6). Nor does he say "Who will descend into the abyss?" for that would mean that Christ had not been raised. He accepts the incarnation and resurrection of Christ and thus the fact that he has new life in Christ. Therefore in contrast to the man in Rom 10:5 he does not try to obey the law in order to gain life. He knows that the message of faith is in his "mouth" and "heart" (10:8), for it is with the heart that one believes and with the mouth that one confesses and thus receives righteousness and salvation (10:10).

With regard to the phrase *eis dikaiosynēn* (Rom 10:4), we have seen that it is contrasted with *eis thanaton* (Rom 6:16) and compared with *eis sōtērian* (Rom 10:10). This, coupled with the fact that *dikaiosynē* is a virtual synonym for life, indicates that *eis dikaiosynēn* (10:4) is a synonym of *eis sōtērian* (10:1). Also the closest verbal parallel in Paul is Rom 1:16: *to euangelion, dynamis gar Theou estin eis sōtērian panti tō pisteuonti.* Thus in Rom 10:4 *eis dikaiosynēn* is not related to *telos* but to *panti tō pisteuonti.* Grammatically *telos* is the equivalent of *dynamis . . . Theou* (Rom 1:16). *Christos* is not predicate but subject.[34] Christ is not the goal of the law in that he realizes perfect righteousness,[35] nor is he the

[31]Käsemann, *Römer* 265, takes *nomon dikaiosynēs* in this way. Alternately by hypallage it might mean righteousness of the law (Calvin's view) if this is taken in the sense of righteousness by means of the law; against C. E. B. Cranfield, "Some Notes on Romans 9:30-33," in *Jesus und Paulus: Festschrift Werner George Kümmel* (ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1975) 37 n. 3; Kaiser, "Leviticus 18:5" 25.

[32]See Bruce, *Romans* 204.

[33]See M. J. Suggs, "The Word Is Near You: Romans 10:6-10 Within the Purpose of the Letter," in *Christian History and Interpretation: Studies Presented to John Knox* (ed. W. R. Farmer, C. F. D. Moule and R. R. Niebuhr; Cambridge: University Press, 1967) 289-319.

[34]See Cranfield, *Romans* 515.

[35]Against Bruce, *Romans* 203; Barrett, *Romans* 197-198.

end of the law in its connection with righteousness.[36] Rather, he is the end of the law so that righteousness or salvation might come to all who believe. And just as the gospel is not the power of God *eis sōtērian* for those who do not believe (Rom 1:17), so Christ is not the end of the law *eis dikaiosynēn* for those who do not believe (Rom 10:4). Those outside of Christ are still under the law, still enslaved to and condemned by the law.[37]

This view of *telos . . . nomou Christos* (10:4) means that the law is terminated only in a very special sense: The condemnation of and enslavement to the law are ended.

This exposition, I believe, hits the nuance of *telos* better than the views that it means "goal," "termination and goal" or "termination" in the sense of "abolished." Lexically it is possible that *telos* means "goal" but normally in Romans (i.e., 6:21-22; 13:7) it means "end." "Goal," moreover, adds something extraneous to the theme of salvation by faith versus works in Romans 1-8; 9:30-10:21. Nor does it take adequate account of the "then" versus "now" aspect of the law. It does not do justice to the negative points Paul makes on the law, and it does not relate the law to the believer's participation in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The desire to protect morality and the positive points of the law are fully protected with my view. It may be that Paul would agree that Christ is in some sense the goal of the law, but this is hardly what is in mind in Rom 10:4.

Neither the messianic-age view[38] nor the cosmological view does justice to the positive points Paul makes on the law. Christ does not put an end to the law as a means of salvation, for salvation never did or could come by the law (Gal 2:21; 3:21). In Romans 4 Abraham and all the righteous of the old dispensation were saved by faith—in Christ (cf. Rom 9:30-33). It was to Abraham (Gal 3:8) and through the prophets (Rom 1:2-3) that the gospel was preached beforehand. The rock that Israel stumbled over was Christ (Rom 9:33 = Isa 28:16; cf. 1 Cor 10:4). Nor is Christ the end of a misused law, for God has consigned man under the law (Gal 3:23), consigned man to disobedience (Rom 11:32), in order that he might have mercy on all (Rom 11:32).

VII. Some Implications

The law, then, is terminated only in a very special sense: The condemnation of and enslavement to the law are ended. But the law as an expression of the will of God is not ended,[39] nor is its demand on the Christian ended, since love is the

[36]Against R. N. Longenecker, *Paul: Apostle of Liberty* (New York: Harper, 1964) 144-147; G. E. Ladd, "Paul and the Law," in *Soli Deo Gloria: Festschrift William Childs Robinson* (ed. J. M. Richards; Richmond: John Knox, 1968) 57-58.

[37]Cf. W. Gutbrod, *"Nomos," TDNT* 4, 1075.

[38]H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 137, rightly asks why Paul did not appeal to it if he believed it and if it were Jewish doctrine; similarly Sanders, *Paul* 479-480. See also Sanders' point, and the literature he cites in support, that it is not likely that ancient Judaism expected the law to be abrogated in the messianic age (479 n. 25).

[39]See also "it stands written" (*gegraptai* = perfect tense and divine passive) in 1 Cor 9:9; 14:21 and *legei* (= present tense) in 1 Cor 14:34.

fulfilling of the law (Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14) and the Christian is commanded to love.

The law is no longer a problem for the man in Christ because he is no longer unspiritual, no longer sold as a slave to sin (Rom 7:14);[40] rather he is in the Spirit and the law is spiritual (Rom 7:14).[41] He no longer walks according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit and is thus able to fulfill the *dikaiōma tou nomou* (Rom 8:4). He is no longer *en sarki* but *en pneumati,* no longer has the *phronēma tēs sarkos* but the *phronēma tou pneumatos,* and is thus able to obey the law of God (Rom 8:5-9).

The law of God expresses the will of God.[42] This law can be narrowed to one commandment—one commandment disobeyed is sufficient to have one condemned—or expanded to contain the entire teaching of the OT[43] and perhaps also the teaching of Jesus.[44] For a Jew, though, the law of God would be both the oral and written *tôrâ.*

The law of God is one and the same as the law of sin (and death);[45] the law expresses the will of God, yet it brings sin and death to the man *en sarki.*

For Paul, when one is saved the law has not changed but one's relationship to it has changed both from the point of view of God and man. From God's viewpoint man is no longer under the law (Rom 6:14-15; Gal 4:5; 5:18), no longer

[40]If the man in Christ could be in any way sold under sin it would contradict all that Paul has said about him having died to sin (see n. 12 above). "Sold under sin" is the same plight as the non-Christian "under sin" (Rom 3:9; Gal 3:22), under the rule of sin (Rom 5:21; 6:12), enslaved to sin (Rom 6:6, 17, 20). Also the contrast between *sarkinos* and *pneumatikos* agrees well with the contrast between *sarx* and *pneuma* (Rom 7:14; 7:5-6; 8:4-9). See B. L. Martin, "Some Reflections on the Identity of *egō* in Rom. 7:14-25," *SJT* 34 (1981) 39-47.

[41]W. Keuck, "Das 'Geistliche Gesetz' im Röm 7, 14a in der Auslegung der griechischen Väter," in *Wort Gottes in der Zeit: Festschrift Karl Hermann Schelkle* (ed. H. Feld and J. Nolte; Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1973) 234-235, argues that this verse and *"ho . . . nomos tou pneumatos tēs zōēs"* (Rom 8:2) both refer to the OT law.

[42]That *tôrâ* in the OT is essentially "revelation" or "instruction" see G. Östborn, *Tōrā in the Old Testament: A Systematic Study* (Lund: Hakan Ohlssons, 1945) 4-22; Bring, *Christus* 63.

[43]See section II above.

[44]At Gal 6:2 Paul affirms the *nomon tou Christou,* and at 1 Cor 9:21 he is not *anomos theou* but *ennomos Christou.* That this refers to the authoritative character of the teaching of Jesus see C. H. Dodd, "ENNOMOS CHRISTOU," in *Studia Paulina: Festschrift Johannis De Zwann* (ed. J. N. Sevenster and W. C. van Unnik: Haarlem: De Erven F. Bohn, 1953) 96-110; Burton, *Galatians* 392; W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (1948, repr. New York: Harper, 1967) 138-145. That Paul is dependent on the teaching of Jesus has been thoroughly examined by D. L. Dungan, *The Sayings of Jesus in the Churches of Paul* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971). Cf. also G. N. Stanton, *Jesus of Nazareth in New Testament Preaching* (Cambridge: University Press, 1974) 86-116.

[45]Hahn, "Gesetzesverständnis" 46; E. Lohse, "Ho nomos tou pneumatos tes zoes: Exegetische Anmerkungen zu Röm 8, 2," in *Neues Testament und Christliche Existenz: Festschrift Herbert Braun* (ed. H. D. Betz and L. Schotroff; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1973) 286. Lohse, "Ho nomos" 280, 283-287; Hübner, "Gesetz" 270-271, suggest that it is the same law that is also the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:2). But for critique of this use of *nomos* as a reference to the *tôrâ* see H. Räisänen, "Das 'Gesetz Des Glaubens' (Röm 3.27) und Das 'Gesetz des Geistes' (Röm 8.2)," *NTS* 26 (1980) 113-117. For a survey of views see Cranfield, *Romans,* 373-378.

enslaved to sin or condemned to death. From the Christian's viewpoint he is no longer under the law, no longer does he attempt to obey the law in order to be saved. In Christ he has eternal life.[46]

Paul, on the other hand, sees the Jew[47] as living *en nomō* (Rom 2:12; Gal 3:11, 21; 5:4; Phil 3:5), *ek nomou* (Rom 4:13; Gal 3:18; Rom 10:5) and *hypo nomon* (1 Cor 9:20), as attempting to gain righteousness (Rom 10:5; Phil 3:5) either *dia nomou* (Gal 3:21; Rom 4:13) or *ex ergōn nomou* (Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5, 10; cf. Rom 3:21, 28).[48] That is, in order to be saved he is obeying what he believes God's law (= will, requirement) to be. This undoubtedly would include both the oral and written law.

Did not Paul believe, though, that God had abrogated the cultic law and the halakah? He certainly insists that neither of these needed to be observed. He insists that Gentiles must not be circumcised (1 Cor 7:18; Gal 2:13; 5:2-3; 6:2). Moreover, he has become "all things to all men": To the Jew he has become a Jew, to those outside the law he has become as one outside the law (1 Cor 2:20-22). But in the "capital epistles" (cf. Eph 2:15) Paul does not explicitly thematize what has happened to the cultic law. Christ, however, is our paschal lamb (1 Cor 5:7).[49] With regard to the halakah there is no evidence that Paul as a Christian believed that it ever was a requirement of God.

The ceremonial law or the halakah is not abolished in the sense that it is now wrong to observe it or that it was ever necessary to perform it in order to gain life. Abraham was already justified before he was circumcised (Rom 4:10; cf. 3:31; 4:9, 11, 12), and Paul, when he is among Jews, continues to observe the halakah and Jewish customs (1 Cor 9:20-22). He believes, however, that it is a denial of the gospel to compel Gentiles (and presumably Jews) to do likewise. Paul's polemic against circumcision must be understood in the context of those who insist that it is necessary to submit to it in order to gain righteousness and life. In this matter it is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision that counts for anything, but a "new creation" (Gal 6:15), "faith working through love" (Gal 5:6), and "keeping the commandments of God" (1 Cor 7:19). True circumcision is something that is spiritual and inward and that the believer can possess whether or not he is physically circumcised (cf. Rom 2:28-29; Phil 3:3; Col 2:11).

Only the law as an expression of God's will is in mind when Paul considers the possibility of a Gentile doing by nature what the law requires (Rom 2:14) and an uncircumcised man keeping the precepts of the law (Rom 2:26). Keeping the

[46]Paul views himself as not having a righteousness that comes from the law (Phil 3:9) and as not under the law (1 Cor 9:20). He castigates the Galatians who wish to be under the law (Gal 4:21) and justified by it (Gal 5:3-4).

[47]The Jew would see one who lives as a Gentile as *anomos* (1 Cor 9:21; cf. Rom 2:17) and as *mē nomon echonta* (Rom 2:14).

[48]To discover the exact nuance of *ergōn nomou* is difficult. For a recent discussion see J. B. Tyson, "'Works of Law' in Galatians," *JBL* 92 (1973) 423-431. I propose that for Paul it is whatever the Jew conceives God's law (= will, requirement) to be; it is what he needs to obey in order to be saved.

[49]A statement not at odds with Hebrews, which sees Christ as the fulfillment of the OT sacrifices. This, however, is not what Paul is thematizing in Romans and Galatians.

commandments of God has nothing to do with such external matters as circumcision or uncircumcision (1 Cor 7:18, 19).

VIII. Summary and Conclusion

Paul's negative statements on the law stem from a consideration of the role of the law in the attainment of salvation. In this regard Paul has three fundamental starting points: (1) Salvation can only come through the death and resurrection of Jesus;[50] (2) the Christian is part of the body of Christ; (3) he is no longer *en sarki* but *en pneumati*. Outside of Christ man is *en sarki*, is enslaved to and condemned by the law. The Christian as part of the body of Christ participates in Christ's death and resurrection. By dying with Christ he dies to the law, he is no longer enslaved to or condemned by it; by rising with Christ he is *en pneumati*, he obtains eternal life, the resurrection life of Christ. To attempt to attain it by obedience to the law is to deny the necessity of the death and resurrection of Christ as a saving event.

What is at fault is not the law but man. Man is obligated but unable to obey the law and is therefore enslaved and condemned. The purpose of the law in the history of salvation is to show man his need for a savior. To the man in Christ the law remains God's law. Consequently, he looks to it for instruction (cf. 1 Cor 9:8-9; 14:21, 34).[51]

[50]Recently Sanders, *Paul* 442-447, has rightly argued that for Paul in the matter of salvation the solution precedes the problem. Schoeps, *Paul* 180, notes that "Paul take[s] as his starting point the death of Jesus as a saving event and survey[s] retrospectively the meaning of the law"; similarly Gutbrod, "*Nomos*" 1075; against J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980) 236, 237, 242.

[51]This paper is a summary and revision of pp. 123-219 of my unpublished dissertation: B. L. Martin, *Matthew and Paul on Christ and the Law: Compatible or Incompatible Theologies?* (McMaster University, 1977).