

LAW AND GRACE

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In the controversy over Law and Grace, grace needs to be seen for what it is—and what it is not: grace is the unmerited favor from God the Father to us in sending His Son to die in our place that we might be freely justified, transformed into the Image of Messiah, overcome our sin life and have eternal life, but it's *not a license to sin*. Paul said,

“What shall we say then? *Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?*” (Rom. 6:1-2)

Most believers in Jesus Christ would agree that the Lord didn't die for us so that we could continue to sin against Him. The New Testament (as well as the Old) states that sin is the breaking of the Law of Moses. The Apostles Paul and John wrote,

“What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, ***I would not have known sin except through the Law.*** For I would not have known covetousness unless the Law had said, ‘You must not covet!’” (Romans 7:7)

“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: ***for sin is the transgression of the law.***” (1st John 3:4 KJV)

Both of those verses were written many years *after* the resurrection and speak of the Law as a guideline in the life of the believer for what is sin, and consequently, what is righteousness. In other words, when a believer keeps the 7th day Sabbath holy it is righteous in God's eyes that He does so. The Law was also the Standard of Holiness that determined if Yeshua sinned or not, and He said that this Standard would be with us until the Heavens and Earth were no more:

“For assuredly, I say to you, until the Heavens and Earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the Law until all is fulfilled.” (Mt. 5:18)

The Church teaches that Jesus ‘fulfilled’ the Law at the cross, and so, the Law gave way to Grace, but if one of the concepts of being *under grace* means that we don't want to sin against God, how do we know what sin is if the Law is not our guideline? Is it just ‘what's in our heart’? God warned us about our own hearts when He spoke through Jeremiah, saying,

“The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Who can know it?” (Jeremiah 17:9)

Subjectivity is not the answer. Yeshua *fulfilling* the Law doesn't mean that it's done away with, but that those things in the Law that spoke of a Savior Messiah *coming and redeeming Israel* were now *fulfilled* in Messiah Yeshua. Israel had been given her Redeemer, just as God had promised our Fathers (Gen. 3:15; 12:1-3; Dt. 18:15-18, etc.).¹

Grace is the power of God in us to resist sin and to walk with Him in holiness: “*For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under Law, but under grace.*” (Rom. 6:14)

Being ‘under Law’ meant that the Law condemned me because of my sins *and* sinful nature. Being ‘in Messiah Yeshua’ I am ‘under grace’ and now I am *free from the condemnation of the Law* because I am a

¹ For more on these two concepts (*fulfilled* and *not under the Law*) see: *Seven Ways Yeshua Fulfilled the Law* at <http://seedofabraham.net/Seven-Ways-Yeshua-Fulfilled-Law.pdf> and *No Longer under the Law? Two Important Phrases* at <http://seedofabraham.net/No-Longer-Under-the-Law.pdf>.

new creation in Christ. Being free from the condemnation of the Law doesn't mean that I can now sin in breaking God's holy Law (Rom. 7:12), which is how this paper began (that grace is not a license to sin) and what the Apostle Paul had to say about Law and Grace ('should we continue to sin that grace may abound?'). If I am found 'not guilty' in a courtroom of murder, am I thus free to murder after that? If I am found 'not guilty' of failing to keep the 7th day Sabbath holy, because Christ died for me, does that mean that I can disregard the 7th day Sabbath for the rest of my life?

I don't keep the Law to be saved (justified). I keep the Law because I am saved. I obey God's Law out of a *grateful* heart, not wanting to sin against Him. Knowing the Law gives me His Standard for my life in the areas that He speaks of. It's not legalism, but *obedience walking in love and God's grace*—just as all the Apostles walked after the resurrection (Acts 21:20-24). It's truly a matter of rightly dividing (correctly understanding and walking in) the Word of God (God's will for us) and not allowing the traditions of men to nullify God's Word:

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of Truth.” (2nd Tim. 2:15)

“Then the Scribes and Pharisees who were from Jerusalem came to Yeshua, saying, ‘Why do Your disciples transgress the Tradition of the Elders’ (Church!)?...He answered and said to them, ‘*Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition?!...Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition!...in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men!*’” (Mt. 15:1-9)

“*All Scripture* [which obviously includes the Old Testament] is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for *teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*, that the man of God may be complete, *fully equipped* for every good work.” (2nd Tim. 3:16-17)

Yeshua didn't free us from Satan's Kingdom to do our own thing, but to become like Him, and being like Him means keeping the laws of Moses that apply to us. This is what the Apostle John said:

“He who says he abides in Him *ought himself also to walk just as He walked.*” (1st John 2:6)

“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God *and keep His commandments*. For this is the love of God, *that we keep His commandments* and His commandments are not burdensome” (1st John 5:2-3).

“Therefore by the deeds of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight, *for by the Law is the knowledge of sin*...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, *being justified freely by His grace* through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:20, 23-24).

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are *those who keep the commandments of God* and the faith of Jesus” (Rev. 14:12).²

*We're not to bend the Word of God to our ways,
but we're to bend our ways to the Word of God.*

² Acts 15:20-21 is the CornerStone passage in the New Testament *after* the resurrection that authoritatively establishes the Law of Moses for every believer. For the 'why' and 'how' of this, read *The Lifting of the Veil: Acts 15:20-21* at <http://seedofabraham.net/The-Lifting-of-the-Veil.pdf>.

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