

and spiritual laws is the unpleasant consequences connected with violations of God's laws. It appears that these unpleasant consequences (notwithstanding the short-term pleasures sin sometimes brings) are also intended by God to motivate His creatures, not so much to want to obey these laws as to want to refrain from violating them, so as to avoid the unpleasant consequences connected with such violations.

In addition to the system of laws that He built into the universe at its creation, God, following the Fall and at various times, promulgated other laws, statutes, and ordinances to regulate human conduct, and accompanied them with various sanctions, some physical, some spiritual. It appears that these additional laws were in some sense established for sinful human beings because they need them and derive benefit from living in accordance with them.

Once laws are promulgated, the question whether or not they will be enforced comes to the force.

In general, "law" may be defined in two basic ways: (1) a principle of uniform, dependable operation, a description of the way things consistently behave; (2) a rule for the regulation of human conduct, a prescription of the way human beings ought to behave. The first meaning (descriptive principle) applies to the physical, the biological, the moral, and the spiritual realms. The second meaning (prescriptive rule of human conduct) applies primarily to the moral and spiritual realms, and to the physical and biological realms only to the extent that they have moral or spiritual value.

In connection with the first meaning (descriptive principles), it would appear that, except for special cases of miraculous intervention, God uniformly sustains His laws (i.e., unsupported objects always fall toward the center of a gravitational field; what a man sows is what he will reap, both in the biological and moral realms; in order to enter the kingdom of God, one must be born again through faith in the crucified Savior). Those who ignore or attempt to violate these laws must suffer the consequences (i.e., if a husband attempts to pick up an expensive china plate with soapy hands and it slips out of his grasp, it will fall to the floor and perhaps shatter; if a farmer sows kernels of field corn hoping to reap a crop of sweet corn and make a large profit from its sale, he will be disappointed in both the crop and the (lack of) profit; if a man indulges his lust with prostitutes and later discovers that he is infected with herpes, syphilis, or even AIDS, he has only himself to blame; if a person rejects the good news of salvation through Christ and refuses to trust in Him, he must remain spiritually dead and dead in his trespasses and sins).

Thus in relation to laws in the sense of descriptive principles, it appears that God enforces His laws by faithfully sustaining them by the exercise of sovereign