

Abraham, Exodus, and Sinai vs. Secular Religion, Ethics, and Law
Session #05
Keeping Faithful to Our Lord in a Growing Hostile Culture
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Charles Clough
www.bibleframework.com

Central Theme of Scripture: Romans 12:1-2 (KJV), “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

This evening let’s go to the Word of God. We’re going to go in the progressive revelation of the Framework. We’ve covered Creation. We’ve covered the Fall. We’ve covered the Flood. We’ve done the Covenant of Noah that established physical stability. We talked about the event of Babel, and how that has contaminated the idea of what government and civil power is all about.

So let’s go to the Lord and ask Him to illuminate our hearts to be sensitive to this section of His conversation to us: the call of Abraham, the Exodus, and Mount Sinai—that cluster of events.

Opening Prayer

“Father, we thank You that You have provided for us in toto and the Lord Jesus Christ; that You have provided the perfect salvation because it is based on perfect merit—not our merit, but the merit of the finished work of our Lord, and Savior, Jesus. We thank You that You resurrected Him from the dead; that You ascended Him into Heaven to sit at Your right hand, and therefore we have a Savior far above all the principalities and powers of the world.

That greater is He that is in us, because You also have dispatched the Holy Spirit to indwell every believer in the Lord, Jesus Christ. We thank You, therefore, that we are operating from a position of strength; a position that will be vindicated for all eternity. We ask that You would make us sensitive to being able to live out the Christian life in a convincing fashion in a culture that is rapidly sinking back into a pagan motif. We ask this in our Savior’s name, Amen.”

Well we’ve talked over and over about Romans 12:1–2, and so what I want to do here is ... we’ll have to advance through the slides to where we are supposed to be tonight. We’re at slide number 47, let’s go to 46, because we want to review how God progressively revealed Himself in history. This is a pedagogically determined sequence.

We have Creation—where God taught us about Himself, about man, about nature, about man’s relationship to nature, which is the foundation of how we are to relate ourselves to the physical environment around us.

We have the Fall: the Fall teaches us about evil. The Fall teaches us about sin and the consequences of sin, not only in our hearts, but sin in the environment, sin in nature. Those are the implications, those of the consequences of man's fall.

We have the Flood, which teaches us about judgment and salvation. The Flood shows what God does in history when His grace is over. The Flood is an example of a grace-less judgment upon the human race. The only people to be saved in that were the people in the ark. There was only one way of salvation. There weren't two arks. There weren't ten arks. There was only one ark. So God's design for salvation has to be respected. He has grace, but it's grace within His design boundaries.

Then we come to the covenant—where the covenant of Noah established a stability of our environment, and it established a special divine institution that was *added* to the original creation ordinances. We have creation ordinances: human responsibility, marriage, and family. Those are not social constructs, and we have to understand that in our dialogue.

Marriage is not something that can be changed because man created it. If man ordained marriage, if it was an invention of man's mind, it would be legitimate to redefine it. But it is not legitimate to redefine something that's related to the very design of men and women. So marriage is rooted in a creation design. Therefore, we disagree with our culture. We say, regardless of the homosexuals, it could have been the polygamists that pushed for this thing; it's not anti-gay—it's not hating the homosexuals; it's not hating the polygamists; it's simply arguing, what is marriage?

We can't agree on that. We, as Bible-believing Christians, believe marriage is inherent to the design of men and women by virtue of creation. Therefore, no unelected judge, no unelected lawyer wearing a black robe, has the capability of redefining this. So they can redefine all they want to, but we disagree.

When we come to government at the covenant of Noah, we have to say: "Wait a minute, should government be getting involved in all kinds of things other than what its original intention was?" It was a divinely established institution to restrain evil and to protect good. And Paul, in Romans 13, and Peter, also in his epistles, argue that the sword of state—remember the symbol, the symbol in the Bible of civil authority is a sword, lethal weaponry—and that's the function of government.

The first function of government is to defend a society against evil behaviors. That's the fundamental notion of civil government. Now today, now at this session, we're going to look at the next set of events in the Bible. With this set of events we have something new happen: the date of the call of Abraham out from what is now Iraq, which in those days was Ur, in the Chaldees. [Slide 47]

At that point something changed in history. Every one of these events that we have picked out as crucial events have altered history. The call of Abraham altered history in this regard: from this point on, 2000 BC on down to the present day, God is not speaking to the rest of humanity, He is speaking *only* through the Jew. The call of Abraham is the first Jew on earth. The Jews were

created as a subset of the sons of Shem to be a channel of revelation to the world, and wherever you have anti-Semitism, you basically have a movement, or movements, that resent God's revelation.

That's the fundamental problem with anti-Semitism—whether it's in Europe, whether it's in the Middle East—anti-Semitism is a rebellion. It's greeted by a rebellion against God's authority of revealing Himself exclusively through the Jews. That's the call of Abraham. God elects the Jew to a function in history, and that function we'll look at tonight.

Then we have the Exodus. The Exodus, like the Flood, is another example of a grace-less judgment of God. It came upon the Egyptians, and just as with the Flood, you have one way of salvation, which was the ark. In the Exodus you have one way of salvation again: put blood on the doors from a sacrificial lamb. There are no other ways of salvation.

So we ought to learn from the Flood and from the Exodus event that when Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: and no one can come to the Father except through me," (John 14:6) it's not like Jesus is inventing a new way of salvation. The exclusivity of the gospel is rooted back in 2000 BC.

So we have the Exodus. We have Mount Sinai. And we're going to look at these, and we're going to look at three things tonight in rebellion against the Word of God. We're going to look at how culture views religion, how culture views ethics, and how culture views law and justice. These are contemporary subjects and we need to understand how to think about these things.

Let's turn our Bibles tonight to Genesis 12. What we are now studying is a counter-culture that God brought into existence through Abraham. At this point you have social division.

Remember, I showed you the quote from John Dewey? He said, "I don't understand how democracy can survive with Christianity." What Dewey was talking about was that Christianity divides societies. Didn't Jesus say: I've come to set a son against his mother? Against his father? The division of society pierces even to that fundamental social unit of the family.

That's why Jesus said that. That was very much of a traumatic statement to say to Jewish people who so cherish their family integrity. For Jesus to have gotten up in a Jewish audience and to say that, "I have come to set daughter against mother and son against father." For Him to have said that to a Jewish society was profoundly disturbing.

But what He was saying was: We have two cultures on earth. We have the pagan culture of unbelief, and we have the culture of those who adhere to the Bible. This is not new with [year] 2016 Christians in the United States. This goes back thousands and thousands of years. So we can take heart in the fact that the discomfort we feel and the competition we feel ... in eternity ...

Think about this someday: after you die, and as a Christian you are in Heaven, do you realize that we will have the opportunity to talk to saints and believers of other centuries? Have you ever thought about sitting down with Paul, or sitting down with some of the martyrs of AD 200 and 300 and they ask you, "How was it in your day? We were killed; we were slaughtered; we were

burned alive; how is it with you?” Well, we were just sitting in United States of America; we had it pretty easy.

Just think of that conversation that you would have, and that puts it into perspective—when we will actually have a conversation with those who were martyrs for the faith. I’m sure they won’t reject us. But the point is that we’ve had it easy and they didn’t, and they stood up for it. And if they stood up for it, we have the same Holy Spirit they did, and so we can stand up for it, too.

So the call of Abraham in Genesis 12:1–3. Here it is—here is where human society, human civilization was divided. “Now the Lord said to Abram, Get out of your country, get out from your family, and get out from your father’s house to a land I will show you.” There’s a separation. It is a physical separation that leads to a situation where Abraham, as the first Jew, will be the father of a counter-culture. He has to leave the society in which he was raised. So there’s a separation that happens. “I will make of you a great nation, I will bless you, and I will make your name great.”

Contrast this passage in Genesis 12, with Genesis 11 when at Babel, what did they say? We will make a name for ourselves. Here God says, “I will make a name for you.” So you can’t be much different than that. These are completely different theories of identity. Babel was that “we establish our personal identity and our social identity.”

Here God says, “I establish your social identity and your personal identity. I will bless those who bless you; I will curse him that curses you: and through you all the families of the earth will be blessed.” So Abraham is given the mission in history for his descendants to be a blessing to the world.

Through Abraham will come three major things: the Bible will come through the Jew, Jesus will come through the Jews, and world peace in the Millennial Kingdom will come through the Jews. The Jews will never be erased from history in spite of all the Adolph Hitlers in the world. They will never eradicate the Jew from the face of this earth, because God has ordained the Jew. Not because the Jews are better than everybody else—the Bible certainly makes the Jews and paints their picture warts and all—but the point is that that’s God’s plan.

So God says I’m going to do these things; there’s a culture break, and you, and by the way, if you look at verse three, notice the object of the verb: I will bless who? I will bless *those*. Is *those* a singular pronoun or is it a plural pronoun? It’s a plural pronoun.

Now continue the clause: and I will curse. There’s the verb curse, and what’s the object of that pronoun [him], single or plural? It’s single; you know what that shows? It shows that in God in His heart He is more willing to bless than He is to curse, and you see that repeatedly in the Old Testament. God is a god of holiness, and God is a god of judgment, but He doesn’t take pleasure in judgment. Here it’s very clear: He wants to bless the many. I’ll curse those individuals that despise you—that curse you.

Now if you’ll turn further in the book of Genesis to chapter 15; what we’re doing here is going through the verses on these particular events. In Genesis 15:4, “One who will come from your

own body shall be your heir.” That was the debate about when Abraham and Sarah thought they would fix things to fulfill God’s promise. “Well, we can’t have kids so we better have a social arrangement.” And God says no, never mind the social arrangement.

And, of course, the Jews have been penalized down through history for that social arrangement because that brought into existence the Arabs. So that was Abraham and his wife’s experiment, trying to bring to pass God’s promise. God doesn’t need us to bring to pass His promise. He’s quite capable of doing that Himself.

So He brought him outside and said, “Look Abraham, look toward heaven, and count the stars, if you are able to number them.” I was just talking to one of you folks who is an amateur astronomer: “Look, count the stars, and He said to him, So shall your descendants be. And he believed the Lord and it accounted to him for righteousness.”

Look again at that verse, verse 6: “he believed the Lord, and the Lord accounted it to him for righteousness.” Paul goes back to this to teach the doctrine of justification by faith. Think about the context of what’s going on here.

Was there any work, any human work that God was asking Abraham to do at this point? It’s all promise. I promise that I will do this, do you trust Me? That was all that was required for him to be justified in the eyes of God.

Do you see what a grace operation does? It doesn’t depend on our human good works. It doesn’t depend on human merit. It depends on what He is going to do for us, and it says that He credited it to Abraham for righteousness. What did He credit? The fact that Abraham trusted Him. He didn’t know how it was going to take place, but God promised it would take place, that he would have a son; the plan of Genesis 12 would be executed perfectly. Abraham trusted that.

Well now we go down further in chapter 15 to verse 7. If you’ll notice here, He takes Abraham out and He makes a prediction. This is important because this is a covenant, this is a contract God is establishing with Abraham.

Remember what we said about contracts: why do people enter contracts? We enter contracts to monitor behavior over time—with the bank, with your car loan, the bank with your mortgage, they’re watching our behavior. Are we making payments regularly in order to satisfy the bank and the contract?

Well here in chapter 15, verse 7, He says, “I am the Lord who brought you,” and He goes on, “to give you the land to inherit. And he said, Lord God how shall I know that I will inherit it?” Several verses go on and then God says Abram, “Know certainly,” not just know, but know for sure, “that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs and will serve them.”

Now there is an objective historical prediction that is verifiable empirically. God lays it out. He says, “Your descendants are going to be strangers in a land that is not theirs and will serve them, and also the nation when they serve I will judge.” He doesn’t tell them what nation, but He says there’s going to be a nation here, and your descendants are going to be slaves of that nation.

“And then afterward they shall come out with great possessions. But in the fourth generation they shall return here for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete. On the same day the LORD made a contract with Abram saying, to your descendants I have given this land.” With all due respect to the United Nations and the Palestinian court, the land belongs to Israel. Not because of a vote, not because of a resolution—because of God’s sovereign control in history.

Well, that was 2000 BC. Now we come 600 years later to Exodus 3. Here we have six centuries pass. Now think: this is a 2016. Six centuries ago it would be 1416. I mean Columbus is wandering around. And that’s how far, historically, we have—a six-century time gap. Is God faithful over 600 years? You bet.

So now we have the implementation of the freedom that they are going to experience, the deliverance from servitude that God predicted as part of His contract. “The angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush.” But notice the quality of the bush. Very interesting. Remember, Moses has seen fire on the desert. There are probably desert fires, so that’s not unusual. What was unusual about this particular fire that caught Moses’ eye? It was the fact that the fire was burning a bush but the bush was not consumed.

Now that’s a strange one; he’d never seen that before in the desert, so he goes up to see that. The bush was burning with fire but the bush was not consumed. Do you know what that’s a picture of? God’s presence is in that fire, but to make it clear to Moses that he is not dependent on His creation He deliberately keeps the bush from being consumed.

That means where did the fuel come to fuel the flame? The flame was being fueled by something other than the bush because if it had been the bush that was the fuel for the fire, the bush would have been consumed. The fact that the bush ... See, this is why you have to be so careful when you read the Bible for these little textual things. The bush isn’t consumed.

Well, Moses is looking at this, and of course later, it becomes obvious in the text that the fire is the very presence of God, and what it’s saying is, this is the un-burning bush, and by doing an un-burning bush what God is saying is, and He’s going to give Moses His name: I AM. I am independent of My creation. I am totally the Lord, the Creator. I don’t depend upon My creation. I am independent absolutely.

So I can appear as a flame, and it’s a special flame that does not depend on any creation fuel. Larry has this big thing of firewood out there. Well, that’s fuel that’s going to need to be consumed. Energy is going to be generated out of that. But in this case, the energy did not come from the bush. It’s a very small little feature in the text, but when you think about it, you think, how’s that? Why is the burning bush not burning?

Well, Moses went up there and God says how He identifies Himself. Look further on down. He says, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” Why does He repeat those three men? That’s the core family of the Jews: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That defines the lineage for the contract. The contract isn’t made with Esau. The contract is made with Isaac. The contract is made with Jacob—the 12 tribes, the 12 sons of Jacob.

So God traces who the parties are to the contract. “I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring my people out of the land of Egypt.” Then Moses says to God, “When I come to the children of Israel and this I say to them, ‘the God of your fathers has sent me to you’, they’re going to say, what is His name? What shall I say to them? And God said to Moses, tell them I AM who I AM.”

Those are the words from which we get the Hebrew, *Yahweh*, and faithful Jews will never pronounce that name. If you write an Orthodox Jew, they will never use the noun G-o-d; what you’ll see them write is G-d, but they will never complete the name of God because to them that name is holy.

But God’s name is I AM who I AM: “And thus you will say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent you to you. This is my name forever. This is my memorial to all generations.”

What did Jesus say when they came to arrest him in the Garden of Gethsemane? They asked, “Where is Jesus?”, and He answered, “I AM,” and what happened to the police force? They fell down.

Tragically when Mel Gibson made that movie [*The Passion of the Christ*], I think he missed something that would have so improved that movie of Jesus and the torment that He went through physically. What Mel Gibson forgot was that when that group of arresting temple police came up on the mountain, all Jesus said was, “I AM”; *eigo emi* in the Greek, and they fell backwards. If you had seen that, if we had seen that at the first scene of the movie instead of just seeing smoke around, and we saw Jesus do that, what would’ve been the dramatic impact for the rest of the film as you saw Him beaten repeatedly, whipped, nails through His hands?

Certainly something in our hearts would scream out, “Why don’t you just say I AM, and stop it!?” See, it would’ve added that tension because He was God and He was voluntarily submitting to that. He did not have to submit to that. So I think Mel lost it a little bit when he started that film. I commend him for making the film, but I wish he had just read the Gospel of John a little bit more carefully.

So we have the un-burning bush picturing God in His holiness. We have the contrast then with the situation in Egypt. And to remind us all of the situation in Egypt, we have this pagan state, and I refer us to slide 49. This is a quotation from Dr. Frankfort, who taught many, many years. He was an outstanding Egyptologist at the University of Chicago, and here’s what he said: “Pharaoh”—he’s talking about the Pharaoh government. Here’s a civil institution, and we have to visualize this because you read the Bible and you see the collision between Pharaoh and Moses, and you think of Yul Brynner as Pharaoh because of the *Ten Commandments* movie.

But the point is that there is a collision, and it’s not just a collision of personality. What we have to understand here is it was a collision of institutions. You have a pagan civil state with a tyrant ruler, where you have the perverted, the function of a divine institution into a redemptive thing. Pharaoh was the great mediator.

So here's what Frankfort says: "[Pharaoh] was the fountainhead of all authority, all power, and all wealth. The famous saying of Louis XIV, *l'état c'est moi*, was levity and presumption when it was uttered, but could have been offered by Pharaoh as a statement of fact in which his subjects concurred. It would have summed up adequately [Egyptian] political philosophy."

He was the state; *I* am the state, and so this was the situation, it wasn't just individual Pharaoh and his personality. It was here Moses comes for the first time in history as a representative of the counter-culture. He challenges the very head of the superpower of the day, or in our vernacular, he speaks truth to power, and that was the collision here, and so he has this battle.

If you turn now to Exodus 11:9; and this, by the way is slide number of 50, and that's the one where I show the pillar. Remember I referred to that before? This is an Egyptian architect who built one of the temples and to depict not just Pharaoh's name, but to teach people who would go by that temple what it meant to be Pharaoh.

What he did is up and down this you'll see if you look carefully, there's a gap up here and that's because this actually is a set of symbols, and up at the top, that particular symbol is a symbol of Heaven. And down below, this symbol here also disconnected notice from the vertical lines, that's the Egyptian symbol for earth. So now that's an artistic statement of Heaven and earth.

Then if you look carefully, these aren't just vertical lines. There's a little thing at the top where it indents, and a thing at the bottom; these aren't vertical lines in the sense of a pure line. Those depict a scepter—those depict the ruling scepter of the state. And then in hieroglyphics, that's Pharaoh's name.

So here we have Pharaoh being declared as the mediator between Heaven and earth. Now the Egyptians thought about that. They said, "If you're going to disturb Pharaoh, you're going to disturb the relationship with nature. You're disturbing everything by challenging Pharaoh." And Moses had to do that.

So we have the situation then in Exodus 11:9, because in this titanic collision, the Exodus is an enormous political statement. The Lord said to Moses, "Pharaoh will not heed you, so that My wonders may be multiplied in Egypt. I'm going to harden this tyrant's heart. He will reject you. He will reject you. He will reject you. And every time he rejects you, I'm going to create a judgment on this nation."

What He's done is He's going to refute the entire pantheon of Egyptian gods that are the theology structure of this tyrannical state. He is undercutting the religion of Egypt. So in Exodus 12:40–41: The sojourn of the children of Israel who lived in Egypt for 430 years; on that very same day it came to pass ... this Exodus 12:40–41; it came to pass that all the armies of the Lord went out from the land of Egypt. This is actually the hosts of the land. Why do you suppose in chapter 12, verse 40 there's that phrase, 430 years? Why is that important? Because that is a chronological marker that God promised Abraham and four generations. 430 years is the contract being obeyed.

We need, as Christians, to understand this, because this teaches us the faithfulness of our Lord. Paul, those of you studied Romans know what happens in Romans chapters 9, 10, and 11, which looks like a total parentheses in that epistle. That is not a parenthesis. Paul goes to Romans 9, 10, and 11 to show that God was faithful to the Jew because somebody could say, “Well, God didn’t treat Israel very well and that doesn’t make God faithful.” What Paul says is, “Yes, it does.” Romans 9, 10, and 11 is to vindicate the faithfulness of God.

Well now we come to chapter 14. We’re hurriedly going through these texts to capture these events. In chapter 14 verses 1 to 31, the Lord spoke to Moses, “I will harden Pharaoh’s heart.” I’m just reading through sections of it. “I will gain honor over Pharaoh and over all his army that the Egyptians may know that I am the Lord.”

See the purpose clause in all this? I want My glory to be manifest in the people that reject Me. “So the Egyptians pursued them; all the horses and chariots of Pharaoh; and they overtook them. And Moses said to the people, do not be afraid, stand still.” This is one of the great verses to claim: stand still and don’t resort to gimmicks. Just stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.

These people are freaking out because the greatest army on earth at the time is going after them and they’re helpless. They have no weapons. They’re out there with their families—their mothers, their dads, their wives, and their children—and here comes the Egyptian army. And here Moses says stand still? I don’t know about that. But that’s what he says: “stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, the Lord will fight for you.”

“So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on dry ground. Notice the details in that verse: they’re not slogging it out through mud at the bottom of the Red Sea. There’s no mud there. How did it get dried out? What did they have? A dryer machine that dried out the bottom of the Red Sea? Something happened because they’re walking around on dry ground.

See all that was so designed so that they understand, “Your salvation comes from Me, you’re not doing this, I’m the one that’s doing this.” “And the waters were a wall to them on their right hand on their left. Moses stretched out his hand and the course of the waters returned and covered Pharaoh.”

They go out in the desert and then we have the third in these events—we have Mount Sinai, which is slide 51. There’s a debate over which mountain was really Mount Sinai. This happens to be Jebel Musa, which is the mountain of teaching—the traditional site of Sinai. I’m not 100% sure that this is the actual mountain, but I was there and I can tell you when you stand with your back to that mountain and you look west, you’re looking at two mountain ranges going down like a big horn, and when you stand there you think, man, if God spoke verbally out loud in public, which He did, you could’ve recorded His voice speaking in Hebrew.

By the way, that these people were stunned at hearing the voice of God, and it must reverberated down this enormous valley from mountainside to mountainside. Well, what does it say? In Deuteronomy 5, we come now to Sinai, and here we have the most stupendous thing in history. And yet isn’t it interesting that, and I’ve asked this before at five different churches and I never had anybody raise their hand.

The question is this: Can any of you remember at any time between the time you were in kindergarten to the time you were a senior in high school, can anyone remember any teacher, in any class, in any context in the classroom or out of the classroom discussing the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai? Anybody here remember that in your school?

What's so funny about this, and odd, is that this happens to be the foundation of western law and western judicial tradition, and yet nobody from kindergarten to 12th grade ever heard a discussion of it. That tells you that we haven't even thought through the basis of ethics and law.

So here we have God speaking. Moses called all Israel, and said to them, "Here, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your hearing that you may learn them and carefully observe them. The LORD our God made a covenant with us." There's another contract. This one is a conditional contract. The LORD did not make this contract with our fathers, but with us.

Down in verses 4 and 5, "The LORD talked with you face to face on the mountain from the midst of the fire." There's the fire again. The fire was on top of a mountain of rock, so that fire couldn't have been fueled by wood. It was fueled because of God's own character.

"God spoke to you from the midst of the fire. I stood between the LORD and you at the time to declare to you the Word of the LORD for you were afraid because of the fire." Well I guess I'd be afraid too. There's something about when God spoke His Word at this point. It wasn't just the audio. It wasn't just the sound waves of hearing this massive voice speaking in Hebrew from the top of the mountain.

The character of the Word of God in this situation must be like in the book of Revelation when the Apostle John said, "I looked at the LORD and out of his mouth came a sword." What does it mean by a sword coming out of His mouth? It pierces, and it's a two-edged sword. A two-edged sword in the Roman army wasn't used to slash—the two-edged sword was used to stab. So there's a picture there of the penetration into the heart and the conscience of people. That's what made them scared, because when they saw and heard the Word of God, they must've felt naked.

Here is the One speaking who knows my inner depths. I can't hide from His voice. He exposes who I am as a fallen being. That's why they were afraid and they asked for a mediator. This was so understood that at one time in our nation, people built consciously their education and their idea of ethics, law, and their whole way of life.

Up here in Plymouth Massachusetts, less than an hour's drive I guess from here is the Monument to the Forefathers. I went there to take some pictures along with Dave Roseland one time. I want to show you three pictures from this monument. By the way, it's the tallest all-granite monument in the United States. People live in Plymouth and don't even know it exists because everybody comes to Plymouth to see the Mayflower and they never realize that two blocks over from the seaport is this monument, and here it is.

[Slide 52] Up at the top of this monument is a woman, and this is Lady Faith. This monument by the way, was built over a number of years from 1820 to 1859 by a group of Christians who wanted to have a monument to what our country once looked like, and thus it is called—it's a

federal site—the Monument to the Forefathers. Notice at the top, what is she doing with her right hand? She's pointing to Heaven, and see, she is not discussing the earth. She's not a pro-Babel person. She's pointing to Heaven from which all these other things flow.

What she's doing at this point, the people who designed this monument are saying, "Look, the whole thing depends upon revelation from God." So here she is with faith. There are four sub-statues around it; on the east side, the north side, the west side, and the south side. We don't have time to go into all of them, but let me just show you a sample of this. If we go around to the west side, you see a man. There are two men, east and west and two women, north and south along the bottom of this monument.

[Slide 53] This is law, dedicated on the west side to law, and he's pointing to a tablet with law based on the Ten Commandments. So it's very clear that they believe that law came from the Ten Commandments. The pilgrims wrote this in their general laws: "Laws are so far good and wholesome as by how much they are derived from, and agreeable to, the ancient platform of God's law."

Tell me that Mount Sinai was a random event, an obscure event. It is the core of western law, and particularly the core of American law. Of course, nobody is trained in that anymore.

[Slide 54] Then we go around, and there's a lady over here on the south. I'm over here on the west side of the monument right here, and over here on the right side is the lady. So I'm going to go around and take her picture here. She is Lady Education. Here's how their view of education was. And notice the woman is doing the educating because the women were the ones in the home. She's pointing. Notice she has something in her right hand. That's an open Bible, and she has it open and she's pointing with her finger to a verse of the Bible. Here is what the Massachusetts school law of 1647 said about education—they wanted a public education for all their youth, and then: "It being one chief project of that old diluter, Satan, to keep me from the knowledge of the Scriptures." That was, in the colony of Massachusetts, their law of public education.

So don't let somebody tell you that John Dewey created public education. He didn't. This is how the education used to be. This statue is elegant and it's close enough for most of you to go up there, have lunch, and see the thing and take pictures of it, and you should for your kids' sake. This is a way of conveying back to them a physical representation of what our country's forefathers believed. And it's so close to you here that you can drive up there and take a picture of it.

Alright Deuteronomy 5:6: "I am the LORD, your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, you shall have no other gods before me." So He goes through the Ten Commandments and down through the Ten Commandments ... honor your father and your mother.

In your handout, I think I have the slide that I'm going to show you next, which is slide number 55. The Ten Commandments have this peculiar structure to them; it's a chiasm. Ancient authors use chiasms to emphasize. They didn't have Microsoft Word to change the font. They couldn't

write and all of a sudden switch to italics or underlining. So the way they would do an emphasis is they would create a chiasm, where they have a list of things.

Let's show you how the chiasm worked. You have first God alone; these are the First and Second Commandments; God alone is worthy of worship and service. Then you have the Tenth Commandment about coveting. Well, if you covet, you're not satisfied with what God provides. The First, Second, and Tenth Commandments deal with worship and service. They deal with the heart attitude.

Then you have the idea that you will not take the name of the LORD, your God in vain. That's Commandment number Three. And you have Commandment number Nine: You shall not commit perjury. Both have to do with the misuse of language. Now this is interesting, isn't it? Language is addressed at both the front and the back end here.

Then you go to, "Six days you will labor"—the Fourth Commandment. Six days you will labor, and the seventh you will rest. And you go to the Eighth Commandment and it says: You shall not steal. Both of those Commandments deal with labor, wealth, and property.

Then you come down and you have the [Fifth] one: You shall honor your father and your mother, and then the Seventh one: You will honor marriage by not committing adultery; so that protects marriage.

Then finally you have: You shall not take life; you shall not murder, which is the protection of life. So you take this structure that's a chiasm, see it centers? See the chiasm going down here and it centers? It's the center of the chiasmic structure that's the emphasis of that passage. So if he did it in Microsoft Office today, he would put that in *italic*. That's the protection; that's the end of society; that's the goal of society.

If you tip that thing upright and turn the chiasm around here's what you would you get: [slide 56] you get the structure of society as God is revealing the rules—the ethical rules of a society that is supposed to function correctly.

Down at the bottom you have the heart allegiance, and see the heart allegiance can't be commanded. See, this is why civil authority is limited. Civil authority can't change hearts. It can only alter overt behavior, but it can't change the heart. This is why God is preaching the gospel today in our generation, and for over 2,000 years, to change hearts, to have people that will one day rule with our King of Kings and Lord of Lords in resurrection.

He's doing it by winning people individually. He's not doing it as a pharaoh making tyrannical rules, "You will believe!" You can't compel belief. People have to believe on their own. There's no such thing as peer pressure—to pressure somebody to believe. They are going to believe of themselves.

So you have a heart allegiance. Then next you have integrity of communication, where you have consistently stated the truth. Why is that so important? Let's think about it a minute. Can you have a functioning society with everybody lying? Can you have a business with an accountant

cooking the books? Does that work for you? See you can't have business. You can't have labor. You can't have marriage. You can't have anything else if you don't have integrity of language.

That's one of the things wrong with America today. We make up words deliberately, to avoid meaning of other words. So we are getting a problem with our language and when you start to eat away at language, you destroy the structure for that social unit.

Then you come up here and you have labor and property. Labor and property has to be respected. You cannot have prosperity in any social society, any nation unless you first protect private property, because when you take private property away, you destroy incentives—you destroy incentives and everybody gives up. So you have to protect private property, you have to honor labor.

I talked to contractors down in Maryland, and there are so many of them now that have their own businesses and they're working by themselves—not creating any jobs. I asked him, “Why don't you have more people to help you?” [He said] “I can't get guys to show up on time. They can't do the work and they don't even show up on time consistently. I've got a job out here. I've made a contract with the customer, the client, and I'm out there by myself waiting for somebody to show up and they don't show up. [They say] ‘I'm sick today.’ Well, I may be sick too, but I've got a client that has to be fixed here.”

So one of the problems is you have a destruction of the economic structures. It has to do with what's called “labor ethics.” There was a great book written about how wealth was created in northern Europe. It was called, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* [author is Max Weber]. It's an amazing study, and he showed it was the Bible-believing reformers that led to the prosperity of northern Europe. You know why? It's because people had a work ethic. Remember the story, The Puritan [Protestant] work ethic? [Max Weber]. Remember that slogan? Where did that come from? It came from the Bible.

Then we have marriage and family. Can you have a functioning marriage without property? Without some sort of way of surviving? You can't. Marriage is a small business. It depends on this stuff down here.

Then finally you have life. Now think about the mess in our cities where 70% of the young men and young women are born into marriages without a dad. Great start in life. Do we have delinquency; we have kids flunking out of schools; we have people that can't get jobs. Why? It's because the family's disrupted.

See all these form a certain cause-effect. Right now our country is paying the price for violating every one of these steps and it's not going to change until people go back and honor the structure that God has designed.

Okay, now let's go to the reaction to all this. Three reactions:

1. We have the issue of religion. How does our society view other religions? Well, we go back to slide 57, to the molds of our culture. Remember what we said? Today the big thing is post-modernism—the social group alone is identity. Well what is happening?

That means that religion is viewed not as God revealing things. Religion is just the product of a social group. “Well that’s just the Jewish religion, that’s all. God’s got a book written by the Jews; I got a book written by the Buddhists.”

That’s what you get when you start talking about religion. They have an argument and in slide 58, here’s the argument. There’s no such thing as exclusive truth. All knowledge is derived from empirically-sensed reality. That’s the starting point of the argument. What’s wrong with that? All knowledge is not derived, is it, from empirical observation?

How do we derive knowledge of the Creation, by empirical observing? Nobody observed it. So we have to depend on God’s revelation. Well, starting with a false starting point leads to a false conclusion. You start out by denying there is such a thing as revelation—religious ideas concern extra-sensory reality. Therefore, all religious ideas are mere private speculations. Therefore no religious idea can claim to be true knowledge. Therefore no religious idea can claim superiority; end of their argument.

But the argument starts on a false premise. Don’t allow somebody to suck you into their false premise and then continue down with an argument. Watch how they *start* the argument.

The idea then is that Christianity, we said this time and again, contains a 66-book library, written over thousands of years, that is internally self-consistent.

2. Alright we have now the secular theory of ethics. What about the secular theory of ethics? Well, we’ve looked at this slide [59] before. We talked about this—the hostility; that there’s an ethic. Anytime anyone tells you that something *ought to be*, or something *should be*, a little bell should go off in your mind: they are making an ethical judgment.

You have the right in a conversation if you can keep it cordial, you have the right to ask, “Why do you believe that that should be so?” In other words, you’re asking them their ethical standard for making that judgment. It’s a fair question. You’re just asking the question innocently about how they get to that conclusion. What’s their standard of right and wrong?

The thing that we all have to deal with—we have in our families; we have in our society; the students have it in school—and that is this subjectivism (moral relativism) versus us, that we believe in absolute truth. That is, truth that is universal. Truth that is always true of all people everywhere.

But here’s the problem: ethical judgments. If you hold to moral relativism, ethical judgments merely express an individual’s emotions or attitudes toward an action. If that’s really the case—that ethics are just relative to how you feel—how I feel; then isn’t it true that we’re not saying anything objectively about this murder?

For example, downtown Baltimore, the murder of Freddie Gray down there? Interestingly, there is a policeman that lives next door to me and he was on duty in Baltimore when this thing happened. He arrested somebody for rioting in the street. So he

asked this guy after he was arrested in downtown Baltimore in the middle of the riot, the police guy said to him, “You must be down here for Freddie Gray.” The guy looks at him, “Huh, who’s Freddie Gray?”

That shows you that these people are just troublemakers that gravitate to something to create hell in the street, just to let things loose and destroy and burn down the buildings owned by the poor black businessmen that are trying to serve their neighborhood. That was a wonderful accomplishment. You did a lot by that; that was really productive.

So here we have this kind of thing going on—subjective [slide 60]. Here are the arguments for it. You will hear this argument over and over again. You’ll hear it from family members that do not believe. You will hear it in school. You will hear it on the media:

1. Circumstances and generation differ from person to person. Haven’t we heard that one before? “Well, I don’t believe the Bible. That’s good for you, but that’s not for me.”
2. Intolerant to impose one’s values on someone else. You know what the fallacy of that is? We’re not imposing *our* values on anyone. They happen to be God’s values. They’re not mine, I didn’t make them last Tuesday afternoon.
3. Two persons’ conflicting judgments can both be true if everything is relative. So we go to the next slide [61] and we have problems. Here are the problems with relativism, and you can point these out.

Relativistic ethics say nothing about the action. All they say is your reaction to the action. All you’re telling me is your emotional state. You’re not telling me about what inherently is wrong with this situation. Is this objectively wrong? You’re not answering that. You’re just telling me how you feel about it. I’m not interested in how you personally feel about it. You should not be interested in how I personally feel about it. We’re not writing a Gallup poll here. We’re trying to discuss something that happened. Is it right or is it wrong, regardless of how we feel about it?

Another problem is it’s self-refuting because no one in the final analysis can live this way. If you’re involved in an undercover drug deal and you send a bogus check to the drug dealer, does he think it’s right or wrong, and does he come after you or not? Oh, all of a sudden we believe in absolute ethics don’t we? Now, when the check bounces.

The resulting anarchy of a relativistic system is, finally: people can’t tolerate an anarchy and they will vote every time for a tyranny. So there’s the problem of ethics.

The Bible solves the ethical problem because God tells us His nature. Ethics come from God’s holy nature. He has revealed His nature, and our conscience testifies to it if we listen to our conscience. So there’s the answer to *our* theory of ethics—that ethics come from God’s character through revelation. Everybody else has to believe,

if you don't believe in God, that ethics somehow are generated in here by our feelings; take your choice.

3. Finally, one more thing: the secular theories of law. When God spoke from Sinai, He spoke law and He gave law to the whole nation. Law came by revelation, as that monument to the Founding Fathers up there in Plymouth [reveals].

If you don't believe that, here's the problem you have, and I cite the Nuremberg dilemma. In 1946, the Nazi war criminals are on trial and we have a judicial guy from America [Robert H. Jackson]. Justice Jackson was on the Supreme Court. He is asked to come to Europe to be the prosecutor in the court trials at Nuremberg.

Here's the problem though, you can get this on the Internet; here's his summation at the end of the trial for the Nazis. The Nazi lawyers and the defense attorneys were arguing that you cannot sentence these Gestapo agents for violating German law because they obeyed German law. So the defense of the Nazi war criminals was, "What did we do? We just followed orders." How do you deal with that one? You can't convict them on the basis of German law because they obeyed German law.

Well, they're wrong, but how do you know they're wrong? Where's the law that they violated? They didn't violate American law did they? They're Germans—they're not under American law. See what the attorneys were doing? The defense attorneys were arguing that you can't convict the war criminal because the war criminal wasn't disobeying your law. He wasn't disobeying his own country's law.

[Slide 62] Here's what in the end Jackson had to do: "As an International Military Tribunal, it rises above the provincial in transient and seeks guidance not only from international law but also from the basic principles of jurisprudence which are assumptions of civilization and which long have found embodiment in the codes of all nations."

Jackson couldn't bring into the trial any kind of law. No, he quotes international law. But international law doesn't exist as a statute. So the trial of the Nazi war criminals in the end went back to a Gallup poll. How do people feel about what these guys did? That was the only way you could convict them.

You see what Jackson is doing in this quote is he's asking for two features as a judge: I've got to have law that is not provincial—what do you suppose he meant by that? "I want law that is not provincial," meaning he wanted law that was universal to all nations. Provincial meant it was only for one province, one nation. I can't use a law for only one nation. I have to have a law that applies to all nations.

Then he had to argue: I don't want law that is transient. What did he mean by that? It changes—"I can't have a law that changes." The law had to be valid in 1943 like it is in 1946. What he unconsciously did in this summary—and you can find it on the Internet—

what he did in this summary was he outlined for us what God's law is. It's not provincial and it's not transient. You have to have that or you can't really adjudicate these cases.

Alright, there are three sources of law and I'll just briefly give you this because we're running out of time tonight. There are three sources that people who don't believe the Bible have to resort to.

1. One is the natural right theory. In the natural right theory, the idea is that man somehow, in his evolution from animals, has now acquired a unique value that's natural to him. So they build law on the right, the natural right of a human being. But see the environmentalists are knocking that down now. Haven't you heard the term "animal rights"? Haven't you heard the word?

Now the Swedes have plant rights. We have to be careful about picking the weeds because the plants have rights. So the "natural right" idea of law has now got a problem.

2. So here's the second one: the social good theory. This is the one you'll see in our society. What is right and what is wrong in the law is what forms the social good. This was John Stuart Mill that did this. It's called "utilitarian" ethics.

But here's the problem: today it's usually phrased, "We will have law so we do no harm." Good law, it does no harm. Here's the question John Stuart Mill never answered, and they can't answer: how do I calculate harm? How do I know it's not going to harm 20 years down the road? How do you do that? You haven't got a test to show that. See, only God has the capability because He's omniscient and He's the Creator. He can tell us what eventually will trip us up, and He's trying to keep us from doing that, so He has law.

Think of the law where Moses was instructed to take contaminated garments and put them out into the sun. Did God tell Moses about infrared and ultraviolet radiation? No, they didn't know anything about ultraviolet radiation, and God didn't go into ultraviolet radiation as a sterilizing agent. But that's what was going on.

So now here we are, well over 3,000 years after Moses, "Oh Moses, you know what? God knew what He was talking about. We know about ultraviolet radiation." Well, Moses did not. What he had to do is follow what God told him to do and later on it turns out what God told him to do was right. So that's the promise about social good.

3. Then finally we have the last one called "positive law" that our courts are now using. It doesn't matter whether the law is right or wrong as long as it was legitimately formulated.

Well, we've looked now at this whole ensemble of the call of Abraham, the Exodus, and Sinai. We've looked how it impacts the issue of religion; it impacts the issue of ethics; it impacts the issue of law. All of these are contemporary terms, and it cannot be discussed by us as believers, without us reverting to the authority of Scripture.

We have to have a basis for ethics. We have to have a basis for law. We have to have a basis for evaluation of different religions. Call us intolerant, but truth is intolerant. Truth doesn't matter what you think—truth is truth.

So the lesson we have tonight is we're going back to this area of society and I give you a close with this slide, slide number 63. Here's the thinker, and this is the choice: are we going to accept God's verbal and nonverbal revelation or are we going to push it aside and create our own substitutes? That's the issue,

We have to be gracious with people, but the problem still is that this is where we are left. We are people who believe in the 66-book library that God wrote over 2,000 years ago. That is our authority. We make no apologies for it. We don't owe anyone an apology for this, because it's not our book. I didn't write the 66 books. I listen to God speaking through the 66 books. And you didn't write it and you don't have to apologize for it either.

You have the Word of God; it's given to you by grace, and it's our job to respond to it. As I said earlier, instead of saying, "It" says, how about us all saying, "He" says.

Closing Prayer

"Father we thank You for Your Words; we thank You for the fact that as we examine these issues in our culture, we realized it's all vanity as Solomon said in the book of Ecclesiastes. Unbelievers can't come up with any basis for ethics. They can't come up consistently with a basis for law. They can't come up with some sort of evaluation of religious faiths.

But we know when we listen to You, when we listen to You speaking to us, we have the basis of religious truth, we have a basis for ethics, we have a basis for law, and we don't have to apologize for it.

Help us have the wisdom, as well as the grace, to be gracious in our conversations with people but as You give us opportunities, may we lead conversations into enough depth so that we can expose people to the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, by causing them to question their unbelief and start searching and listening to the gospel message. For we ask this in our Savior's name, Amen."