

Introduction – Deuteronomy 16:18-17:20

Reflection: Describe the Christian's relationship with God. What are some challenges that Christians face in the world that make this relationship hard? How can the covenant community encourage each other to keep the faith?

1. Read Deuteronomy 16:18-20, what are Moses' instructions about appointing judges and officers? How did the Israelites play a part in the appointment of judges and officers? (cf. Deu 1:13-15) What would happen if these judges and officials perverted justice by accepting bribes? (cf. Deu 27:19, 25)
 - a. Why is justice important to God? (cf. Deu 32:4, Isa 30:18)

2. Read Deuteronomy 16:21-17:7, detail the covenant violations given in this section?
 - a. Why do you think the Asherah trees were commanded to not be placed next to altar of the Lord, nor was a pillar to be set up? (Deu 12:30, Josh 23:7, Psa 81:9)? What was wrong with sacrificing animals with blemishes and defects to God? (Lev 22:22,32, Mal 1:6-8) What is the big issue with men and women who worship other gods? (Deu 5:7-10)

 - b. How do these covenant violations shape our own ideas about faith and worship of God in the New Covenant? How does our culture and society dilute our views of worship? Give some examples.

3. Read Deuteronomy 17:8-13, explain Moses' instructions on how to handle the different legal decisions by priests and judges.

4. Read Deuteronomy 7:14-20, what are Moses' instructions for kings? How might the different qualifications and preparations for a king affect the righteousness of a covenant people?

I want to make clear: The Law was never meant to merit salvation. Christ's imputed righteousness that we can only obtain by faith is what allows us to have the righteousness necessary for salvation. However, the covenant righteousness here is not the righteousness necessary for salvation, but the proper and righteous way to live in the New Covenant. For the Church, there is no political structure to encourage this covenant righteousness, but we are still tasked with it!

1. What does covenant righteousness look like for those in New Covenant? (Matthew 22:34-40)
2. How does God empower us to pursue covenant righteousness? (Phil 2:12-15, Eph 2:10, 1 Pet 1:2, John 16:8)
3. How does the body of Christ help us in maintenance of our faith? (Heb 3:13, 10:24-25) How do leaders? (Acts 20:28, 1 Pet 5:1-3, Heb 13:17)
4. What is our own personal responsibility to covenant righteousness? (2 Cor 5:10, Gal 6:1-5, Eph 4:29-32)

We live in a fallen world that challenges our faith daily, and this is a major reason we need the help of the Church. Though we may not be part of the Old Testament society, we, as the Church, are tasked to personally maintaining our own covenant relationship with God, and then as the Body of Christ, to help each other in the maturing of our faith. Therefore, to summarize, it takes the effort of the local body of Christ to help us each individually maintain our faith in the Lord.