

Law or Grace
(And the Believer's Rule of Life)

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Something New

Romans 6:14 says:

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

The believer lives “under grace” in the present dispensational outworking of God or the new stewardship, economy, and work that God is promoting today among His own people. This is why Paul called it the grace dispensation (Eph. 3:2). The new Grace Dispensation that replaces the Law Dispensation has grace as its primary focus. Living “under” something indicates a rule or principle of life under which people place themselves and the regulatory precept that they allow to direct their lives. Living under grace indicates that New Testament believers are to allow the new grace principle of life, or the regulatory precept of grace, to direct their lives. Living under something means to subject oneself to its *power, rule, direction, and regulation*. Living under grace indicates how people govern their lives today and what force and power they allow to motivate and direct them in all of their daily decisions and actions.

Grace is the basis for our Christian living. Grace is the method or plan that God uses to change our lives. Our salvation, security, and spiritual growth are all based upon the grace principle (Eph. 2:8-9, Gal. 5:18; Titus 2:11-12). Our rule of life focuses on grace and not law. *Grace is the method or way that God deals with the believer in relation to his salvation, service, and sanctification.* It's the New Testament message of grace that governs, motivates, and directs our lives in the way of holy living and transformation. Living under grace has to do with a new arrangement for godly living that God has created for believers today in the present dispensation. We are no longer to live under the old arrangement (“ye are not under the law”) but enjoy God's new method and work which is to transform our lives. Earl Radmacher said:

“To be under grace means we are living under a new administration from God, with a new set of principles with grace as its focus.”

Although God’s grace was functioning throughout the Old Testament times in that it provided salvation for people (Rom. 4:3), it began to function in some new sense during the present dispensation. A new sacrifice (“a new and living way” – Heb. 10:20) and a new working of the Holy Spirit (“newness of spirit” - Rom. 7:6) was introduced that magnifies the working of God’s grace. Grace is the Golden Rule that is to direct and transform the lives of present-day believers. Our new mode of living, sphere of existence, and motivation for living is said to be “under grace” in that a new arrangement for both salvation and godly living has been introduced in the present economy or Dispensation of the Church. It is a brand new arrangement of grace that now governs and guides our lives as New Testament saints.

The believer today has no relationship to the Law (“ye are not under the law”). The Bible teaches that every New Testament believer has been released from the jurisdiction of the Mosaic Law and is no longer bound to any legal binding relationship with the Law. The fact that we are no longer living “under the law” (Rom. 6:14-15) indicates that God has finished the Law Dispensation (“He taketh away the first” - Heb. 10:9). In short, present-day believers no longer live under the Law (Rom. 6:14-15; Gal. 5:18) dispensationally or relationally. Dispensationally believers have been released from the Law as a system of intricate rules and regulations designed to teach typical truths about Christ and holiness (Col. 2:16-17).

Relationally believers have been released from their legal, binding, enslaving, condemning, and powerless relationship with the Law, which they possessed in their unsaved or unregenerate state (Rom. 7:1-6). This study will demonstrate that New Testament believers in Christ have been freed from the Law ceremonially, civilly, and even morally, as a working system that legalizers have notoriously used to promote salvation and sanctification before God. God’s New Testament saints are no longer bound to follow any of the Law’s commands in order to produce salvation and sanctification in their lives, nor are they liable to any of its penalties, since they have been freed from the Law as a means of salvation or sanctification before God. Blessed noonday truth!

To state it simply, we have been freed from the 613 commands of the Mosaic Law as a way to life and a regulatory principle for life. In this study we want to grasp what it means to be released from the Mosaic Law in relationship to its ceremonial, civil, and moral commandments and what it means to live under the new administration of grace. There is confusion and misunderstanding today regarding these two concepts of freedom from the Law and living under grace. In this study we will try to clear up the misunderstandings and misrepresentations of these two Biblical concepts and discover that New Testament believers have been released from the Mosaic Law dispensationally and relationally, freeing them from the ceremonial, civil, and moral aspects of the Law.

With the change of the dispensation comes a newfound freedom and liberty from the regulations and old relationship to the Mosaic Law which was one of typical rules, regulations, condemnation, and servitude to sin. It is wrong to interpret the Law written upon tables of stone as a mandate for Christian living today and this breeds confusion when one seeks to apply those promises, commands and curses, given specifically to Israel, for Christian living today.

Free From the Law

The concept of freedom from the Law is taken from Romans 7:3-4 where our old relationship to the Law has been severed and a new relationship with Christ has emerged. These verses and others (John 1:16-17; Rom. 6:14; 2 Cor. 3:13; Gal. 4:21; 5:1; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 7:12) point to the change of the dispensation from law to grace. The old regulations and relationship to the Law have been replaced by New Testament freedom and the believer's relationship with Christ. The Bible actually teaches that New Testament believers, who live under grace, have been released from all three aspects of the Mosaic Law.

New Covenant believers have been released from the Law in three distinct ways – ceremonially, civilly, and morally. The concept of being free from the moral Law has caused considerable debate between Reformed and Dispensational theology. However, God's Word does not debate the issue. It says what it means and means what it says ("for ye are not under the law, but under grace" – Rom.

6:14) and adds that we have been “delivered from the law” (Rom. 7:6) – this includes the moral Law of God.

Object Lessons

The Bible teaches we have been ceremonial freed from the Mosaic Law and all of the object lessons that it was teaching. There is profound soteriological and dispensational significance attached to this Biblical truth. This is because our salvation is not based upon adherence to the ceremonial laws of Moses as the legalists were teaching in Paul’s day (Acts 15:1; 1 Tim. 4:1-4; Gal. 6:12-15). We have been freed from observing the ceremonial laws as a way to produce salvation before God. Using the Law in this way was a terrible distortion of the Law’s purpose (Gal. 3:24; Rom. 3:20). However, being free from the Law in the New Testament sense, certainly means to be free from the Law as a means to obtain righteousness or salvation before God (Gal. 4:21-31; 5:1-4).

When a person places themselves under the Mosaic Law, as a means of salvation, then a person’s salvation is based on legalism, or the works of man and the way of human effort. Paul vehemently reinforces the truth that the Law cannot justify a person before God and that believers have been freed from this terrible plight and predicament of earning their salvation before God (Gal. 1:6; 2:16; 21; 3:1-2; Rom. 3:28).

Judaism was originally a God-given revelation, whose forms and ceremonies were intended to teach spiritual truths in a typical way, as the Epistle to the Hebrews and other parts of the New Testament show. Dispensationally we are no longer bound to observe the days, diets, and distinct rules that were given to govern the nation of Israel under the Old Covenant of the Mosaic Law while God was working with only one group of people (Ex. 31:13, 16-17; Lev. 26:46; 27:34; Romans 9:4-5). The ceremonial rules and regulations regarding sacrifice were given to provide typical lessons about God’s requirements for salvation (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:24) and ultimately provided a picture or shadow (Heb. 10:1) of salvation through Christ in *figures* (Heb. 9:9, 24) and *patterns* (Heb. 9:23) relating to sacrifice (1 Cor. 5:7; Heb. 9:11, 23-26; 10:19-20).

Tabernacles, temples, and typical lessons in feast days (Lev. 23) are no longer God's plan for the Church. These ceremonial laws were also object lessons designed to teach practical holiness in the Christian life (Lev. 11:44-47; 19:1-2; 22:31-33) and worship (Lev. 23:2-4). They could be viewed as teaching tools to help the people understand that God was holy and they were required to live in a holy fashion (Ex. 19:3-6). The intricate laws between the clean and unclean and the entire Mosaic code was a perpetual reminder of God's holiness (Lev. 19:2; 20:7, 26) and that Israel was to be set apart from the pagan nations around them (Ex. 19:5-6; Lev. 20:26; Deut. 14:1-2; 28:1) under the old covenant of the Mosaic Law.

Today in God's New Covenant Church program the distinction between Jews and Gentiles no longer exists (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28); therefore, there is no need for the intricate ceremonial laws that distinguished the two people (Acts 10:9-16, 28, 34). Peter could invite the Gentiles directly into the new program of the Church, without insisting upon dietary regulations, which separated the Jews from the Gentiles during the days of the Old Covenant. The ceremonial laws have been revoked since the distinctions between Jews and Gentiles in God's New Testament Church program have been taken away. The Jerusalem council decided that the Gentiles no longer had to become Jewish and follow Jewish laws to enter the New Covenant (Acts 15:19-29). They realized a new dispensational day had dawned that no longer demanded the distinctions between Jews and Gentiles as the Mosaic Law demanded. The Holy Spirit is at work today to break down the barriers between Jews and Gentiles and unite the two people as one people in Christ (Eph. 2:15).

Today God no longer gives object lessons and teaching tools to the Church, since His program of distinction between Jews and Gentiles has been dissolved, and since a new program has replaced the old one. Furthermore, we don't use animals and object lessons to guide us in our spiritual growth but the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18) and New Testament Scriptures which are given to the Church (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 3:16). We are no longer called upon to live in the shadows and teachings of the past (Col. 2:17; Heb. 10:1) since Christ fulfilled them (Heb. 10:26; 2 Cor. 3:14; Heb. 7:11-12; Matt. 27:51) and has brought us into a new dispensation, stewardship, or economy (Rom. 6:14), where His grace is featured in a new dynamic manner

among God's people, instead of the Mosaic Law of rules and regulations.

Let's think this through Biblically. If we were to obey all 613 Mosaic Laws we would be bound by rules that would restrict shellfish and eating pork (Lev. 11), picking up sticks or making a fire on Saturday (Ex. 35:3; Numb. 15:32-33), planting different seeds in our garden, or the wearing of clothing which are made from two different fabrics (Lev. 19:19). The point is this. We have been ceremonially freed from observing the distinct Jewish laws related to farming, animals, clothing, washing, worship, Sabbath days, diet, sacrificing animals, hair, oaths, vows, keeping castrated people from our church services in order to represent holy, clean, and undefiled worship, disposing of our waste in the fashion of the Law (Exodus 30:19-21; 35:3; Lev. 1-7; 5:2; 11; 19:19; 35:2-3; Numb. 6:18; Duet. 22:10-11; 23:1-4, 12-13; 21), and intricate laws regarding tithing (Matt. 23:23 – "ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin").

Today would-be preachers want people to vow money to their ministries and then threaten people if they don't pay their vows to them based upon the Mosaic regulations of the Law (Deut. 23:21; Ps. 76:11). This practice tries to place people back under the Law and becomes the trick of false teachers who are trying to make merchandise of the Gospel in the last days (2 Pet. 2:3). The New Testament does not teach about vowing things to the Lord but giving in a planned and sacrificial manner (1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 8:1-6; 12; 9:7-8). Nor does it teach that God's judgment comes upon those who do not give according to an exact vow or oath.

These laws no longer have any jurisdiction over our lives (Col. 2:16). They have been revoked and we are no longer bound to observe them today. The Mosaic laws with all of their dietary regulations, days, and distinctions between clean and unclean (Lev. 11:47) have been rescinded (Acts 10:9-16; Rom. 14:14; 1 Tim. 4:1-5) but the principle of holiness which they taught remains in tact (1 Pet. 1:15-16). Time does not change principles. God still wants us to represent His moral holiness in all of our actions and decisions in life. God still wants us to be faithful in our service and dedication to Him. God still wants us to remain separate, distinct, and holy from the pagan influences that surround us, without enforcing the exactness of the

ceremonial Mosaic regulations of the Law upon people, which typically taught the doctrine of separation and holiness. The ceremonial Law taught Bible separation in typical forms, lessons, and pictures. The ceremonial teachings of the Law were similar to a Sunday school teacher presenting truth to children in picture format. The pictures were designed to convey the truth that God wanted His people to live separate from sinners. God presented typically what He wanted His people to portray practically in their lives.

Today God wants us to live separate from our pagan neighbors in an outward way (2 Cor. 6:14-17) but not in a ceremonial or isolated way since we no longer live under the Mosaic regulations of the past. The truth is this. We should be able to work and live among pagan influences but not become like pagans. The old adage is still true. We are to live *in* the world but not become *of* the world. The same principle of separating from worldly influence is applied in the New Testament without all the baggage of the ceremonial regulations (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 15:33; 1 Pet. 4:4). We must live above the fallen world and display redemptive holiness to pagan people who live among us (1 Cor. 6:19-20; Col. 4:5; 1 Thess. 4:12). So even though the regulations for ceremonial laws have been removed, what these laws revealed remains relevant and instructive for believers today (Rom. 15:4). When studying the Old Testament Mosaic laws, we can see the pictures God was painting and the typical lessons He was teaching. This is why all Scripture is profitable for doctrine (2 Tim. 3:16).

The Old Government

The Bible also teaches we have been delivered from the observance and practice of the civil laws of Israel. There are those who want to resurrect the old Mosaic governmental laws, or civil laws that pertain to the nation of Israel, and incorporate these same laws in modern America. They are termed as *theonomists* since they want to follow the regulations of *God's Law* as it pertains to the old government of Israel. In other words, they suggest that the old government or civil Law that regulated Israel is to be strictly enforced today. However, one must understand that the civil Law was given only to Israel and enabled Israel to function independently, economically, and ethically as a unique religious nation that God chose to portray His standards

of holiness (Deut. 14:2). The New Testament does not teach that we should govern our nation or personal lives according to the civil laws of Israel since these were distinct laws only intended for national Israel (Lev. 27:31- “These are the commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses for the children of Israel” and Romans 9:4 – “Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth ... the giving of the law”).

God required personal tithes, specific procedures, and penalties for not meeting the civil demands of the Mosaic Law. One indication that the civil Law was intended just for Israel is indicated by the civil regulations regarding slavery (Ex. 21:1-11; Lev. 25:39-46; Deut. 15:12-18). These practices are not applicable to most nations today. The penalties under the civil Law were to be stricter for Israel because she was supposed to represent a holy nation, chosen by God, who was unique in all the earth (Ex. 19:6). In addition, the strict penalties enforced under the civil Law were designed to portray a spiritual picture of how a law relationship with God can only bring cursing and condemnation, since man is a lawbreaker (Gal. 3:10). Man deserves the penalty that the civil Law requires. In the context of the New Testament it becomes a curse or penalty of death, doom, and damnation to every sinner who has “become guilty before God” (Rom. 3:19).

The civil laws of the Old Testament should not necessarily be accepted as normative for modern states or contemporary nations to incorporate into their laws. There are several Biblical reasons why we can come to this conclusion. First, none of the nations existing today intrinsically comprise God’s special and peculiar people (Ex. 19:6). No nation today functions as a sole political entity for God. No nation has the unique privilege of a state and religion ordained by God. Second, the Church does not replace Israel in the plan of God (1 Cor. 10:32). Third, the Church is nowhere given a civil mandate to exercise political power over the state (Rom. 13:1-7). Fourth, these laws were only given to Israel (Rom. 9:4) and were not intended to become binding upon modern nations and peoples. Fifth, the spiritual picture that the penalties of the civil Law portrayed have been fulfilled in Christ paying the penalty for our sins (Gal. 3:13). For all these reasons there is no mandate for any nation, or the Church, to incorporate the civil laws as mandatory governing laws.

Of course, this does not mean that modern states will not prohibit some actions the Old Testament prohibited (Lev. 20:15). Nor does it imply that some principles and procedures will not be adopted (Deut. 17:6) or that some of the penalties will never be the same (Lev. 24:17; Rom. 13:4). However, none of these laws possess a binding authority over modern states. The truth is this. The moral principles found in the Law should be normative for all states in all places to embrace but the civil penalties for breaking them certainly are not to be applicable to all nations or for the Church.

For instance, the Law commanded that those who commit incest be put to death (Lev 18:6-18, 29). However, in 1 Corinthians 5 Paul did not demand death for the practice of incest. Instead, he commanded that the offender be put out of the church. Why? It's because Paul understood that the Church did not function as a political entity that had governmental rights to put people to death (Rom. 13). The moral evil of incest was the same but the penalty for it changed.

Let's reiterate a simple truth. The fact that we are no longer living "under the law" (Rom. 6:14-15) indicates that God has finished the Law Dispensation ("He taketh away the first" - Heb. 10:9). Being free from the Law, as argued in 2 Corinthians 3:11 and Galatians 3:25, would mean that we are also freed from the civil or governmental parts of the Mosaic Law. This is because the Law is seen as a single unit or chain that cannot be separated (James 2:10; Gal. 5:3). The Biblical truth of freedom from the civil Law has profound dispensational significance for our nation and personal lives today. For instance, the Bible teaches that neither states of Christians are bound to the civil penalties of the Mosaic Law (Lev. 20:10; Deut. 22:22; 28:15-68 Numb. 15:32-35) which governed Israel.

If we followed the civil laws of Israel then those who blaspheme God, homosexuals, adulterers, Sabbath day breakers, and children who harm or curse their parents should be publicly stoned and put to death (Ex. 21:15; 35:2-3; Lev. 20:9-10, 13; 24:11-16, 23). If we governed our land according to the year of Jubilee, which commanded that all debts be returned, the banks would be broke and the stock market would crash (Lev. 25:10-11).

We have also been released from the 23.3% tithing system that was practiced under the Law. The tithe was part of the outworking of the civil Law. First, the Old Testament reveals there was a priestly tithe of 10% which was given to support the priests, since they had no income (Numbers 18:21; Lev. 27:30–32). Please note that one fifth of the original cost was to be added on to the ten percent if a person sold his crops and exchanged crops for money (Lev. 27:13, 31). So it was 10 percent plus one fifth added on! The priestly tithe was kept in the storehouse at Jerusalem (Mal. 3:10; Neh. 10:38; 13:12). The storehouse, contrary to much popular preaching on this subject, is not the local church, since the church was not in existence at this time.

Second, there was also the annual festival tithe given to support the national feasts of Israel (Deut. 14:23-26). Many Old Testament scholars see this as an additional tithe, since this tithe was given in connection with the annual feasts in Jerusalem, and was used to feed the people while in Jerusalem (Deut. 14:23, 26 - “eat”). It was a second tithe to be used for the celebration of convocations of worship at the sanctuary, in addition to the first tithe mentioned, known as the Levitical tithe, which went to support the priests and Levites who served the people (Lev. 27:30–33 and Num. 18:21–32). This is another 10th of the remaining 90%. These tithes of grain and animals were not kept in the storehouse (Mal. 3:10) but were eaten together among the people in Jerusalem. They became like a national potluck dinner at the annual feasts. The sharing and fellowship around the table became a way for Israel to express her unique relationship with the Lord.

Third, there was also an additional welfare tithe or social security tax that was to be brought to Jerusalem (Deuteronomy 14:27-29; 26:12-13) and given to feed the priests, the widows, poor people, and Gentile proselytes to Judaism who were present at the Jewish festivals. This was the nation’s social security system. Verses 27-29 are probably connected together and refer to the priests and poor people being fed at the annual feast by 10% tithe which was given over a period of three years. In other words, an additional 10% figure was given every three years equaling another tithe or ten percent over a period of three years. This comes to about 3.3% annually on top of the already 20% that was given. When adding all the tithing figures together one can arrive at the Biblical conclusion that God’s

people in the Old Testament actually gave 23.3% of their total income per year. These tithes were designed to provide the needed funds to operate Israel's theocracy and government. The New Testament clearly revokes and overrules the tithing practice and centers upon proportionate and sacrificial giving (2 Cor. 8-9; 1 Cor. 16:1-2).

It goes without question that we no longer want to live under the many civil, financial, and marriage laws (Deut. 24:5; 25:5) that governed Israel nor would we, as a nation, want to place ourselves under the strict penalties, judicial judgments, and curses the Mosaic Law required and enforced for disobedience (Ex. 35:2-3; Lev. 27:15-26; Deut. 28:15-29 - "cursing," "vexation," "rebuke," "pestilence," "fever," "inflammation," "extreme burning," "sword," "blasting," "mildew," "botch of Egypt," "emerods," "scab," "itch whereof thou canst not be healed," "madness," "blindness," "astonishment of heart," "shalt not prosper in thy ways," "spoiled forevermore," "no man shall save thee"). Add to this list Ezekiel 18:4 and 20 ("The soul that sinneth, it shall die") and you have cursing and death that no man would want to ever face or live under! Do you want to live under "the curses of the covenant" (Deut. 29:21)? It's clear that these curses have been lifted today for modern nations and Church life. If they have not been lifted, then whole nations would be cursed by the plagues mentioned in Deuteronomy 28 and eventually become dysfunctional due to God's wrath.

These curses were also designed to teach a typical spiritual truth regarding the Law's condemnation of sinners (Rom. 4:15; 8:2) and how Christ took the curse that the Law inflicted on us upon Himself (Gal. 3:13). Those who live under the Law must face its curse and judgment. The Biblical truth of our freedom from the civil penalties of the Law has profound soteriological implications for our lives as well. The New Testament applies the temporal and physical judgments, or the curses found in the Mosaic Law, to the spiritual and eternal condemnation or curse that unbelievers face, who choose to live under the Law (Gal. 3:10).

The penalties of the Law were given to show or illustrate that a law relationship with God was a condemning relationship. The penal character of the Mosaic Law with its curses demonstrates that man must be judged for breaking the Law of God. This is what the New

Testament teaches. The counterpart to physical death under the Law (Ezekiel 18:4) is spiritual death or separation from God.

“I’ve tried in vain a thousand ways
My fear to quell, my hopes to raise;
But what I need, the Bible says,
Is ever, only Jesus.”

Being free from the Law in the New Testament sense means that believers, through Christ’s death, have been freed from the curse and charges of a broken Law (Col. 2:14) from a spiritual standpoint. The Bible teaches that Christ has set us free from the curse or condemnation of the Mosaic Law (Gal. 3:13). Christ paid the penalty of a broken Law so I could go free. Glory hallelujah Christ has set us free! Glory hallelujah a new life now I see!

The point is this. No longer living under the dispensation of the Law (Rom. 6:14; Gal. 3:19) would include living free from the strict enforcement of its civil laws and the penalties that were required for breaking these laws. Thus far we have seen that the Bible teaches we have been freed from the dispensational procedures, practices, and penalties that both the ceremonial and civil Law required (Col. 2:14-17).

Morally Debunked

We now turn to the believer’s freedom from the moral Law of God. This Biblical truth of being free from the moral Law brings out the believer’s *relational* freedom from the Law. Once again, since the Law is seen as a complete unit (James 2:10; Gal. 3:10; 5:3), the Bible teaches that New Testament believers have also been released from the moral aspects of the Law. This is especially developed by Paul in Romans chapters 6-8 where he alludes to the moral Law of God (Rom. 7:7) and his deliverance from this moral Law (Rom. 7:4). In the remainder of this study we will discover that believers in Christ no longer possess a *law relationship* but a new *grace relationship* with Christ and are now severed or delivered from even the moral Law of God as a means to salvation before God and sanctification within the Christian life. The Law sees all humanity as morally debunked or exposed as sinners, since we have repeatedly broken the moral laws

of God (Rom. 3:9-20). Therefore, the moral Law of God condemns us as guilty and worthy of condemnation (“the letter killeth” - 2 Cor. 3:6). For this reason, we are in need of being released from a condemning relationship with the moral Law (“delivered from the law” – Rom. 7:6) and given freedom from its terrible penalty.

Being free from the Mosaic Law means we are liberated from observing even the moral parts of God’s Law, as a means of salvation before God (Rom. 10:4 – “end of the law for righteousness), since this relationship with the moral Law of God would only condemn and consign us to an eternal hell (Gal. 3:10; 2 Cor. 3:6-7). From the standpoint of legalism (Acts 15:1, 24), we have been set free from even the moral demands of the Law, which demanded perfect obedience, or else judgment (Gal. 3:10). Christ has redeemed us from a condemning relationship we had with the moral Law of God in our unsaved state since he exclaims that we are “dead to the law” (Rom. 7:4) and “delivered from the law” (Rom. 7:6). Paul is referring to our old condemning relationship we had with the Law prior to our salvation.

Christ has rescued us from the sure judgment that we deserved for breaking God’s perfect moral code or Law (Rom. 3:19-20). Christ took the curse of judgment in our place. He was condemned on the cross for our sins (1 Cor. 15:3) and died the sinner’s death (“the just for the unjust” - 1 Pet. 3:18) in order to save us from the Law’s demands for spiritual death and judgment. The Bible declares: “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them” (Gal. 3:10). We are cursed to die the sinner’s death in hell, if we remain in a law relationship, which is based upon legalism instead of grace. The moral Law condemns us as sinners and places a curse of doom upon our lives.

Galatians 3:13

“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.”

Christ has rescued us from the curse that morally debunked sinners deserved, by becoming a curse for us, so we can express faith in His work on our behalf and be saved (John 3:16) When we trust in Christ

to be our personal Savior, and are delivered from this condemning law relationship, we can say, "Once for all Christ rescued me!"

"Not the labors of my hands
Can fulfill Thy law's demands;
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou alone."

A Bad Marriage

Romans 7:1-3

"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? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man."

Paul begins this chapter with the illustration of the law of marriage and remarriage and relates this to the believer's old relationship to the Law and new relationship to Christ. The law God ordained for marriage "has dominion" (vs. 1) over the individual until the marriage has been dissolved by death. In a similar way the Mosaic Law, even the moral Law of God, had dominion and control over our lives in our unsaved state. In a marriage relationship the woman is "bound by the law" (vs. 2 – the law of marriage as stated in Genesis 2:24) to remain tied to her earthly relationship unless the husband dies. If the husband dies, then she is "loosed" (vs. 2) or free to remarry and begin another relationship.

In a similar way we were once bound to a relationship with the Law, when we were unsaved, and found this law relationship to be one of unloving condemnation which contained no mercy and grace. It was like a bad marriage. However, when by faith we trusted Christ as our Savior, we were loosed from this terrible condemning and merciless relationship with the Law. If a husband dies in the marriage relationship the woman is "free from that law" (the law of marriage) and can be legally "married to another man." By analogy, the person

who believes in Jesus Christ has been freed or loosed from their old condemning and enslaving relationship to the Law and has been married to Jesus Christ beginning a new grace relationship with the Lord.

A New Marriage

Romans 7:4-5 declares:

“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. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.”

Paul is now applying what he has just previously taught by way of illustration. In summary, this section of Scripture teaches that the believer’s old relationship to the Law, a relationship of condemnation and servitude to sin, has been forever severed. The old relationship we had with the Law in our unsaved state (“when we were in the flesh” – Rom. 7:5) was one of sure condemnation and death as evidenced by Paul’s words in this section of Scripture (“fruit unto death” – Rom. 7:5; “being dead” – Rom. 7:6; “I died” – Rom. 7:9; “unto death” – Rom. 7:10; “slew me” – Rom. 7:11; “working death” – Rom. 7:13).

As a result of the believer’s spiritual union with Christ’s death they have been severed from their old condemning and enslaving relationship with the Law (“ye have become dead to the law by the body of Christ” – Rom. 7:4). The expression “dead to the law” is used in a relational sense. *The fact that the believer is dead to the Law and delivered or discharged from the Law presents the picture of release from a former relationship of slavery and condemnation.* The Law has no more jurisdiction over our lives. This is because we have died to the old relationship we had with the Law and the bond has been broken forever. *It’s not the Law that has died but the believer who has died.*

The believer’s death to the Law relationship occurred when they were linked to Christ’s bodily death upon the cross (Rom. 6:3) which severed their old condemning and enslaving relationship to the Law.

Christians have died with Christ and have been severed from their prior relationship to sin and the Law (Rom. 6:6, 14; 7:4). But it does not end in death! Praise the Lord! As a result of the believer's union with Christ's resurrection they now share a new dynamic and loving relationship with Christ ("married to him, even to him who is raised from the dead" - Rom. 7:4). Yes, our union with Christ is illustrated by way of a marriage to Christ. As a result of the believer's marriage or union with Christ in His resurrection they can now share His resurrection power and receive divine enablement to live victoriously (Rom. 6:4-5).

We have been given a new grace relationship with the risen Lord and have been brought into a state of newfound freedom from sin as we gladly embrace the commands of our new loving Master (1 Cor. 7:22 – "being free, is Christ's servant"). Paradoxically the believer is free to serve another Master! The believer has been delivered from the Law in every way and now has been given a new grace relationship with Jesus Christ which is a relationship of freedom from sin's power and mastery.

Paul clearly teaches that we have been "delivered from the law" (Rom. 7:6), which means we have been delivered from our old condemning and slave relationship to the Law, in our unsaved state, and have now entered a new relationship with Christ that is built upon love, grace, mercy, and power to live free from sin's mastery. Believers are now married to Jesus Christ! It is a life of love, liberty, and freedom from the power of sin. We no longer have any relationship with the Law "wherein we were held" (Rom. 7:6) meaning that in our unregenerate state we were restrained from living victoriously and were held captive by the Law's bondage, curse, and condemnation.

Since we no longer have a law relationship (the old marriage relationship) we are not obligated to serve the Law as a means to salvation or sanctification. This is because the Law can neither save us nor provide power to sanctify us. The Law provided nothing. Grace must supply everything! By grace we mean the new grace relationship that the believer possesses because of their union with Christ (Rom. 6:14). This grace relationship is termed "the newness of the spirit" (Rom. 7:6) which is our new marriage relationship with

Christ that is being manifested and revealed to us through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. The ministry of the Holy Spirit reveals Christ's life to us by presenting His love, grace, mercy, and power to our lives as we seek to serve God and live the Christian life. What a difference grace makes!

Paul's thought concerning the "newness of spirit" seems to be that the Spirit now guides the believer to live a life of freedom from sin's power by His internal power and also promotes a life of gratitude for the salvation he has received as a result of God's saving grace. The Spirit enables each believer to live and "serve" God out of a new sense of freedom, gratitude, and love. The newness of Spirit must be directly related in some way to our new marriage union with Christ (Rom. 7:4). *The Spirit is the internal love connection between Christ and the believer (John 16:14)*. Through the Spirit's ministry we can now serve our new Master out of love and a sense of liberty knowing that we have been freed from our past slavery to the Law and its condemnation.

The contrasting expression "oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:6) refers once again to the old relationship we had with the Law in our unsaved state, which was one of human independence from God, self-effort, bondage or enslavement to sin, and the fear and dread of condemnation. Heb. 10:28 reminds us that there is no mercy with a law relationship. "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." The oldness of the letter speaks of our past bondage to sin and our inability to live righteously. The newness of the Spirit speaks of our freedom to serve God through the internal sanctifying ministry of the Spirit of God (Gal. 5:18).

The working of grace in the present economy is the glorious truth that Spirit gives a new love, new attitude, and new internal power to serve the Lord and do what is right. This is because He impresses the *righteous character* of the Law upon our hearts in contrast to the tables of stone (1 Cor. 3:3; Rom. 8:4) and then empowers us to live according to God's righteous ways. Praise God we have exchanged "the oldness of the letter" (law relationship) for the "newness of the spirit" (grace relationship) which we now possess. The Holy Spirit reveals the peace, presence, and power of Christ's life to us so that we can serve God in a relationship that is

fueled by a new incentive, motive, and love for Christ instead of fear, dread, and bondage that was linked to our old law relationship.

How you serve God today depends upon what kind of relationship you have – a law relationship or a grace relationship. If you serve God out of a law relationship, then you will never be certain of your salvation. There will be a constant fear and dread of dying without God’s acceptance, approval, and salvation. However, if you serve God out of a grace relationship then you will experience assurance, peace, and certainty regarding your salvation and serve God out of a newfound love, joy, peace, and power that comes from a Spirit-taught relationship with Christ.

The point is this. Our old relationship to the Law (law relationship) has been severed and a new relationship to Christ (grace relationship) has been gained (Rom. 7:3-4), providing us with the inner motive, love, power, and resource we need (Rom. 8:4) to live a fruitful life of holiness unto God (“bring forth fruit unto God” – Rom. 7:4), without the threat of a broken Law and judgment hanging over our heads. Those who doubt their salvation and live in the constant fear of judgment are not experientially freed from a law relationship.

How wonderful it is to be free from the fear of judgment by severing our law relationship, which is motivated by fear and terror, and replace it with a grace relationship with Christ that is motivated by a new love, appreciation, and gratitude for His salvation. This is the “newness of the Spirit” that Paul talked about. It’s new life with Christ, a new loving and powerful relationship with Christ, as the Holy Spirit reveals the wonder-working power and presence of Christ’s life to us (Phil. 1:21).

“New life in Christ!
Abundant and free!
What glories shine,
What joys are mine,
What wondrous blessings I see!
My past with its sin,
The searching and strife,
Forever gone
There’s a bright new dawn!
For in Christ I have found new life!”

After the Spirit

Romans 8:1

“There is therefore now no condemnation (the promise) to them which are in Christ Jesus (the position), who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit (the practice).”

If we understand Paul as dealing with the subject of sanctification in Romans 8 (“who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit – vv. 1 and 4), we can conclude that Romans 8:1 means the believer in Christ is not “condemned” or sentenced as an unbeliever, who must serve sin in his unregenerate state, where he is bound to the chains and power of sin, and when he must “mind the things of the flesh” (Rom. 8:5). *Paul seems to be referencing our state of condemnation in sin’s power.* Yes, the believer in Christ has been freed from the condemnation of hell. Paul certainly would never deny this (Rom. 6:23; 8:34). But Paul is looking at condemnation from a different angle in this context. Each believer has also been freed from their condemned position and state of being a slave to sin. In essence, every child of God is no longer condemned to a life of slavery to sin (Rom. 1:24). They have been freed from the stigma and sentence of a slave to sin. *The condemnation in this context seems to be a condemnation or sentence of remaining bound to the shackles of sin.* This is why in two references Paul adds, “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (vv. 1, 4).

We are no longer condemned or sentenced as an unbeliever to live the old way of life, since we are in Christ, and since we have the Spirit’s abiding presence. In other words, the believer in Christ is no longer condemned or sentenced, as an unbeliever, to serve sin in his unregenerate state, since he has been placed in Christ and has been given a new dynamic way to live holy (Rom. 7:6 - “the newness of the spirit”). Therefore, “the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us (not by us) who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit” (vs. 4).

The context seems to favor sanctification and freedom from the adverse judicial sentence of remaining a slave lost in sin and to sin. The Law could not sanctify us (“what the law could not do” - Rom. 8:3) but Christ can sanctify us since he “condemned sin in the flesh” (8:3) or brought our release from sin’s powerful mastery through His

death (“our old man is crucified” - Rom. 6:6-7). Sanctification seems to be the main point of Paul in this text and context when talking about the “in Christ” and “after the Spirit” relationship (Rom. 8:1).

Let’s break Romans 8:1-4 down in the context of sanctification. The text says “There is therefore now no condemnation.” Contextually, the believer during his present lifetime is no longer judicially sentenced to a life of servitude to sin and mastery by the old disposition and way of life (“when we were in the flesh” - Rom. 7:5). Instead, the believer is now “dead to sin” (Rom. 6:1) and “freed from sin” (Rom. 6:7, 18). This is only offered “to them which are in Christ Jesus” which is referencing the place of our spiritual union with Christ, where we share in the victory of His death (“planted together in the likeness of his death” – Rom. 6:5; “dead with Christ” – Rom. 6:8) and where we share in the victory of His resurrection (“we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection” – Rom. 6:5).

The added expression “who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” refers to those believers who in their daily Christian walk apply the Spirit’s sanctifying ministry to their lives instead of walking after the power and control of the old disposition/nature and way of life. Paul now introduces something new when he says “For the law.” This is a reference to a new spiritual principle, standard to live by, or rule of life for Christians which is described in this way: “of the Spirit of life.” This means the Spirit introduces us to God’s regenerating life (2 Cor. 3:6) which supplies us with infinite power that is able to control the sin nature and produce newness of life (Rom. 6:4) in our daily practice. These blessings are only found “in Christ Jesus.” This speaks of the place, position, and particular union the believer has with Christ’s own life, through the Spirit’s baptizing work (1 Cor. 2:13), which is a shared life with Christ that liberates us from sin’s power and control (Rom. 6:1-10) on a daily basis.

This deliverance is brought out by the next words “hath made me free.” These setting free is in past tense and occurs as the time of regeneration (Rom. 6:7 - “he that is dead is free”). In a moment’s time we are set free from the old sinful disposition through Christ’s death (Rom. 6:6). However, like gravity, this disposition is still at work as a force and wants to control and dominate our lives as believers (Rom. 7:18). The added description “from the law” is referring to another

spiritual rule or standard of life that once dominated and controlled us. This is a reference to the old sinful disposition (Rom. 7:23) that we have been freed from through Christ's death. This relationship with the old nature was one "of sin and death." It was "of sin" because our old master or sinful disposition controlled our lives and it was related to "death" since in our unsaved state there was no deliverance from the final judicial penalty or outcome ("the wages of sin is death" - Rom. 6:23). When we were unsaved we were not only condemned to a life of slavery to sin (Rom. 8:1) but ultimately condemned to be separated from God forever in hell (Rom. 6:23).

"For what the law" (now the Mosaic Law) "could not do" (free the believer from the controlling power of sin and produce sanctification or holiness), "in that it was weak through the flesh" (man's inability through legalistic self-efforts to use the Law for sanctification – Rom. 7:14-15), "God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh" (there was no sin in Christ), "and for sin" (as an offering or sacrifice for sin to deliver us from sin's power and slavery – Rom. 6:6), "condemned sin in the flesh." This again speaks of Calvary's execution of sin and victory over sin (Rom. 6:6). The Mosaic Law could bring the sentence of judgment upon sinners, but it could not enter a person and execute actual judgment upon sin, in the sense of nullifying its power over the lives of people. However, Jesus "bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness ..." (1 Pet. 2:24).

The text concludes by saying "That the righteousness of the law" (righteous character of God's moral Law – not the entire Law) "might be fulfilled in us" (not by us but "in us"). Grace emphasizes the inward and not the outward ("which worketh in you" - Phil. 2:13). The inward work of following God's moral laws lead us once again to the "newness of the Spirit" (Rom. 7:6) operating in our lives, which in an experiential and appropriating way nullifies, cancels out, and abolishes sin's power over our lives. This truth is brought out in the final additions "who walk" (moment-by-moment) "not after the flesh" (the old disposition and nature that still resides in all of us – Rom. 7:18), "but after the Spirit" reminding us again of the person, power, and provision of the Spirit which liberates us from sin's power (Rom. 7:6). The key to victory in the present dispensation is to avail

ourselves to the ever-present inward work (John 14:17) of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:22).

In short, even our old condemning and powerless relationship with the moral Law of God (Rom. 7:7) has been severed (Rom. 7:3 – “free from that law”), and a new spiritual relationship with Christ has emerged (“married to another” – Rom. 7:4), which releases the believing sinner from their relationship to the moral code or Law of God (“dead to the law” – Rom. 7:4; Gal. 2:19) that once condemned them for sinning, while at the same time enslaved them to sin (“the motions of sins, which were by the law” - Rom. 7:5). This means the Law stirred up the activities of sin (Rom. 3:20). It became a stimulus to sin (“the strength of sin is the law” – 1 Cor. 15:56) since the old nature naturally rebels against a righteous standard. As a result, this old condemning relationship with the Law also became an enslaving relationship to sin and one which could provide no deliverance. The only way to be rescued from our state of condemnation in sin’s power was to be placed in Christ and receive the Spirit’s transforming ministry which is referred to as the “in Christ” and “after the Spirit” relationship (Rom. 8:1).

Legalism

When we speak of legalism we are referring to the works of man and the way of human effort. Legalism is not a Biblical word. It is simply derived from the concept of the legal letter of the Law. When a person enforces the Law as a means of salvation or sanctification they are teaching legalism. The principle of legalism in any form results in failure, the failure to secure salvation, and the failure to succeed in holy living. It is totally inconsistent with God’s principle of grace.

William Kelly wrote:

“Some good men who in grievous error would impose the law as a rule of life for the Christian mean very well by it but the whole principle is false because the law, instead of being a rule of life, is necessarily a rule of death to one who has sin in his nature. Far from a delivering power, it can only condemn such; far from being a means of holiness, it is, in fact, the strength of sin (1 Cor. 15:56).”

Galatians 4:21 asks this question: “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law?” The Law is a stringent, harsh and condemning master that gives absolutely no help or assistance toward salvation, service, or sanctification. The many Reformed writers, teachers and speakers, who suggest that believers are to live under the Law and follow the Law for sanctification, or as a rule of life, need to once again hear the demands of the Law and understand that the Law is a slave master and not a loving Master to help us along in life. Grace is our friend and not the Law. Many Reformed teachers give a wrong message about New Testament Christianity. They do not teach about the believer’s total release and freedom from the entire Law as it is clearly revealed in New Testament revelation.

Believers who trust in Jesus Christ for salvation have been released from the totality of the Law and legalism (self effort) as a rule of life, motivational force, power, and sanctifying principle for daily living and conduct (Heb. 7:12). *No structure of true holiness can be erected on a legal basis of law.* Yes, we are free from the Law morally. Even our moral relationship to the Law has been severed. This was necessary since the prior relationship we had with the Law of God condemned us for sinning while at the same time enslaving us to sin. This is because our sin nature was constantly finding ways to break God’s moral code (Rom. 8:3).

Whenever a person sees a sign, “Wet Paint” their human nature tempts them to touch the paint and see if it’s still wet or dry! The point is this. The Law stirs up sin in our hearts and enslaves us to sin. How wonderful it is to be delivered from the jurisdiction of the Mosaic Law and be freed from our old relationship to the Law which was one of condemnation and servitude to sin. We have been totally freed from this relationship and no longer must fear God’s condemnation (Rom. 8:1; 33-34). Our grace relationship with Christ, expressed through the Spirit’s presence, guarantees us freedom from the Law’s curse or condemnation (Gal. 5:1) and liberty from sin’s power (Rom. 8:4).

The Final Verdict

Peter’s answer in Acts 15:10 explains why our relationship to the Law had to be severed. In answering those who wanted to bring Gentiles under the legalism and condemnation of the Law, Peter exclaims:

“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?”

Who wants a relationship with a partner that is likened to a yoke around the neck and a heavy burden? To say the least, this would be a very unhappy marriage! It would be a blight and not a blessing. This is what a law relationship is like. When a person places themselves under the Law, as a means of salvation, it becomes a heavy yoke that no individual wants to carry on his shoulders, simply because the Law condemns a person as a sinner and threatens his life with eternal judgment for breaking only one of the commands (James 2:10). Not a very good marriage!

The legalists were saying a Gentile had to become a Jew first through circumcision in order to be saved (Acts 15:1, 24). But Peter categorically condemns this teaching. The description of the Law as a heavy yoke was an appropriate one. Describing the legalism of the scribes and Pharisees, Jesus said in Matthew 23:4, “For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.” Law, when observed as a means of salvation, becomes a heavy yoke (Gal. 5:1). It was foolish of the legalists to expect Gentiles to shoulder a burden they themselves and their historical fathers found too heavy to bear (Exodus 19:8). This is because a law relationship is a condemning relationship to any person (Rom. 3:19). This is why Peter exclaims that both Gentiles and Jews are saved by grace and not by the Mosaic Law (Acts 15:11).

The Law's Purpose

The Mosaic Law was never intended to save any person. This is why our old relationship with the Mosaic Law had to end.

1 Timothy 1:9-10 says:

“Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured

persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine.”

The Law is designed to show people their sinfulness. The Law is intended for those who remain unconvinced of their sin. Thus the Law is not for one who has already recognized his sin and turned to Christ. The wonderful truth is this. The person who places their faith in Christ is no longer under the Law’s condemnation.

1 Timothy 1:8

“But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully.”

Those who are saved may use the Law to lead people to Christ. It can act as a condemning force that brings conviction to their conscience. This is an important secret in evangelism. We can use the Law to show people they are sinners that have broken God’s moral code.

Guy King has pointed out that there are three lessons which the law teaches: “We ought. We haven’t. We can’t. When the law has done its work in the life of a sinner, then that person is ready to cry out to God, “Lord, save me by Your grace.”

Those who teach that the Law is essential for salvation are not consistent. They say that if a Christian breaks the Law, then he need not be put to death. However, the penalty of a broken Law demands death (Ezek. 18:4; Gal. 3:10). The truth is this. The Law was made to convict and condemn the sinner – not save him (Rom. 3:20; Gal 2:16, 21; 3:11).

Acts 13:39

“And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”

A Deadly Letter

2 Corinthians 3:6

“Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”

In this verse Paul once again reminds us of the vast difference between the letter and the Spirit.

The life lived under the regime of the letter (Law) brings condemnation and death (Rom. 7:10-11) whereas the life lived under the government or ruling system of the Spirit brings spiritual life.

J. M. Davies wrote:

“This ministry of the letter that killeth is illustrated in the 3000 killed at Sinai, at the inauguration of the Old Covenant; and the ministry of the Spirit, the life-giving ministry, is illustrated in the 3000 saved on the day of Pentecost.”

This tells us that preachers must preach the message of the New Covenant, which is one of grace and freedom from the Law's condemnation (2 Cor. 3:17). It also reminds us that believers are to minister or serve in the context of the Spirit's New Covenant ministry instead of the oldness of the letter (Law). Any attempt to fulfill God's righteousness apart from divine enablement will bring the condemnation of the Law upon the minister. This is because the letter kills and the Spirit gives life (Rom. 8:2).

When the Law is used as a works/salvation approach to God it becomes an administration of death and doom to us (2 Cor. 3:6-7). The Bible says “the law worketh wrath” (Rom. 4:15) which is the expression of God's wrath against our lives. Paul views every unsaved person as a lawbreaker “under the law” (Rom. 3:19) who stands condemned before God as a sinner. The lost human race is said to be “kept under the law” (Gal. 3:23; 4:5; 5:12) which means they are placed under the curse and condemnation that the Law imposes upon their lives for breaking God's moral code (Heb. 10:28). In this Age of Grace, there is still a law of condemnation for those who will not come to Christ for freedom. This is because certain aspects of the Mosaic Law are still enforced even with the change of the dispensation from law to grace.

From the perspective of the lost human race, every person who has ever lived, except Christ (Heb. 7:26), has broken the Law of God, and is viewed as being under the Law's condemnation and judgment for violating God's holy standard (Rom. 3:19). The good news is that

Christ took the penalty or curse of the Law upon Himself (Gal. 3:13 – “being made a curse for us”) when He died upon the cross and freed us from its penalty (“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law” - Gal. 3:13; 4:4-5; Col. 2:13-14). The Law was intended to reveal sin in its true character as transgression and drive men to Christ (Gal. 3:24; 1 John 3:4). The Law was given to help people see they could never obtain righteousness by keeping it, since they did not have the power to obey it (Rom. 3:20; 7:7).

The Law was meant to show people that they were hopeless sinners, so they would cry out to God to save them by His mercy and grace (Titus 3:5). When a sinner places their trust in Christ as their Savior, instead of their own flawed human righteousness (Phil. 3:9; Rom. 10:2-3; Isa. 64:6; Matt. 5:20), they are immediately released from the penalty of the broken Law and receive the free gift of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which provides them with full acceptance in God’s presence (Rom. 3:21-22; 8:33-34; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21).

A Promise

Galatians 3:21-22 gives a wonderful promise:

“Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.”

God never gave the Law to save mankind. He gave a promise to save mankind – the promise of the sacrificial seed through the Abrahamic Covenant (Gal. 3:21). When a person today places their faith in Christ the promise is being fulfilled since people are being spiritually blessed through the Abrahamic Covenant promise of Christ (Gal. 3:29; Gen. 12:1-3). As a result, their condemning relationship with the Law also ends.

It’s important to realize that the Law was dispensationally “added” (Gal. 3:19) or introduced to reveal transgression to Israel (Gal. 3:24) and prove to Israel that she needed grace for salvation (Gal. 3:16-19). The ministry of the Law was dispensational. The coming “seed

which is Christ” (Gal. 3:16) would cancel out the Dispensation of the Law. The Dispensation of the Law would continue to exist “till the seed should come” (Gal. 3:19) which is a reference to the advent of Christ’s death, resurrection, and ascension. There would be a dispensational stopping point to the Law dispensation which was designed to point Israel to her need for Christ and prepare Israel for her Savior.

The Law Dispensation existed before the advent of Christ was ushered in (“before faith came we were kept under the law” – Gal. 3:23). The new era revolving around Christ’s death would be a time when Jews could place their faith directly in the finished work of Christ (“unto the faith which should afterward be revealed”- Gal. 3:23). The point is this. There was an ending to the “schoolmaster” (Gal. 3:24) era when Christ actually came and fulfilled the Abrahamic Covenant promise with His death, resurrection, and offer of salvation to the Jews. It would be a new era when Jews could place their faith directly in Christ and His finished work.

Galatians 3:25

“But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

This verse is teaching a dispensational ending to the time of the Law. The Law served its purpose to prepare Israel to express faith in Christ when He arrived on the world scene. Its strict discipline for sin and the revelation of Israel’s sinfulness (Rom. 3:24 – “schoolmaster”) prepared the Jews to receive the free grace that Christ offered in His promised arrival.

The Law was then given as a temporary unit to reveal sin to Jews (Gal. 3:23 - “we” and Gal. 3:24 – “our” and “we”) until the coming of Christ, who would grant salvation to lost mankind as promised in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:3). The change in pronouns to “ye” and “you” (vv. 26-29) indicate how the Church today (both Jews and Gentiles) no longer must live under the Law. The reason is stated: “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26). In other words, the period of the Law that prepared Israel to receive Christ is over. Christ has already come and no more preparation is necessary. All that Jews and Gentiles must do today is place their faith in the finished work of Christ and become part of the program of

the Church which is the new work of God in the present dispensation (1 Cor. 12:13). *The preparatory time of the Law and purpose of the Law for Israel has ended.* Now the marvel of God's grace is manifested in the Grace Dispensation with the death of Christ and His new outreach to the Church.

Just as the Law had a point of origin on Mount Sinai, so also it had a point of termination - Mount Calvary. Paul clarified that the Law was only a temporary measure designed to function until Christ came to save His people from their transgressions which had for centuries been revealed by the Law. The function of the Law was to prepare the Jewish people to place their faith in Christ, the promised One of the Abrahamic Covenant, when He arrived on the scene. It was not given to provide a way for the Jews to be saved. The entire Law dispensation showed Israel why she needed the promise of Christ's coming. Therefore, any person who seeks to place themselves under the Law, as a means to salvation, will find themselves condemned and cursed by the Law, since the Law was never intended to save.

Israel and all humanity discover that a law relationship with God sends a person to hell (Ex. 20:19; 2 Cor. 3:7, 9; Gal. 3:13), strikes fear in hearts (Ex. 19:16-18; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 5:1), and separates a person from God's presence (Ex. 19:21-23; Rom. 3:19-20).

A Powerless Relationship

Living free from the law, even the moral Law of God, also means that believers have been freed from using the Law, which was written on stones, as a means to sanctification. This is because there is no power in a Law relationship. The New Testament teaches that only a grace relationship can produce sanctification and victory in the Christian life. The truth is this. We are no longer commanded to follow the moral laws of God, as they are independently revealed on tables of stone, since laws written on external stone could not promise delivering power over sin (Rom. 8:1-3). God chose in the past to reveal and administer His moral absolutes on tables of stones. However, this way is no longer to be followed. Today we are called upon to allow the Holy Spirit, who is seen as a new ministry and unique expression of God's grace (Gal. 5:18), to fulfill the moral dictates of the Law within us.

Romans 8:4

“That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”

The righteous or moral character of the Law is fulfilled “in us” (not by us) today as we avail ourselves to the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit. This means we do not need an outward code of laws placed on stone to provide us with victory. Instead of an outward code we have God’s inward code which is the work of the Holy Spirit leading and empowering us to live victoriously. We will have more to say about this when we study about living under grace. For now, we will ask one question. Is the Law to be our moral teacher and guide today? No, No! It is not the Law which is said to teach us to live morally, but the grace of God.

Both the illustration of grace as seen in Christ’s death (Titus 2:11-12) and the inward power of grace at work in our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which is the New Testament expression of God’s grace (Gal. 5:18), is given to believers today as the only means of sanctification or holiness. There is to be no reliance upon the Law to assist in holy living. The Law, in and of itself, provides no motive, incentive, or power to live a life that is pleasing to God. The Law only reveals sin (Rom. 3:20) without giving the remedy for sin. It takes the grace of God to provide the believer with incentive and power to live victoriously.

Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit (not the Law) would guide us in truth (John 16:13). Nowhere in the New Testament is the Law said to be the moral teacher and guide for the believer. God has a better guide, the grace of God. The moral laws of God are now written, taught, and impressed upon our hearts by the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:3) and put into practice by the inner power of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18; Gal. 5:18).

In short, we are freed from the moral Law of God *relationally*, as a condemning force that was against our lives (Gal. 3:13), and also *dispensationally* (2 Cor. 3:11), as a system of rules written upon tables of stone, which in and of themselves could never produce change or transformation in our lives. Dispensationally we now have the privilege of following the moral laws of God as they are taught or

impressed upon our hearts by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 36:27) and as we are empowered by the Spirit (Rom. 8:4).

In summary, the New Testament teaches we are no longer bound to serve any part of the Mosaic Law (ceremonial, civil, and moral), as a means of salvation or sanctification before God, since we have been freed from both the condemning and powerless relationship we had with the Law. In short, New Testament believers have been liberated or freed from the terrible condemning and powerless relationship they had with the Law in their unsaved state (Rom. 7:3-4; 8:2; 2 Cor. 3:6, 17; Gal. 5:1). This is explained as being delivered from the Law (Rom. 7:6), free from the Law (Rom. 8:2), and dead to the Law (Gal. 2:19). Our old relationship to the Law, even the moral Law of God, has been severed. Therefore, we are no longer obligated to use this Law as a path to salvation or provision for holy living.

Please don't misunderstand. I'm not saying it's okay to commit adultery, lie, steal, covet, and worship idols! Our liberation from the Law does not mean we fail to practice the unchanging moral laws of God. Grace teaches us to flee sin; not live in sin (Rom. 6:1-2, 14; Titus 2:11-12). Our liberation from the moral Law of God means we have been delivered from a powerless relationship with the Law, which could not assist us in our daily lives, and enable us to live according to God's righteous standards. Instead of possessing a powerless and fruitless relationship with the Law, even the moral Law of God, we have entered a new grace relationship, whereby the Holy Spirit supplies the power and assistance to live a life that is pleasing unto God.

From the perspective of the New Testament writings and Paul's dealings with legalists (Acts 15:1, 24; Gal. 1:7; 2:4), we have been freed from the Mosaic Law as a legalistic and mandatory administration that we must follow to produce salvation and sanctification (Rom. 8:1-4). This is true regarding even the moral Law of God. Neither the ceremonial, civil, or moral Law could provide freedom from hell and sin. The law principle that the legalists enforced upon the people was severely opposed by the grace principle that Paul taught (Rom. 3:28; Gal. 2:16; 6:15; Eph. 2:8-9). The legalists taught that the Law could save a person while Paul

taught the Law condemned a person (2 Cor. 3:6,7,9) and that the works of law that were placed before God as a means of salvation were nothing but “dung” (Phil. 3:7-9).

Under Law

Those who are legalists place themselves under law, as a means of salvation, and make the bold claims “all that the LORD hath spoken we will do” (Ex. 19:8) “And it will be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God” (Deut. 6:25). But Paul says that those who think the Law can save a person are “ignorant of God’s righteousness” and they attempt “to establish their own righteousness” (Rom. 10:3) before God. When a Christian places themselves “under the law” (Rom. 6:14; Gal. 4:21) principle for living they are no longer experiencing their freedom under grace (Rom. 6:14-15) which assures them of liberty from the Law’s penalty and sin’s power (Gal. 5:1, 18). *Living under the Law relationship without grace produces bondage to both sin’s penalty and power.*

When Paul speaks of “them who are under the law” (Rom. 3:19) he is pointing to those who are lost, condemned by the Law, and found “guilty before God” (Rom. 3:19). This is because the Law cannot save or sanctify a person (Rom. 8:1-4). It keeps men in a state of condemnation and servitude to sin. The strict law relationship provides no salvation and power to live for God. Without God’s saving and sanctifying grace no person can live a life that is pleasing to God. The wonderful truth is that grace produces liberty or freedom from sin’s condemnation and power for it provides everything we need to be saved and live victoriously over sin (Gal. 4:22-26). “So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free” (Gal. 4:31). If we live in relationship to the law principle for salvation, we are condemned by the Law and under its dreadful curse (Gal. 3:10).

The point is this. Neither salvation (Gal. 3:21-22) nor sanctification (Gal. 5:18) can be produced when living under the law relationship. It is impossible to use the Law as the means for either salvation or sanctification, since man is imperfect and cannot keep the Law by His own strength and power, in order to produce the desired results (Rom. 8:3; Gal. 3:21-22). Using the Law as a measuring stick for salvation condemns us (Gal. 3:10) and using the Law as a motive for

sanctification makes us carnal (Rom. 7:7-25). The external nature of the Law, in and of itself, could never change man (Rom. 8:3-4). There needs to be an internal force (2 Cor. 3:3) that provides ability and power and this internalized power comes through the presence of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:5, 9, 14-15).

The Law of Christ

In the present grace economy or dispensation we are called upon to follow “the law of Christ” (Gal. 6:2) and not the Law of Moses. The word “law” in Galatians 6:2 refers to a standard, principle, precept, or rule of life and highlights the message of love, which Jesus taught, while He was here on earth (John 13:34). Of course, this expression of love for God and others is spawned and produced by the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22 – “the fruit of the Spirit is love” and “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost”). This is the work of God’s grace and not the Law since the Bible states in Galatians 5:18 that when we are “led of the Spirit” we are “not under the law.” Grace then becomes the answer to how a person can truly love (Gal. 5:14 – “the law is fulfilled ... thou shalt love”) and live according to the moral and righteous standard of the Law (Rom. 8:4 – “righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us”). A legal relationship with the Law cannot produce love in the heart or provide any assistance to live a holy life that is honoring to God. Living a fruitful and holy life is solely dependent upon the Spirit’s assistance and work in our hearts.

The whole point is this. Since the believer lives under the law of Christ, which involves loving God supremely and loving his fellowman, Christian liberty does not involve license to live as one pleases. *The Christian’s loyal love toward God prevents both the attitude and actions of rebellion and carnality from overtaking his life.* It results in the child of God loving and serving God out of a newfound freedom. The law of Christ (loving God and others) prevents sinful license from occurring.

Instead of license there will be genuine love for God and others that will keep the believer from being bound to their old manner of living and lifestyle in the flesh. Love for God and others wins out over the flesh and serving the Lord out of love is the very core of New Testament Christianity (John 21:15-17; Rom. 7:6; Eph. 6:24; 1 Cor.

16:22). I love you Jesus! Christian liberty and liberated living from sin stems from a loving slave/Master relationship with Christ (Rom. 6:1-11; 20-22; 1 Cor. 7:22) and becomes the believer's loving response to God (Luke 10:27), which results in the believer's freedom to do what is right and pleasing to the Lord (Rom. 6:6; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Thess. 4:1).

Under grace we are not free to do as we please. Instead, we are under law toward Christ, which means that we will gladly follow the New Testament commands of Christ out of a heart of love expressed toward Him and others. *The law of Christ, which is love, exercises a restraint over the individual and takes the place of the legal restraint and penalty, which the Mosaic Law had imposed.* Being under law to Christ is a love relationship and love walk.

Free!

In summary, we have been freed from the Mosaic Law in every way (dispensationally, ceremonially, civilly, morally, relationally, judicially, legalistically) and are given the privilege to rest and rely upon the working of God's grace for both salvation (Eph. 2:8-9; Gal. 1:6) and sanctification (Rom. 6:14; Phil. 2:13). There can be no mistake about this matter. We have been freed from the 613 commands of the Mosaic Law as a way to life, rule of life, and regulatory principle to follow in life. Our lives are no longer governed by the law principle but the grace principle as outlined in the New Testament epistles. With the death of Jesus Christ, we are forever accepted in God's presence (Rom. 5:9) and with the entrance of the Holy Spirit into the world we are fully empowered (Rom. 7:6) from within to follow God's moral laws.

"Ye are not under the law, but under grace" (Rom. 6:14) and "ye are not under the law" (Gal. 5:18). The Scriptures are very clear on this point. We have been set free from the Mosaic Law even morally as a legalistic code that once condemned us to hell and which could not deliver us from sin's penalty and power.

Galatians 4:31

"So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

Galatians 5:1

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

2 Corinthians 3:17

“Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

No more condemnation! No more curse! No more consignment to a life of servitude to sin! No more bondage to legalism, or the way of human effort, as a means to produce salvation and sanctification before God. No more! The Law cannot condemn us for the price has been paid (Gal. 3:13). The Law cannot cure us so the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1:8). As a result of God’s grace, we have been freed from the Law relationally and judicially, as a moral system that condemned us and consigned us to hell, and which independently provided no way for salvation and sanctification before God. We are children of the free!

“Free from the law, O happy condition,
Jesus hath bled, and there is remission.
Cursed by the law and bruised by the fall,
Grace hath redeemed us once for all.”

Once for all, O sinner, receive it,
Once for all, O brother, believe it;
Cling to the Cross, the burden will fall,
Christ hath redeemed us once for all.”

Living Under Grace

Believers today are called upon to live under the new administration or dispensation of grace.

Romans 6:14-15

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

One again, our rule of life, or the way we live out our lives as believers, focuses on grace and not law. Grace is the basis for our

salvation and Christian living. Grace is the method or plan that God uses to change our lives. In the New Testament teaching, *grace becomes the method or way that God deals with the believer in relation to his salvation, service, and sanctification.* Grace is magnified in every way throughout the present order. In this section of our study we want to address how grace is highlighted in the New Testament in relationship to the message of the New Covenant.

Saving Grace

Living under grace signifies that a new and final expression of God's grace has been revealed through Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 10:19-20

“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh.”

The word “new” speaks of a fresh or recent sacrifice that is a marked difference from all the previous blood sacrifices of animals which “decayeth and waxeth old” (Heb. 8:13) in relationship to their practice. Christ's sacrifice was a type of sacrifice that never existed before. It's the fresh and final sacrifice in Jesus Christ that God has given to mankind to pave the way into His presence (“into the holiest”) and give man full and final acceptance in the throne room of God. The word “living” points to the resurrection of Christ. Christ not only died but rose from the dead (something no animal sacrifice accomplished). Today as our risen High Priest He is our “living” way into God's presence for He “ever liveth to make intercession” for us (Heb. 7:25). Christ's risen life assures us that He is representing the value of His sacrifice before the throne of God on our behalf (Rom. 4:25). The Lamb of Glory is resurrected and this gives reassurance of our acceptance before God (“It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again” - Rom. 8:34).

Once again we see that the ministry of the Law was dispensational. It served its purpose to present Christ and salvation through His blood in patterns or picture format (Heb. 9:9; 10:23-24). However, the Law with the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins (Heb. 10:4). Therefore, something better was needed (Heb. 8:6; 12:24). As

a result, the Law dispensation was replaced by a new manifestation of grace found in Jesus Christ Himself and the shedding of His blood upon the cross of Calvary (Col. 1:20).

“No blood, no altar now,
The sacrifice is o’er!
No flame, no smoke ascends on high,
The lamb is slain no more.
But richer blood has flowed
From nobler veins
To purge the soul from guilt
And cleanse the reddest stains.”

Christ’s death upon the cross becomes the “new and living way” (Heb. 10:20) or the fresh and final sacrifice that can actually remove a person’s sin forever (Heb. 9:25-26) and give them a justified position in God’s sight (Heb. 10:14; Rom. 5:9). Precious Lamb of glory! Love’s most wondrous story!

1 Corinthians 11:25

“After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.”

The “new testament” or covenant refers to the shedding of Christ’s blood and the promise of forgiveness of sins in God’s sight (Heb. 10:17) through God’s final Lamb (Jesus Christ) that was offered upon the cross (John 1:29). The New Covenant in relationship to salvation promises its recipients the blessings of eternal forgiveness (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; 1 John 1:7) and justification before God (Rom. 8:33-39). The sacrificial death of Christ upon the cross and the shedding of His blood become the believer’s entrance and acceptance into the presence or throne room of God (Heb. 1:2; 4:16; 7:25; 8:1; 10:14). Because Christ shed His blood on the cross and became our High Priest we can now enter into God’s presence by the “new and living way” (Heb. 10:20). The New Covenant emphasizes the significance of a new sacrifice which replaces the old sacrifices under the Law of Moses. It is new, it is recent, it is real, and it saving to the uttermost (Heb. 7:25).

“Hear the story from God’s Word
That kings and priests and prophets heard;
There would be a sacrifice
And blood would flow to pay sin’s price.
Precious Lamb of glory
Love’s most wondrous story!”

Grace for Grace

John 1:16-17 explains the newness of Christ’s sacrifice:

“And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” This is pivotal dispensation passage. These verses (vv. 16-17) elaborate further on what was mentioned in verse 14 concerning Jesus Christ, who was the outward expression of grace and truth, during His first entrance into the world. The expression “and grace for grace” (vs. 16b) explains the fullness that was just addressed (“and of his fullness have all we received” – 16a) and speaks of God’s new saving plan! In other words, in the present order we have received Christ’s completed salvation and this is explained as “grace for grace.” In John 1:16-17, John hinted that a whole new order had come in, replacing the Mosaic system.

The expression “grace for grace” (John 1:16) seems to be contrasting two different expressions of grace – the pictorial form under the Law and the pleroma form (“fullness”) with Christ’s entrance into the world. The new form of grace replaces or exchanges the temporary and typical form of grace found under the Mosaic Law through animal sacrifices. The Greek preposition “for” (anti) can mean “instead of” as it often does elsewhere. According to this interpretation John means that God’s grace through Jesus Christ (the “fullness” or pleroma – John 1:16) replaces the temporary and outdated form of grace. Verse 17 seems to continue and further explain this thought and support this interpretation. John is referring to a new replacement of a previous and antiquated form of grace that God presented through Moses when giving the Law (“the law was given by Moses” – vs. 17).

If you have a computer, you know that over time it becomes antiquated or insufficient to meet the new demands of faster

programs which require more ram and motor power. This was also true regarding the older form or expression of grace that was presented by Moses through animal sacrifice. This older expression of grace needed to find its ultimate fulfillment in the new form of grace found in Jesus Christ. The sacrifice of animals became antiquated. The reality of who they pointed to needed to come into the world (John 1:29). For this reason Christ's sacrifice which brought complete and final salvation to people (John 1:16; Rom. 3:25-26) was the new form of grace that replaced the old form.

The conjunction "For" (vs. 17) looks back to verse 16 and is explaining the reason why the grace of Jesus Christ replaces the grace found under the Mosaic Law. The grace under the sacrificial system of the Law was replaced for this reason: "For the law was given by Moses (a preliminary, temporary, and typical expression of grace and truth), but grace and truth (the literal fulfillment and final expression of grace and truth) came by Jesus Christ" who was "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). This is the soteriological emphasis in John's Gospel. Christ came into the world to express grace (John 3:16) and truth (John 14:6) to all mankind bringing in a whole new dispensational order with His death upon the cross (Matt. 27:51).

The Mosaic Law revealed the message of grace to some extent (Ex. 34:6). God gave the people a sacrificial system so they could have their sins covered by the blood of animals until Christ in His New Covenant would come and wash away their sins (Heb. 10:17). Each sacrifice was an expression of the grace of God. However, the Mosaic economy, with its old expression of grace, was only typical and preliminary in character and could not take away sins (Heb. 10:1-4). It was pointing to the coming sacrifice of Christ but was not the truest form and final expression of grace. Christ the Word (John 1:1) is the fullness of what the Law could only foreshadow (Heb. 10:1). The types and shadows of the Law were fulfilled in human flesh when Jesus Christ became man (John 1:14). So John argues that the new expression of grace (the death of Jesus Christ – the shedding of Christ's blood) replaces the old typical expression of grace found in the sacrificial system of the Mosaic Law. It was "grace for grace" (vs. 16).

John 1:16 teaches that grace (the old typical form under the sacrificial system) is exchanged or replaced by the new form and the true reality! Out with the old and in with the new! The reason for this exchange is then explained in vs. 17. It's because the true reality and fulfillment of grace and truth had finally arrived in the person and work of Jesus Christ Himself ("grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" - John 1:17). The typical truths and teachings of the Mosaic Law and the expression of grace through animal sacrifices was not a complete package. But when Jesus came the completed package arrived and it was marked "grace and truth." It was the fullest and finest expression of grace and truth that was ever displayed before mankind.

The Law revealed pictorial truth and taught the message of God's grace through animal sacrifices, which were types and shadows of the true reality found in Christ. The Law revealed God's mind concerning grace and truth in a preparatory fashion through animal sacrifices until the "fullness" (John 1:16) or real and complete expression of God's grace and truth (John 1:17) arrived in the world through the death of Jesus Christ. What a wonderful joy to know that the grace of Jesus Christ and His full provision of salvation is ours today.

Hebrews 10:12

"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God."

Through the revelation of Jesus Christ grace and truth have come to their greatest realization. Jesus was the incarnate exegesis of God's existence (John 1:18). He died upon the cross and has brought to us the complete and fullest expression of grace that the world has ever witnessed (John 3:13-16). Christ and His sacrificial work on the cross is the fullest measure of divine grace and truth that the world has ever known. Grace and truth have finally arrived in the person of Jesus Christ. The reality came when Jesus was born in Bethlehem. The true package of grace and truth that was being presented in picture form finally became a living reality in the Logos of God who was Jesus Christ the Son of God (John 1:14).

Jesus as the Lamb replaces the Old Testament lambs (John 1:29). Jesus as the Lamb replaces the old typical form of grace under the

sacrificial system. Jesus Christ is the final Lamb and fullest expression of grace for He came to take away our sins forever and grant sinners justification in God's sight.

Hebrews 9:26

"For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself."

In John 1:16-17 we discover that the ministry of the Law was dispensational. It served its purpose to present Christ and salvation through His blood in picture form. However, this Law dispensation was replaced by a new manifestation of grace found in Jesus Christ Himself. The dispensation of the grace of God (Eph. 3:2) is the era when Christ came and fulfilled all the types and shadows.

Yes, the Bible teaches that grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. He did not come to judge the world but to save those who were unworthy, who could not save themselves, and who were His enemies (Rom. 5:6-10). This is grace - Heaven's Best for earth's worst. As a result of Christ's finished work we are given full acceptance in God's presence by the finished transaction of God's grace which is the glorious feature in the present dispensational outworking of God (Rom. 3:25-26; 8:33-39). This means we will never again be judged by the standard of a broken Law.

Romans 5:20

"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound."

Amen! Grace cancels out the Law that was "against us" (Col. 2:14) and gives us full and final acceptance in the throne room of God's presence forever (Heb. 4:16; 10:19-20; Eph. 1:3, 6; 2:6). The Law demands righteousness but grace gives to us righteousness (Rom. 5:17-18). How amazing!

"Amazing grace! how sweet the sound!
That saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

Not of Works

Ephesians 2:8-9

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”

Since Christ has died and paid the penalty of the broken Law for our sin (Gal. 3:13), Paul could conclude that every person who places faith in Christ is saved by God’s grace, as displayed by the finished work of Christ upon the cross. There is no mention of law (“not of works”) or human boasting (“lest any man should boast”) but only the magnification of God’s grace when it comes to a man’s salvation (Jonah 2:9). The way of salvation is “by grace” and the means of salvation is “through faith.” The freedom of salvation “is the gift of God.” With the free gift of salvation and justification before God through grace, without law (Rom. 3:20, 24, 28; Gal. 2:16; Tit. 3:7), one can rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ, understand that they are “complete in him” (Col. 2:10), and sing these words:

“Complete in Thee!
No work of mine
May take, dear Lord,
The place of Thine;
Thy blood hath pardoned bought for me,
And I am now complete in Thee.”

Sanctifying Grace

Living under grace means we are given the new privilege to experience sanctification through God’s new work of grace. In short, we can follow the moral laws of God and the New Testament commands in the context of the Church epistles (2 Thess. 2:15; 2 Tim. 3:14), as we allow a new internal work of grace to operate and function in our lives, which is our union with Christ (Rom. 6:1-15) and the Spirit’s presence and power which reveals Christ’s life to us (Gal. 5:18). According to Romans 6:1-15 living by grace is experiencing our union with Christ. According to Galatians 5:18 living by grace is experiencing the Spirit’s delivering and freeing power. Both work harmoniously together promoting a new work of grace in our hearts and lives.

The Spirit's Role

Galatians 5:18 says:

“But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.”

Liberation from sin is based on the enablement provided by the Holy Spirit, who frees people to love God fully, and helps them to remain unshackled from sin, a condition they could not achieve in their former unsaved state under law. “Ye are not under the law.” The Scriptures speak for themselves on this point. New Testament believers have been released from the strict demands and commands of the Law as an outworking of salvation and sanctification. *We do not live according the law principle but the grace principle.* Since the Law could not produce either salvation (Rom. 3:28) or sanctification (Rom. 8:1-4) it was necessary to release the believer from the Law and replace the Law with something new (“the newness of the spirit” – Rev. 7:6 and “newness of life” - Rom. 6:4). The New Covenant emphasizes the significance of new things (2 Cor. 5:17) in relationship to God’s work and manifestation of grace in the present order.

Think of it this way. If living by the Spirit’s indwelling and enabling power means that we are no longer living under the principle of law, as a means of sanctification or spiritual growth (Gal. 5:18), this must mean that the work of the Spirit in our lives today represents a new operative ministry of grace in the present economy (Eph. 3:2). In essence, the whole teaching, transforming, and filling ministry of the Spirit (Eph. 5:18) is a new ministry of grace that takes place in our hearts and lives today (Gal. 5:18), a ministry that replaces the administration of the Law, which could never by itself produce and provide the grace of sanctification.

Christ's Life

Romans 6:14

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

Paul once again verifies that New Testament believers do not live under the administration of the Mosaic Law which promoted specific

regulations and rules that governed the nation of Israel. “Ye are not under the law.” This truth is significant in relationship to God’s plan for holy or sanctified living. In this context we discover that it’s the new work of grace (our union with Christ) that grants victory to believers today (Rom. 6:1-15).

This new dynamic living and loving relationship with Christ (“married to another” – Rom. 7:4) motivates, empowers, teaches, and transforms our lives. The Christian life is not one of independence and rebellion. It is a new love relationship and empowering relationship with the person of Jesus Christ. We were delivered from the Law (Rom. 7:6) that we might now serve Christ (1 Cor. 7:22). This truth refutes the false accusation that Paul taught lawlessness or antinomianism. Under the new administration and outworking of grace we find ourselves being married and introduced to a living Person (Jesus Christ) who we are in love with. Why are we in love with Him? It’s because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). Jesus died for us and we love Him in return for saving our souls from hell and eternal judgment.

“But drops of grief can ne’er repay
The debt of love I owe;
Her Lord, I give myself away,
‘Tis all that I can do!”

Our life is to be a loving and growing relationship with Jesus Christ. It should revolve around a Person. Christianity is a *grace walk* or *grace relationship* with Jesus Christ. This is the new arrangement grace believers have today in the present economy. Jesus spoke about this glorious grace walk when He said in John 14:20, “At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.” This is the new union that believers would have with Christ. It would be a new loving and intimate relationship filled with dynamic power for personal living. The Holy Spirit (“Comforter”) would unveil the life of Christ to New Testament believers in a new internal and intimate way (1 John 3:24; 4:13). A loving union and relationship would be established between the Lord and His own children (“ye in me and I in you”).

“Loved with everlasting love,
Led by grace that love to know;

Spirit, breathing from above,
Thou hast taught me it is so!
Oh, this full and perfect peace!
Oh, this transport all divine!
In a love which cannot cease,
I am His, and He is mine.”

New Testament grace provides a new Master relationship with Jesus Christ whereby we serve Him as a loving, dedicated slave (Col. 4:1). We are married to a new Master and we love Him! When this grace relationship with Jesus Christ motivates the life of the believer, he will be faithful to the Lord and find great delight in following His commands. This grace relationship with Jesus Christ, made real through the dynamic of the Spirit, will keep a believer from a life of legalism – *conformity without love, or duty without delight*. We must learn to operate on a relationship basis in life and not a rule basis. The relationship we have is with Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:10 – “that I may know him”). We must walk with Him in communion and fellowship and learn to enjoy His presence and power for victory.

Living under grace does not mean that we are lawless! It means that our motivation and desire has changed. We now want to obey God’s commands and laws out of a heart of gratitude and love for Jesus Christ instead of obeying God’s commands out of fear of condemnation and adverse repercussions. Because of this new grace arrangement, our marriage and union with Christ (Eph. 5:25), obedience and holy living is no longer done out of some kind of *legal* contract before God, but out of a *love* relationship with the Lord.

Legalism says, “Do this or die” whereas God’s grace says, “Do this because you love Me.” *Grace provides a love relationship instead of legal relationship*. All of God’s commands under grace are motivated by the grace feature of the Spirit communicating the life of the risen Christ to us and the wonder of His love for us (Rom. 5:5). This feature of the grace of God, Christ living in us (Gal. 2:20), motivates us to live according to God’s commands, since we are a loving slave of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 7:22-23 says:

“For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.”

Romans 14:8 echoes the same truth:

“For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.”

P. T. Forsyth once said:

“The first duty of every soul is to find not its freedom but its Master.”

“I own no other Master!
My heart shall be Thy throne!
My life I give, henceforth for Thee,
O Christ, for Thee alone.”

Grace always teaches us to be obedient out of love and gratitude. Under grace all of God's commands become the way of freedom or liberty. Our relationship to Christ under grace is like a wife lovingly serving her husband (Rom. 7:4 – “married to another”). Because of this loving relationship, living under grace allows God's commands to become light instead of burdensome (1 John 5:3). Living under grace allows God's commands to become a delight instead of a sense of outward duty. Under grace I am motivated to serve my loving Master who gave His life for me and obey Him out of gratitude and love (Romans 7:6 – “newness of the spirit”).

The oldness of the letter brought bondage, fear, and condemnation since we were under its judgment. But the newness of the Spirit's internal work and ministry in our hearts creates obedience out of love for Christ. At the same time this grace relationship supplies us with the power necessary to accomplish God's commands and be freed from the power of sin through our union with Christ (Rom. 6:14-15). This is the grace walk of the present economy that God has provided for His children.

The Dynamic Duo

Later Paul explains that the transforming work of our union with Christ is a work of grace, which is ultimately experienced by the Holy Spirit, who makes the risen life and ministry of Jesus Christ come alive to each one of us (Rom. 7:6; 8:3-4). Romans 6:14 (the Christ life), along with Galatians 5:18 (the Spirit's life), informs us that grace is connected with the Spirit's permanent residency and work in our hearts and lives today, as He reveals the victorious power and life of Jesus Christ to us. Both Christ and the Holy Spirit work together, like a dynamic duo ("the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ" - Phil. 1:19), in order to provide us with victory. Allow me to repeat something said earlier. The Spirit is the internal love connection between Christ and the believer ("for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you" - John 16:14). This is God's new method or plan by which He is expressing grace today.

Carl B. Hoch Jr. said:

"In conclusion, for Paul life in the Spirit is almost synonymous with life in Christ. To have the one is to have the other. To live in the one is to live in the other. To please the one is to please the other. If Christianity is Christ, it is also the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the other Paraclete. He is the gift par excellence of the risen, ascended, Christ to his church."

The Holy Spirit working in our hearts today is a New Testament expression of grace that is showered upon our lives. The internal ministry of the Holy Spirit inspires and promotes godly living and sacrificial giving. The Spirit's work (not the law's work) is what should motivate our lives to be more like Christ. "But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law" (Gal. 5:18). Grace can do what the Law could never do (Rom. 8:3-4 - "what the law could not do"). The gracious work of the Holy Spirit upon our lives can sanctify us and transform our living into Christlikeness.

2 Corinthians 3:18

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

Oswald Chambers said:

“God's grace turns out men and women with a strong family likeness to Jesus Christ, not milksops.”

Living “under grace” means to experience our union with Christ and the dynamic influence of Christ’s resurrection power operating in our lives through the Spirit’s ministry and assistance (Rom. 6:11-14; 8:4; Phil. 1:19). It involves experiencing the internal working of the Holy Spirit in our lives as the Spirit seeks to communicate the resurrection life of Christ to our own life (Rom. 6:4; 8:2-3; Phil. 3:10), teach us about the gracious death of Jesus Christ on our behalf (Titus 2:11-12) and conform us to Jesus Christ through His sanctifying and freeing ministry (Gal. 5:15-26; 2 Cor. 3:18). Grace frees us from living under the enormous pressures of the world system (1 John 2:15-17) and conforming to the worldly standards of other people (Rom. 12:2) in order to fit in with the crowd.

Through the Spirit’s ministry the grace walk becomes the free walk. We are free not to sin and live by the dictates of the flesh. Christian liberty is actually the freedom to do what is right! Grace provides liberty so that we no longer must be controlled by sin and can now live in freedom from sin’s power as we lovingly yield to God (Rom. 6:13), who promises freedom from sin’s power (John 8:32 – “free indeed”) and from the tyranny of Satan’s clutches (Heb. 2:14-15; Col. 2:15; 1 John 3:8).

The Spirit’s internal ministry and work is the key feature of New Testament grace. This is why many have called the present dispensation the *age of the Spirit*. The Holy Spirit permanently indwells God’s people in the present dispensation (John 14:16; Rom. 8:9; Gal. 4:6) in order to bring believers into a new loving relationship with Jesus Christ and provide a newfound liberty from the curse, condemnation and sinful bondage that the Law brought upon their lives. This liberty occurs through the believer’s union with Christ in His death and resurrection life (Rom. 6:1-13).

The “newness of the Spirit” (Rom. 7:6) highlights this union with Christ and points to our freedom to serve God through the internal sanctifying ministry of the Spirit of God as He writes the righteous character of the Law upon our hearts (2 Cor. 3:3), reveals the

victorious life of Christ to our own daily living (Gal. 2:20), and impels and empowers us to serve God (Rom. 8:1-4) out of a love relationship with Christ (Rom. 7:4) and loving response to His work on our behalf (1 John 4:19).

The internal working of the Spirit creates an intimate bond of love between the believer and Christ (John 14:20). As a newly married woman loves her husband and sacrificially serves him, so the believer serves Christ out of love through the Spirit's ministry of revealing Christ to the believer (Rom. 7:1-6). Christianity involves the expression of love that one lover (the believer) has for another Lover (Christ). The believer is to possess a new loving relationship with Christ (James 4:8) in the present outworking of God's grace and serve the Lord from a heart that is filled and overflowing with gratitude and love for Him.

Because of the Spirit's new internal work of writing God's moral Law upon our heart and His work of bringing us into a new vital and intimate relationship with Christ (John 14:20), we can now serve God out of love instead of legalism, fear and dread! The Spirit internalizes God's moral code upon our hearts and at the same time reveals Christ's person, power and purity to our lives and leads us into a life of victory, godliness, Christlikeness and holiness (Ezekiel 37:26-27; 2 Cor. 3:18; Titus 2:11-12).

The lost individual is saved by grace (Eph. 2:8-9) through the Spirit's ministry upon the heart (John 16:7-11; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:2). The Holy Spirit saves us from the position of being condemned "under the law" (Rom. 3:19) by placing us "in Christ" (2 Cor. 5:17; Rom. 6:1-5) and then begins a sanctifying ministry "under grace" (Rom. 6:14) that results in "newness of life" (Rom. 6:4). The ministry of the Holy Spirit is at the center of all New Covenant work.

Batteries Included!

Dr Scofield aptly remarks:

"The rule of the believer's life is gracious, not legal."

Today we live "under grace" (Rom. 6:14) which speaks of the victorious delivering power of the Spirit controlled life (Eph. 5:18),

experienced through our union with Christ, or the indwelling life of the Son of God (“the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” - Rom. 8:2). This relationship has no legality in it. It is a loving relationship where we depend upon the Lord for power and victory.

Galatians 2:20 says:

“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”

Yet not!! It takes the life of the Son, being communicated to our own lives through the Holy Spirit, to grant us with daily power and victory. Christ liveth in me! O what a salvation this! It's our life with Christ that promises victory – not our reliance upon the Law. We look to Christ for victory and not the Law. The Law does not promote godly living or aid in sanctification. *Grace is the method or way that God deals with believers in relationship to their salvation, service, and sanctification.* Christians under the New Covenant have the dynamic of the Spirit available to them and this permits them to live, as God wants them to live. The Old Covenant or Law provided no inward power to live holy (“what the law could not do” – Rom. 8:3) but the New Covenant provides the consistent inward power (John 14:17 – “shall be in you”) of the Spirit's presence and divine enablement to live holy.

Carl Hoch said it best:

“The Old Covenant came with the sign *Batteries not included* whereas the New Covenant sign reads much differently – *Batteries Included!*”

Have you ever bought a particular item in the department store only to discover that when you got home the fine print on the box read, “Batteries Not Included?” The Old Covenant with the Mosaic Law came in a box that said, “Batteries Not Included.” It did not provide the necessary power to follow God's commands. However, the New Covenant comes wrapped in a package with instructions that read, “Batteries Included.”

In summary, to live “under grace” (Rom. 6:14-15; Gal. 5:18) means to be married to another person (Jesus Christ – Rom. 7:4) and rely upon

His indwelling presence to provide motive (Phil. 2:13a), power (Phil. 2:13b; Col. 1:29) and victory (Romans 6:11-22; Gal. 2:20; 2 Peter 1:2-4) as the ministry of the Spirit unleashes and reveals Christ's very own life and nature to us ("Spirit of life ... Christ Jesus – Rom. 8:2) with the result of experiencing Christlikeness in our lives from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18). Under the Old Covenant the glory fades away whereas under the New Covenant the glory does not fade away since Christlikeness is evidenced in our lives (2 Cor. 3:7-11).

The New Covenant

The internal presence and power of the Holy Spirit is the promise of the New Covenant that provides the believer with the promise of daily sanctification. The New Testament Church receives the blessing of the New Covenant (1 Cor. 11:25; 2 Cor. 3:6; Heb. 10:15-17) without replacing the future blessing that Israel will experience with this covenant.

Ezekiel 36:27

"And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

Hebrews 8:10

"I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."

The New Covenant with its internal work upon the heart is opposite of the external work of the Mosaic Covenant written upon stone. The emphasis of the New Covenant is to internalize God's moral code in the hearts of people through the new nature ("write them in their hearts" – Heb. 8:10) and then allow the Holy Spirit to empower us from within, causing us to become transformed in our daily walk and living by His internal work ("I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes" – Ezek. 36:27). The New Covenant came with the promise of inward power to live according to God's moral laws and commands.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is highlighted as the central figure in our relationship with Christ and the Christian walk, as God writes upon our hearts and minds His moral Law through the new nature ("I

will put my law in their hearts” - Jer. 31:33), and then gives us the power to live out these holy desires and ambitions through the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 36:26-27 – “I will put my spirit within you”). The New Covenant is a covenant stressing the role of the Holy Spirit in enabling Christians to fulfill the will of God in connection with the internalization of the “Torah” in the hearts of people (“that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us” - Rom. 8:4).

The New Covenant calls for new things to take place in the believer’s heart and life. Therefore, special attention must once again be given to the new way of living under the New Covenant which is termed as the “newness of the Spirit” (Rom. 7:6). This it is the pivotal truth that makes New Testament Christianity different than the old relationship of living by law and legalism. The new arrangement of the internal and abiding ministry of the Holy Spirit is the central figure in our relationship with Christ and the Christian walk.

Romans 7:6 states:

“But now we are delivered from the law (released from our old unregenerate relationship of bondage, condemnation to the law, and the law’s jurisdiction over our lives), that being dead (spiritually dead) wherein we were held (under the law’s bondage, curse, and condemnation), that we should serve in newness of spirit (a new way of living and service - the internal ministry of the Spirit inspiring a new motive, new love, new teaching, and new power to serve God and be liberated from sin’s power), and not in the oldness of the letter (the old relationship we had with the law which was one of human independence, self-effort, bondage, enslavement to sin, fear and dread).”

Paul had been talking about the misuse of the Law in this section of Scripture. Therefore, he is contrasting a way of service that is not based upon the ministry of the Spirit of God with a ministry based upon the Spirit of God. In Romans 7:6 Paul places the new against the old and the Spirit opposite of the letter. They are at opposite ends of the pole! *These are actually two contrasting spheres of living and two different principles designed to regulate a person’s way of life.* The contrast between the “letter” and the “Spirit” is a contrast between a ministry based upon works or human self-effort and a ministry dependent upon the Spirit of God for life and victory. A

ministry not related to the Holy Spirit always brings death, condemnation, and defeat. In essence, Paul is expressing the true liberty that believers have through the Agent of liberty, the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:17), who has delivered us from the Law's slavery and condemnation.

The "newness of the spirit" is contrasted to the "oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:6). The "oldness of letter" portrays the individual trying to live by a cold informal relationship to Law, attempting to find help and assistance through an outward inflexible code, and acting out of a legalistic sense of duty instead of love. Paul discovered, even as a Christian, that the "oldness of the letter" brings defeat and despair into the life (Rom. 7:11-25). Only as we live under the New Covenant, with its emphasis of "newness of Spirit," can we experience this new outpouring of God's grace in the present economy (Gal. 5:18) which enables us to walk and live victoriously. As we experience the Spirit's sanctifying ministry, through the inner work of the Spirit upon the heart, we will sever ourselves from worldly and fleshly sins (Rom. 8:1; Gal. 5:17).

The "newness of the spirit" refers to the Holy Spirit's ministry operating in our hearts, which stirs, motivates, and empowers us to serve God out of love, as we contemplate His love for us (Rom. 5:5). *The New Covenant stresses the role of the Holy Spirit in enabling and empowering Christians to fulfill the will of God out of a loving and willing heart.* We have a love relationship with Jesus Christ and the Spirit motivates us to serve Jesus out of love – not fear. The "oldness of the letter" (Rom. 7:4) refers to serving God out of human self-effort and a legalistic fear of condemnation, realizing that if we don't serve Him appropriately, we will be judged and condemned for all our actions. A great many folks serve God this way but it is not the grace motivated way. This is the Arminian way and path of insecurity.

The Spirit gives us a new love, new assurance, new attitude, new understanding, and new power to serve the Lord and do what is right. This is because He empowers us to follow the righteous character of the Law (Rom. 8:4). The Spirit writes the Law of God upon our hearts, which is the new internal nature (2 Cor. 3:3, "... written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart"). Paul alludes to the fact

that God's people were impressed or imprinted upon his heart in the same way the Holy Spirit imprints, or writes God's moral Law upon our hearts, by moving and leading us to follow the inclinations and drives of the new nature. It can be said that the Holy Spirit provides inner motivation by pouring out the love of God in our hearts (Rom. 5:5). But the Spirit also provides inner conviction and leading in accordance with the promptings of the new nature and then empowers us to have victory and serve God (Ezek. 36:26-27; Gal. 5:25; Acts 1:8).

The internal ministry and work of the Spirit in believer's lives during this present economy involves the Spirit stressing our allegiance to the new nature (Gal. 5:16-17) and then empowering us to live by His power (Rom. 7:6). The Spirit works from the inside out and is internal and flexible, unlike the Old Covenant, which was outward, impersonal, and inflexible. The person of the Holy Spirit acts as an *internal monitor* or *indwelling Guide* that provides us with the built-in conviction of God's holy Law in the "fleshly tables of the heart" (2 Cor. 3:3) so we can apply God's righteous and holy Law to every situation that we face (2 Cor. 3:3).

In other words, the New Covenant ministry promises the internal working and application of God's moral code to our hearts, through the new nature, allowing us to make wise choices in the ever-changing culture and circumstance that we must face, so holiness can be maintained by New Covenant believers. The internal flexibility of the Spirit's work allows the believer to apply God's holiness to their lives, as they make decisions concerning various actions and activities, which the inflexibility of the Law did not cover. In short, the Spirit's internal ministry upon the heart helps believers to apply God's moral code to their everyday lives.

The Spirit is the *internal Agent* who transforms from within, where the trouble lies (Matt. 15:19-20). Through the new nature and the Spirit's enabling ministry the believer's will is changed from "I won't" (John 5:40) to "I will" (Eph. 5:17). The Lord's will must become the believer's will. Grace operating in the heart leads a person to say with the apostle Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). This is because grace changes the heart and brings a person into a love relationship with the Lord.

Philippians 2:13 states:

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will (inward desire and motive from new nature) and to do (inward power from the Spirit) of his good pleasure (outward holy will of God).” This is possible since we have a new inner desire, will, and power to do what is right!

The will of the believer is transformed so that the believer moves progressively from self-centeredness to Christ-centeredness (“the same image from glory to glory” - 2 Cor. 3:18). The Spirit’s leading and conviction ministry, which works in connection with God’s internal code and nature, directs us into a life of Christlikeness and godliness. The Spirit writes the new nature upon our hearts, turns on the inner lights, and then takes on the responsibility to help us meet God’s inner demands or requirements that stem from the new nature.

In summary, the “newness of the Spirit” (Rom. 7:6) then becomes a new sphere of living and service in the believer’s life that is accomplished under the internal work and power of the Spirit, since the old outward code of Law provided no delivering power. New Testament believers do live “under grace” (Rom. 6:14), instead of Law (Gal. 5:18), which means that believers have been delivered from the old, legal, condemning, and powerless relationship they once had with the Law, in their unsaved state, and have now been given a new grace relationship which consists of an internal victorious delivering power to live for God through the Spirit controlled life (Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:25).

The “newness of the Spirit” speaks of the new life that the believer lives “in the Spirit” (Rom. 8:9). It is an *internal* work as opposed to the *external* work of the Law (Rom. 2:29 – “circumcision is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the letter”). The internal work stresses a life of inward power, fruit, victory, leading, teaching and transformation that starts on the inside and progresses to the outside.

The Christian who is experiencing the New Covenant ministry of the Spirit in his life has a new motive (love) for service and a new means (power) to serve the Lord. The New Covenant promises a new inward desire to do God’s will (the new nature) and then provides us with a new dynamic power to do it (the Holy Spirit). The Law says, “Do this

and live” but grace says, “You live, so do this.” The motive has changed. *Grace motivates the believer to serve and obey God out of love and gratitude and does not create the fear of condemnation before God.* Jesus looked ahead to this wonderful ministry when He said in John 7:38, “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.” Jesus is generally referring to many Old Testament passages that spoke about the ministry of the Spirit (Isa. 44:3; 55:1; 58:11; Ezek. 36:25-27; Joel 2:28-29) and *applying* them to the dispensational outworking of the Spirit’s ministry.

Jesus is saying that that the inauguration of the new dispensation and New Covenant would bring to every believer the experience of inner spiritual blessings through the dynamic New Covenant ministry of the Holy Spirit. These blessings would include His New Testament baptizing (1 Cor. 12:13), sealing (Eph. 4:30), indwelling (John 14:17), filling (Eph. 5:18), teaching (John 16:13), and empowering (Gal. 5:18, 25; Acts 1:8) ministries.

In essence, we have been judicially freed and delivered (2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:31; 5:1) from the legal, binding, condemning, and powerless relationship we had with the Law when we were unsaved (Rom. 7:2-3). The New Covenant has changed everything. It has brought us into a right relationship with God through grace (Eph. 2:8-9) and has empowered us to live effectively for God through grace (Gal. 5:18). Therefore, when Paul countered the legalists of the New Testament churches, he says we are no longer bound to observe even the moral Law of God, as a system to produce righteousness or salvation before God (Rom. 10:4-5), and sanctification in the Christian life (Rom. 6:14; Gal. 5:18). This is because the New Covenant promise regarding the complete forgiveness of sins (Heb. 10:17-18) and the present-day ministry of the Holy Spirit (Ezek. 36:27; 2 Cor. 3:18) provides everything we need for salvation and sanctification.

Holy Living and the Holy Bible

Living by the direction and dictates of the Holy Spirit is an important truth regarding the New Covenant ministry. However, it does not mean we live without restraint for this would result in bondage. *The Holy Spirit can only direct a person in the way of holy living.* Many

identify the New Covenant freedom of the Spirit as being able to listen to carnal music, watching lewd content in movies, and getting tattoos all over their body. Of course, this is not freedom but license and is a terrible distortion and misunderstanding of the Spirit's transforming work in the life of the believer (Eph. 5:18-19; 2 Cor. 3:18). Grace is not all about what we *can* do but also what we *cannot* do (Titus 2:11-12).

Although believers have been released from the Mosaic Law regulations as an outworking of many minuscule rules, which taught typical lessons about Christ and separation, they are still *obligated* to follow the unchanging moral and ethical laws of God (Rom. 8:4). The leading of the Holy Spirit is in the context and direction of holy living (Gal. 5:18, 25-26; Rom. 8:1, 13-14; 2 Cor. 3:3, 17-18; Phil. 1:19; Ezek. 36:27) and also giving divine guidance for daily living and decisions that relate to the will of God (Acts 8:29; 16:7; 21:4; Eph. 5:18; Rom. 8:14).

Actually, true Christian freedom is God's enablement to do His will. The New Covenant ministry and life in the Spirit involves a new directional leading that is fueled by the internal work of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit serves as the rule of life for the Christian, as God's new transforming work of grace (Gal. 5:18), causing the believer to walk by His power (Gal. 5:16, 25), fruit (Gal. 5:22-23), passion (Rom. 5:5), truth (1 John 5:6), and direction (Rom. 8:14). It's the Spirit's work in our hearts, apart from the Law, that is the hallmark of the New Covenant (Eph. 2:22).

This means we are free to choose our path of living (Rom. 14:5), apart from the Mosaic Law, a lifestyle that is based upon the Spirit's inward leading, which corresponds to the revelational dimension of the New Testament epistles that are written for the Church (John 16:13; Eph. 6:17). The Holy Spirit does not work in a vacuum. The Spirit leads us *objectively* through the Scriptures and *subjectively* by His internal promptings which are always based upon God's standard of truth.

The manual for Christian living which the believer adheres to is the New Testament document. It's this document that the new nature and Spirit gives witness to in our daily lives, so that we can possess the

“mind of Christ” (1 Cor. 2:9-12; 15-16). The truth of God’s “precious promises” (2 Pet. 1:4) found in His Word help us to experientially live according to the dictates of the “divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:3) and the Spirit’s inward ministry of “divine power” (2 Pet. 1:3) promised in the New Covenant. The Word of God, the nature of God, and the ministry of the Spirit of God work as a holy trinity guiding us on in our life of liberty and victory. As a result, the Spirit’s inner ministry works in conjunction with the Word of God so it can be said that we become sanctified through the truth (John 15:3; 17:17). The grace way is still the Bible way!

Martyn Lloyd-Jones said:

“Nothing is more dangerous than to put a wedge between the Word and the Spirit, to emphasize either one at the expense of the other. It is the Spirit and the Word, the Spirit upon the Word, and the Spirit in us as we read the Word.”

The similar results between the Spirit-filled life (Eph. 5:18-20) and the Word-filled life (Col. 3:16) would confirm the above conclusion that the ministry of the Holy Spirit should never be separated from the ministry of the Word of God.

So let’s state it in a simple fashion. Living under grace is not a matter of dos and donts, regulated by the strictness of the Mosaic Law, but a matter of wills and wons spawned by the internal working of the Spirit of God, which is regulated by God’s Word, as it is revealed in the New Testament epistles. The Bible teaches we have been freed from the Law’s legal jurisdiction over our lives in every way and have been given the new internal working of God’s Spirit to transform us.

The truth is this. In the present dispensation both the *message* about God’s grace (Christ’s death upon the cross – Titus 2:11-12; 2 Cor. 8:9) and the *method* of administering grace (union with Christ and the internal work of the Spirit – Rom. 6:14; Gal. 5:18) provides us with a new inward stimulus, motive, teaching, and power to live according to the righteous and moral character of the Law (Rom. 8:2-4). It’s true that we are not under the Law morally, but we are under grace morally (Rom. 6:14-15), and grace will always direct us into holy living, not sinful living (Rom. 6:1-2; Titus 2:11-12; Gal. 5:18-25).

If Christians are not living holy lives it's because they are not allowing themselves to be taught (Titus 2:10-12), empowered (Gal. 5:18), and delivered by grace (Rom. 6:1-15). When God's people fail to allow grace to teach their lives and rule their hearts they will no longer experience the supernatural grace way of living. They will begin to drift without a moral compass and pass through various stages of carnality (1 Cor. 3:1-3). Their lives can begin to move in an antinomian (no law) direction, which breeds forth lust and the attitude of doing those things which are right in one's own eyes (Judges 17:6). Positionally, no Christian is under law, but at the same time they may not be acting like they are living under grace!

Radical Grace

Contrary to the radical grace teaching of today, living under grace does not mean we dismiss all standards or rules in life. Establishing standards and rules will not stifle the working of New Covenant grace in our hearts and produce legalism, unless we rely on some code of conduct list as our sole measuring stick for holiness and source or inspiration for power. Seeking to maintain Bible holiness or separation (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 6:14-17; 1 John 2:15-17) will allow for certain standards to be put in place. However, Biblical separation does not mean we rely upon a simplistic list of standards to make us godly. It means we establish standards because we are seeking to be godly. The holiness and godliness comes as a result of grace teaching us (Titus 2:11-12), leading us (Gal. 5:18), and empowering us (Rom. 6:14) in to a new way of life. The standards are erected because of the role of the Spirit teaching us to follow the righteous character of the law (Rom. 8:4).

Under grace the Christian is controlled by the motives of love and gratitude instead of by legality and rules. However, this does not mean that the believer living under grace does not follow any rules or commands. The New Testament document contains many commands and rules to follow (Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 6:18; 10:14; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Pet. 2:11), and as one allows the Spirit to direct their lives in holiness, various boundaries and standards will be erected to maintain a holy stance and separation from the world (1 John 2:15-17). Let us remember one thing. *There is a vast difference between having rules and legalistically living by rules.*

Rules are only a means to an end. Rules, in and of themselves, should not become the sole driving force in the believer's life, or that which motivates him to live godly and do right. He should rely on the internal force, the permanent residency of the Holy Spirit, who has freed him from the old enslaving and condemning relationship with Law, and who implants within his heart a new dynamic for Christian service and living. Lastly, those commands and Scriptural principles written for the Church in the inspired New Testament Document are to be part of the grace-way of living, since the Holy Spirit guides us in truth (John 16:13) and sanctifies us by the truth (John 15:3).

There is no such thing as radical grace where there are no commands, rules, boundaries, and lines that are drawn. The radical grace teaching, which seeks to promote a lifestyle independent from God's authoritative Word, causes the believer to engage in lascivious practices (Jude vs. 4), and actually directs believers away from the true grace-way of living (Tutus 2:12-14).

Many want to celebrate the liberation that grace brings into their lives but forget about the purification that grace is to have upon their lives (2 Cor. 7:1). Grace places a constraint and control over our lives and teaches us to live godly and righteously in the present world (Titus 2:12). Grace reforms our lives (Rom. 6:1-14). Holiness is the outgrowth of grace. A believer can violate the principle of grace when they engage in ungodly living and lustful practices. Of course, many want grace truth today but they do not want separated Bible truth. This conclusion is contrary to the Spirit's inner leading, working, and transformation. The Spirit is called the Holy Spirit not only because He is holy in His eternal being and character, as the third person of the Godhead, but the Spirit is also called holy because He leads the child of God in all manner of holy living (Rom. 1:4; Eph. 4:30-32; 1 Pet. 1:22).

Today we are no longer living under the jurisdiction and leading of the Law. Instead, we have been freed from these Mosaic regulations dispensationally, relationally, legalistically, morally, civilly, and ceremonially. We are now to be led by the Spirit's New Covenant ministry upon our hearts and lives (Gal. 5:18, 25; Rom. 8:14) as it reflects New Testament living which is outlined in the epistles (2 Thess. 2:15; 2 Tim. 3:14-16).

A Word of Warning

And now there is a word of caution.

Romans 6:15

“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.”

Just because God has released us from our law relationship and granted us a new grace relationship that is built upon freedom from the Law’s ceremonial, civil, and moral commands, does not mean we have the license to sin and live unto ourselves. This is because we are to “live unto the Lord” (Rom. 14:8). To abuse the message of liberating grace is unthinkable (Rom. 6:1 – “God forbid”). Our freedom or liberty from the Law, as a means of salvation and sanctification, does not mean we are free to indulge in fleshly lusts. Grace sanctifies us (Rom. 6:11-14; Titus 2:11-12); it does not make us sinful. Grace teaches us to live differently (Rom. 6:1, 14; Gal. 5:18-21; Titus 2:11-12). Let us never forget this.

Galatians 5:13 records:

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.”

1 Peter 2:16 adds this truth:

“As free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God.”

Both Paul and Peter remind New Testament believers to never use grace as a means to feed the flesh and excuse their sinful inclinations. This goes against the whole principle of sanctifying grace. Many today use grace as an excuse to be disobedient to God and live by the dictates of their old carnal nature and own selfish ways. *There is always the danger that one can abuse grace by turning it into lasciviousness (Jude vs. 14).* Therefore, Paul makes the abuse of grace an important part of his message when addressing the subject of our freedom or emancipation from the Law (Rom. 6:1-3).

When grace is misunderstood license is the result (Rom. 6:1-2; Gal. 5:13; 1 Pet. 2:16). When grace is understood liberty is the result (Titus 2:11-14; Rom. 6:14; 2 Cor. 3:3,18). When grace is ignored legalism is the result (Acts 15:1; Romans 7:7-25).

The point is this. Freedom from the Law does not mean antinomianism (no law). Freedom from the Law does not mean we are free to live without any commands or Scriptural directives. Total freedom is actually a new form of bondage. It becomes anarchy. Our freedom is based upon liberty from sin (Rom. 6:14; 8:2). Therefore, freedom that does not implement God's instructions and commands for holy New Testament living leads to bondage and sinful departure from God's will. The Spirit uses the New Covenant document to free us from sin's slavery and power ("the perfect law of liberty" – James 1:25).

Freedom actually means we can follow all the New Testament commands in the context of grace living by allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us in truth (John 16:13) and empower us to live according to God's holy standards (Gal. 5:25) so we can be transformed by the Spirit into Christlikeness "from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). None of the New Testament commands (1 Thess. 4:2; 1 John 5:2; 2 Cor. 6:14-17; 1 John 2:15-17) or Scriptural traditions (2 Thess. 2:15) promote the strict regulatory laws of the Mosaic code (Col. 2:16-17) and they allow freedom of choice in regards to amoral areas of living (Rom. 14:1-5) and giving (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 8:1-23; 9:7, 14-15).

Grace does not lead a person into rebellion (1 Sam. 15:23). One must remember that grace gives a person a new motive and tender heart ("a new heart" - Ezek. 36:26). The stony heart becomes a pliable heart of flesh, which when yielded to, keeps a person from following their carnal nature and appetites. Grace writes the moral code of God's law upon the heart (2 Cor. 3:3) and changes the attitude, emotions, and will of a man. Grace changes the heart ("A new heart also will I give to you" - Ezek. 36:26). This is something the Law could never do! Praise the Lord, He can make, a brand new heart!

Growing in Grace

2 Peter 3:18

“But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.”

God wants us to grow in grace. Grace does what psychology and human therapies cannot. Growing in grace is God’s plan for our lives. The implementation of this plan is seen in the words “the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” The theme of Peter’s epistle stresses the importance of the inner godlike nature, power, and life of Jesus Christ being communicated to our daily lives (2 Pet. 1:1-8). In short, it’s our experiential union with Christ that causes us to grow in Christian virtues. To grow in grace would mean to allow this particular method or plan of grace, which God has given us, to change and transform our lives on a daily basis.

The fruits of grace (2 Pet. 1:5-8), as evidenced through our never-ending union with Jesus Christ, allows God to do the work within us (Phil. 2:13) through our experiential union with His Son (“neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ” – 2 Pet. 1:8). *The outflow of our lives comes from the inflow of God’s grace operating in our hearts.* God’s grace is not something that happens in a moment of time and then disappears. It is the key part of our process of growing as Christians.

Grace seeks to establish a prominent role and dominant place in the lives of all believers (2 Cor. 9:14 – “the exceeding grace of God in you”). In fact, even when grace chastens believers, it does so out of love (Heb. 12:5-7). Like a doctor, grace says, “I may hurt you, but I won’t harm you.” Grace chastens and disciplines our lives in order to bring us back to the rivers of transforming grace once again, where we can grow and learn to experience practical day-to-day grace sanctification.

Roll Back the Curtain

Grace grants to every believer a new relationship that is based upon love for Christ (Rom. 7:4) instead of legality, and relationship instead of rules. Our love for the Lord, which is inspired by the Holy Spirit

(Rom. 5:5), will keep us from sinning against God's commands. Let us pause and give thanks to God. Let us remember where grace has brought us from and where we would be today, if it were not because of the operation of God's transforming grace upon our hearts and lives (2 Pet. 3:18).

“Roll back the curtain of memory now and then,
Show me where you brought me from
And where I could have been.
Remember I'm human, and humans forget
So remind me, remind me dear Lord.”

Let's remind ourselves what God has done for us. We have been liberated from the Law's legal condemnation and curse (Gal. 3:13). We have been relationally and judicially released from the ceremonial, civil, and moral Law, as a penal system that condemned us to hell, without providing the necessary salvation or sanctification to meet God's holy requirements or standards (Rom. 3:28; 7:6-25; 8:4). We have been liberated from the fear or dread of condemnation and the power of sin (Rom. 8:1) that came from a law relationship. God has delivered us from the bondage of legalism which provided no assurance of acceptance before God and no power to live according to God's righteous standard (Rom. 7:24 – “O wretched man that I am!”). We have been delivered from a law relationship and been given a new grace relationship with Christ (“married to another”) which the Holy Spirit reveals to our hearts and lives on a daily basis (Rom. 7:4-6). From this relationship stems a newfound love and intimate partnership with Christ. It's a relationship of acceptance, love, joy, privilege, and power.

We now live under grace (Rom. 6:14-15; Gal. 5:18). Living under grace means to experience our victorious union with Christ. It means we can now experience life, liberty, and love with Jesus Christ through the Spirit's ministry (“the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ” - Phil. 1:19). The Holy Spirit translates the life of Christ into Christian behavior. Furthermore, we can enjoy our new relationship with Christ without the ever present threat of the Law hanging over our heads, trying to condemn and judge us (Rom. 8:33-39). We are now free! We are free from the fear of judgment and the power of sin (Rom. 8:1). Free is the Christian watchword (Gal. 4:31; 5:1; Rom. 8:2).

Oswald Chambers wrote:

“The Spirit of God is always the spirit of liberty; the spirit that is not of God is the spirit of bondage, the spirit of oppression and depression. The Spirit of God convicts vividly and tensely, but He is always the Spirit of liberty. God who made the birds never made birdcages; it is men who make birdcages, and after a while we become cramped and can do nothing but chirp and stand on one leg. When we get out into God's great free life, we discover that that is the way God meant us to live "the glorious liberty of the children of God.”

Grace has restored us to favor with God (Rom. 3:24) and provided us with a new incentive and power to live for God (Rom. 7:4). We live under a new administration, whereby God releases us from the jurisdiction of the Law, and where He is revealing His moral absolutes and liberty to people through the new inward working and permanent residency of God's Spirit (John 14:17; Gal. 5:18; Eph. 2:22). This is God's New Covenant blueprint.

2 Corinthians 3:7-8 states it this way:

“But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?”

The giving of the Law and the past dispensation was glorious in that it revealed the holy character of God to His Old Testament people. But as we contemplate God's new order of administering grace to the lives of His people, through the Spirit's inward ministry and work upon their hearts, we see even a greater display of God's glorious power, wisdom, and working. The new order is more glorious in that it has a better covenant (Heb. 8:6), better promises (Heb. 8:6), a better sacrifice (Heb. 9:23; 10:10-12) and a better way to administer God's moral and unchanging absolutes and His righteous character (2 Cor. 3:7-8). The inward sanctifying ministry of the Spirit in the present administration or dispensational outworking of God (Gal. 5:18) is the hallmark of New Testament Christianity (2 Cor. 3:1-17).

It's this saving and sanctifying ministry that is recorded in the old hymn which says,

“Breathe On me, Breath of God,
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.”

Ephesians 2:22 reveals to us the wonder and amazement of the present economy of grace and the marvel of the Spirit’s new in-working ministry when saying: “In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”

Conclusion

Dispensationally the Law with all of its legal regulations, requirements, and curses ended with the sacrifice of Christ as is evidenced by the statements of Scripture - “the veil of the temple was rent in twain” (Matt. 27:51), “the end of that which is abolished” (2 Cor. 3:13; Eph. 2:15), “not under law” (Rom. 6:14-15; Gal. 5:18), “that which is done away” (2 Cor. 3:11), “till the seed should come” (Gal. 3:19), “no longer under a schoolmaster” (Gal. 3:25), “took it out of the way” and “Let no man judge you” (Col. 2:14-17), “being changed” (Heb. 7:12), “disannulling of the commandment going before” (Heb. 7:18-19), “taken away” (Heb. 10:9). Something has drastically changed. A whole new order has begun which has replaced the old Mosaic system. We are no longer living under the old administration of the Mosaic Law with all of its shadows, pictures, types, legal obligations, requirements, and curses.

Relationally, our condemnation under the Law and bondage to the Law’s requirements for perfection ends, when we place faith in Christ. Romans 10:4 concludes: “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.” We have been delivered from our law relationship that demanded perfection but gave no power or assistance to live according to God’s holy standard (“delivered from the law” - Rom. 7:4-6). We have been freed from a condemning and powerless relationship with the Law and have now been given a grace relationship with Christ based upon acceptance before God and power to live victoriously through the Spirit’s abiding presence (Rom. 8:1-4; John 7:37-39).

From salvation's and sanctification's perspective we have been released from every aspect of the Law – ceremonially, civilly, and morally. *We are not obligated to use the Law as a path to salvation or provision for holy living.* This is a wrong use of the Mosaic code. We are no longer relationally bound to a system that cannot produce salvation before God (Rom. 3:21-22; Phil. 3:9) or righteous living (Rom. 6:14; 8:3-4). We are now relationally bound to Christ (Rom. 14:8; 1 Cor. 7:22) whose life gives us the promise of liberty and hope from condemnation (Rom. 8:1-2) and sin's power (John 8:36).

Galatians 2:20-21 brings out the relational truth:

“For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

The Law demanded death for those who broke it but Christ paid that death penalty for all believing sinners and freed them from this old relationship to the Law (“dead to the law” – Gal. 2:19; Rom. 7:4), bringing them into a new dynamic relationship with Christ (Gal. 2:20). Basic to an understanding of these verses is the meaning of union with Christ. This is the New Testament ground for victory in the Christian life. Are you living on New Testament ground experiencing the joy and victory that your union with Christ gives?

Paul had already spoken about the new work of liberating grace which was connected to the believer's union with Christ (Rom. 6:1-15). This new work of grace, the believer's union and relationship with Christ, being “married to another” (Rom. 7:4), promises freedom from the power of sin (Rom. 7:2-4). In Galatians 2:20 Paul reemphasizes our union with Christ as a work of grace operating in our hearts and lives to free us from the power of sin.

The essence of grace is that God gives people what they have not earned (Rom. 4:4). Paul's point in Galatians 2:21 is this. When a person insists that their justification or sanctification comes by law/works it nullifies the grace of God. Paul reasons that if salvation and sanctification comes by the Law, then why would Christ die upon

the cross? When a person insists that the Law can save and sanctify them through legal obedience, then Christ died for nothing. If righteousness and right living can come by keeping the Law, the cross was the biggest mistake in the universe! Christ literally threw His life away for nothing!

Philippians 1:21

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

Paul emphasizes that Christianity is a love relationship and not a legal relationship with the Law.

“All that thrills my soul is Jesus,
He is more than life to me.
And the fairest of ten thousand
In my blessed Lord I see.”

We have been freed from our old condemning and enslaving relationship to the Law (Rom. 7:3-7) and have been given a new living, loving, and dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ, whereby we can live victoriously over sin by His indwelling presence and power as it is communicated to us through life in the Spirit (Rom. 8:2). *Grace is the method or way that God deals with the believer in relation to his life, service, and sanctification.* What a difference grace makes!

C.H. Mackintosh said:

“As to the believer’s rule of life, the apostle does not say, ‘To me to live is the law;’ but, ‘To me to live is Christ’ (Phil. 1:21). Christ is our rule, our model, our touchstone, our all.”

Our union with Christ becomes the believer’s rule of life which is presented as a new working of God’s grace in the present dispensation (Rom. 6:14). Our rule of life focuses on grace not law, relationship not rules, and love not legality. It’s the New Testament message (Titus 2:11-12) and method of administering grace (Rom. 6:14; Gal. 5:18), an inward work of grace in our hearts, that governs, motivates, and directs our lives in the way of holy living and transformation. The Law, on tables of stone, with all of its commands and demands, cannot produce sanctification in our lives (Rom. 7:7-25). It’s the life of Christ (not law), communicated to us through the

Holy Spirit, that enables us to live a righteous life. It's our relationship with Christ (not law) that grants us victory in our Christian lives (Rom. 8:3-4).

George Zeller commented:

"If the law is a 'MINISTRATION OF DEATH' (2 Cor. 3:6-9) then how can it be the believer's rule of life? If the law has been 'done away' (2 Cor. 3:11) and 'abolished' (2 Cor. 3:13; Eph. 2:15) and 'disannulled' (Heb. 7:18-19) and 'taken away' (Heb. 10:9 and compare Heb. 8:6-13), then how can a believer be under the law as a rule of life?"

The believer living under Law and the believer living under grace are diametrically opposed to each other. These two concepts are not necessarily a matter of two different doctrines. Rather, they deal with two different ways of living! A person who places themselves under the law regime (system of rules) for salvation and sanctification is doomed to fail every time (Rom. 3:19; 7:10-25). However, a person who lives out his life under the grace principle and practice, as outlined for New Testament living (Rom. 6:14; Gal. 5:18), will find victory and blessing. Where you live, under law, or under grace, is your choice. However, when you stop trying and trust in God's grace to save you, and then sanctify you in your Christian life, it's then that you can be free from the fear of judgment and liberated from the bondage of sin's power. Where are you living? Are you living free?

"I'm free from the fear of tomorrow
I'm free from the guilt of the past.
For I've traded all my shackles
For a glorious song.
I'm free, praise the Lord, free at last!"