



REFLECTIONS

February 9, 2014

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

Romans 6:1-2

Law and Order

Law and Order, the TV show bearing that name in various forms, has had a long and popular run. The shows themselves conform to its title. They follow a consistent pattern that dedicates the first half of the show to violations of the law and the pursuit of the perpetrators; then the second half brings justice so order is restored. In the end, the purpose of the law is to maintain order—keeping things the way they are designed to be.

Perhaps no book of the Bible is more about law and order than Leviticus. Now, I am no authority on matters of law and order, but order, the noun, has many definitions. Among them are, “the arrangement or sequence of objects or events in time,” and “the state of peace—freedom from confused or unruly behavior.” These definitions describe the manner in which God created the universe and the way of life he desires for mankind.

God created the world in an orderly way and he designed it to have order. Night and day define time and establish routines for work and rest. Gravity holds things in place and even makes the oceans move. The earth’s revolutions around the sun provide the seasons that designate times for planting, harvest, and rest. And families are formed through an orderly process of succession. There are endless examples of orderliness in the world and the natural laws intended to perpetuate it.

It occurs to me that God's laws are not intended to be unreasonable restrictions to take joy from our lives. They are designed to maintain the order he intended for us. When followed, joy in life is assured.

Just as God has free will, so we too were given free will. But because our sinful nature drives to be our own bosses, we often disregard God's laws in favor of our own pleasures. Then those selfish desires disrupt the order designed for life and there are consequences to face before order can be restored. So, God sent his Son into the world to redeem us from the disorder we bring into it. It’s called grace.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:8-10)

And the good works God prepared us to do will uphold God’s law and produce the orderly way of life he desires for mankind.

You are the light of the world,

Richard +

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