

LAW AND GRACE (NO. 3)

“But We Know That the Law is Good, If a Man Use it Lawfully.” (I Tim. 1:8)

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Two previous sermons have left questions in the minds of some of our readers as to our belief on Law and Grace. No doubt, this is a result of some statements made that needed further explanation. We apologize for any confusion caused and pray you will allow us another sermon in which to try and set forth our thoughts in a more orderly fashion. We love to hear from our readers. Their comments help determine the effectiveness of the teaching.

The question before us is this, “WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE LAW TO US BORN-AGAIN MESSAGE BELIEVERS?” First, let it be said that by “The Law” we are referring to the Ten Commandments and any other Moral Laws, or Rules, set forth in the Word of God. We are not speaking of the Ceremonial Laws of the Old Testament such as the washing of clothes and pots and pans. Neither are we setting forth the keeping of the Law as A CONDITION TO SALVATION.

What we greatly desire to show is that all Christians are responsible to God for the keeping of His Moral Laws AFTER SALVATION, and that the Laws direct us as to how to OBEY our Lord. We fully agree that we are in the dispensation of GRACE, but

we continue to hold the view that the New Testament doesn't ever teach against Believers in this age using the Law as their guide to Moral conduct. Just the opposite is true. Jesus, Himself, in His great Sermon On The Mountain, stated, **“Think not that I am come to destroy the Law.....Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least Commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven....”** (Matt. 5:17-19)

Please note that in the above scripture Jesus is talking to some who are already in the Kingdom. They are not being required to keep the Commandments as a way to be saved, but he said the man that violates His laws will be called the LEAST IN THE KINGDOM. On the other hand, He said, **“Whosoever shall DO AND TEACH THEM** (as a rule for Moral Conduct) **shall be called Great in the Kingdom of Heaven.”**

In I Tim.1:8 the scripture says, **“WE KNOW THAT THE LAW IS GOOD, IF A MAN USE IT LAWFULLY.”**

What would be the **“LAWFUL USE OF THE LAW?”** We believe to use it lawfully is for a Christian to study it, take it into his heart, love it because it shows forth the total Righteousness of his Savior, then strive with all that is in him to live by it. To use it lawfully is to use it as God intends it to be used, as our Moral Guide toward Holiness. To use the Law UNLAWFULLY, is to suppose that it was sent as a way to Salvation. No man can ever be saved by keeping the Law. Not that the Law is wrong, but that the man is weak in his flesh, and cannot perfectly keep it. (Rom. 8:3) Grace was not given to deliver us from our RESPONSIBILITY to God's MORAL LAWS. It is only sent to FORGIVE us of our failures and to promise Salvation in spite of said failures, through Grace.

Rom. 4:13, **“For the promise that he should be the Heir of the World, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the Law, but through the righteousness of FAITH.”** Abraham and his seed are saved through FAITH IN GRACE. But, Grace never leads us AWAY from the

Righteousness of God's Moral Laws. It bids us to keep them. Then, as we strive and fail, strive and fail, Grace moves in and wipes the slate clean for every repentant heart. Grace never declares Law to be wrong, or done away, because **EXCEPT FOR VIOLATED MORAL LAWS, GRACE HAS NO ROOM TO WORK.**

There had to be a Law Standard set before us that was **IMPOSSIBLE** to keep. If not, there was no place at all for GRACE and our Father, according to the Prophet, was determined to show all His attributes, of which Grace (Love) was the leading one. If then, His Moral Laws were set aside, so is our obligation set aside, and if we are not responsible, then what need have we for Grace. We would save ourselves. Law made way for Grace, but only if Law is kept in force morally.

Paul taught that, **"Without the Law sin was dead."** (Rom. 7:8-13) Sin has no hold on us without the Law. Paul went on to say in verse 9, **"For I was alive without the Law once, but when the Commandment came (to him and to us) sin revived and I died."** The Law made him aware of sin, and because he could never keep it perfectly, he died spiritually. Then in verse 10, **"And the commandment which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death."** Paul found that the Commandments, if he could only keep them,

would bring him LIFE. The only problem was that he couldn't keep them, and for that reason it meant spiritual DEATH.

But in verse 12, he still testified that, **"The Law is Holy, and the Commandment Holy, and just and good."** Not "no good", not "done away and forgotten", not disregarded as a Moral Guide, but still very much before us, constantly reminding us of our desperate need of GRACE. In verse 13, Paul said, **"God never meant for the Law to mean my death, but He used the Law to show me my imperfections in the flesh, and that I MUST TRUST IN HIS GRACE FOR SALVATION."**

Rom. 3:28-31, **"Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by FAITH without the deeds of the Law.....Do we then make Void the Law through Faith? God forbid. Yea, we ESTABLISH the Law."** In the dictionary, the word *void* means "not legally valid." Paul therefore, was saying, "We do not render the Law invalid, Useless. We establish it as GOOD by striving to keep it. Then, after that, GRACE takes care of our failures.

QUOTE: THE ONCOMING STORM, PAGE 9, "God is just and HE HAS LAWS. When these LAWS are broken.....any Law that's broken, (and) has no penalty to it, isn't a LAW. You cannot break the LAWS of GOD without having

to pay for it somewhere. You must do it. The Bible said, **"Be sure your sins will find you out."** (End quote) The Prophet is not speaking of a Christians Soul being endangered by failing in some of the Law, but about loosing blessings in this life for willful disobedience. As far as life in the flesh, we reap what we sow!

Rom. 6:14-16, Paul said, **"For you are not under Law but under Grace. What then? (Or what about the LAW then, are we to become LAWLESS?) God forbid."** Paul went on to say that we are actually the servants of the one whose LAWS we obey. We are to become the servants of the Righteous Laws of our God.

Rom. 7:6, **"But now we are delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held, that we should serve in NEWNESS OF SPIRIT, and not in the OLDNESS OF THE LETTER."** How often do we hear the first part of this scripture quoted, **"But now we are delivered from the Law."** But please notice the rest of what Paul said, **"That we should SERVE (the Law) in the Newness of the Spirit."** Not at all saying we are to ignore the Law, but rather to study it, get it into our Spirit, so we will be enabled to serve it BETTER. Not going strictly by the unbending LETTER of it, but being led by the Spirit about how to make it flexible, so as to meet every circumstance of life.

In Rom. 7:25 Paul said, **“So then with the mind I myself SERVE THE LAW OF GOD.** Paul did not discard the Law just because he couldn't use it as a means of Salvation. He set his mind to serve it. It was the Standard by which he lived. It was his rule of thumb. It was never out of his mind. So should it be with all of us.

QUOTE: WISDOM VS. FAITH, PAGE 65. “David said, **“Thy Law have I hid in my heart....I've got it hid here. I'm meditating in it day and night. They're written upon my bedpost and everywhere I've got them. Got them bound on my fingers.... And Jesus said, “Your name's in the Palm of My Hand.”** So how is it (the Law) going to be forgotten?” (End quote)

Rom. 7:1, **“Know ye not, Brethren, (for I speak to them that know the Law,) how that the Law hath DOMINION over a man as long as he liveth?”** This is a plain statement of fact. A man is under the dominion of the Law as long as he is in this flesh. The Law is the Standard toward which he must continually strive.

Then in Verse Four, **“Wherefore, my Brethren, ye also are become DEAD to the Law by the Body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that WE SHOULD BRING FORTH FRUIT UNTO GOD.”**

We are dead to the Law as far as its hold on us pertaining to Salvation, but never are we free from its Moral Rule. We BRING FORTH FRUIT unto our God by obeying His Law, then repenting when we fail. In this way, God is free to pour out His blessings on us in this life. (Example- If we freely give, we freely receive.)

Paul said, **“I delight in the Law of God after the Inward Man.”** (Rom. 7:22) This is the same man that said, **“But now we are delivered from the Law.”** (Rom. 7:6) He is delivered from being lost by failing some part of the Law, yet he loves the Law as his Standard of Conduct in the way of pleasing his God. Paul knew, as did our last day messenger, that God's Holy Moral Laws can never be changed.

QUOTE: CHRIST IS THE MYSTERY OF GOD REVEALED, PAGE 59, “Well you say, now wait a minute Brother Branham, you're talking about the Old Testament. He's the same yesterday, today and forever....If God ever says anything He cannot change it. He always magnifies it; not change it. The Law was magnified, not changed, magnified. Whosoever commits adultery shall be guilty of death, but whosoever (Now magnified) looketh upon a woman, to lust after her....He never changed the Commandment, He magnified it.....” (End quote)

And so in the above scriptures and quotes, we should

recognize the responsibility of man to keep God's Holy Laws. Because we have repeatedly insisted on walking the highway of Holiness (by keeping God's Laws) some may doubt our belief in the final perseverance of the Saints, or at least suppose that we do not believe in it as strongly as we ought. Let it be said that we believe in the Eternal Security of the Soul with all our hearts. At the same time we believe that a Soul that has been secured will love God's Moral Laws and be found striving to live them and that because of his striving, though he often fail, he will PROSPER in this life.

QUOTE: END-TIME EVANGELISM, PAGE 30, “.....David said, **“Sit not in the seat of the scornful, nor stand in the way of the ungodly like that....(By purposely breaking God's Laws) But, he that delighteth in THE LAW OF THE LORD, he loves to do it. He shall be like a tree that's planted by the rivers of water, his leaves shall not wither. And whatever he does will PROSPER.”** It will come to pass just exactly. That's the kind of Church God wants.” (One that obeys His Laws.) (End quote)

The Lord Jesus said, **“Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay Tithe of Mint and Anise and Cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the Law, judgment, Mercy and Faith. These OUGHT YE**

TO HAVE DONE, and not leave the other undone.”

How clearly does the Lord say in the above Scripture, that we ought to keep the Law! When John declared that, **“The Law was given by Moses, but Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.”** (John 1:17), he was showing the difference between Law and Grace, but not as two opposing systems. They were two parts of ONE SYSTEM. The Lord Jesus did not come to put the Law aside by introducing Grace. He only added Grace to the Law so that we are forgiven when we fail in the Law.

Nothing concerning the Moral Law was done away with except the CURSE that followed the breaking of it. Grace has destroyed the Curse for Christians. We are not saved by keeping the Law, neither are we lost when we fail in it. Faith in Grace saves us. Now we obey the Law because the new Nature (Soul) compels us out of Love. Jesus said in John 14:15, **“If you**

love me keep My Commandments.” Friends, this is a definite, New Testament Command out of the mouth of the Law Giver Himself.

In all that has been said above, we see a razors edge that must be walked down as we minister on the subject of Law and Grace. If we do not preach that Grace alone saves us, then no one can be saved, because, **“By the Law shall no flesh be justified.”** (Rom.3:20) But, if we preach that those who do not strive to obey the Law have a saving faith, then we do away with the Commandments that Jesus said we should keep. (John14:15)

God has set His Laws before us and requires us to **“BE UNDER THE LAW TO CHRIST”**, as I Cor. 9:19-21 shows. **“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more....To them that are without law, as without law (BEING NOT WITHOUT LAW TO GOD, BUT UNDER**

THE LAW TO CHRIST.) that I might gain them that are with out law.” To be **“Under the Law to Christ”** has to mean, **“To be under Christ’s Law.”**

Speaking of Love and how it fulfills the Law, Paul turned right around and admonished us to keep the Ten Commandments by naming five of them in the following Scripture. Rom. 13:8-10, **“.....He that loveth another hath fulfilled the Law. For this (Law) thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not bear false witness, thou shalt not covet.”** This is a far cry from encouraging us to believe that the Commandments are done away. He says that just because we love, this is not a substitution for actually keeping the Law. Love is what moves the Christian to obey the Law. Not to be saved, but because he is saved. Amen!

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