

Antithetic Language Regarding the Law in the NT

(Antithetic: negative, opposite, opposing, denial)

in light of Matthew 5.17

Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets;
I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.

and Romans 8.1-4

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. ² For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. ³ For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

1. What wrong use of the law best identifies the antitheses of the following passages?

Decide if it is one of the following: law aggravates sin's bondage, law gives promises, and law is misused for justification. *Some of these categories may overlap.*

Matthew 11.13, the Law prophesied until John [after John we do *not* have it]

We are not under law in its promise form

Romans 3.21, now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law

We are not under law in its misuse for justification

Romans 6.14, For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

We are not under law in its function of aggravating sin's bondage

Romans 3.28, For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

We are not under law in its misuse for justification

Acts 15.10, Now, therefore, why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke [of Law] on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear?

We are not under law in its misuse for justification

Romans 5.20, Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more

We are not under law in its function of aggravating sin's bondage

1 Corinthians 9.20-21, To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though *not being myself under the law*) that I might win those under the law. ²¹ To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.

We are not under the law in its promise form

1 Timothy 1.9...the law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners

We are not under law in its function of aggravating sin's bondage

2A. What positive and good uses of the law do these “negative” texts imply?

We are not under law for justification but we are under it for sanctification

We are not under law in its function of aggravating sin's bondage, but we are under it for freedom in Christ

We are not under law in its promise form but we are under law in its fulfillment form

3A. Do we have an antithesis of law versus grace in John 1.17? For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

Do we have the hard contrast that indicates absolute or strong discontinuity between NT fulfillment in Christ and OT promise through Moses? No, if you think strong discontinuity like “law then but no law now” you over press the contrast because if grace and truth indicate strong discontinuity with no law today, then the OT must have been devoid of grace and truth. However, the OT had all three: law, grace, and truth. The fuller point is that in Christ now in the NT time of fulfillment we have a greater form of law, grace, and truth; we now have a fulfillment form of law, grace, and truth. As 1.16 states: we now have grace upon grace or greater grace!