

*The Law is what God commands.
The Gospel is what God gives.*

1. The distinction between Law and Gospel is *not* the distinction between the Old Testament and the New Testament: because there is promise also in the Old Testament and commandment also in the New Testament.
2. The distinction between Law and Gospel is *not* the distinction between the earthly/natural and the divine/supernatural: because both law and gospel come from God. However, the law can be known in part by natural means, while the gospel can be known only through the Holy Spirit.
3. The distinction between Law and Gospel is *not* the distinction between the pre-Christian life and the Christian life: because the law continues to apply even to the Christian life. In the Christian life, the law is no longer the *mediator* of the relationship between God and the sinner, but it still offers *instruction* in how we are to live with God and one another.
4. The distinction between Law and Gospel is *not* the distinction between God's wrath and God's love: because the law is also an expression of God's love. God is wrathful against sin and therefore against sinners, because His law is good. The gospel is that Christ fulfills the law for *sinner*s because of God's love for them, but God's wrath toward *sin* remains in effect.
5. The distinction between Law and Gospel is *not* the distinction between what makes me feel good/innocent and what makes me feel bad/guilty: because God's word is not the same as our psychological reactions to it. People can be happy about the gospel because it tells of God's love, but they can also be angry about the gospel because they want to save themselves instead of being dependent on anyone, even God. People can be frightened by the law because it exposes their sin, but they can also be happy about it because it is better than the false laws that they have obeyed in their past.
6. The distinction between Law and Gospel is *not* the distinction between Israel's way and the church's way: because Israel also lived by God's promises and the church also obeys God's law. However, the specific law given to the people of Israel is not binding on Christians or Gentiles. Only the universal law is binding on all people. The Ten Commandments are commended to Christians because they are such an excellent presentation of the universal law.
7. The distinction between Law and Gospel is *not* the distinction between something bad and something good: because both words of God are good.