

Question 11: What are Law and Gospel?

Short answer

The Law shows what God commands and what is right; the Gospel announces what God has done to save us in Jesus. The Law guides us and corrects us; the Gospel forgives us and changes us.

Explanation

In the Bible we find both commandments and good news. Understanding the difference between Law and Gospel helps a lot so we don't get confused.

- The Law is what God says we must do: love God, love our neighbor, tell the truth, not steal, not hate, be righteous. The Law is good because it shows God's character and teaches us how to live well. But the Law also does something else: it shows us that on our own we are not perfect and that we need help and forgiveness.
- The Gospel is the good news: Jesus came, lived without sin, died, and rose again to save us. The Gospel does not say, "Do this to be loved," but "You are loved; therefore come to Jesus, receive forgiveness and a new life."

So, the Law is like a mirror that shows the dirt; the Gospel is like water and soap that truly cleanse. If you use only Law without Gospel, you feel only accused or afraid. If you use only Gospel without Law, you might take grace lightly. Together, Law and Gospel bring us to Jesus and teach us to live with gratitude.

Reference verses

- **Romans 3:20** – "Through the law comes knowledge of sin."
- **John 1:17** – "The law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."
- **Ephesians 2:8–9** – "By grace you have been saved... not by works..."

In simple words

The Law is what God tells us to do: it shows us the right path and helps us understand when we are wrong. The Gospel is the good news: Jesus forgives us and helps us change. The Law shows the need; the Gospel gives the solution.