

creed, and be all but banished from the practice. The apostle has satisfactorily proved, that, no one, whether Jew or Gentile, can ever attain to justification through the deeds of the law: and if attained at all, it must be through the righteousness of faith. This faith excludes boasting; but, it is nevertheless, the friend and supporter of the law: hence the apostle triumphantly asks. "Do we then make void the law through faith?"

And he as triumphantly answers: "God forbid: Yea we establish the law."

1. The law was necessary. Its necessity arose out of the nature and relations of moral beings. God gave us a moral nature and established those relationships that exist in society. But, with such a nature, and such relationships must we be left without a rule, by which to regulate our conduct toward others? The Creator was too wise and loving and good, to leave us without a moral law. The framing of that law was not left to the creature. No creature, however exalted, was equal to the task. Men may now frame laws, having the moral law as a basis; although we have reason to lament, that very many human laws are far from the spirit of the Divine. Had law-making been left to the creature, it might have been difficult to fix upon a standard of right; each law-maker might have had his own standard, and with a multitude of standard-bearers, moral and social disorder must have convulsed and broken up society. Let us rejoice, then, that the Creator himself is the lawgiver. The moral law is the standard of right for moral beings such as we. Take away this law, and we must be left to drift on the ocean of time, without either compass or rudder.

2. The moral law is a just and reasonable law—because, in the first place, it requires nothing of its subjects that they are unable to give. We are reminded, however, that it is written somewhere, that "no mere man since the fall is able perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but, doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed." It is true that no mere man since the fall has kept the commandments of God perfectly, but every man must be held guilty to the extent that he comes short of the requirements of the law. But, in the absence of the ability, there can be no guilt. Were any one commanded to arrest the sun in its course, or make the earth turn back upon its axis, the command would be unreasonable, because the party commanded had not the power to obey. But, it may be said, we lost the power to obey through our own