

A banner with a background of a wooden desk, a green book, and a typewriter keyboard. The text "Catechism: Foundations of the Faith" is written in a dark green, serif font on a light yellow rectangular background.

Catechism: Foundations of the Faith

How Do We Know What God Demands of Us?

Key idea:

What has God given to teach you his demand? God has given us His law, which is a reflection of His character, to teach us how to be perfect in holiness, love, and integrity.

Key text:

Romans 2:14–15

Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law, 15since they show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts now accusing, now even defending them.

Ezekiel 20:11

I gave them my decrees and made known to them my laws, for the man who obeys them will live by them.

James 2:12

Speak and act as those who are going to be judged by the law that gives freedom.

Key points:

1. When God made us in His image, His Law was inscribed on our very nature so that every human instinctively knows what God demands of us.
2. Because we distorted, denied, and suppressed the Law written on our nature, God gave us His moral Law in written form.
3. On judgment day the standard to judge righteousness will not be human opinions or standards, but the perfect Law of God, which is a reflection of God's character.
4. There are three distinct uses of God's moral law for humans:
 - a. God's moral law restrains evil in society (civil use)
 - b. God's moral law convicts us of sin & points us to Christ
 - c. God's moral law guides Christians into true holiness, love, and integrity

Questions for discussion/application:

1. Note: this is BRCC Catechism Question 9. The catechism has many other verses, questions, and resources for further study related to this question.
2. What part of Sunday's text and teaching stood out most to me? Why?
3. What is meant by the phrase "natural law"? Why should I expect that God's character and demands would be evident in all of creation? Why would they be especially evident in human nature?
4. How could I answer someone who claims that there is no such thing as right and wrong? Is it possible to consistently live as if there is no objective right and wrong? Why or why not?
5. Why did God give His moral law to me in written form? How is this a gift of grace for me in my sinful state? How does it protect me from my own sinful thoughts and desires?
6. Can a human society ignore or violate God's moral law in its own laws and cultural norms and still thrive and prosper? Why or why not?
7. The second use of the law is to convict me of sin and point me to Christ. Is this only useful before I become a Christian, or will this use continue even after I have become a Christian?
8. Why do I need God's law to guide me as a Christian? Can't I just trust my new nature and the Holy Spirit to guide me into true holiness, love, and integrity?
9. How are God's moral law and the Holy Spirit involved in my sanctification (growth in holiness, love, and integrity)? Why do I need both? How does the New Covenant provide for my needs in this area?
10. Whom can I pray for, share what I have learned, and invite to church this week?

Preview of next week: The Grace of Comfort (2 Corinthians 1:3-7)