

WHAT SHALL WE DO?  
THE CHRISTIAN AND RULES:  
BEING A STUDY OF  
CHANGES AND CONTRASTS  
IN LAW  
BETWEEN THE DISPENSATION OF LAW  
AND  
THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE

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INTRODUCTION

Rules! Rules! Rules! What's a man to do? Each dispensation has an administrative responsibility or responsibilities and a way of life delegated to some or all of mankind living in that particular dispensation. The first rule given as a responsibility pertained to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "Thou shalt not eat from it." Does this apply to believers today in the Dispensation of Grace? Obviously it cannot. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil is long gone. Even if it was still standing, the rule was given to Adam, not to us. Just what is a man to do? With the giving of the law in Exodus 20 the rules were negative. The law didn't say "thou shalt" but "thou shalt not..." The law was made up of rules accompanied by consequences for failure to keep them. The emphasis of the law was "don't do." There was a cartoon picturing Moses at the giving of the law looking frustrated as he looked at the two tablets of stone upon which the Ten Commandments were written. The caption said, "What then shall we do?" The Ten Commandments didn't tell the Jews what to do at all. They told them what they were not to do. To do the law was to not do the things prescribed in the commandments. To do the law was to live by the law. To do the law was work. The law involved self effort. Those who lived under the law throughout the Old Testament had to keep the law by their

own efforts from the flesh. They had no divine enablement, since they were not indwelt by the Holy Spirit. They didn't keep the law for their initial salvation. They were saved by God's favor through faith. Their faith was evidenced in their present tense salvation by their keeping the law.

Under the law they worked to receive physical and material blessings from God. These blessings were temporal. If they kept the law, they would receive health, wealth and happiness in time. They would have many offspring and cattle. But if they did not keep the law, the law carried the death penalty for breaking seven and sometimes eight of the commandments. The law didn't save them spiritually but it did keep them alive physically as long as they kept it. Once they were spiritually saved, they were saved. As with King David, they could lose the joy of their salvation but could never lose their salvation, Psa. 51:12. Their future tense salvation was guaranteed. They will be raised and receive the land promises in the first covenant given to their father, Abraham, cf. Gen. 15:18-21. When their New Covenant is implemented their heart will be changed and they will receive their eternal life, cf. Jer. 31:31f; Dan. 12:2, 3. Yet in their present tense salvation they worked for the blessings from God in time. Their salvation was good, but different than ours. Our salvation is better as the book of Hebrews points out. They didn't receive eternal life at initial salvation by the indwelling of the Son of God. They will get eternal life when they are raised out from dead ones. They didn't receive a new nature by the indwelling of God the Father. They will get a new heart when their New Covenant is implemented. They also didn't receive divine enablement by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. At initial salvation we were indwelt by the Godhead. Hence, in our present tense salvation, we possess eternal life, a new nature, and divine enablement. Besides this, their blessings are earthly while ours are heavenly. We did nothing to receive any part of our salvation. It was accomplished by God, by grace and through faith. None of it was out from ourselves.

Human nature wants to do something for salvation in any tense. Listen to the Israelites just before the giving of the law in response to God's promise to care for them if they would keep the promises of His covenant to Abraham in mind. They said, "All that Jehovah hath said, we will **do**," Ex. 19:5; cf. Gen. 15. The result was the giving of the law. Now they had something to do- don't break the law! When John the Baptizer came on the scene, the people, the tax collectors and the soldiers came to him in individual groups and asked him "What should we **do** then?" Lk. 3:10, 12, 14. During the Lord's earthly ministry a man came to Him and asked, "What good thing shall I **do** in order that I shall have eternal life," Mt. 19:16. In Mark's gospel the man asks what he must **do** to inherit eternal life, Mk. 10:17, cf. Lk. 18:18. We find a similar but different occasion when a rich young ruler came to Jesus asking the same question while tempting Him, Lk. 10:25-39. The Lord's answer was this: "Since you are desiring to enter into life, keep the commandments," Mt. 19:17. He had to keep the Ten Commandments, not for initial salvation, which would be work, but for present tense salvation. The Lord then listed six of the Ten Commandments and summarized them with "you shall love your neighbor (another Jew) as yourself," Mt. 19:19, cf. Lev. 19:18. This was Old Testament love, not a part of the fruit of the Spirit. This was human love and it was selfish for the

Jew loved himself. This keeping of the law didn't save anyone spiritually, but it did keep one alive physically. As stated above the penalty for breaking seven and sometimes eight of the commandments was death. The law dealt only with present tense salvation for the Jews. For initial salvation they had to have faith, believing that Jehovah, their God, was there in their midst, first in the tabernacle and later in the temple. They were saved through faith.

Even following the Day of Pentecost we find the same question. Saul of Tarsus when he was confronted by the resurrected and ascended Jesus on the road to Damascus said "What shall I **do**, Lord," Acts 22:10.<sup>1</sup> Years later, the Philippian jailor specifically asked, "Sirs, what must I **do** to be saved?" Acts 16:30. It is natural for mankind to want to do. Men want to do something to earn past tense salvation. Men want to do something for present tense salvation and many believe that they must work like mad in present tense salvation to earn future tense salvation. But salvation in any tense is not dependent upon any man but is dependent upon God and the completed work of the Lord, Jesus Christ.

People attempt to keep the law for initial salvation. But righteousness doesn't come from keeping any rules for salvation. Christians also will attempt to keep either the Mosaic Law or some other law to please God in their Christian life. Some believe you must work hard here and now to guarantee future tense salvation. Any such attempts are dependent upon work, i.e. self-effort.

The purpose of this paper is to develop the concepts of law from the Scriptures and the grace believer's relationship to such legal principles. Many in Christendom believe they can please God by keeping the Ten Commandments. Many, even some Dispensationalists, believe the Church is to observe the Sermon on the Mount. Yet others think that they can please God simply by not doing certain things which either they establish for themselves or things established by social pressures. Some of these are legalistic Christians, who attempt to demonstrate to God how good they are by keeping rules. Others are Galatianite Christians, who attempt to show men how righteous they are as Christians by what they do or don't do. Then there are some, who are antinomian, cf. Jd. 4. They know they are under grace and resist any restrictions or requirements believing they can do anything they please, cf. Jd. 4. Their attitude is "anything goes". Any of these kinds of Christians are carnal. All they do in these conditions comes from the flesh. They either live by some rules or no rules, but whatever they do or don't do is from their own strength and unacceptable to God. Hence, they really cannot be well-pleasing to God. Finally there are some Christians who, when they are spiritual, are filled by means of the Holy Spirit so that He makes up for their deficiency of Christ likeness. They walk, or order their lives, by the Spirit. They are led by means of the Spirit and are learning to direct the fruit of the Spirit in their daily lives. Such Christians are well-pleasing to God and bring Him the glory He deserves. The Spirit filled believer has

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(We find the same context in 9:6 where there is a textual problem and we would leave it out).

ceased from his own self-effort and is dependent upon God the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit filled Christian directs the fruit of the Spirit, he is not living by any kind of a legal principle. “Against such,” says Paul by the Holy Spirit, “there is no law” (of any kind), Gal. 5:23. There is only one rule laid out for the believer and that is the New Commandment that you “love one another” as Christ loved His disciples, Jn. 13:34.

So, what is a man to do? We will consider the concepts of “law”. Then we will briefly go back to the Old Testament and notice uses of the term before the giving of the law and then look into the giving of the law at Mt. Sinai. We will then move on into the Gospels and see the law and the Lord’s dealing with the law during His earthly ministry. We will see His changes of the law for His Millennial Kingdom and His purpose to fulfill the law, which He did. Then we will move on to the epistles and there we will see descriptions of the law and what the law was good for. In the epistles we will see what the law could and could not do. There it will be seen that the Christian doesn’t need to do anything with respect to rules to please God, since Christ has done it all. Now it is not what the Christian does, but what God does in and through the Christian.

## PART ONE

### THE TERMS INVOLVED

#### I. THE TERM LAW IN ENGLISH.

##### A. An Authoritative Rule.

In English the term “law” is applied to “all the rules of conduct established and enforced by the authority, legislation, or custom of a given community or other group...”<sup>2</sup> This is the concept of the Mosaic Law and Millennial Law in Scripture. God is the authority who laid down the rules through Moses and later on the Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry.

##### B. Law As A Principle.

Sometimes we use the term “law” of a principle, such as “the law of gravity.” We will find the term applied in this sense to different kinds of laws as law principles in our study.

#### II. THE BIBLICAL TERMS FOR LAW.

##### A. The Term Law In The Old Testament.

In our Old Testaments we mostly find the term “law” translating the Hebrew word

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<sup>2</sup> Webster’s New World Dictionary Of The American Language, College Edition. Cleveland and New York, 1962.

תּוֹרָה- (torah), law.<sup>3</sup> It occurs around 223 times in the Old Testament. The term was used of instruction or law. It is the normal term applied to the law given to Moses on Mt. Sinai. It was the binding rule given by God to the Nation Israel through Moses. The term came to be applied to the Pentateuch, the five books of Moses as a group or sometimes to other parts of the Old Testament as well as to the law. The term was technically used of the requirements and restrictions God gave to His people Israel for their daily conduct. The Mosaic Law came with penalties for failure to keep it. As we have noted, seven and sometimes eight of the Ten Commandments (Words) carried the death penalty. There were teeth to the law when it was carried out.

## B. The Term Law In The New Testament.

### 1. The Greek Term For “Law”.

#### a. Definition of the term.

The term law in the New Testament is the Greek noun νόμος (nomos) from the verb νέμω – (nemo)- to divide, distribute, dispense, which verb does not occur in the New Testament. Its’ basic meaning is a “law” or a “rule” setting some sort of standard to be lived by. There is another word ἀγοραῖος- (agoraios) that is translated “law”, which occurs only once and would be better translated “court days”, Acts 19:38. We will mention one other term here ἕξεστι- (exesti) translated “lawful” twenty-nine times out of its thirty-two occurrences which would be better translated “permissible”.

#### b. The usage of the term of the Scriptures.

It is used in the New Testament of the Mosaic Law and sometimes expanded to speak of whole Old Testament or to parts of the Old Testament Scriptures, cf. Jn. 10:34; 12:34; 15:25; I Cor. 14:21. We find the combination “the law and the prophets” at least seven times in the Gospels and Acts and once in Romans, Mt. 5:17; 7:12; 22:40; Lk. 16:16; Acts 13:15; 15:5; 24:14; (28:23); Rom. 3:21. Once we find “the law, the prophets and the Psalms,” Lk. 24:44. Six times it is called “the Law of Moses” and once “Moses’ law”, Lk. 2:22; 24:44; Jn. 7:23; Acts 13:39; 15:5; 28:23; I Cor. 9:9; Heb. 10:28.

#### c. The number of occurrences and the distribution of the term in Scripture.

The term “law” (νόμος- nomos) occurs around 196 times in the Gospels and the New Testament.<sup>4</sup> The term is found only in the Gospels, in Acts and in the Pauline Epistles.

3 In Scripture the English term “law” is used to translate six different Hebrew terms. דָּת- (dath)- law, edict, decree; חֹק- (choq)- statute, prescribed law; חֻקִּים- (chaqim)- to decree; מִצְוָה- (mitzvah)- a command, order or precept; מִשְׁפָּט- (mishpat)- judgment; תּוֹרָה- (torah)- law. The words for “commandment are דְּבָר- (davar)= a word, cf. the Ten “Commandments”= Ten Words and מִצְוָה- (mitzva)= an order, command or precept.

4 The number varies due to textual variations.

We find the following distribution:

<u>Gospels</u>	<u>Historical</u>	<u>Epistles</u>
Matthew- 8 times	Acts- 18 times	Romans- 75 times
Luke- 9 times		I Corinthians- 9 times
<u>John- 15 times</u>	<hr/>	Galatians- 32 times
Total= 32 times	Total= 18 times	Ephesians- 1 time
		Philippians- 3 times
		I Timothy- 2 times
		Hebrews- 14 times
		<u>James- 10 times</u>
		Total= 146 times

We might expect to find the word “law” more frequently in the Gospels. However, the law or some law is the core of Paul’s argument in Romans and Galatians. In Galatians there is a problem with Jewish believers who believe that at least Jewish Christians, if not all Christians, are to live by law.

## 2. Compound words.

The compound forms of the word “law” also occur mostly in the Pauline Epistles.<sup>5</sup>

## 3. The Term “Commandment”.

### a. The noun form.

Law and commandment go together. The law consisted of commandments, Eph. 2:15. There were commandments in the law, Mt. 22:36. A commandment is an order or instruction given to someone. The Greek word ἐντολή- (entole)<sup>6</sup> occurs around seventy-one times in the Gospels and the New Testament.<sup>7</sup> We give the following breakdown:

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<sup>5</sup> We find “law teacher(s)”- νομοδιδάσκαλος- three times- (Lk. 5:17; Acts 5:34; I Tim. 1:7); “lawyer(s)”- νομικός- nine times- (Mt. 22:35; Lk. 7:30; 10:25; 11:45, 46, 52; 14:3; Tit. 3:9, 13); “lawfully”- nomi,mwj- twice- (I Tim. 1:8; II Tim. 2:5); “giving of law”- νομοθεσι,a- once- (Rom. 9:4); “lawgiver”-νομοθέτης- once- (Jas. 4:12); “giving of law”- νομοθετέω- twice- (Heb. 7:11; 8:6).

<sup>6</sup> Other words translated command: παραγγελία- (parangelia)= an order, commandment from a superior officer, (“commandment” twice); ἔνταλμα- (entalma)= a precept, commandment resulting from an act of commanding, (“commandment” three times); διάταγμα- (diatagma)- hapax= an injunction resulting from an appointment or arrangement, (“commandment” once); ἐπιταγή,- (epitage)= a command, injunction, (“commandment” six times).

<sup>7</sup> There are several textual problems which the Nestle Aland Greek Text leave out, resulting in a total of sixty- seven occurrences.

<u>Gospels</u>	<u>Historical</u>	<u>Epistles</u>	<u>Prophetic</u>
Matthew- 7 times	<u>Acts- 1 time</u>	Romans- 7 times	<u>Revelation- 3 times</u>
Mark- 8 time	Total 1 time	I Corinthians- 2 times	Total- 3 times
Luke- 4 times		Ephesians- 2 times	
<u>John- 10 times</u>		Colossians- 1 time	
Total- 29 times		I Timothy- 1 time	
		Titus- 1 time	
		Hebrews- 4 times	
		II Peter- 2 times	
		I John- 14 times	
		<u>II John- 4 times</u>	
		Total= 38 times	

In the “Synoptic Gospels” the term is always used of the Mosaic Law except once when it is used of a son not breaking his father’s commandment, Lk. 15:29. It may be used in the singular (eighteen times) of one commandment or in the plural (eleven times) of more than one. In John’s gospel it is used of the Mosaic Law, but then, in the Upper Room Discourse, the Lord gives a New Commandment for Christians. The New Commandment is emphasized not only in John’s Gospel but also in his first and second epistles. The one occurrence in Acts is a command sent by Paul to Silas and Timothy, Acts 17:15. Paul in his epistles often uses it of the Mosaic Law. All of the references in Romans, Ephesians and Hebrews are to the Mosaic Law. Elsewhere in Colossians, First Timothy and Titus he speaks of the commandment(s) of men. Only in First Corinthians does he write of commandments for the grace believer. The commandments in Revelation are for Tribulation saints.

b. The verbal form.

Whereas there isn’t a verb used in the Gospels or in the New Testament for law, there is a verb meaning to command.<sup>8</sup> The verb ἐντέλλω- (entello) occurs seventeen times in

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<sup>8</sup> There are several other verbs with the idea of giving commandment: ἐντέλλω- (entello) or ἐντέλλομαι= to order, instruct, command someone to do something with the emphasis on the content of the command from a superior, (“command” ten times); κελεύω- (keleuo)= to command verbally, give verbal orders, the verbal command from a superior, (“command” 24 times); παραγγέλλω- (parangello)= a military charge, a command from a superior officer, (“command” 20 times); διατάσσω- (diatasso)= to arrange, give order, (“command” seven times); ἐπιτάσσω- (epitasso)= to charge, to command, to enjoin to do something with on going duties, (“command” eight times); προστάσσω- (prostasso)= to assign to, command, appoint to some abiding duty, (“command” six times); εἶπον- (eipon)- aorist of λέγω- (lego)= to say or to speak with the emphasis on the content spoken, rarely with the idea “to command,” (“command” eight times); ῥέω- (hreo)- future of λέγω- (lego)= to say, to speak with the emphasis on the

the Gospels and the epistles. The distribution in usage is given in the following chart:

<u>Gospels</u>	<u>Historical</u>	<u>Epistles</u>
Matthew- five times	<u>Acts-two times</u>	<u>Hebrews- two times</u>
Mark- three times	Total= two times	Total= two times
Luke- one time		
<u>John- four times</u>		
Total= thirteen times		

In the “Synoptic Gospels” the verb is used three times of God giving commandments to the Israelites through Moses. It is also used of God the Father giving commandment to angels concerning the care of the Son twice. Three times it is used of the Lord Jesus giving commandment to His disciples. Once it is used of a man giving commandment to his servant. John only uses the verb once where it is used of the Mosaic Law. Once it is used of the Father giving commandment to the Son. Otherwise, it is used twice in the Upper Room Discourse of the Lord’s commanding the disciples to keep the New Commandment that they love one another. In the historical account of the founding of the Church in Acts we find the verb used of the Lord giving commandments unto His apostles and then of the Lord giving commandment to Paul and Barnabas to be a light to the Gentiles. In the epistles it only occurs twice in Hebrews where it is used of God giving commandment to Israel and of Joseph giving commandment to his brother concerning his bones.

### C. A Summary Statement Concerning The Use Of The Biblical Terms For Law.

The law was made up of individual commandments given to the Jews and had nothing to do with the Gentiles. Sometimes the term “law” was used of the whole Mosaic Law and other times it was used of a particular commandment of the law. Throughout the Old Testament the Jews were to keep the law, which they mostly failed to do. The law involved work. It was dependent upon their human effort to do what was prescribed in the law. In the Gospels the Jews were still under the Mosaic Law and responsible to keep it. The Lord, in the Sermon on the Mount, made the law for His earthly kingdom tougher for the Jews to keep. With the beginning of the Church, when the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost, a change took place. Christ, by His completed cross work had fulfilled the law so that there was no more law to do. We will see that grace believers, not being under any law, work on a different basis. There is only one commandment given to believers today, i.e. to love one another as Christ loved His own.

## PART TWO

### THE LAW IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

#### I. THE CONCEPT OF LAW BEFORE THE MOSAIC LAW.

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content spoken, (“command” once).



#### A. The First Pre Old Testament Reference To A Law.

Jehovah appeared to Isaac and reiterated to him the land promises given to Abraham in the first Abrahamic Covenant, Gen. 26:3, cf. Gen. 15:18-21. God continued in promising to Isaac the fulfillment of the fourth Abrahamic Covenant which He swore by an oath to Abraham. Abraham will have a singular yet multiple seed, Gen. 26:4, cf. Gen. 22:17, 18.<sup>9</sup> By Abraham's singular seed all the nations of the earth will be blessed by the promises of the fourth Abrahamic Covenant. The land promises of the first Abrahamic Covenant will also be fulfilled for Abraham's physical seed. The first covenant with Abraham was unconditional while the fourth covenant was conditional. The covenant was made with Abraham because he heard Jehovah's voice and proceeded to obey His charge, i.e. His מִשְׁמֶרֶת (mishmereth- a charge or thing to be watched), His commandments, i.e. His מִצְוָה (mitzvah- an order or command), His statutes, i.e. His חֹק (choq- statute), and His laws, i.e. תּוֹרָה (torah- laws or instructions), Gen. 26:5. Just what did God tell Abraham to do and what was it that he did? The answer is in the context preceding the fourth covenant with Abraham. God had told Abraham to offer his son Isaac for a burnt offering, Gen. 22:2. Abraham did just as God instructed him, Gen. 22:9, 10, 12. God then provided a ram and as a result made the covenant when He swore by an oath to Abraham promising him a singular yet multiple seed, Gen. 22:16-18. There was no law laid out before Abraham but God gave him some specific instructions concerning his son Isaac which Abraham obeyed exactly as God had told him. This is the context of the first reference to some "law". This is also the only reference to law in Genesis.

#### B. Instructions (Law) Given To The Jews Concerning The Passover.

The people of Israel were given instructions concerning the eating of the Passover, Ex. 12:43-50. No uncircumcised male was to eat the Passover, Ex. 12:43, 48. A stranger in the land could partake of the Passover if they were circumcised. Then they would be like one who was a Jew who was born in the land. There was one law then to the Jew who was home born and the Gentile who was a stranger in the land with respect to the Passover Feast, Ex. 12:49. When it came to the Passover, the Jews were to do it, Ex. 12:47. The sons of Israel did as Jehovah had commanded them, Ex. 12:50. Moses referred to this as "Jehovah's law" or instruction, Ex. 13:9. This instruction to the Israelites pre-dated the giving of the law.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Through the fourth Abrahamic Covenant the Church has a connection to Abraham through Christ who is the singular seed of Abraham, cf. Gal. 3:16. The multiple seed of this covenant is the Church in Christ, cf. Gal. 3:27-29. The Church doesn't become Israel, but Christ is the singular seed of Abraham and the Church is in Him as a result of Spirit baptism.

<sup>10</sup> This instruction was also carried over to Israel after the giving of the law. It is referred to as the statute (A. V. "ordinance"-θηῶν χηθ) of the Passover, Num. 9:14; 15:15, 16.

### C. Instruction (Law) Given To The Jews Concerning Collecting Manna.

The next instruction or law given to Israel pertained to the collecting of the manna. The instruction was explicit as to the gathering of manna. They were to take in just enough for each day six days a week and twice as much the day before the Sabbath. In this way God tested them to see if they would walk according to His “law” or instruction concerning the manna, Ex. 16:4, 5. At the outset they failed to do as they were instructed, Ex. 16:20. Some also went out on the Sabbath looking for manna refusing to keep Jehovah’s commandments (מִצְוָה- mitzvah- order, command, precept) and laws (תּוֹרָה- torah), Ex. 16:27, 28.

### D. God’s Laws Being Made Known To Israel By Moses.

The final occurrence of the term pre-law was just before the giving of the law. The people kept coming to Moses from morning until evening to have Moses enquire things from God and to make judgments between individuals, Ex. 18:13-16. Moses told his father-in-law Jethro that when the people came to him he made known to them God’s statutes (צִוּוּת-choq) and “laws” or instructions (תּוֹרָה- torah), Ex. 18:16. Jethro told Moses that this was too much for him to do alone and suggested he appoint men to judge the lesser things so he could deal with the weightier things, Ex. 18:17-23. Moses could then teach the people God’s statutes (צִוּוּת-choq- A. V. “ordinances”- statutes, things prescribed) and “laws” or instructions, Ex. 18:20. Up to this point all “laws” were instructions to the people in matters pertaining to their observing what God had told them to do. They were not under law. They just needed to guard (in their minds) the land promises given to Abraham in the first Abrahamic Covenant, Ex. 19:5, cf. Gen. 15:18-21. The people failed to just trust God and wanted to do something instead of letting God do for them. The result was the giving of the law to them so they would have something to do.

## II. THE OLD COVENANT OR TESTAMENT: THE MOSAIC LAW.

### A. The Giving Of The Law To The Nation Israel At Mt. Sinai.

#### 1. The Old Testament accounts.

##### a. The giving of the Ten Commandments (Words).

At Sinai, Jehovah reminded the people of how He had delivered them from the Egyptians. They did nothing to be delivered. God did it all for them. But when Moses told them to obey Jehovah’s voice and keep His promises of land in mind, they said, “All that Jehovah hath said, we will **do**,” Ex. 19:8. This resulted in Jehovah giving them the law through Moses in Exodus Twenty, Ex. 20:1-17; 24:12. There at Sinai or Horeb Jehovah “cut a covenant” with Israel, Deut. 5:2, 3. Deuteronomy five gives the second statement of the “Ten Commandments” (or words), Deut. 5:10-21. After the giving of the “Ten Commandments” the people once again spoke presumptuously when they told Moses that all that Jehovah said to him, they would hear it and **do** it, Deut. 5:27, cf. Ex.

24:7. They needed to keep all of the law so they could enter the land and possess it and live long, Deut. 5:29-33, cf. 4:1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 13, 14; 6:1, 2, 17, 18, 23-25; 8:1; Lev. 26:44-46, etc. The law came with teeth to it. There were consequences for breaking the commandments. Seven of the commandments carried the death penalty always and one sometimes.<sup>11</sup> Yet there were blessings under the law, if they kept the covenant, Deut. 28:1-13. The law also carried curses with it, if they broke the covenant, Deut. 27:13-26; 28:15-68; 30:20-28. The choice was theirs to live or to die, to choose blessing or cursing, Deut. 30:19, 20.

#### b. The giving of other laws after the Ten Commandments.

Following the completion of the Tabernacle God gave further instruction with respect to the offerings which are called “laws”. There are “the law of the burnt offering,” Lev. 6:9; “the law of the meal (A. V. “meat”) offering, Lev. 6:14; “the law of the sin offering,” Lev. 6:25; “the law of the trespass offering,” Lev. 7:1; “the law of the sacrifice of peace offerings,” Lev. 7:11. A summary of these laws is given, Lev. 7:37. Later other “laws” were given: “the law of the beasts and of the fowls... a difference between unclean and clean,” Lev. 11:46; “the law for her that hath born a male or a female,” Lev. 12:7, 8, cf. Lk. 2:24; “the law of the plague of leprosy,” Lev. 13:59, cf. 14:32, 54, 57; “the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing,” Lev. 14:2; a law pertaining to male and female impurities, Lev. 15:32, 33.

### 2. The giving of the law through Moses.

#### a. The account in the Pentateuch.

Jehovah called Moses up into the mount and spoke to him there the words of the law, Ex. 19:20, 21; 20:22; Lev. 25:1. The words of the statutes, judgments and laws between Jehovah and the Israelites were by the hand of Moses, Lev. 26:46, cf. Ex. 34:27, 28.

#### b. The understanding in the Gospels concerning Moses as the source of the law.

As we pointed out earlier in the paper, the law is referred to as “law of Moses” seven times. Luke calls it the “law of Moses,” Lk. 2:22; Acts 28:23. The Lord, Himself, referred to it as “the law of Moses,” Lk. 24:44; Jn. 7:23. Paul also spoke of “the law of Moses,” Acts 13:39; I Cor. 9:9. Some believing Pharisees did likewise, Acts 15:15. We also find “a quality of a law of Moses,” Heb. 10:28. These could be a genitive of possession, “a law belonging to Moses,” or an ablative of source “a law from Moses.” The latter seems best. We get a hint of this meaning where Philip tells Nathaniel that they “have found the one concerning whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did

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<sup>11</sup> Commandment # 1+ # 2- utterly exterminated, Ex. 22:20; stoned, Deut. 17:3-7; # 3- stoned, Lev. 24:11-16; Deut. 5:11; # 4- put to death, Ex. 35:1-3; Num. 15:32-36; # 5- put to death, Ex. 21:15, 17; Lev. 20:9; Deut. 21:18-21; # 6- put to death, Ex. 21:12, 29; Lev. 24:17; # 7- put to death, Lev. 20:10; # 8- put to death only for kidnapping, Ex. 21:16.

write,” Jn. 1:45. The Lord also said that Moses gave the Jews the law, Jn. 7:19. Often it is said that Moses commanded. Two verbs are used of Moses giving commandment. We find προστάσσω- (prostasso) which means to appoint, to give a command used of Moses giving the law, Mt. 8:4; Mk. 1:44; Lk. 5:14. We also find ἐντέλλω- (entello) the normal verb for giving a commandment, Mt. 19:7; Mk. 10:3; Jn. 8:5. Other references also connect Moses to the law, Mt. 19:8, 22:24; Mk. 7:10; 10:4; 12:19; Lk. 20:28; Jn. 1:45; 5:45, 46; 7:19, 22; 9:29.<sup>12</sup> Moses was the intermediate agent through whom the law was given to Israel, Jn. 1:17. God is the ultimate source of the Mosaic Law.

### 3. God as the ultimate source of the law as understood in the Gospels and Acts.

The Lord spoke of the commandment (ἐντολή- entole) from God and of God commanding (ἐντέλλω- entello), Mt. 15:3, 4, 6; Mk. 7:9, cf. Heb. 9:20. Luke not only refers to the law as “the law of Moses” but he also calls it “the law from the Lord,” where “Lord” is used in the sense of Jehovah, Lk. 2:23, cf. verse 22. God not only gave the law through Moses as the human instrument but Stephen said that He also gave it through the “disposition” (arrangement or mandate) from angels, Acts 7:53. The reference goes back to Moses looking back to Sinai and describing Jehovah coming “with ten thousands (myriads) of saints (holy ones= angels) when He gave the law, Deut. 33:2.

### 4. The recipients of the Mosaic Law.

There is no question that the law was given to the nation Israel. The references to “thou” in Exodus twenty are clearly to the people, i.e. the Jews. The statutes and judgments and the commandments were given to Israel and Israel was to obey them to enter the land, Deut. 4:1. They were not to add to the law nor to take away from it, but were to guard it just as Jehovah commanded them, Deut. 4:2. They alone had such statutes and judgments, Deut. 4:8. The legal covenant was with Israel only, Deut. 4:13; 5:1-3, cf. 6:4-7, etc. Moses gave the law to the Jews, Jn. 7:19. Hence, Paul could refer to it as “the law of the Jews,” Acts 25:8. Others spoke of “your law” or “their law,” cf. Jn. 18:31; Acts 18:15; 23:29. The Jews could call it “our law,” Jn. 7:51; 19:7. In the Old Testament following the promises to Abraham and his seed, there were two races, the Jews and the Gentiles. The Gentiles never had a law given to them, Rom. 2:14. The law was only for the Jews. As for the Church, it has absolutely nothing to do with the Old Testament Jewish law. The Church is under no law, but under grace, Rom. 6:14.

#### B. The Content Of The Mosaic Law.

We needn’t go into detail as to the contents of the law. The Ten Commandments or Words are found in Exodus twenty and Deuteronomy five. These were the “thou shalt nots.” As referred to previously (page 10, 1, b) there were other things prescribed as offerings and laws given to Israel following the Ten Commandments, cf. Leviticus.

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<sup>12</sup> We also find Moses indicated as the writer of the law in Acts and the Epistles: Acts 3:22; 6:15; 7:37; 15:1, 5; 21; 26:22; Rom. 10:5, 19; II Cor. 3:15; Heb. 9:18, 19.

chapters 6, 7, 11-15. The law was essentially summarized in the “Shema”, “Hear, O Israel: Jehovah our Elohim is one Jehovah: And you will love Jehovah your Elohim with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. And these words, which I command you this day, shall be upon your heart,” Deut. 6:4-6. The Lord Jesus quoted this as the first commandment and the second was to love your neighbor as yourself, Mt. 22:36-39. He went on to say that it was upon these that all the law and the prophets hang, Mt. 22:40. This love was strictly a human emotional kind of love. It was a selfish kind of love, for there was concern about yourself. In another place the Lord said, “Therefore as many things whatsoever you desire that men should do to you, you (on your part) also do likewise to them, for this is the law and the prophets,” Mt. 7:12. The contents of the law required work. It was all self-effort. You **do** or you don’t **do**.

### C. The Character Of The Mosaic Law.

There was nothing wrong with the law. God gave the law. We turn to the New Testament where Paul describes the law. He says, “So then the law indeed *is* holy and the commandment (cf. verses 7-11) *is* holy and righteous and good (ἀγαθός- agathos),” Rom. 7:12. The context tells us that Paul’s problem wasn’t with the law and the commandment but his sin nature. He goes on to say, “we know (factually) that the law is spiritual (i.e. it pertains to the human spirit and emanates from the spirit) but I, on my part, am carnal, in a state of having been sold under the sin nature,” Rom. 7:14. He is also “affirming to the law that *it is* good (καλός- kalos- excellent, useful),” Rom. 7:16. Later on Paul again describes the law as good or excellent. He wrote to Timothy, “But we know (factually) that the law is good, if someone should use it in a lawful manner,” I Tim. 1:8. The law was given due to the sin nature and the Jews’ determination to do things by their own strength. The law was not laid down for a righteous man, I Tim. 1:9. The law was never the problem. The problem was the depravity of man.

### D. The Purpose Of The Mosaic Law.

The law provided an experiential knowledge of sin. Sin was in the world before there was any law, but was not imputed to man when there wasn’t any law, Rom. 5:13. It demonstrated that mankind died because of Adam’s sin, not their own, cf. Rom. 5:12-14. Without law there is no transgression, i.e. no stepping over the line of the law, Rom. 4:15. The law was added on account of the transgressions, until the seed (Christ, cf. vs. 16) should come, Gal. 3:19. Men did acts of unrighteousness before law but the law was added because of their transgressions. With the law their unrighteous deeds became trespasses. The law was only to be in force until Christ the singular seed should come. The law was not laid down for righteous men and Paul gives a list of the kind of men for whom law is laid down, I Tim. 1:9-10.

Paul, writing about his own experience said, “Is the law sin? May it never come to be. But I didn’t experientially know the sin (nature) except through the intermediate agency of law. For I had not known lust, except the law says, ‘you shall not lust.’ But the sin (nature) having taken occasion (a base of operation, a toe hold) through the intermediate

agency of the commandment worked in me all kinds of lust, i.e. strong desire. For without some quality of law, a quality of sin *was* dead,” Rom. 7:7, 8. Through law is a full experiential knowledge of sin, Rom. 3:20. The sin nature came to be known to Paul because of the law and he came to know about lust through the commandment. The law demonstrated the sinfulness of the sin nature. Paul having stated that the commandment is good, continues, “But the sin (nature), in order that it might appear a quality of sin, works out a quality of death in me through the (previously mentioned) good, in order that the sin (nature) might come to be surpassingly sinful through the commandment,” Rom. 7:13.

God gave Israel the law so that their sin would be imputed to them and they would have a line to cross over in the law. Hence they could now sin by transgressing the law just as father Adam did when he sinned by his transgression, Rom. 5:14. Law gave an experiential knowledge of the sin nature and made the sin nature appear to be what it was- sinful. Law demonstrates the unrighteousness of mankind.

Law spoke only to those who were under law and left them with liability and put the world under judgment before God. So Paul pointed out following his description of the depravity of mankind: “Now we know that as many thing as the law says (λέγω- lego- emphasizing content) it says (λαλέω- laleo- emphasizing speaking vocally) to the ones in (the sphere of) the law, in order that every mouth may be shut and all the world may come to be under judgment to God,” Rom. 3:19.

#### E. The Responsibilities Of Those Who Were Living Under Law.

The law involved work. It was not “the hearers of law who are righteous alongside God but the doers of law shall be declared righteous,” Rom. 2:13. This was simply self-effort. Those having done the things in the law lived by them, Gal. 3:12. Paul alludes to Leviticus where we read, “You shall **do** my judgments, and keep my statutes to walk in them: I *am* Jehovah your Elohim. You shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments: which if a man should proceed to **do**, he shall live by them: I *am* Jehovah,” Lev. 18:4, 5. However, we will see how it was impossible for anyone to keep the whole law before God except one, the Lord, Jesus Christ.

Before the giving of the law the Jews had said that they would **do** all that Jehovah had said, Ex. 19:8. After the giving of the law they again said they would **do** all that He had said, Ex. 24:3, 7. This was presumption on their part. There was no faith in keeping the law. That the law was work is clear. Paul says, “But Israel while pursuing a quality of a law of a quality of righteousness did not arrive unto a quality of a law of a quality of righteousness<sup>13</sup>. Why? Because they didn’t *pursue* it out from a quality of faith but rather *they pursued it* as *it was* out from works of law<sup>14</sup>,” Rom. 9:31, 32. No one is declared righteous out from works of any kind of law, Gal. 2:16. Notice Paul’s questions to the

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13 Some manuscripts leave out “righteousness” but we include it.

14 Some manuscripts leave “law” out but we would include it.

Galatians concerning works out from any kind of law, Gal. 3:2, 5, 10. Any kind of law involves work to keep it.

The Ten Commandments (Words) said “thou shalt not.” Remember if they broke the law, most of the commandments (words) carried the death penalty. Now human nature would say, “I’m alright. I only broke one little commandment.” But what saith the Scriptures? James gives the answer, “For as many as shall keep the whole law but shall stumble in one *commandment*, has come to be and is liable with reference to the whole law. For the one having said, You should not commit adultery, also said you should not murder. Now assuming you are not committing adultery, but you are murdering, You have come to be and are a transgressor of law,” Jas. 2:10, 11. To break the law you only had to break one point and in the Old Testament under law, this put them under the curse of the law. Paul points out that this is true of anyone who attempts to live by law. He says, “For as many as are out from works of any quality of law, are under a quality of a curse, for it stands written ‘cursed is every one who is not abiding in all the things which stand written in the Book of the Law to **do** them,” Gal. 3:10. Essentially the law kept the Jew alive by his keeping it, but he could not be declared righteous by any law, nor could he grow by keeping any law.

Though they were responsible to keep the law, the Jews usually failed to do so. During the Lord’s earthly ministry, the religious Jews paid tithes from their gardens but failed to keep the weightier things of the law, the judgment and the mercy and the faith. They should have been doing those things also but they left them out of their practice, Mt. 23:23. Even though they hadn’t carried out the penalties of the law for centuries they brought up the death penalty to the Lord when the woman was taken in adultery and said that by their law she should have been stoned, Jn. 8:5. They did it to tempt the Lord. But they didn’t **do** the law themselves and were liable for the whole law.

#### F. The Limitations Of The Law.

There were some things that the law could not do. No one was declared righteous by law. The law was not out from faith. The law brought no one to maturity.

##### 1. The inability of any one to be declared righteous by any law.

A study of Romans and Galatians demonstrates without doubt that righteousness does not come out from any law as to its source. Paul points out that “there is not a righteous man not even one,” Rom. 3:10.<sup>15</sup> The law couldn’t make anyone righteous. The Scriptures are clear: “Wherefore no flesh (humanity) shall be declared righteous out from any works from any law before Him,” Rom. 3:20; “Therefore we reckon a man to be declared righteous (“justified”) by faith apart from works from any kind of law,” Rom.

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<sup>15</sup> Only one man ever kept the law and that was the God-man, Jesus Christ the Son of God. Righteousness is only available in Him as a result of Spirit baptism, cf. I Cor. 1:30; II Cor. 5:21.

3:28; “Knowing (factually) that a man is not declared righteous out from any works of any law except through faith concerning Jesus Christ, and we (on our part) believed into Christ Jesus, in order that we should be declared righteous out from faith concerning Christ and not out from any works of any law, because no flesh shall be declared righteous out from any works out from any law,” Gal. 2:16; “That no one is declared righteous by law alongside of God *is* clear, For the righteous shall live out from faith,” Gal. 3:11. The law didn’t save a man in his initial salvation nor could it make him righteous alongside of God in his present tense salvation. There was a relative righteousness under law but not so a man could have a standing with God.

Paul, in one of his longer sermons, speaking to the Jews in the synagogue in Antioch of Pisidia told them that through Christ the forgiveness of sins was announced, Acts 13:38. Righteousness didn’t come through the law but those in Christ are declared righteous. He said, “And in this one everyone, the one believing, is declared righteous from all things which you (Jews) were not made able to be declared righteous by the Law of Moses,” Acts 13:39.<sup>16</sup>

## 2. The inability of the law to mix with faith.

Salvation has always been by God, by grace, or in the Old Testament, by favor, through faith, cf. Eph. 2:8. Abraham received promise from God before the law and he believed Jehovah and it was imputed to him for righteousness, Rom. 4:3, cf. Gen. 15:6. God is the one who declares righteous the one who believes in Jesus, cf. Rom. 3:26. This excludes boasting. Paul asks by what law is boasting? Is it by a law pertaining to works? The answer is “No! but rather through a law (principle) consisting of faith. For we reckon a man to be declared righteous out from faith, apart from works from any law,” Rom. 3:27, 28, cf. Gal. 2:16. The promise to Abraham that he would be heir to a quality of a world was not through any law, but through a quality of righteousness from a quality of faith, Rom. 4:13, cf. Gen. 17:4, 6. Paul explains the problem if the promise was out from some law, “For assuming for the sake of argument the heirs (of Abraham) *are* out from any law, the faith has been made empty with the abiding result that it is empty and the promise is in a state of having been rendered inoperative,” Rom. 4:14. This promise to Abraham was out from faith that *it might be* measured by grace as a standard, Rom. 4:16. Work and faith do not co-exist. Paul told the Galatians that the law is not out from faith, Gal. 3:12.

## 3. The inability of the law to give life.

Most of the law carried the death penalty. That the law couldn’t give life is plain to see. “*Is the law against the promises from God? May it never come to be. For if a quality of a law was given, the one being able to make alive, but there wasn’t, truly the*

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<sup>16</sup> There is a textual problem where the part of the verse dealing with the Mosaic Law is left out, but it should be included.



righteousness would have been out from a quality of law, *but it wasn't*," Gal. 3:21.<sup>17</sup> The result follows, "But the Scripture locked up together all *humanity*<sup>18</sup> under a quality of sin, in order that the promise (consisting of the Holy Spirit, cf. vs. 14) out from a quality of faith concerning Jesus Christ might be given to the ones believing," Gal. 3:22. Both Jew and Gentile were in this condition but the Jew was locked up together under law. "But before the (previously mentioned) faith came, we (Paul and other Jews at the time) were continuously garrisoned about being in a state of having been locked up together unto the faith being about to be revealed, so that the law came to be and was our custodian ("school master") unto Christ, in order that we might be declared righteous out from a quality of faith, Gal. 3:23, 24.

#### 4. The inability of the law to bring anyone to maturity.

No one ever matured under law. The greatest scholars and authorities on the law never matured. The religious leaders couldn't mature by the law. The inability of the law is expressed by Paul in Hebrews. "For, on the one hand, there comes to be a setting aside of the preceding commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness or uselessness. For the law matured ("made nothing perfect") nothing, but, on the other hand, the bringing in of a better hope *does make mature*, through which we draw near to God," Heb. 7:18, 19. Those who lived under law were spiritually stunted. If they obeyed the law, they would be blessed with health, wealth and happiness here on earth. The law separated mankind from God. Only the priesthood had access to God and that was limited to the High Priest once a year on the Day of Atonement to offer first for his own sins and then the ignorances (A. V. "errors"= *sins* of ignorance requiring a sin offering, Heb. 9:7, cf. Ex. 4:2, 13, 22, 27, not applicable today) of the people. The bringing in of a better hope does what the law couldn't do. Our hope is a happy heavenly hope based upon a resurrected and living Savior seated at the Father's right hand in heaven. It is through this better hope that we can draw near to God. We have access right up behind the veil. We can mature, whereas those living under law couldn't mature.

The offering of gifts and sacrifices under the law were incapable of making the one doing the religious service mature measured by conscience, Heb. 9:9. The Jewish priesthood continuously kept on entering into the first tabernacle accomplishing their religious service, but into the second, i.e. the Holy of Holies, the High Priests went in alone once a year but not without blood. He went in year in and year out offering sacrifices which could never make him mature spiritually under law, Heb. 9:6, 7. They could never arrive at the end God intended. Maturity was not possible for those who served in the Holy of Holies until Christ, a High Priest after a different order, came and offered His own blood. Christ came a High Priest of good things to come, Heb. 9:11. Christ has cleansed (A. V. "purged") the conscience of the grace believer from dead

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17 The construction here is a second class condition which is contrary to fact. If the protasis, the "if" clause was true, but it isn't, then the apodosis, the result clause, would also have been true, but it isn't either.

18 τὰ πάντα- (ta panta- neuter plural= literally the all things- used idiomatically of those locked up together).

works (as under law) by his blood when He offered Himself for the purpose that we might religiously serve *the* living God, Heb. 9:14.

Paul, once more, speaks of the inability of the law to mature those living under it as he brings the subject up again. “The law having a shadow of the good things about to come, not the same image of the things, is not at any time able to perpetually (A. V. “continually”) mature (bring to an intended end- hence mature) the ones approaching by the same sacrifices, which they offer yearly,” Heb. 10:1. The Old Testament priests would have stopped offering the sacrifices, if they had been able to cause one to mature, cf. Heb. 10:2. Their sacrifices which they kept on offering could not take away sins, but Christ having offered one sacrifice on behalf of sins into perpetuity, sat down at the right hand of God, Heb. 10:12. His was a once for all sacrifice, cf. Heb. 10:10. The resulting continuation of this maturation is expressed: “For He has matured (A. V. “perfected”- brought to their intended end), with the abiding result that they are mature, into perpetuity the ones being sanctified,” Heb. 10:14. The grace believer, being sanctified in Christ, is seen here positionally mature into perpetuity. Now, there is no need for further sacrifices. Christ fulfilled all need for sacrifice by His one offering of Himself when He shed His blood on the cross for our sins. The law couldn’t bring one to maturity in any way.

#### G. The Inabilities Of Those Under Law.

The law was given to the Jews who had said “All that Jehovah hath said, we will **do**,” Ex. 19:8; 24:7. Yet we find throughout the Old Testament their failure to **do** what God told them to **do**. They constantly were breaking God’s commandments given in the law. Right away after the giving of the law, they broke the second commandment by making a golden calf for a god, cf. Ex. 32:1, 4. As a result they were given various sacrifices to bring for different kinds of sins and trespasses.<sup>19</sup>

The golden calf was just the beginning of a history of failure to keep the law. They had to keep it by their own strength. They only had one nature, a fallen nature, which the New Testament refers to as the sin (nature) or the flesh. They did not have a new nature nor did they have eternal life imparted by God the Son nor did they have the Holy Spirit indwelling them to enable them to keep the law. A few verses in the gospels and in the New Testament describe their failure historically and at that time. Paul describes their failure, “But Israel while pursuing a quality of a law of a quality of righteousness, did not attain (or arrive at) unto a quality of a law of a quality of righteousness<sup>20</sup>. Why? because *they did not pursue it* out from faith but rather *they pursued it* as out from works of a

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19 There were offerings for sins of ignorance, Lev. 4; for sins of implication, Lev. 5; willful sins, Lev. 6. There were different types of offerings, the meal (A. V. “meat”) offering, Lev. 6:14; the sin offering, Lev. 6:25; the trespass offering, Lev. 7:1; peace offerings, 7:11; cf. Lev. 7:37.

20 Some manuscripts do not include “righteousness”, but it should be included.

quality of law<sup>21</sup>, Rom. 9:31, 32. As we pointed out above, there was nothing wrong with the law. God gave it. But to reach the righteousness of the law required an absolute fulfillment of the law. Remember, to break the law in one point made one liable for the whole law.

The Jews during the Lord's earthly ministry had ways to get around the law with their traditions. The scribes and Pharisees came to the Lord in Jerusalem to complain about the disciples breaking the tradition of the elders by eating with unwashed hands, Mt. 15:1, 2, cf. Mk. 7:3-13. Yet these very religious leaders were transgressing God's commandment through their tradition, Mt. 15:3. They rendered the commandment of God void through their tradition, Mt. 15:6. Even though they had their loopholes, they were sticklers about the law to a point. But not even one of them was **doing** it. The Lord said to them, "Did not Moses give the law to you (yes he did) and no one out from you is **doing** the law. Why are you seeking to kill me?" Jn. 7:19. This could be a commentary on most of the history of Israel. Even while they were not keeping the law themselves the Pharisees were prideful when they stated that the people didn't experientially know the law, cf. Jn. 7:49. They professed to know the law but didn't keep it. They were about to really break the sixth commandment of the law "thou shalt not murder" when they had the Lord Jesus put to death. After the crucifixion, resurrection, ascension and the sending of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost Stephen riled the Jews up by calling them murderers and pointed out that they didn't keep the law. Having called them murderers for the crucifixion of Jesus, he brought up the law, "You who received the law by a quality of a disposition (or arrangement) from angels<sup>22</sup> and you did not guard *it*," Acts 7:52, 53. The Jews had accused Stephen of speaking against Moses and the Law, Acts 6:11, 13. Now he points out that though they had the law, they did not guard or keep it.

Some Jewish believers were always trying to get the Gentile believers to keep the law. We have a case in Acts fifteen that led up to the first "Church Council." Some Jews came down to Antioch on the Orontes in Syria saying that it was necessary for present tense salvation for the Gentiles to be circumcised by the custom of Moses, Acts 15:1. The matter was carried down to Jerusalem where some believing Pharisees contended that the Gentile Christians should not only be circumcised but they should keep the law of Moses, Acts 15:5. Peter's response is to the point. Neither they nor their fathers could keep the law. He said, "Now therefore, why are you tempting God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we, on our part, are strong to bear? But rather we believe that through the grace from our Lord Jesus we shall be saved in the same manner even as those," Acts 15:10, 11. Peter points out that the law was a yoke upon the necks of those under it. It was a burden which the Jewish fathers in the Old Testament didn't have the strength to bear nor did those living at that time have strength to bear it. No one was able to keep the law. Salvation in any tense was never dependent upon keeping any law. Salvation was and is through the grace from the Lord Jesus.

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21 Some manuscripts leave "law" out but we include it.

22 Cf. references where angels are seen involved with the giving of law- Deut. 33:2- "saints"= holy ones, i.e. angels; Gal. 3:19; Heb. 2:2.

The Jews in Paul's day were judging others but they were doing the same thing. Paul told them that they could not escape God's righteous judgment, Rom. 2:1-6. There is an equality of judgment upon both the Jew and the Gentile, Rom. 2:7-11. Paul explains, "For as many as sinned without law shall themselves perish without law, and as many as sinned in law, shall be judged from law," Rom. 2:12. Now we see the limitation of the law in declaring anyone righteous. "For the hearers of a quality of law *are* not a quality of righteous ones before God, but rather the **doers** of a quality of law shall be declared righteous," Rom. 2:13. The Jews heard the law and prided themselves in knowing the law but they failed to **do** the law. We will see that no man, apart from the God-man, Jesus Christ, was ever declared righteous by any kind of law. Though the Gentiles didn't have any law, whenever they by nature did the things in the law, though not having any law, are a law to themselves, displaying the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience co-witnessing between themselves while accusing or excusing, i.e. giving a verbal defense for themselves, Rom. 2:14, 15. These Jews were resting in a quality of law and boasting in God, Rom. 2:16. They were instructed out from the law, Rom. 2:18. They had a form of the experiential knowledge and the truth in the law, Rom. 2:20. They were teachers of the law but at the same time they were breaking the law, Rom. 2:21, 22. These very Jews who knew the law and taught the law could not keep it. Though they boasted in law, through their transgression of the law they were dishonoring God, Rom. 2:23. There was a benefit to circumcision for the Jew, if he should happen to practice a quality of law. But if he should happen to be a transgressor of a quality of law, his circumcision came to be uncircumcision to him, Rom. 2:25. He was no better than the Gentile who had no law. But the Gentile, the uncircumcision, if he guarded the righteousness of the law his uncircumcision was imputed for circumcision. He would judge the Jew who transgressed a quality of law through a quality of letter and circumcision, Rom. 2:26, 27. The Jew in Paul's day, no matter how hard he tried, could not keep the law and was no better off than the Gentile who had no law. The problem was not with the law but with the fallen nature of those who were under the law. The law was not laid down for righteous men.

#### H. The Consequences Of Law.

##### 1. Law as master over a man.

A man who is under law is under law as long as he is alive. Paul says that "the (previously mentioned) law lords (A. V. "has dominion over"- verbal form of κύριος- kurios) it over a man for as long a time as he is living," Rom. 7:1. The only escape for one under law was death. For a Christian to overcome the sin nature, he must die to the sin nature to live unto God. For the Jew under law he was a slave to his master, the law, for his whole life. As Peter said, the law really was nothing more than a "yoke of bondage," Acts 15:10.

##### 2. The law carried a curse.

We noted the curses of the law as given in Deuteronomy chapters twenty-seven through thirty. If they failed to keep the law, they would not experience the physical and material blessings in time. Eventually they would be driven from the land that God gave to them. If a Jew turned away from Jehovah to follow the gods of the Gentiles around him, Jehovah would blot his name out from under heaven, i.e. he would die, Deut. 29:20, 21, cf. Gal. 3:13.

### 3. The failure to keep the law brought death.

In Hebrews we find a summation: “Anyone having rejected (A. V. “despised”- ἀθετέω- *atheteo*- to set aside something that has been laid down, to reject, refuse, nullify) a quality of a law of Moses, shall die without tender compassion upon the basis of two or three witnesses,” Heb. 10:28, cf. Deut. 17:2-6. As we have already pointed out, seven and sometimes eight of the commandments carried the death penalty. (See page 10, A, 1, a).

### 4. The law works out a quality of wrath.

God didn’t make the promise to Abraham and his seed that he would be an heir of a world through any kind of law but through a quality of righteousness from faith, Rom. 4:13. In the next verse there is an assumption for the sake of argument, “For assuming, for the sake of argument, the heirs *are* out from law (as to their source), the previously mentioned faith is in a state of having been emptied and the promise is in a state of having been rendered inoperative, for the law works out a quality of wrath...,” Rom. 4:14, 15. The Jews failed to keep the law and God swore (by an oath) in His wrath that they would not enter into His rest, Heb. 3:11; 4:5. This is not “the wrath of God” which He will pour out upon the earth in the future, i.e. the wrath of the Tribulation which grace believers will not go through, cf. Rom. 5:9; I Thess. 1:10; 5:9.

The law came with requirements and consequences. The law was in affect when God the Son came to be flesh. The Jews, especially the religious leaders, were sticklers for the law but they were still unable to keep it. They came up with their own traditions and loopholes when it came to the law. The Lord Jesus entered the world in such circumstances and became the only one who ever fulfilled the law in every detail. During His earthly ministry, He changed the law for His earthly kingdom, making it even more stringent. Through His completed cross work He did away with the Mosaic Law. Hence, the Church is not under any law. We move on to consider from Scripture Christ and the law.

## PART THREE

### THE LORD, JESUS CHRIST AND THE LAW

#### I. THE BIRTH OF CHRIST AND THE LAW.

#### A. The Birth Of The Lord Jesus Under Law.

The law was still in force when the Lord Jesus was born. The gospel accounts demonstrate this. But Paul makes the clearest statement when he describes the birth of the Lord. “But when the fullness of the time came, the God sent forth His Son, Having come to be out from a woman, having come to be under (the authority) of a quality of law,” Gal. 4:4. It was the perfect time when the Father sent the Son into the world. When the Father was sending Him into the world, the Son spoke to the Father concerning His coming. The Father prepared Him a body, Heb. 10:4, cf. the “holy thing” being born to Mary, Lk. 1:35. The blood of bulls and goats could not take away sins so the Father had no pleasure with the burnt offerings and sin offerings being offered according to the standard of the law, Heb. 10:4, 6, 8. The Son came to do the Father’s desirous will, Heb. 10:7, 9. The purpose of His coming was to take away the first, i.e. the law, in order that He might establish the second, i.e. the Dispensation of Grace, Heb. 10:9. By the will of the Father, grace believers “are sanctified or set apart through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,” Heb. 10:10.

#### B. The Fulfillment Of All Of The Requirements Of The Mosaic Law At His Birth.

We find that the law was in force at the birth of Jesus in the account in Luke’s Gospel. After the birth of Jesus when the days of purification were fulfilled according to the Law of Moses, they presented Him to the Lord as the Law required, Lk. 2:21-24. The parents of Jesus brought the young child into the temple so that they should do the thing being accustomed according to the standard of the law concerning the child, Lk. 2:27. They did everything the law required. “And when they completed all things measured by the law from the Lord, they returned into Galilee into their own city Nazareth,” Lk. 2:39. The birth of the Lord Jesus was a birth under the authority of the Mosaic Law. He was required to keep it, which, we will see, He did.

#### C. The Lord’s Appeal To The Jews’ Law During His Earthly Ministry, Jn. 8:17, cf. Deut. 17:6.

The Pharisees accused the Lord Jesus of only bearing witness concerning Himself and that His witness wasn’t true, Jn. 8:13. The Lord told them that, though He was bearing witness concerning Himself, His witness was true, Jn. 8:14. But He is not witnessing alone. The Father also bears witness concerning Him. He responded appealing to the law for support to His argument, “Moreover, it also stands written in your law that the witness of two men is true,” Jn. 8:17. He refers back to Deuteronomy 17:6, where two or three witnesses were required to execute someone worthy of death. No one was to be put to death under the law on the basis of one witness. The Lord went on to say that He was one who was giving witness concerning Himself and the Father who sent Him was another, Jn. 8:18. On the basis of the requirements of the law concerning witnesses, His witness was true concerning Himself. (Also cf. Mt. 12:5 and Num. 28:9, 10).

## II. PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST IN THE LAW.

The Jews recognized from the law<sup>23</sup> and the prophets that Messiah was to come. Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, “We have found Him concerning whom Moses wrote in the law and the prophets, Jesus from Nazareth, the Son of Joseph,” Jn. 1:45. When the Lord demonstrated His omniscience to Nathaniel knowing Nathaniel beforehand, He said to Jesus, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God, you are the King of Israel,” Jn. 1:49. The law and the prophets prophesied concerning one who was to come who would reign as king over Israel. Both Philip and Nathaniel recognized Jesus to be that one from their knowledge of their Scriptures.

John the Baptizer, as the forerunner for Jehovah, announced the Kingdom of the Heavens but the people wanted the kingdom on their own terms, Lk. 16:16. They were going to reject the King. All the prophets and the law, up until John, had prophesied concerning the coming King and His kingdom. All they had to do was search their Scriptures to find that the one who came was the one who was prophesied about in them.

There are several other statements concerning specific prophecies in the law concerning Christ. The Lord spoke of His impending death on the cross and the crowd recognized this and appealed to their Scriptures in doubt that He truly was the Christ. They said, “We, on our part, have heard out from the law that Christ is abiding into the age, and how are you, on your part, saying that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” Jn. 12:34. Even though He had done so many sign miracles before them, they still didn’t believe into Him, cf. Jn. 12:37. He had spoken to the Jews on another occasion concerning those witnessing about Himself. John the Baptizer had borne witness; His works had borne witness; the Father had borne witness, and the Scriptures had borne witness to Him, Jn. 5:31-39. They recognized His claim to be equal with God and rejected Him, Jn. 5:17, 18, cf. 10:30-33. The Lord challenged the Jews to “Search the Scriptures, because you, on your part, are supposing (based on feeling, not fact) by them that you have eternal life, and those are the ones bearing witness generally concerning me,” Jn. 5:39. Notice, their Scriptures bore witness concerning the Lord Jesus. The Scriptures included the law. The Lord went on to point out that Moses, in whom they hoped, was accusing them to the Father, Jn. 5:45. He continues with a second class contrary to fact condition, “For if you had believed Moses, *but you didn’t*, you would have believed me, *but you didn’t*, for that one wrote generally concerning me. Since (first class condition) you are not believing that one’s writings, how shall you believe my utterances?” Jn. 5:45, 46. Moses in the law had written concerning the one who was to come. The prophecies were clear to see. The Jews revered Moses, but

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23 The word νόμος- (nomos)- law is used of more than the law and the Pentateuch as seen where the Lord appeals to Psalm 82:6- “Is it not written in your law (yes it is), ‘I said, you are gods.’” The title elohim is used there of unrighteous human judges of Israel. “The law” is used here in the way that we use the term to describe the Old Testament Scriptures. Also cf. Jn. 15:25 below. Paul twice refers to other Scriptures as “the law” besides the Mosaic Law, cf. I Cor. 14:21 of Isa. 28:11, 12; I Cor. 14:34 probably of Gen. 3:16.

disregarded what he had to say.

The Jews hated the Lord Jesus during His earthly ministry. In hating Him they hated the Father also. He had done works which were sign miracles among them which no human had ever done. They possessed sin because, even though He had done such works among them, they hated Him, Jn. 15:23, 24. Their hatred was in fulfillment of their law, i.e. here used of the Old Testament as the reference is found in the Psalms where it reads "It stands written in their (the Jews) law, 'They hated me without a cause,'" Jn. 15:25; cf. Psa. 35:19.

The Jews hated the Lord so much that they wanted to kill Him. When the opportunity arose, they appealed to their law that He should die. They said to Pilate, "We, on our part, have a quality of a law and measured by our law He ought to die, because He made Himself a quality of a Son of God," Jn. 19:7. Their argument would have been valid had it not been true that He truly is the Son of God and equal with the Father. It is interesting that they hadn't been concerned with the penalty phases of the law for generations. But on account of their hatred and envy they now appeal to their law concerning the death penalty.

All of the prophecies concerning the Lord Jesus in His earthly ministry were fulfilled completely. There were many prophecies in the law and the prophets concerning Him that have been fulfilled and there are more that will be fulfilled in the future. He was born to be a king sitting upon David's throne in fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant, cf. II Sam. 7:13f. He came a prophet like Moses, cf. Deut. 18:15, 18. He also came a High Priest to offer a once for all sacrifice of His body on the cross. His priesthood and the law are a theme found in Hebrews.

### III. THE PRIESTHOOD OF CHRIST CONTRASTED WITH THE PRIESTHOOD UNDER LAW.

The high priesthood of the Lord, Jesus Christ is a heavenly priesthood. He could not have been a priest on earth. We read "Therefore if He indeed was upon earth *but He isn't*, He would not have been a priest *but He is*,<sup>24</sup> being that the priests are the ones offering the gifts measured by the law," Heb. 8:4. The earthly priests were appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices. Christ had to have something to offer also. And He did. He offered His own shed blood, as He died for the sins of the world on the cross. Under the law things were cleansed by blood and without the shedding of blood forgiveness doesn't come to be, Heb. 9:22. The priest didn't go in before God without blood. It was necessary for Christ to enter into the heavenly Holy of Holies to offer better sacrifices than those of the blood of animals, Heb. 9:23. The Son came to earth because the Father didn't desire these, nor was He well pleased with them, Heb. 10:8. Christ entered once for all into the presence of the Father for the grace believer and offered Himself, offering His own blood by the sacrifice of Himself, Heb. 9:24-26. To do this He had to become a

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24 Second class condition, contrary to fact.



## High Priest.

The Levitical priests under the law had to keep on offering sacrifices and gifts. There needed to be a change in law for the Lord Jesus was from the wrong tribe, Heb. 7:13. He came from the tribe of the kings, the tribe of Judah. But His priesthood superceded the Levitical Priesthood for He was a priest after the order of Melchisedec, Heb. 7:11, 17, 21. (Cf. Melchisedec King of Salem and priest of the most high God, Gen. 14:18). The priesthood was changed so there needed to be a change in law since Christ couldn't have offered at the earthly altar, Heb. 7:12, 13. Christ's offering was upon the heavenly altar, Heb. 9:23, 24. There was no longer a need for the law or for the priesthood under law. It was very clear, then, that a different priest in the likeness of Melchisedec should arise, Heb. 7:15. This different priest didn't "come to be a *high priest* measured by a quality of a commandment pertaining to human flesh, but rather *he came to be a high priest* measured by a quality of power pertaining to a quality of indissoluble life, i.e. a life which is not subject to destruction," Heb. 7:16. It was prophesied in the Psalms how one from the tribe of Judah could be a high priest, "You, on your part, *are* a priest after the standard of the order of Melchisedec," Heb. 7:17, cf. Psa. 110:4. Another priest would bring in a better hope. Although there was nothing wrong with the law itself, it was weak. It couldn't mature anyone under it. There needed to be some changes not only in the priesthood but also in the requirements under law. The law had to be set aside for the change in priesthood. Paul in Hebrews continues, "For indeed there is a setting aside (A. V. "disannulling"- literally a "putting aside" or annulling<sup>25</sup>) of the former commandment because of its weakness and unprofitableness<sup>26</sup>," Heb. 7:18. The law had to be put aside or annulled for Christ to be a priest and to offer sacrifice for the sins of mankind. His priesthood and His sacrifice were different from those under law. And His sacrifice provided a better hope. It was better. The law and its commandment were utterly useless in enabling anyone under it to mature and to have a better hope through which they could draw near to God, cf. Heb. 7:19. The Lord Jesus, having died on the cross for our sins to be our Savior, is now come to be a guarantee of a better covenant, i.e. the New Covenant for the Church, Heb. 7:22. The Levitical priests were caused to become priests without an oath, but Christ is a priest accompanied by an oath, being a priest into the age after the order of Melchisedec, Heb. 7:21. Christ, having risen out from dead ones and being alive, has a priesthood which cannot be transferred (A. V. "unchangeable"), Heb. 7:24. He always lives to intercede for believers, Heb. 7:25. He became fitting to us and has come to be higher than the heavens and doesn't need to continue making sacrifice for His own sins, since He had none, and then offer for the sins of the people, because He offered up Himself once for all, Heb. 7:26, 27. We now come back to the term "law". "The law appointed men high priests who had weakness (a weakness in the flesh), but the word consisting of the oath, which was after the law, has made the Son complete so that He is

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25 ἀθέτησις- (athetesis) is used in the papyri as a technical legal formula for annulling a legal document, see Moulton and Milligan, pg. 12 and Deissmann, Bible Studies, page 228.

26 ἀνωφελής- (anopheles)- from the negating alpha privative and ὄφελος- (ophelos)- profit, hence unprofitable. It only occurs here and Titus 3:9.

in a state of completeness (i.e. He is all that He should be) into the age,” Heb. 7:28. The law was no longer in force after Christ completed His cross work and offered His once for all offering of Himself and His shed blood upon the heavenly altar.

#### IV. THE CHANGE IN LAW FOR THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM.

The Lord Jesus was born under law. The law was in force during His lifetime on earth. However, He made some changes to the law as we have stated earlier in the paper. We will be looking at some of these changes now.

In the Sermon on the Mount the Lord spoke of how He came to fulfill the law. However, He laid down the rules for the Kingdom of the Heavens, i.e. His earthly rule upon David’s throne. He brought up several parts of the law and gave an even stricter law. He first brought up the sixth commandment: “thou shall not kill,” Mt. 5:21. But notice what He said next: “But I say unto you.” Just to be angry with one’s brother without cause made him liable of the judgment. And just to say to one’s brother “Raca”, i.e. “empty head,” would make one liable with reference to the Sanhedrin and to simply call someone “fool”, i.e. “moron” would make him liable unto the Gehenna (A. V. “hell”) of fire, cf. Mt. 5:22-26. Next the Lord brought up the seventh commandment, “thou shall not commit adultery,” Mt. 5:27. Then He makes it even harder. “But I say to you, that everyone, the one glancing at a woman facing the purpose to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart,” Mt. 5:28. Notice, it doesn’t say he sinned by actually doing the act, but did it in his heart. That was enough to bring a quick trip into Gehenna, cf. Mt. 5:30.

The next references move away from the commandments to other parts of the law. The Lord now refers to divorce under the Mosaic Law by writing her a bill of divorcement, Mt. 5:31, cf. Deut. 24:1. But He makes a stronger rule for His kingdom. “But I say to you.” His rule says that there is only one grounds for divorce in His kingdom and that is fornication. To divorce one’s wife for any other reason would cause her to commit adultery, if she remarried and whoever she married would likewise commit adultery, Mt. 5:32.

He then brought up swearing by an oath falsely but to give their oaths to the Lord, Mt. 5:33, cf. Lev. 19:12. He follows this with another “But I say to you,” Mt. 5:32. They are not to swear by anything, but to let their yes be yes and their no be no, Mt. 5:33-37. Anything else is out from evil.

The law said “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth,” Mt. 5:38, cf. Ex. 21:24; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21. The Lord once more says, “But I say to you,” Mt. 5:39. In His kingdom they are not to resist malignant evil, rather they are to turn the other cheek. If someone desires to judge you by taking you to court and takes your tunic or under garment, you are to give him your outer garment also. If someone compels you to go a mile with him, you go two. If someone asks something from you, you give it to him and

don't turn away someone who would borrow something from you, Mt. 5:38-42.

The final reference is "You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy," Mt. 5:43, cf. Lev. 19:18; Deut. 23:6. The Lord says once more, "But I say to you," Mt. 5:44. They were to love their enemies. The reference was to a human love, not part of the fruit of the Spirit, since the Holy Spirit had not yet come. The rest of the verse involves some textual variations. We would include the following statements. They were also to bless or speak well of the ones cursing them and to do well to the ones hating them. They were also to pray in behalf of the ones insulting them and persecuting them, Mt. 5:43, 44. The purpose is that they might come to be sons of their Father in heaven, Mt. 5:45. They were to be complete as their Father in heaven is complete, Mt. 5:48.

Many Christians have come here for rules for the Christian to live by. Any Christian who comes to the Sermon on the Mount for something to live by will be a stunted Christian. He will be stealing someone else's rules. In the context the Lord is addressing Jews. The references to "you" are all directed towards Jews in view of the offering of the Kingdom of the Heavens. These are not rules for the Christian. As we will see later on there is one commandment given to the grace believer and it is a commandment that one cannot do on one's own or in one's own strength.

When Christ comes back to earth at His Second Coming to earth, He will establish the New Covenant with Israel, cf. Jer. 31:31-34. He will give His laws (plural) into their thought process and will write them upon their hearts and He will be for a quality of God to them, Heb. 8:10, cf. Jer. 31:33. We find an altered reference later on where God will give His laws upon their hearts and write them upon their thought, Heb. 10:16. The laws given in their thought and written upon their heart will be laws for the Millennial Kingdom. The context and content of Jeremiah thirty-one is clearly Jewish. This covenant and the laws of this covenant are not for the Church. They are to the united House of Israel and the House of Judah. They will involve the kind of severe rules that the Lord gave in the Sermon on the Mount. The Mosaic Law is no longer in force for it has been fulfilled by the one who came under law and died for the sins of the human race under law, only to rise again the third day.

## V. THE PURPOSE OF HIS COMING.

The primary purpose for the coming of God the Son into the world was to do the Father's will, Heb. 10:7, 9. This He did. His coming had to do with Israel at the beginning as He came as the Messiah to Israel to sit upon the throne of David. But when it came to the law, He came to redeem the ones who were under a quality of law, i.e. to buy them out from the market place of bondage and sin, Gal. 4:4. However, the Lord, Himself, gave the ultimate purpose for His coming with respect to the law.

The purpose for the coming of Christ into the world covers all that has been said about law in the Old Testament including the Gospels. Before the Lord gave His rules for the kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount, He gave the purpose for His coming with respect

to the Mosaic Law. He told the multitude, “Don’t begin to suppose<sup>27</sup> that I came to destroy the law or the prophets; I didn’t come to destroy but to fulfill,” Mt. 5:17. There is no doubt what the Lord was saying. He didn’t come to nullify the law and the prophets but to fulfill them. He did just that. To fulfill meant that He did every detail of the law and the prophets. There was nothing left to be done. Once the law was fulfilled by the Lord, there was nothing left to be done by anyone else. His work was accomplished once for all. He fulfilled it by His human nature throughout His whole life on earth. Those who attempt to live by rules, the Mosaic Law and the Old Testament prophets in particular, are attempting to do something that has already been done. They are treating the life and completed work of Christ as though they weren’t enough. Just before His ascension, He told His disciples “... that all things must be fulfilled, which stand written in the Law of Moses and the prophets and the Psalms generally concerning me,” Lk. 24:44. Then He opened their thinking faculty and understanding concerning the Scriptures. The Scriptures prophesied concerning His suffering and resurrection out from dead ones on the third day, Lk. 24:45, 46. He provided forgiveness of sins, Lk. 24:47. Not only were all of the Scriptures pertaining to His completed cross work fulfilled, but He also fulfilled all of the law in His life on earth. The Lord gave a guarantee that law would be completely fulfilled before heaven and earth would pass away. He said that it was impossible (using a double negative) for one iota, the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet, or one tittle, an extremity, a little part of some letters, to ever pass away from the law until all things (in the law) should come to be, Mt. 5:18, cf. Lk. 16:17. The whole law, even the smallest parts, would be fulfilled before heaven and earth would pass away. The Lord did just that. He fulfilled even the most minute parts so there was no more to be done. Once He fulfilled all of the law, He could enact the commandments that He gave for His kingdom. These will be in force in the Millennial Kingdom.

Years later, the Apostle Paul wrote concerning the law to the Galatians who had some who were teaching that Christians should live under some kind of rules. He wrote, “I am not setting aside (A. V. “frustrating”) the grace from God, for assuming for the sake of argument righteousness *is* through any quality of law, then Christ died gratuitously (A. V. “in vain”), Gal. 2:21. If righteousness came through keeping some law, Christ didn’t need to die. If that was true the conclusion would be He died without any purpose. He died freely or gratuitously. But righteousness is not through any kind of law so Christ didn’t die unnecessarily.

The Jews tried to establish their own righteousness while they failed to submit to God’s righteousness, Rom. 10:3. But now there is no more law to keep, since Christ fulfilled the law being the only absolute righteous man to keep it. Moses had described the righteousness of any kind of law: the man doing the things in the law was to live by the things in the law, Rom. 10:5. Only the Lord Jesus did so and thus He fulfilled the law. Paul wrote of how the law came to an end. “For Christ is a quality of an end of any

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27 A. V. “think”- νομίζω- (nomidzo)= to suppose- a supposition based on an objective consideration of the external facts. For comparison with synonyms see Thayer’s Lexicon on ἡγήομαι.

quality of law with reference to a quality of righteousness to everyone, the one believing,” Rom. 10:4. That the law is not in force for the grace believer could not be put much plainer than this.

To the Ephesians Paul describes the law as enmity between Jews and Gentiles. In the Old Testament era, the law was a barrier between the Jews and the Gentiles. It was like a fence or wall dividing them. The Gentiles were afar off from God, while the Jews were closer. The Gentile believers who previously were afar off were now made near by the blood of Christ, Eph. 2: 13. This was accomplished by Christ, our peace, who made both Jew and Gentile one and broke down the partition consisting of a fence, i.e. the law, Eph. 2:14. “He rendered inoperative (A. V. “abolished”) by His flesh (humanity) the enmity (i.e. hatred) , i.e. the law consisting of commandments in decrees (A. V. “ordinances”), in order that He might create in Himself the two (Jew and Gentile) into one new man, making peace,” Eph. 2:15. He put the law which was made up of commandments out of business. The way He did it was by fulfilling the law completely in every detail. No other man was able to do so. But He demonstrated that it could be done. Keeping the law wouldn’t save anyone. Christ fulfilled the law demonstrating that it could be fulfilled. He did so by being a doer of the law. The law was in force as long as a man lived and, as long as He lived, he lived by the law. In doing so He rendered the law inoperative. The law is now no longer in force. The fence, the wall in the middle, is broken down. Now He created a new entity, the new man, i.e. the Church of God, cf. I Cor. 10:32. Believing Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ. Both are reconciled in one Body by Christ’s cross work, the enmity having been slain, Eph. 2:16. Both Jew and Gentile have access to God the Father by one Spirit, Eph. 2:18.

Things have changed since Christ fulfilled the law by His life on earth and fulfilled the requirements for sacrifices when He shed His own blood on the cross for the sins of mankind and arose out from dead ones. There is no more law to do. The Jews couldn’t keep the law and no one else can either no matter what rules they may set up. God wasn’t pleased with the sacrifices and offerings. Paul points out, “If that first (covenant, the law) was faultless *but it wasn’t*, He would not have been seeking a place for a second (covenant, the New Covenant with Israel, Jer. 31:31f) *but He did*, Heb. 8:7. There was no problem with the Mosaic Law but those under it failed to keep it. Paul follows this verse with Israel’s New Covenant. The first covenant wasn’t without blame for those under it. Their New Covenant will be established when Christ establishes His kingdom on earth and writes His laws for the kingdom in their hearts and puts them in their thought. But there is a contrast. The Church is not under the Old Covenant, the law, nor is the Church going to be under the New Covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. We have a better covenant, activated upon the basis of better promises, Heb. 8:6.

#### PART FOUR

#### RIGHTEOUSNESS AND LAW

## I. A REVIEW OF THE INABILITY OF THE LAW TO MAKE ONE RIGHTEOUS.

### A. The Condition Of Mankind As A Result Of The Fall.

The indictment against mankind is “There *is* not a righteous man, not even one,” Rom. 3:10. Solomon put it this way, “For there is not a righteous (A. V. “just”- simply the word for “righteous”) man upon earth, that proceed to do good, and doesn’t proceed to sin,” Eccl. 7:20, cf. Psa. 14:1. Paul picks up the thought down the context, “They are all turned away, they are all caused to become useless; there is no one doing kindness (A. V. “good”), there is not even up to one,” Rom. 3:12. Paul alludes back to the Psalms which were written under law, “... they are all together turned aside, they are all together become corrupt<sup>28</sup> (A. V. “filthy”): there is none **doing** good<sup>29</sup>, not even one,” Psa. 14:3. The context begins with the fool, (i.e. the senseless one toward God and what is right) under law who denies the existence of God and behaves corruptly or destructively and does abominable deeds, “*there is* none that did good,” Psa. 14:1. In the days of both David and Solomon it was evident that the Jews under law were not righteous under the law. They were the opposite as their depravity was displayed for all to see. These descriptions in the Old Testament were true throughout their history. Yet Paul can appeal to these references in the Old Testament to describe the depravity of mankind and that there are none who are righteous in and of themselves. Neither the Mosaic Law nor any other kind of rules can make a man righteous.

### B. A Relative Righteousness Under Law.

There was a relative righteousness under law but not an absolute righteousness. Some Jews did what was right in some instances and in general behavior. Joseph is referred to as a “just” or righteous man, Mt. 1:19. The parents of John the Baptizer were said to be righteous before the Lord, Lk. 1:6. Simeon in the temple was likewise said to be “just” or righteous, Lk. 2:25. There are also general references to those who were said to be righteous. This was not an absolute righteousness but a relative righteousness. It is likely that this was evidence that they were Old Testament believers who had faith and it was imputed to them for righteousness. It doesn’t say. Righteousness under law only kept them alive physically but couldn’t save them spiritually. Salvation has always been by grace through faith. The apostle Paul was a Pharisee measured by law before His salvation, Phil. 3:5. He had a righteousness with respect to the law which was blameless before men, Phil. 3:7. He demonstrated this righteousness by persecuting the Church. But this was not what he wanted after he was saved. He wanted to be “found in Him (Christ) not having my own righteousness which is out from law, but rather *to have a righteousness which is* through faith concerning Christ, the righteousness out from God upon the basis of faith, Phil. 3:9, cf. II Cor. 5:21. After the Day of Pentecost there was

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28 אָלַח (alach)- bad, like sour milk, in the Niphal as here it has the idea of being corrupted morally, cf. Gesenius, page 50.

29 טוֹב (tove)- the general word for “good”. Here it would have the concept of good or kind.

also Ananias who was sent to Saul of Tarsus in Damascus who was described as a devout man measured by the law, Acts 22:12.

## II. THE ABSOLUTE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST.

There has been only one man who was absolutely righteous and, as we have stated earlier, He is the God-man, The Lord, Jesus Christ. His righteousness was demonstrated by His keeping of the law. If He had failed in one point, He would have been liable for the whole law. But He did not fail in any point of the law. His righteousness in His human nature was demonstrated in that He, following His cross work, ascended up to the Father. When the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost the Church began and His ministries to the believers began. He had one ministry to the world, a convicting or convincing ministry (A. V. “reprove”). He would convince the world of three things: generally concerning sin, righteousness and judgment, Jn. 16:7, 8. He gives an explanation concerning righteousness: “generally concerning righteousness because I am going away to my Father...” Jn. 16:10. To go to the Father He had to be as righteous as the Father. He was and He went. In the early preaching of the Church He was referred to as “the Holy One” and “Just” or “righteous,” Acts 3:14; the “Just One” or “Righteous One”, Acts 7:52; 22:14. The Apostle John also called Him “Jesus Christ the Righteous,” I Jn. 2:1. He alone fulfilled the law in every aspect and is absolutely righteous. But the law isn’t what made Him righteous, nor can it make anyone else righteous as we saw under the inabilities of the law.

## III. RIGHTEOUSNESS WITHOUT WORKS FROM ANY LAW.

We have seen that righteousness is not out from the works of any kind of law, whether the Mosaic Law or some other form of law, cf. Rom. 3:20. Righteousness, on the one hand, is out from faith but law, on the other hand, is not out from faith, cf. Gal. 2:16; 3:11, 12. This is an imputed righteousness. Christ would not have had to die if righteousness was through some law, cf. Gal. 2:21. The law was a pedagogue for the Jews until Christ came so that they could be declared righteous out from faith (as to source), Gal. 3:24. But after Christ came there was no more need for the law, Gal. 3:25. The Gentiles also are declared righteous out from faith, Gal. 3:8, cf. Eph. 2:8. There are no strings tied to this righteousness, “Being declared righteous (A. V. “justified”) freely (without strings attached) by His grace through the complete redemption that is in Christ Jesus,” Rom. 3:24, cf. Eph. 2:5, 8. We find again the clear statement that “out from the works of any law shall no flesh be declared righteous before Him,” Rom. 3:20.

Although no one was declared righteous out from any kind of law, now there is “a quality of righteousness from God without works of any law in a state of being made manifest being witnessed by the law and the prophets,” Rom. 3:21. The Old Testament prophesied concerning Christ and His coming. In Paul’s day the New Testament Scriptures were just being written. Those living at the time could study the Old Testament and find that Messiah would come and die and be raised out from dead ones. This quality of righteousness apart from any law is identified in the next verse. It is “A

quality of righteousness from God through faith concerning Jesus Christ unto all the ones believing. For there is no difference,” i.e. between believing Jew and believing Gentile, Rom. 3:22. “For all (believing Jew and Gentile) sinned (at a point of time- in Adam) and have come short of God’s glory,” i.e. God’s opinion of them, Rom. 3:23. Earlier Paul referred to the righteousness apart from the law as a quality of righteousness from God revealed in the Gospel concerning Christ out from faith into faith, cf. Rom. 1:16, 17.

It is this kind of righteousness that was important to the Apostle Paul. He could say that when it came to a quality of righteousness by a quality of law, he was blameless (before men). There was nothing man could put their finger on and throw it in Paul’s face measured by law, Phil. 2:6. But this righteousness wasn’t anything as we have noted above from what He wrote to the Romans and to the Galatians. This righteousness meant nothing to Paul. He wanted to be found with imputed righteousness in Christ. He wrote, “And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness out from a quality of law but rather the *righteousness* which is through faith concerning Christ, the righteousness out from God upon the basis of the previously mentioned faith,” Phil. 3:9. This is imputed righteousness from the Father in Christ, cf. II Cor. 5:21.

#### IV. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LAW PRINCIPLE OF THE SPIRIT.

We find righteousness connected to another law, the law (principle) from the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:2. Christ having come, freed believers from another law principle, the principle of the sin (nature) and the (spiritual) death. He condemned the sin (nature) in the flesh (human flesh), Rom. 8:3. He did so “That the righteousness of the previously mentioned law (i.e. the law of the Spirit) might be fulfilled by us, the ones not walking by the standard of the flesh (sin nature) but rather *the ones walking* by the Spirit,” Rom. 8:4. Law here is not the Mosaic Law. Christ fulfilled the Mosaic Law so that there is no more to **do**. The Christian is not under any law but under grace, Rom. 6:14. Walking by means of the Spirit has nothing at all to do with the Mosaic Law. And the righteousness fulfilled by grace believers is not by fulfilling the Mosaic Law which has already been fulfilled by Christ and is now out of business. The Spirit filled Christian doesn’t live by rules, as we will see. But for the carnal Christian the inherent power of the sin nature is the law, I Cor. 15:58.

#### V. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THOSE WHO ATTEMPT TO BE RIGHTEOUS BY KEEPING SOME LAW.

Now we return to the fact that the grace believer is not under law but under grace. Many Christians believe that, if not for initial salvation then for present tense and maybe future tense salvation, they must keep some kind of law to be righteous in their standing before man and God. Some in Galatia, as well as elsewhere, were insisting on circumcision. Paul tells them that if a man is circumcised (on religious grounds), that he is a debtor to **do** the whole law. When it comes to law, you can’t pick and choose. You have to **do** it all or you are liable for the whole thing. To try to live under any kind of rules will stunt a believer in their spiritual growth. They are trying to live by their own



strength by the flesh. Paul gives the result of attempting to live under some law to be righteous. He says, “You were rendered inoperative away from Christ, whoever is attempting to be declared righteous<sup>30</sup> by means of law, you have fallen out from the grace,” Gal. 5:4. Such ones did not lose their salvation. They were not allowing Christ to be the center of their life. Hence they were not relating to their position in Christ who did all that needed to be done. And they are also not living out the eternal life which has been imparted within them by Christ who is in them. They are not reflecting Christ but themselves. They have fallen out from grace in that they are not living under grace but by law. Law is dependent upon self-effort. Hence, such Christians are carnal and cannot please God.

## PART FIVE

### LAW AND THE CHRISTIAN

Just what is a Christian to do? Is a Christian to do the Mosaic Law? Is a Christian to live by the Millennial laws of the Sermon on the Mount? We have demonstrated before that Christians are not under any kind of law. Rules are not the basis for the Christian life. However, even in the early Church there were many Jewish believers who had a problem with what a Christian was to do. They were, no doubt, as inconsistent as the Jews while the Lord was on earth when it came to the law. They had never been able to keep the law themselves but they wanted other Christians, out from both Jews and Gentiles, to **do** what they themselves could not do. We find the same kind of problems amongst professing Christians today, even some who should know better. In a Pre-millennial Dictionary one author says that the Church is not under the Mosaic Law but then turns around and puts it under Millennial Law. He distinguishes between the Old Covenant and law, but the Old Covenant was the law. He says “Christians are not under the old covenant and law but under the new covenant and **the teachings of Jesus Christ**. Although some Old Testament commands and principles are reiterated in the New Testament, these repetitions do not argue that the Christian is under the old covenant. In fact, some Old Testament principles are given **a higher standard by which the Christian is to live in the New Testament period. An example of this is found in Matthew 5:27-28...**”

**“The old covenant and Mosaic Law have been superseded by the new covenant and teachings of Jesus Christ (Heb. 8:8-13).... The Christian can fulfill the law by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit and the outworking of the life of Christ in their life (Matt. 5:17-20; Rom. 8:1-4).”<sup>31</sup>** (Emphasis mine).

The previous writer is clear that we are not under the Mosaic Law but yet he puts us

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<sup>30</sup> This is a tendential present tense meaning that there is an attempt to do something but it is not actually taking place. No one is declared righteous by keeping any law as is demonstrated from Scripture above.

<sup>31</sup> Article on Law and Grace by John A. McLean in Dictionary of Premillennial Theology, page 241, Mal Couch, ed.

under the rules the Lord Jesus gave pertaining to His earthly kingdom and also under the New Covenant for Israel. Rules are rules whether they are the Mosaic Law or the Sermon on the Mount. What the writer says is not uncommon amongst those who we would consider friends. While working on this paper we ran across a title in a book catalogue Heirs of the King: Living the Beatitudes. This is said to be a study that “helps you get started with keys to victorious living through a study of the Beatitudes... Inherit all that God has for you!” Unfortunately believers will read these kinds of articles and books and if they try to live them, they will not be able to mature. Law cannot bring anyone to maturity. We have something better than living under God’s promises to Israel for the future or their rules for the past. We will now look into what the New Testament says about the believer and any kind of law and what a believer is to do.

## I. THE ATTEMPTS BY SOME TO PUT GRACE BELIEVERS UNDER LAW.

### A. The Attempt By Some Jewish Believers To Cause The Gentiles Believers To Be Circumcised In Accordance With The Custom Of Moses, Acts 15.

During the transitional period between the Dispensations of Law and Grace the believing Jews didn’t know much about grace. They were still plugged into their synagogues and the Temple in Jerusalem. Circumcision was very important to them based upon the Mosaic Law. The first council of the Church came about over issues dealing with the law. Some Jewish believers from Jerusalem went to Antioch on the Orontes in Syria teaching that Gentile believers must be circumcised by the custom of Moses to be saved in present tense salvation, Acts 15:1. This was a wide spread problem in the Early Church as is also seen in the letters to Rome and Galatia. These men were insistent in their teaching as they began teaching their heresy and kept on teaching it. This resulted in creating a commotion and much disputing with Paul and Barnabas who had just come back from preaching the gospel to Gentiles and having seen the work God had done in “opening the door of faith” to them, Acts 14:27; 15:2. As a result the Church in Antioch arranged for Paul and Barnabas and others to go up to Jerusalem and meet with the apostles and elders there to deal with this question. When they arrived in Jerusalem and told all the things God had done associated with them, some Pharisees, who had believed, stood up and said that it was necessary for the Gentiles to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses, Acts 15:4, 5. The problem was law versus grace in present tense salvation.

After the apostles and elders came together to look into the demand, Peter got up and addressed the group. He reminds them of how God had used him to present the gospel to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius so they could believe, Acts 15:6, 7, cf. 10:34-48. God gave the Holy Spirit to those Gentiles just like He did to the Jews so that there was no difference between the Jew and the Gentile, and He purified their hearts by faith, Acts 15:8, 9. Notice the mention of faith. The Holy Spirit is given as a result of faith, cf. Gal. 3:2, 3. The Gentiles, as well as Jews, are declared righteous through faith for initial salvation just as Abraham believed and it was imputed to him for righteousness, cf. Gal. 2:6-8. Since initial salvation is a matter of faith, does present tense salvation revert to

law and works? Peter responds further with a question, “Now therefore why are you tempting the God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples (the Gentile believers), which neither we, on our part, nor our fathers were strong to bear? But rather we believe we shall be saved in the same way as those through the grace from our Lord, Jesus,” Acts 15:10, 11. James understood that this was the first time that God had visited a quality of Gentiles to take out from them a people for His name, Acts. 15:14. The Church is a Gentile dominated entity. James makes a judgment concerning the Gentiles who turned to God that a letter be written to them encouraging them not to do four things that would offend the Jews in their midst, Acts 15:19, 20, 29. The Jews were still heralding Moses with authority, as they read the law in their synagogues out among the Gentiles every Sabbath Day, Acts 15:21. The letter was sent to the Gentile Christians in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia, Acts 15:23.

There is an indication that the apostles and elders in Jerusalem did not agree with the Jews from Jerusalem who went up to Antioch or with the believing Pharisees who thought the Gentiles should be circumcised and keep the Law of Moses. At the beginning of the letter, they addressed the issue concerning those who had stirred up the trouble in Antioch in the first place. The letter begins “Since we heard that certain men having gone out from us troubled you with words attempting to pervert (A. V. “subverting”- a conative present- began to pervert but were interrupted) your souls, saying *it is necessary for you* to be circumcised and to go on keeping the law,<sup>32</sup> to whom we gave no *such* strict commandment,” Acts 15:24. When the letter was read in Antioch they rejoiced upon the basis of the exhortation, Acts 15:31. The demands from the men from Jerusalem had been very disconcerting to these Gentile believers in Antioch. They knew they were saved by grace and that it had nothing to do with circumcision or the law. The letter was a relief to them.

Were the contents of this letter a new set of rules given as law to the Church? No! The Gentiles did not need to be circumcised nor keep the Law of Moses for their present tense salvation. Nor did these things constitute a law for them to keep. The purpose for the suggestions in the letter was for the benefit of Jews living amongst the Gentiles so that the Gentiles wouldn’t offend the Jews. They were not put under some law, for as Paul would later write to the Romans, “You are not under any kind of law, but under grace,” Rom. 6:14. The things in this letter were suggestions from the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for that time to a particular group of believers under particular circumstances. These were not rules laid down by God for the Church. In fact they have nothing to do with the Church today outside of keeping one’s self from fornication.<sup>33</sup>

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32 This whole clause is left out of some manuscripts and is not included in the Critical Text, but we would include it.

33 The “Jehovah’s Witnesses” use the abstaining from blood part to reject blood transfusions. They ignore the context and the meaning to those who received the letter. This is a good example of misuse of Scripture by abusing the context and the content dealing with the dietary laws observed by the Jews.

## B. The Contradictory Behavior Of The Apostle Paul When He Went Up To Jerusalem Against The Warnings From The Holy Spirit, Acts 21.

Some years after the Jerusalem Council, Paul made the decision to go to Jerusalem from Europe for the Feast of Pentecost, Acts 20:16. When He reached Palestine he was warned by the Holy Spirit through the prophet Agabus and others not to go up to Jerusalem, Acts 21:10-12. He rejected the warning by the Holy Spirit and went on up in the flesh and went to see James and the elders, Acts 21:13-18. After Paul rehearsed what God had done among the Gentiles, they glorified God. But now James and those with him set Paul up for perhaps his greatest inconsistency when by his actions he would contradict the very things he had been teaching out in the Gentile world. Listen to what they said to Paul, “You behold, brother, how many myriads there are among the Jews who are believing and all are existing zealots with reference to the law: And they were informed concerning you that you are teaching all the Jews, the ones distributed throughout the Gentiles, a departure away from Moses, by saying they are not to go on circumcising their children nor to go on walking in the customs,” Acts 21:20, 21. They were informed correctly. Consider Paul’s epistles to the Romans and the Galatians and it is evident that his message was grace, not circumcision and any part of the law. But the story continues.

“Therefore what is it? Certainly it is necessary for *the* multitude to assemble,<sup>34</sup> for they shall hear that you have come and are here. Therefore you do this thing which we are saying to you. There are four men with us having *taken* a vow upon themselves. Having taken these you be purified together with them and you pay the expenses for them in order that they will shave the head and all will know that there is nothing to the things concerning which they have been informed generally concerning you, but rather you are walking in the footsteps also yourself guarding the law,” Acts 21:22-24. Had Paul been carefully lining up his life with the law? No! Should Paul have taken a Jewish vow? No! This was not becoming all things to all men so that some should be saved as he wrote to the Corinthians, cf. I Cor. 9:20, 21. This was not to evangelize. This was to appease believing Jews who were still zealots with reference to the law. In Jerusalem during the transition, the Jews didn’t have a grasp of grace. They recognized that salvation was by grace but they still believed they needed to keep the law to please God. Their understanding would plague the Church throughout its history. Down through Church History there have always been some true Christians who tried to live by either the Mosaic Law or some other kind of law. Any Christian who tries to live by rules will not grow. There isn’t a law that can mature a believer.

Following this appeal, they stated that this didn’t apply to Gentile believers and they brought up the list of things they had concluded at the council that would be offensive to the Jews, Acts. 21:25. They recognized the Gentiles weren’t bound to the law, but still many Jews thought they were. They were legalists apparently trying to please God by

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34 Textual problem- the Critical Text leaves out the phrase from “necessary”, we include it.

attempting to live by the law. Paul became what would appear to be a Galatianite, to demonstrate to men how righteous he was by doing likewise. The sad part of the account is that Paul did what they asked him to do, Acts 21:26, 27. While he was in the temple some Jews from Asia Minor saw him and stirred the people up saying he had polluted the temple by bringing a Gentile into the temple, Acts 21:27-28. He ended up in trouble due to a lie. But he was living a lie himself. As a result of Paul's carnal insistence in going to a Jewish feast and living a lie by taking the vow to demonstrate that he kept law, he ended up ultimately a prisoner in Rome. He had been teaching that Christians didn't need to be circumcised or keep the Mosaic Law. His acceptance of the appeal of James and those with him was a big contradiction to all he had been teaching.

### C. The Fatal Result Of Attempting To Live By Law For Present Tense Salvation, Gal. 5:4.

There were some bad teachers with bad doctrine in the Galatian region who were teaching legal principles for Christians to live by. This was to demonstrate how righteous they were to men by what they did or didn't do. They were foisting rules off on Christians putting them into bondage.

Paul encouraged these Galatian believers to "stand firm in the liberty *into which* Christ freed us and stop being entangled again in a yoke of bondage," Gal. 5:1. The problem again was circumcision. If one was circumcised on religious grounds, Christ didn't profit him in one thing, Gal. 5:2. Paul then tells them that if they are circumcised in keeping with the law, they are debtors to **do** the whole law. Christ had fulfilled the law and there was no more to **do**. They were not appreciating and availing themselves of what Christ had provided for them as the resurrected and glorified One.

The whole issue is law and grace. We have referred to these verses previously. They only harm themselves in their present tense salvation by insisting that they might be declared righteous by law. Notice again what Paul says, "You were rendered inoperative away from Christ, whoever is attempting to be declared righteous by any quality of law, you fell out from grace," Gal. 5:4. As pointed out earlier, this is not dealing with past tense salvation but living under grace in present tense salvation. We have seen that righteousness doesn't come by any kind of law. They have fallen out from living under grace. The righteousness that counts is the righteousness out from faith, cf. Gal. 5:5; 2:6, etc. The important thing in Christ is not circumcision or uncircumcision, but faith being energized through love, i.e. two parts of the fruit of the Spirit working together, Gal. 5:7. No law can make up for being filled by means of the Spirit. The Christian life is not a life of self-effort but a life of dependency upon the Holy Spirit, so that He can make up for our lack of Christ likeness. Attempting to live under law is a guarantee to failure in the Christian life as Paul gave personal testimony to.

## II. THE FAILURE OF THOSE WHO ATTEMPT TO LIVE UNDER LAW.

The Jews in Jerusalem were out to kill Paul when Barnabas took him up to Jerusalem

after his seminary training in the desert, Acts 9:29. The brethren then sent him home to Tarsus where he remained for eight silent years, Acts 9:30-11:25. Paul was isolated from other believers during this time. He had learned the Christian life from the Lord and had learned how to overcome the sin nature. He learned what he later wrote in Romans six that you had to die to live, cf. Rom. 6:3, 4, 11. But he learned the hard way that to live by any aspect of the law only led to failure to live in resurrection life, cf. Romans 7.

In demonstrating that a man under law was under it as long as he lived, Paul used the illustration of a woman being under bondage to the law of her husband as long as he is alive, but she is free from the law of her husband if he should die to marry another, cf. Rom. 7:1-5. Paul then moves from law to grace. “But now we have been rendered inoperative away from the law having died *to that* in which we were continuously confined (A. V. “held”), so that as a result we should serve as slaves by newness<sup>35</sup> from the Spirit and not by oldness pertaining to a quality of a letter (the law),”<sup>36</sup> Rom. 7:6. By our death together with Christ, we are free to serve God as slaves having a newness from the Spirit and have no obligation to the law. We have been raised to walk in newness of life, Rom. 6:4. We have to die to the sin nature, which gets its inherent power from rules, to live. Those who were living during the Transition period and were previously under the law died to the law through the Body of Christ so they could come to be to a different one, i.e. Christ who has been raised out from dead ones, with the purpose that they should bring forth fruit to God, Rom. 7:4. The Gentiles were never under law and a believing Gentile didn’t begin to be under the Mosaic Law or any other kind of law. As for the Jewish believer who had been under the Mosaic Law, he was no longer under bondage to the Mosaic Law or any other kind of law. Grace believers are not under any kind of law but under grace as a rule of life. We are free to be Spirit filled and to walk by means of the Spirit and to be led by the Spirit, Eph. 5:18; Gal. 5:16, 18; Rom. 8:14.

Paul had been living, enjoying the Christian life, having victory over the sin nature as he was walking by means of the Spirit. He was free from the law and then he was blind sided by one commandment, the tenth. Paul came to experientially know the sin nature through a quality of law, for he hadn’t known lust back then, i.e. strong desire, except the law kept on saying “you shall not covet (lust, strong desire)<sup>37</sup>,” Rom. 7:7, cf. Ex. 20:17. Now Paul is in trouble. He could count himself dead to the law, but he didn’t. Instead we will see that he became carnal. The lust came to his mind through his soul. The sin

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35 Cf. *καινότης*- (*kainotes*)- newness, only here and Romans 6:4- from *καινός*- (*kainos*)- new in quality- cf. “new creation,” II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15; “new man,” Eph. 2:15; 4:24.

36 We are servants of a New Covenant by Christ’s blood (not Israel’s covenant of Jeremiah 31) and “are not out from a letter (law) but out from the Spirit: for the letter kills but the Spirit makes alive,” II Cor. 3:6. The result is that Christ, who is written in our hearts by the Spirit, can be reflected as in a mirror by the believer who is being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, II Cor. 3:3, 18.

37 The Greek verb *ἐπιθυμέω*- (*epithumeo*), to strongly desire, translates the Hebrew verb *חָמַד*- (*chamad*) to covet, desire, lust. A lust is not sin but it may lead to sin. Lust can be either good or bad depending on the context, cf. a good use, Phil. 1:23- “desire”.

nature wages a limited warfare against the soul, our weak point which is yet to be saved, cf. I Pet. 1:9; 2:11. It is never a rational thing to give a lust a place in our mind. The law said to Paul, “you shall not lust” and the first thing Paul does is to lust. He doesn’t say what he lusted after but that because of the law he came to a point where he experientially knew lust. Once a lust is given a place in the mind it baits and decoys one out of the place of safety and leads to sin and sin to death, cf. Jas. 1:14, 15.

Paul experienced this for the sin nature got a toehold, i.e. a place to start, a base of operations (A. V. “taking occasion”), through the commandment, i.e. “you shall not lust,” Rom. 7:8. This is not something that only happened to Paul. It is common to man, cf. I Cor. 10:13. Paul failed to take the way out that God provided for him in dealing with the sin nature. Now the sin nature worked out in Paul all kinds of lust. Though the sin nature is very much alive, he goes on to describe how without, i.e. apart from, any law, a quality of sin was dead. The sin nature was inactive with Paul until the commandment came to mind. It is a very simple thing, to lust or covet. Who hasn’t coveted or lusted. However, such a simple command brought the sin nature into action. Just like telling someone “don’t do that” brings about the strong desire to do it.

This is just what happened with Paul. He says “Now I, on my part, was living at once, i.e. at some time without any kind of law, but the commandment having come (into his mind) the sin nature revived (lived again) and I died,” Rom. 7:9 (verses 9 and 10 in the Greek Text). As we said, Paul was living in the realm of resurrection life and enjoying his Christian life when the commandment came to mind that “you shall not lust,” and then the sin nature came to life in activity within him again and the result was not pretty. When the sin nature came back to life, he died. The commandment which was to life turned to be death to him, “For the sin nature having taken a toehold through the commandment thoroughly deceived me and through it (the commandment) slew *me*,” Rom. 7:11. He was no longer living in dependence upon the work of the Godhead in his life. He was not living as one who had died to the sin nature and was raised together with Christ to live unto God, cf. Rom. 6:11. He was rendered inoperative to Christ and fallen from a life living under grace, cf. Gal. 5:4. There was also no manifestation of His eternal life from within. Paul was experiencing that the law is the inherent power of the sin nature, cf. I Cor. 15:56. The problem was not the law, but the indwelling sin nature, Rom. 7:17.

He says, “The law *is* holy and the commandment (“you shall not lust”) *is* righteous and good. Therefore, did the thing which is good come to be death to me? May it never come to be. But rather the sin nature, in order that it might appear a quality of sin, working out a quality of death in me through the good, in order that the sin nature might come to be surpassingly sinful through the commandment (“you shall not lust”),” Rom. 7:12, 13. The commandment appealed to the sin nature and brought out how sinful the sin nature is. There is nothing good about man’s sin nature. To be under its’ control is to be carnal. This is just where Paul was. “For I know<sup>38</sup> intuitively that the law is spiritual

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38 The Greek Text reads οἶδαμεν- (oidamen)- “We know” but we break the word in two

(emanates from the spirit and pertains to the spirit- here human spirit), but I am carnal<sup>39</sup> (pertaining to the flesh and emanating the flesh), in a state of having been sold under the sin nature,” Rom. 5:14. At that time Paul was carnal and he expresses it strongly that he was sold under sin by using the perfect tense in a dramatic sense. He was a slave to the sin nature when he was carnal. Paul went through a great conflict between the old I, i.e. the old nature and the new I, the new nature. He did what he didn’t want to and didn’t do what he wanted to do. The problem wasn’t the law. Paul wanted to do right but on account of the commandment, he wasn’t doing the right thing he wanted to do in his new nature. Rather it was the sin nature dwelling in him that was doing the things he didn’t want to do and not doing the things he wanted to do, Rom. 7:17. The commandment fed the sin nature within Paul and he became carnal. He knew for a fact that in him, i.e. in his flesh, his fallen nature, dwells no proper thing (A. V. “good”). He had the desire to do the appropriate thing but he couldn’t find how to work it out, Rom. 7:18. When he worked out the thing he didn’t want to do, like carrying out a lust, it wasn’t in the realm of his new nature but the sin nature dwelling in him, Rom. 7:20. Law appeals to the sin nature and attempting to live by rules only leads to failure in the Christian life.

### III. THE CHRISTIAN AND DIFFERENT LAW PRINCIPLES.

#### A. The Law Of Works And The Law Of Faith, Rom. 3:27.

Since God is the one declaring anyone righteous, Paul asks, “ Therefore, where is the boasting? It was excluded, i.e. shut out. Through what law *was it shut out? Through the law of works? No! But rather through a quality of a law (as a principle) consisting of faith (genitive of apposition), for we reckon a man to be declared righteous by faith apart from any works of any law,”* Rom. 2:27, 28. The works mentioned go back to law. There would be reason to boast if righteousness came through **doing** works of law but there is no reason to boast since boasting is excluded through the principle of faith. This ties in with the fact that salvation is by grace through faith, Eph. 2:8. It isn’t out from works lest any man should boast, Eph. 2:9. Law in the latter instance is used of a law principle like the law of gravity.

#### B. The Different Laws In Romans Seven And Eight.

There are eight different laws in these two chapters. Outside of reference to the Mosaic Law the rest of the references are used of law as a principle. Some are good and some are bad.

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to read οἶδα μέν-(oida men)- I know indeed. Paul is speaking about his own experience here and uses the first person singular pronoun in the next clause.

39 There is a textual problem where the Critical Text reads σάρκινος- (sarkinos)- “fleshy, consisting of flesh” but the Majority Text reads σαρκικός- “fleshy, carnal- pertaining to the flesh and emanating from the flesh. We accept the latter form. The result is the works from the flesh, Gal. 5:19-21.



## 1. The Mosaic Law, Rom. 7:(1), 4.

Chapter seven begins with a reference to any law (anarthrous- no definite article) and includes the Mosaic Law. The allusion is illustrating the Mosaic Law or any other law. Paul addresses those who experientially know some law, “That the (previously mentioned) law lords it over a man for as long a time as he should live,” Rom. 7:1. He will illustrate this by a married woman. Those under the Mosaic Law were only relieved of the bondage when they died.

This is what the next reference dealing with the Mosaic Law describes. Paul tells the Romans, “You were put to death to the law through the Body of the Christ, that you should come to be to a different one, the one having been raised out from dead ones, in order that you might bear fruit to God,” Rom. 7:4. By the law one could not bear fruit to God, but being dead to the law and being joined to “the Christ”, one can produce fruit to God.

## 2. The law of the husband over a wife.

A married woman is in a state of bondage to her husband by a quality of law as long as her husband is living. But if her husband should happen to die she is severed from (A. V. “loosed”= rendered inoperative, the sense of being severed from) the previously mentioned law pertaining to her husband, Rom. 7:2. Paul uses the word “free” in the next verse. If her husband dies she is set free from the previously mentioned law of her husband, Rom. 7:3. Women of that time were not permitted to divorce their husbands but husbands could divorce their wives.<sup>40</sup> But a wife was freed from the law of the husband,

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<sup>40</sup> Under law a man could simply write out a bill of divorcement and she was gone, Deut. 24:1-4; Mt. 5:31. She was then free to marry another man. But if her new husband should die or divorce her, her first husband could not marry her again. The Lord gave a different commandment for His kingdom, A man who divorced his wife for any reason except for fornication, will cause her to commit adultery. And any man who marries a divorced woman commits adultery, Mt. 5:31, 32. The grounds given for divorce were limited to fornication here. Under grace Paul repeats what he wrote in Romans, “A wife is in a state of being bound by law (left out of some manuscripts, we include it) for as long a time as her husband should live. But if the husband should happen to sleep (the sleep of death), she is free to be married to whom she desires, only in the Lord,” I Cor. 7:39. The only restriction is that she marry a Christian man.

Now if a believing couple has problems, Paul encourages a wife not to depart from her husband but if she does, let her remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband and the husband wasn't to put away his wife, I Cor. 7:1, 11, 27. If the spouse is an unbeliever and wants to live together, the believer is to stay with their mate, I Cor. 7:13. But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart, I Cor. 7:15. The believer is no longer under bondage in such instances. These are not laws as in “thou shalt not.” Remember that under grace there is no law, cf. Rom. 6:14. Divorce under grace comes as a result of carnality.

if he should happen to die, to marry another.

3. A law principle to do the thing lacking in character, Rom. 7:21.

Paul speaks of another kind of law in this verse. This law is not the Mosaic Law but a principle explaining the problem he has while desiring to do good, he doesn't do it. He says, "I find then the (specific) law (principle), that while desiring to be doing the proper thing *is* in me, the thing lacking in character (A. V. "evil") is present (literally laid alongside) with me." This law is the carnal principle by which he is carnal and sold under the sin nature, cf. Rom. 7:14. This is the reason he doesn't do what he knows he ought to do and goes on doing the things he hates. This is the principle of carnality when a believer is carnal.

4. The law principle from God, Rom. 7:22, 25; 8:7.

Following his description of the carnal principle, Paul now explains his co-pleasure or delight<sup>41</sup> in the (specific) law (principle) from God measured by the standard of his inner man, Rom. 7:22. This is a principle for Christians to live by. The inner man is where the believer is made mighty through the Holy Spirit, cf. Eph. 3:16. With his thinking faculty (A. V. "mind") Paul serves as a slave a quality of law (principle) from God, Rom. 7:25. This is a law principle that applies to the spiritual Christian. A carnal Christian cannot fulfill this as Paul points out, "Wherefore the reflective mind pertaining to the flesh *is* enmity against God, for the law (principle) from God is not under subjection to the (previously mentioned) law (principle) neither is it able *to be*," Rom. 8:7. The carnal mind cannot relate to the law principle from God. The carnal Christian cannot be subjected to this principle, so as a result "the ones being in a quality of flesh (old nature) are not able to please God," Rom. 8:8. This rule of life provides the means to have victory over the sin nature as found in Romans six, etc.

5. The law principle pertaining to Paul's mind, Rom. 7:23.

Paul delights in the law principle from God but he sees a different kind of law

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Sometimes there may be an innocent party, but usually not. The guilty parties may sin when they divorce. If someone is innocent, they are not involved in a sin for the divorce nor if they remarry. If they remarry they ought to marry in the Lord. Under grace there are grounds for divorce such as the breaking of the marriage union by fornication, which includes adultery, cf. the union with an harlot, I Cor. 6:17. The marriage union may also in effect be broken by desertion also. This is especially true if an unbeliever departs, I Cor. 7:15. By God's grace a physically abused partner might have to separate to preserve their life and well being. The strong suggestion for grace believers though, is that if they don't stay together they can separate but should try to reconcile.

41 This hapax is a compound verb συνήδομαι- (sunedomai)- the preposition σύν- (sun)- together, intimately together, and ἡδομαι- (hedomai) to have pleasure or delight, cf. hedonism.

principle in his members (of his physical body) waging a limited war against the law (principle) pertaining to his mind or thinking faculty and taking him captive by the law (principle) pertaining to the sin nature, the one being in his members. This law principle is the law of bodily appetites from the old nature. This law wages a warfare against Paul's mind by which he hates the things he is doing. This law wars against the renewed mind. Paul had learned to put off his old man, i.e. his connection to Adam, and to be renewed in the spirit belonging to his thinking faculty or mind and to put on the new man, Eph. 4:22-24. This is the mind that desired to do what he ought to do and delighted in the law principle from God.

6. The law principle from the sin nature within the believer, Rom. 7:23.

The law principle of the sin nature carried on a war against his mind and brought him into captivity. It is this law principle pertaining to the sin nature that he serves as a slave with the flesh, Rom. 7:25. This conflict leaves Paul in a miserable state. He was a most miserable man in this condition. Who will deliver him out from this body of death? Rom. 7:24. The commandment slew him. The law of sin was activated in him and he was enslaved to it. This was a hopeless situation except that there is an answer to the question, "who shall deliver me from this death?" The deliverance will come through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Rom. 7:25. In Him there is no condemnation, Rom. 8:1.

7. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:2, 4.

Paul explains why there is no condemnation to the ones who are in Christ Jesus,<sup>42</sup> "For the law (principle) of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus freed me from the law (principle) of sin and death," Rom. 8:2. This law principle of the Spirit involves resurrection life in Christ. Not only did we die to the sin nature together with Christ, we were also raised together with Him so that we could walk, or order our lives, in a new quality of life, cf. Rom. 6:3, 4; Eph. 2:5, 6. This is spiritual life. This is the life that gets us out of the way as we live here on the earth so that the Holy Spirit can make up for our deficiencies of Christ-likeness. Resurrection life is positional life in the heavenlies accomplished by Spirit baptism, I Cor. 12:13. This is where the grace believer is to frame his mind as Paul wrote to the Colossians, "Therefore since you were raised intimately together with Christ, you keep on seeking the things above, where Christ is seated on *the* right hand of the God. You frame your mind (or reflectively think) on the things above (what you are and have in Christ), not on the things upon the earth," Col. 3:1, 2. There in the heavenlies "you are dead and your life is in a state of having been hidden intimately together with the Christ in the God," Col. 3:3. One framing his mind on those things above is out of the way being so heavenly minded that he can be some earthly good. The Holy Spirit can

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<sup>42</sup> Romans 8:1 should end with "Christ Jesus." The rest of the verse was brought up by a scribe from verse four. The inclusion of the rest of the verse would contradict other Scripture dealing with the believer's righteousness in Christ and puts security in the hands of the believer rather than in God's work and his position in Christ.

fill him, making up for his deficiencies of Christ-likeness as he directs the fruit of the Spirit, cf. Eph. 5:18. Now the believer is in a place where he can walk by means of the Spirit and be led by the Spirit, Gal. 5:16, 18, cf. verse 25<sup>43</sup>. This principle has absolutely nothing to do with any kind of legal law. The grace believer is not under any kind of law.

Christ's cross work condemned the sin nature in human flesh. The purpose was "that the righteousness of the previously mentioned law (principle) might be fulfilled by us, by the ones not walking measured by a quality of flesh (old nature) but rather *walking* measured by the Spirit," Rom. 8:4. Many take the righteousness of the law to be the Mosaic Law. However the context is dealing with two laws: the law of the sin nature and the death, and this law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Christians are not bound by the Mosaic Law. It is true that believers shouldn't do the things forbidden in the Ten Commandments but they are not to the Church, nor are they for the Church. The Spirit filled believer does not need rules. We will see that there is no law against what the believer should do when he is spiritual. The righteousness of the law here in this verse is based upon the righteousness which is imputed to the believer based upon his position in Christ and the behavior of the spiritual believer in ordering his life. This is a law based on liberty, not on works. This is a law that fits under grace. The fulfillment of this law is dependent upon being in tune to the Holy Spirit and His enablement in living a victorious Christian life. We summarize this law principle of the Spirit in Christ Jesus: It freed Paul from the law of the sin and the death, Rom. 8:2. It applies to those who walk measured by the Holy Spirit and those who reflectively think on the things from the Spirit, Rom. 8:4, 5. To be so minded is life and peace, Rom. 8:6. By implication one who is so minded can please God, Rom. 8:8. Paul concludes that you are in the Spirit, since the Holy Spirit dwells in you and since Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin but the Spirit is life because of righteousness, Rom. 8:9, 10. In between verses two and four we find another law principle that is the opposite of the law of the Spirit of life. The Holy Spirit gives life, but the other law gives death.

#### 8. The law of sin and death, Rom. 8:2, 3.

The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus freed Paul<sup>44</sup> from another law: the law of the sin nature and the death (spiritual), Rom. 8:2. This is a rule which dominated Paul's life. He had a struggle with the law principle of the sin nature which he served as a slave with the flesh, cf. Rom. 7:23, 25. Christ delivered him from that death, where he lived like a spiritually dead man when the commandment killed him, Rom. 7:24, cf. 9-11. Paul was saved and possessed eternal life but when the commandment popped into his mind,

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43 In Galatians 5:25 the word "walk"- στοιχέω- (stoicheo) means to walk in a straight line, one foot in front of the other- to walk in line with the Holy Spirit, while in 5:16- περιπατέω- (peripateo) is to walk around, to order the details of ones life by means of the Spirit.

44 The Critical Text following a few of its' favored manuscripts reads "you" (singular). One manuscript and one "Church Father" read "you" (plural). We accept the first person singular pronoun "me" as Paul refers to his own experience.

he lived like a natural man, a dead man, cf. I Cor. 3:1-4. Carnality is living as one who is dead. Paul describes those who live after the flesh, “For the ones being measured by the flesh reflectively think on the things from the flesh.... For the reflective mind belonging to the flesh *is* death.... Wherefore the reflective mind belonging to the flesh *is* enmity against God. It is not being subjected under the law of God nor is it able *to be subjected*,” Rom. 8:5-8. This is what is involved with the law of sin and death. But God intervened by sending His Son.

Paul continues where he left off in the second verse in the next verse explaining how the law principle of the Spirit freed him from the law of the sin and the death. “For the inability of the previously mentioned law (of the sin and the death) in which it was continuously weak through the flesh, God having sent His own Son in a quality of a likeness of a quality of flesh pertaining to a quality of sin and *as an offering* generally concerning sin, condemned the sin in the flesh,” Rom. 8:3. The rule of the sin nature and the spiritual death were never able to accomplish anything pleasing to God. The sin nature brings death. Paul’s situation was hopeless in Romans seven until the end of the chapter where Christ is seen rescuing him from the body of this death. But God intervened by sending the Son, who, having joined His Person to a human nature, accomplished His cross work judged and condemned the sin nature and the death in the flesh. Hence, there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8:1.

#### C. The Law Of The Christ, Gal. 6:2.

Paul encouraged the Galatians to “bear one another’s burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ,” Gal. 6:2. The previous verse deals with someone who is overtaken by a trespass. This is where Paul was when the commandment came up and he had a lust in his mind. He hadn’t sinned yet but He was on the verge of sinning. He was being baited and decoyed by the lust, cf. Jas. 1:14. When a spiritual believer sees another believer overtaken by a trespass he is to restore (thoroughly adjust) such a one in a quality of a spirit of meekness (having an objectivity of mind- part of the fruit of the Spirit), continually considering himself so that he would not also be tempted, Gal. 6:1. The Christian overtaken by a trespass is out of joint and needs to be spiritually adjusted by a spiritual Christian.

To “bear one another’s burdens” is to carry another believer’s load, consisting of the things in his life that weigh upon him. The pronoun is reciprocal, i.e. one another’s burden. Each believer should carry the other’s burden. In doing so one fills up the law of the Christ. The law of the Christ is not a law in a legal sense like the Law of Moses. There are no “thou shalt nots” in Christ’s law. Christ’s law is a positive law and it only contains one commandment with different parts. The Lord Jesus gave His commandment to the eleven disciples, Judas having departed, in the Upper Room Discourse just before His betrayal and cross work. He told His disciples, “A new commandment I am giving to you, that you love one another, just as I loved you, in order that you should love one another,” Jn. 13:34.

The “one another” is reciprocal just like bearing one another’s burden. To carry one another’s load is to love one another the way the Lord loved. He loved His own right up to an end, Jn. 13:1. He demonstrated this love by what He did for them. He washed their feet, Jn. 13:4-12. He as their Teacher and Lord washed their feet, which was the job of the lowest servile slave in the household, Jn. 13:13, 14. He gave them an example that they should do as He had done, i.e. serve one another as slaves, Jn. 13:15. If He, their Teacher and Master, could serve them, they could serve one another as slaves, Jn. 13:16, 17. This was how the Lord loved them and to serve in this way is to love one another.

This love is not something one can do on their own. Love, as used here, is not a human generated love. It is part of the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22. A carnal Christian cannot love in this way. Only a Spirit filled believer can direct ἀγάπη- (agape) love. To love one another is the one rule for the Christian. The Lord also spoke of His commandments after they left the upper room. He told His disciples “If you should happen to keep my commandments, you will feel at ease in my love, just as I, on my part, have kept and am keeping my Father’s commandments and feel at ease in His love. These things I have spoken unto you in order that my joy might be in you and your joy might be full. This is my commandment, That you love one another just as I loved you,” Jn. 15:10-12. In the earlier context the Lord spoke of fruit bearing. He speaks of two parts of the fruit of the Spirit, joy and love. The fruit is the fruit of the vine. Hence the fruit produced is the character of the vine. When believers, the branches, bear fruit, the fruit is the character of Christ, the Vine, cf. Jn. 15:15, 8. The law of Christ involves loving one another.

John brings this commandment up in his first and second epistles. He says it isn’t a new commandment but an old commandment because it has been around for a while, yet it is a new commandment and it involves loving one’s brother, i.e. another Christian, I Jn. 2:7-10. One who doesn’t habitually do righteousness and doesn’t love his brother is not out from God, I Jn. 3:10. He gives the New Commandment next, “For this is the message which you heard from a quality of a beginning that we should love one another,” I Jn. 3:11. This kind of love is demonstrated by doing something. John illustrates this when he writes, “But whosoever should happen to have the good thing (things pertaining to physical life) belonging to this world (system) and should happen to behold (with interest) his brother having need and should happen to shut his deep inner most feelings from him, how is the love for God feeling at ease in him? My little born ones let us stop loving by a quality of a word or by the tongue but rather *let us love* by a quality of a deed and a quality of truth,” I Jn. 3:17, 18. It is not loving someone just to say “I love you.” This divine quality of love is the same kind of love that Christ had for His disciples and as a believer directs it, he is manifesting the character of Christ.

What about commandments plural? The Lord Jesus spoke to His disciples concerning keeping His commandments, Jn. 15:10. John also speaks of keeping His commandments, “And by this we experientially know that we experientially know Him, if we should happen to keep His commandments,” I Jn. 2:3. He uses the plural in writing to the elect lady and her children after he brings up the New Commandment that we love one

another. He says, “This is love, that we go on walking measured by His commandments. This is the commandment just as you heard from a quality of a beginning that you should go on walking in it,” II Jn. 6. Is there one commandment or are there more commandments? We find an explanation where John repeats the commandment with an additional part. “And this is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son, Jesus Christ, and we should love one another, just as He gave commandment to us,” I Jn. 3:23. The first part of the commandment is that you believe in the Name (character) of His Son, Jesus Christ. The Second part is what the Lord called “A New Commandment.” The commandment is divided out into two commandments and spoken of as plural in some instances and singular in others. John uses the plural in the next verse. “And the one keeping His commandments feels at ease in Him and He, on His part, *feels at ease* in him, and by this we know experientially that He is at ease in us, out from the Holy Spirit whom He gave to us,” I Jn. 3:23. We love God by fulfilling the New Commandment, “And we have this commandment from Him, that the one loving God love his brother (another Christian) also,” I Jn. 4:21. John describes the love of God, “For this is the love for God (objective genitive), that we should keep His commandments, and His commandments are not weighty (A. V. “grievous”),” I Jn. 5:3. In contrast the Mosaic Law was a yoke upon the neck that had to be borne, Acts 15:10. But the New Commandment is not a burden to be borne.

Bearing one another’s burdens is not a weighty matter. It is the fulfillment of the law principle of the Christ. The only requirement for fulfilling this law is that one be Spirit filled and direct part of the fruit of the Spirit, love. This is accomplished by sacrificing one’s self to serve another believer by doing something to meet their need. This could be a spiritual need or a material need. The New Commandment is the only “law” applicable to the grace believer and it is positive. Love as part of the fruit of the Spirit, has no law against it, Gal. 5:23. When one is Spirit filled there is no need for any rules. The Holy Spirit makes up for the believer’s deficiencies of Christ likeness and the believer will not do anything that will harm his brother. He will sacrifice from himself for the well being of another believer. This should be reciprocal. However each believer is responsible for his own actions whether he is loved by his brother or not.

#### IV. REFERENCES TO THE LAW IN THE EPISTLES.

##### A. The Law And Love.

##### 1. Love and the Mosaic Law.

In the Old Testament men could only love with a human love. The Holy Spirit had not begun His indwelling ministry and there was no supernatural fruit from the Spirit. Following the “Shema” i.e. “Hear O Israel, Jehovah our Elohim *is* one Jehovah,” the Jews were told to “love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might,” Deut. 6:4, 5. Earlier they were told to love their neighbor as themselves, Lev. 19:18. During the Lord’s earthly ministry a certain lawyer stood up tempting Him and asked “Teacher, by doing what shall I inherit eternal life,” Lk. 10:25.

The Lord answered with a question, “What stands written in the law? How are you reading?” Lk. 10:26. The lawyer was familiar with the verses out of Deuteronomy and Leviticus. His answer was, “You shall love the Lord your God out from your whole heart and out from<sup>45</sup> your whole soul and out from<sup>45</sup> your whole strength and out from<sup>45</sup> your whole thought,<sup>45</sup> and *you shall love* your neighbor as yourself,” Lk. 10:27. The Lord said that he answered right and if he did what he had just said, he, himself, would live in the future, Lk. 10:28. During the Lord’s earthly ministry the Jews were still under law. Their eternal life was out in the future when they will be raised, “some to eternal (A. V. “everlasting”) life,” Dan. 13:2. They would inherit eternal life, but grace believers receive eternal life as a present possession at the moment they are saved as a result of God the Son indwelling them as a result of regeneration, cf. I Jn. 5:11, 12.

We find these verses from Deuteronomy and Leviticus in grace revelation. Is this part of living the Christian life? We will consider the passages where these are brought up in the epistles.

2. Old Testament love as an illustration of the working of New Testament love, Rom. 13:8-10.

We have just noted the law of Christ which is “love one another as I have loved you.” Paul illustrates the effects of love from the Mosaic Law. Some would say that the Mosaic Law is reiterated in the New Testament for the Christian to observe. Is this what Paul is doing when he refers back to the law? To the Romans Paul says, “Owe no man anything except to love one another, for the one loving the different one has fulfilled a quality of law so that it is accomplished,” Rom. 13:8. He is not identifying a particular law here. It is any kind of law. The next verse is explanatory as an illustration of the things one wouldn’t do to another person. “For this, ‘you shall not commit adultery, you shall not murder, you shall not steal, you shall not lust (covet),’ and since there is some different commandment, it is summed up by this, ‘you shall love your neighbor (another Jew) as yourself,’” Rom. 13:9. Paul listed four of the Ten Commandments (Words). Is he saying these are now applied to the Christian? We reply in the negative, No! The grace believer is not under any kind of law. Notice love is for one’s neighbor but it is to love as you love yourself. The grace believer is to love as Christ loved. The Old Testament concept of loving your neighbor was a selfish human love. Christ elevated the meaning of love to a divine quality of love in which there is no selfishness. Paul isn’t putting the believer under these but illustrates that one loving his brother, i.e. another Christian, will not harm him. That is what he says in the next verse, “Love is not working out anything lacking in character (A. V. “ill”- bad) against his neighbor (another believer). Therefore love *is* a quality of a fulfillment of any kind of law,” Rom. 13:10. The Spirit filled believer directing part of the fruit, love, will do nothing harmful to his fellow believer. Doing so is the fulfillment of the New Commandment, the law of Christ.

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45 Some manuscripts read ἐν – (en)- instrumental= with, instead of ἐκ – (ek)- out from, and leave out the phrase “your whole thought” which we include. We accept the “out froms” and include the final phrase.



### 3. Old Testament love as an illustration of serving one another by New Testament love, Gal. 5:13, 14.

Paul points out that believers have been called to liberty, only they are not use liberty for a toehold (A. V. “occasion”) to the flesh, “but rather you keep on serving one another as slaves through love,” Gal. 5:13. This is how love, as part of the fruit of the Spirit, functions. As the Lord Jesus served His disciples, so believers are to serve one another through the same kind of love the Lord directed towards His own when He served them as a slave. The Lord heightened the meaning of ἀγάπη-(agape) love, to be a self sacrificial, other centered, kind of love, a divine quality of love, a part of the fruit of the Spirit. This kind of love fulfills any kind of law.

Now there were some in Galatia teaching the necessity of circumcision and keeping the law even though they didn’t keep the law themselves, cf. Gal. 6:13. However, as we have seen, believers are not under law. But if believers today were under law, the kind of love the Lord Jesus demonstrated would fulfill any law. Paul illustrates from the law that even human love fulfills the Mosaic Law. “For all the law stands fulfilled by one word (statement), by this ‘You shall love your neighbor (another Jew) as yourself,’” Gal. 5:14. Again, this is a selfish love. There is no “as your self” in the New Commandment. But under law, if you didn’t do anything to others that you wouldn’t want them to do to you, you would fulfill the law, cf. Mt. 7:12. Grace believers have divine enablement from the indwelling Holy Spirit so that it is not human love, but a divine quality of love that is to be directed when loving one another. The requirement, the motivation and the enablement for love for the grace believer are not connected with any rules but with grace. The Galatians needed to direct love as they served one another as slaves not pleasing themselves as free ones giving the flesh a starting point. They were biting and devouring one another instead of loving one another and they needed to beware lest they should consume one another, Gal. 5:15. Carnal behavior ruins believers but the fruit of the Spirit will look out for the other believer. It is essential for the believer to be walking by means of the Holy Spirit so that he can have victory over the flesh and the Holy Spirit always wins the conflict, Gal. 5:16, 17. This is not a life under law. Paul continues, “But since you are led by the Spirit, you are not under any kind of law,” Gal. 5:18. There are no rules for the spiritual Christian. There is no law against the fruit of the Spirit, cf. Gal. 5:23. Believers are free from law and hence free to obey Christ by loving one another.

#### B. The Reference To The Law Of Moses Concerning Not Muzzling An Ox While It Is Treading, I Cor. 9:9.

Paul used a part of the law to illustrate the right of one serving the Lord to expect to be supported. Even those who ministered in the temple were to share together the things offered in the temple. So, it isn’t too much for those who proclaim the gospel to expect to live by it. He says, “The Lord in like manner ordered that those announcing the gospel should live out from the gospel,” I Cor. 9:14. But Paul didn’t take advantage of this. A necessity was pressed upon him, and woe is unto him if he doesn’t gospelize, so he practices preaching from his own free will, I Cor. 9:16, 17. However for others who

preach, they should expect to partake from the fruit of their labors. A soldier doesn't go to war without support, nor does a farmer have produce and livestock and not partake of the results of his labor, I Cor. 9:7, 8. This isn't just Paul's idea, the law also says the same where it "...stands written, 'You shall not muzzle an ox while it is treading.'" Doesn't the ox matter to God or is he saying this entirely because of us?" I Cor. 9:9, 10, cf. Deut. 25:4; I Tim. 5:18. He is comparing here, what the law established for support for those who served in the temple under law, to the right of one preaching the gospel under grace to expect support from those to whom he ministers. The one plowing should plow upon the basis of hope and the one thrashing should thrash upon the basis hope of partaking of that which he thrashes, I Cor. 9:10. Now Paul comes back to what he is illustrating, "Since we, on our part, sowed the spiritual things (things pertaining to the human spirit), *is it* a big thing since we, on our part, are reaping your things pertaining to the flesh (A. V. "carnal"- i.e. things pertaining to the physical body, material things)?" I Cor. 9:11. It is only right that one ministering the Word of God should receive material remuneration to sustain him in his service for the Lord.

Is Paul saying here that the law applies to the grace believer? No! He is using the law to illustrate a point that demonstrates the laborer being worthy of his hire. He doesn't say when, what or how much. He is not laying down a law for Christian giving. In His second epistle to the Corinthians he gives some guidelines for grace giving, cf. II Cor. 8, 9. Here, however, he is pointing out the right of those who preach the Gospel to live by the Gospel. In the following context Paul shows that he knows grace believers aren't under law. He behaves as one under law to the ones who are living under law (Jews) and as not under law to those who are without law (Gentiles) that he might gain some, I Cor. 9:20, 21. He concludes verse twenty-one with, "not being outlawed to God<sup>46</sup> but rather inlawed to Christ,<sup>47</sup> in order that I might gain the ones without law." Above in the context he used law as an illustration, but here he would not do things that would offend the Jews, nor would he do things that would offend the Gentiles. But whatever he did, he was not attempting to please God and gain righteousness before God by keeping the law. He did not go against the law though, so that he might gain some Jews.

C. A Reference To The Taking Of Tithes According To The Standard Of The Law, Heb. 7:5.

Many churches teach that Christians are to tithe based upon the Old Testament requirement to give one tenth of one's goods to the Lord. In Hebrews we find reference to tithes. Paul is not teaching tithing in this context but that Melchisedec's priesthood was better than Aaron's priesthood. Abraham gave a tenth of his spoils of war to Melchisedec while the priests under law had the commandment to take tithes from their brethren, i.e. others who were offspring of Abraham. Since the lesser paid tithes to the greater, Levi, being in the loins of his father Abraham (the head of the race), paid tithes to Melchisedec, cf. Heb. 7:2-9. This showed that Melchisedec's priesthood was a better

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46 The Critical Text reads genitive case- "with reference to God" but we accept the dative case- "to God".

47 The same textual problem exists here as above. We accept the dative case "to Christ".

priesthood. The lesser, Abraham, was blessed by the better (Melchisedec), Heb. 2:7. The Levitical Priesthood couldn't bring one to maturity. We find a second class, contrary to fact condition pointing this out, "If therefore indeed, maturity was through the Levitical Priesthood, *but it wasn't*, for upon the basis of it, the people (Jews) were furnished with law, with the abiding result that they had the law, what need *was* there yet that a different kind of priesthood should be raised up measured by the order of Melchisedec and not said to be measured by the order of Aaron? *And there was no such need,*"<sup>48</sup> Heb. 7:11. Christ arose a priest after the order of Melchisedec, Heb. 7:15, 17. There was not only a change in priesthood but a change in law as the law was set aside (A. V. "disannulling), Heb. 7:12, 18. Now with a better hope through which there is now access to God based upon better promises, grace believers can mature, Heb. 7:19. The context here is not teaching tithing for believers. Paul covers grace giving in Second Corinthians chapters eight and nine.<sup>49</sup>

#### D. The Use Of The Term "Law" By James The Lord's Half Brother.

When we consider "law" in James, we must consider some of the background of the epistle. If James wasn't the first of the epistles to be written, it had to be second. We would date it sometime between 45 A. D. and 48 A. D. We would place it right after the Church Council in Acts fifteen and the letter sent out to Gentiles who had Jews living amongst them. It was written by James the Lord's half brother from Jerusalem. It was written during the transition from law to grace. Its' original readers were Jews as seen in the first verse of the epistle, but it is written to the Church. The content indicates that the readers were steeped in their Old Testament, yet it deals with situations that are found in the Church today. The original recipients are Jews who are in the Diaspora, who are told how to live among the Gentiles. If James is the first epistle to be written, then the only other Scripture available was the Old Testament. At any rate there was little written New Testament revelation if any at all.

James came to proper conclusions at the Acts fifteen Church Council as far as the Gentile Christians were concerned but he still didn't understand grace for Jewish Christians. We have observed his caving in to the Jews in Acts twenty-one when he, along with others in the Jerusalem church, persuaded Paul to contradict all he had been teaching and to take a Jewish vow. Many of the Jews in Jerusalem were still going to the temple and many were zealots with respect to the law. They were saved by grace through faith, but they were trying to live in their present tense salvation under law. As a result,

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48 A second class condition with the imperfect verb in the protasis (the "if" clause) and in this case an ellipsis in the apodosis (the result clause).

49 In grace giving one is to give out of what they have, II Cor. 8:11. First there is to be a readiness of mind present, it is well-received according to whatever he might have, not according to what he doesn't have. It isn't so some are eased and others burdened but to be an equality according to what one has, II Cor. 8:12-14. It is not a tenth, but as one purposes or decides beforehand in his heart. It isn't to be done out of grief or necessity, for the Lord loves a cheerful (hilarious) giver, II Cor. 9:7.

these were stunted Christians who were not growing. They still were living by rules.

With this brief backdrop we get some idea of what was going on when James wrote this epistle to Jewish believers early on in the history of the Church. James is not putting these believers under the Mosaic Law as such, but he does use the term law, a term with which they were well familiar. He refers to law in three contexts.

1. The “perfect law of liberty,” Jas. 1:25; 2:12.

The first use of the term “law” is in a context dealing with behavior. He encourages them to be “doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving (reasoning alongside, missing the point) yourselves,” Jas. 1:22. Such a one is likened to a man who considers his face in a mirror and after he considers it he departs and forgets what sort he was, Jas. 1:23, 24. He sees how he needs to clean his face but leaves and does nothing about it. It didn’t do him any good to just consider it and so it is when one looks into a quality of a perfect or complete (brought to its’ intended end) “law of liberty”.<sup>50</sup> The word law is anarthrous (no definite article) here emphasizing character or quality. It is not a reference to a specific law, except that it is a quality of law, the one pertaining to freedom or liberty.

Under the Mosaic Law there was bondage. The Mosaic Law kept them alive and physically and materially blessed if they kept it. But if they failed to keep the law they

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<sup>50</sup> The first declension noun “liberty” or “freedom” used here- ελευθερία (elutheria) occurs eleven times and is found only in the epistles. Cf. “where the Spirit from the Lord is, there is liberty,” II Cor. 3:17; “the freedom pertaining to the glory of the born ones of God,” Rom. 8:21; believers are to stand firm in the liberty by which Christ has freed them, Gal. 5:1; believers are called to liberty, only they are not to use it for an occasion to the flesh, Gal. 5:13; believers are to do good as free and not having liberty as a cloke of bad (that which is lacking in character) but as slaves belonging to God, I Pet. 2:16. There have always been some who want to put believers under bondage to rules. Paul had false brethren who were smuggled in to spy out his liberty, Gal. 2:4. When it came to eating meat offered to idols, Paul could eat it with good conscience, but not if it would offend someone else. But he says “why is my liberty judged by another’s conscience?” I Cor. 10:29. Why was he spoken bad of for eating that which he could give thanks for since by grace he could partake of such meat, I Cor. 10:30. Here we find a guideline of what one should do in any circumstance, “Therefore whether you are eating or drinking, or anything you do, do all unto the glory of God,” I Cor. 10:31. Cf. not stumbling a weaker brother, Rom. 14:7, 13, 21; I Cor. 8:7-13.

Elsewhere we find the verbal used for making one free. It is “the truth that shall make you free, Jn. 8:32, 36, (note the context- free from the sin nature); free from the sin nature, Rom. 6:18, 22; free from the law of sin and death, Rom. 8:2; Christ has made us free from a yoke of bondage, Gal. 5:1. Cf. the writer’s 2003 forum paper on “The New Testament And Freedom: Revelation Concerning The Christian And Liberty.”

would either die for breaking seven and sometimes eight of the Ten Commandments or suffer physically and materially for breaking other parts of the law. The Mosaic Law brought bondage, not liberty. Though James didn't draw a line between law and grace, he had recognized that the Gentile Christians were not bound by the Mosaic Law, cf. Acts 15. But he still didn't tell the Jewish believers who were zealots of the law that they were wrong, cf. Acts 21. Instead he had Paul take a Jewish vow and demonstrate to the Jews that living by the law was still valid for them.

Now when James wrote to the Jews of the dispersion, he brings up law to them. He is not implying that they are under the Mosaic Law, for he doesn't specify the law as "the perfect law of liberty." He speaks of a quality of law as a principle that pertains to liberty or freedom in the first chapter. The context speaks of God the Father having determined to give birth to believers by a word consisting of a quality of truth, Jas. 1:18. He moves on to the behavior of believers and then comes back to another word, "you receive the implanted word which is able to save your life (soul-life)," Jas. 1:21. The first reference to "a word consisting of a quality of truth" goes back to the gospel for initial salvation. "The implanted word" is a word that is for Christians, since James is writing to those who are already saved. This is a word for Christians pertaining to present tense salvation. This is a word which can save their lives if they are doers of a word and not hearers only, Jas. 1:23. "The implanted word" is the word by which Christians are to live. It is not the Mosaic Law, nor the words of Jesus, though these were known by the recipients, but a modification of law that is a law pertaining to liberty. Included would be the words of the New Testament apostles and prophets. Paul, Peter, John and Jude would later write down the Word of God for grace believers. When James wrote, there was mostly the oral words from God instructing believers how to live. If one was only a hearer of the word and not a doer, he was like a man giving consideration to his face in a mirror and turning away doing nothing to it. In the natural realm it did no good for him to look in a mirror and to go away forgetting what he saw in the mirror. So is the case with one who looks into the implanted word and turns away doing nothing with it. He may study it, memorize it, understand it, but it does him no good unless he does what it says.

The contrast is "one who, having stooped down to look (like looking in a mirror) into a quality of a perfect law which pertains to liberty, continues (remains or is at ease alongside) this law of liberty, not coming to be a forgetful hearer but a doer of work, this one shall be happy in his doing," Jas. 1:25. Notice the mention of "hearers" indicating again that this was oral revelation, Jas. 1:22, 23, 25. One who was a doer of the implanted word wouldn't go about breaking the Mosaic Law, but his motives would be different. He wouldn't be keeping rules to please God, but living by the limited grace revelation at that time.

## 2. A royal law, Jas. 2:8.

The Jews to whom James was writing were having a problem in preferring the rich who assembled with them and were insulting the poor, Jas. 2:1-7. He takes them back to the summary modification of the Mosaic Law as we have seen in the Gospels, "Indeed

assuming for the sake of argument<sup>51</sup> you are fulfilling (or completing, bringing it to its' intended end) a quality of a royal law measured by the Scripture, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing well," Jas. 1:8, cf. Lev. 19:18. The law spoken of here is a law emanating from a king or fit for a king.<sup>52</sup> This is the kind of a law a king would make. If his subjects brought this law to completion, they would do what was proper. The reference to love here is a human kind of love as in the Old Testament. It is not the fruit of the Spirit here since it is a selfish love, "as yourself". But if you love another believer (a Jew in the Old Testament) like you love yourself, you won't do something to harm him. You won't give the rich preferential treatment over the poor when you gather together. Even this human love won't insult another believer when you come together. Essentially this is a modification of the Mosaic Law. If this is fulfilled the rest won't be broken. This is not applicable for today. We have a higher form of love under grace as the Lord gave in the New Commandment for the Church, "Love one another as I have loved you," Jn. 13:34. This is possible only for the Spirit filled believer.

These Jewish believers understood the law. To give preference to some believers was working a quality of sin, while the one preferring another was being convinced by the law as a transgressor, Jas. 1:9. The next two verses are explanatory. You could keep the whole law but stumble in one point and come to be liable (A. V. "guilty") of all of the law, Jas. 1:10. The next verse by way of explanation is an illustration going back to the Ten Commandments. The law said, "you shall not commit adultery, it also said, you shall not murder, but since you are not committing adultery but you are murdering, you have come to be a transgressor with reference to a quality of law," Jas. 1:11. The requirement under law was to keep the whole thing. If you broke one point, you crossed over the line as a transgressor of law. The Jews understood this. At that time they knew what the law required. James isn't putting his readers under the Mosaic Law, but he is suggesting a modified form of law to love one another as yourself. He is going to the law to illustrate what was involved in keeping the law. However, as Paul points out later, believers are not under any kind of law but under grace, Rom. 6:14, 15. It is not possible for a grace believer to be a transgressor, "for where there is no law, *there* is no transgression," Rom. 4:15. For there to be a transgressor, there has to be a legal standard in force to step over and there are no legal standards today. What James describes here to these early Jewish believers is not in force for grace believers today. If those believers in the Early Church were trying to keep any law standard in their present tense salvation, they were stunted Christians. A Christian can never grow by rules, only by grace. James is illustrating to them that they should not have preference for one believer over another believer.

### 3. A quality of a law pertaining to liberty, Jas. 2:12.

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51 First class condition- assuming it is true for the sake of argument.

52 βασιλικόν- (basilikon)- the -ικός ending means pertaining to or emanating from, hence a law either pertaining to a king or emanating from a king, hence a law fitting for a king.

James now comes back to a law pertaining to liberty. He says to his readers, “You keep on speaking in this manner and you keep on doing in this manner as being about to be judged through a quality of a law pertaining to liberty (or freedom),” Jas. 2:12. In the same way a man under law was to love his neighbor as himself, so his readers need to behave as those who are fixin to be judged, not through the Mosaic Law, but through a law principle of liberty. They are free to do God’s will and free to please God. To treat all other believers with respect would be the place where they needed to start. This quality of a law pertaining to liberty at that time was the oral word from God through the apostles and prophets as seen above, cf. Jas. 1:25. The point James is making has to do with how believers relate to one another. Now a believer can direct a God quality of love, i.e. part of the fruit of the Spirit, when he is spiritual.

#### 4. The problem with one who is a judge of a quality of law, Jas. 4:11, 12.

The last reference to a quality of law also involves relationships between believers concerning how they speak to each other. “Stop speaking against one another, brethren. The one speaking against a brother or judging his brother is speaking against a quality of law and judging a quality of law. And since you are judging a quality of law, you are not a doer of law but rather a judge. There is the one lawgiver even judge, the one being able to save and to ruin, but who are you, the one judging a different one, (Some manuscripts read “neighbor”),” Jas. 4:11, 12. These Jewish Christians in the first century were having problems getting along. They were speaking against one another and judging other believers. In so doing they were not living by the law principle that was given to them in loving one another, but rather they were speaking against and judging a quality of law by not loving other believers. Therefore they were not doing what they should have been doing in loving one another but became judges with respect to one another. They had no business in doing this for God is the one who is the lawgiver and judge. Who did they think they were to be setting themselves up as judges of others? The law principle in this context relates to Christian living. It is a principle for living under grace, not under any kind of law.

## PART SIX

### LAW VERSUS GRACE

The grace believer is saved by grace through faith without any kind of works, Eph. 2:8, 9, cf. II Tim. 1:9. Present tense salvation is a life under the rule of grace and faith. Future tense salvation is still by grace, but faith will become sight. The place we begin this section is a consideration of how law and grace relate and how law and faith get along.

#### I. THE RELATIONSHIP OF LAW AND GRACE AND LAW AND FAITH.

##### A. The Inability Of Law And Grace To Get Along Together.

1. The standard of measurement for work, Rom. 4:4.

Paul turns to Abraham as an example of righteousness being imputed through faith, not works, cf. Rom. 4:1-3. He simply believed God and it was imputed to him for righteousness. Where there is work, there is no grace. Paul explains, “Now to the one working for himself, the wage is not imputed measured by the standard of grace, but rather measured by debt,” Rom. 4:4. Grace is God’s attitude of kindness, whereby He bestows some benefit upon one who is undeserving, i.e. it is “unmerited favor.” As soon as one can do something to get something, it is work to earn something. There is nothing one can do to earn the benefits provided by grace. Grace and works do not get along together. You either have grace or you have work. You cannot have both together.

2. The absolute distinction between law and grace, Rom. 11:6.

Romans chapters nine through eleven are directed toward Israel. There we find the strongest statement concerning the inability of works and grace to get along. In Elijah’s day there was a remnant that had not bowed the knee to Baal, Rom. 11:2-4. God had not cast all of His people away. In Paul’s day there was a remnant which is “measured by the election from grace,” Rom. 11:5. God’s choice of some Jews as well as some Gentiles was and is from God’s grace. It is unearned and undeserved. If it was by work, as it would be if it was out from some law, it would no longer be from grace. Paul continues the thought concerning grace. “And since by a quality of grace, *it is* no longer out from works, otherwise the *previously mentioned* grace no longer comes to be a quality of grace,” Rom. 11:6a.<sup>53</sup> “But since *it is* out from works, it is no longer grace, otherwise the *previously mentioned* work is no longer work,” Rom. 11:6b. The verse is clear. You can’t mix works and grace. You either have works or you have grace. They cannot be put together. The law was work. Any law involves work. Hence the law cannot be grace.<sup>54</sup> Remember that the grace believer is not under any kind of law but under grace, Rom. 6:14, 15. In the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament, initial salvation is by grace through faith though in the Old Testament it was more favor. Under law, present tense salvation involved work. Keep the law. The result was emotional, physical, and material blessing in time. For the grace believer, present tense salvation is by grace. The grace believer has already been blessed or well spoken of in Christ as a result of Spirit baptism, Eph. 1:3. There is nothing for the grace believer to do but take God at His word and accept the work that has been done for him. Then by divine enablement he can do the works that God has prepared for him beforehand, Eph. 2:10. The Spirit filled believer can perform these works for he ceases from self-effort. But the

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<sup>53</sup> The rest of the verse is left out of the Critical Text. but we include it.

<sup>54</sup> A book written by a Reformed author is titled “The Grace Of Law.” The contents include “...the ongoing moral obligation Christians have to the law, the idea of gospel obedience, and the Christian’s freedom from the law’s condemnation. Although the Puritans saw law and grace as opposing principles regarding one’s justification, they did teach about how God ultimately uses the law in the life of the believer for His gracious purposes.”



carnal Christian only does things by the flesh and manifests the works from the flesh. There is nothing good in the flesh which dwells in the believer, Rom. 7:18a. Paul was willing but couldn't find a way to work out that which is good, Rom. 7:18b. For the spiritual believer, "it is God who energizes in you both to be willing and to be doing in behalf of His good pleasure," Phil. 2:13. The Holy Spirit is the intermediate agent who causes the believer to be mighty in the inner man by God the Father's inherent power, Eph. 3:16. Therefore the Christian life is not a self-life, but a life of dependency on God to work in and through the believer. It is also a life of faith.

## B. The Inability Of Law And Faith To Get Along Together.

### 1. The reception of the Holy Spirit out from faith and not out from works, Gal. 3.

Paul wants to know if the Galatians received the Holy Spirit out from works of any kind of law, or out from the hearing from faith, Gal. 3:2. Are they foolish enough to suppose that they could mature by the flesh, i.e. the old nature? Gal. 3:3. Paul turns to his own ministry to the Galatians, "Therefore, the one (Paul) thoroughly supplying the Spirit to you even working miracles among you, *did he do it* out from works from any law or out from a hearing from faith?" Gal. 3:5, cf. Acts 11:15-17. The answer to the questions is obvious, it was out from the hearing from faith. The law is not out from faith, Gal. 3:12. The promise consisting of the Holy Spirit was received through the previously mentioned faith, Gal. 3:14. The law had nothing to do with the reception of the Holy Spirit nor with the Christian life. The righteous are to live out from faith as to the source of their life. The law had nothing to do with the promise to Abraham in any way. The law could not render the promise to Abraham inoperative (A. V. "disannul"). For if the inheritance was through some law, it was no longer out from promise, but God gave the inheritance to Abraham through promise, Gal. 3:17, 18.

### 2. The imputed righteousness of the one not working but believing, Rom. 4:5.

As mentioned above the one working earns what he gets, it is not imputed measured by grace, Rom. 4:4. In the next verse Paul brings up believing, i.e. putting faith in something. "But to the one not working but believing (verbal form of faith) upon the one declaring the ungodly righteous, his faith (noun form) is imputed<sup>55</sup> for righteousness," Rom. 4:5. God doesn't count faith to be a work. To believe is to put faith in something, it is not work. Faith, not work, is imputed or counted for righteousness by God.

Paul next appeals to what David wrote as another example of righteousness without works, Rom. 4:7, 8, cf. Ps. 32:1, 2. The man to whom God imputed righteousness

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<sup>55</sup> In Romans chapter four we find the verb λογίζομαι (logidzomai) translated "counted" verses 3 and 5; "reckoned" verses 4, 9, 10; "imputed" verses 6, 8, 11, 22, 23, 24. It is to count something to be true as illustrated in verse seventeen, "...calling the things not being as being," or as the Authorized Version reads, "...calleth those things which be not as though they were." Cf. Rom. 6:11.

without any works was a happy man under law, Rom. 4:6. This imputed righteousness was not just to the Jews, the Circumcision, for Abraham was counted to be righteous before the law was given. Circumcision was given to Abraham as a seal with reference to his faith while he was still uncircumcised. This was so he might be called the father of all who believe though they are not circumcised, for the purpose that they might also be declared righteous, Rom. 4:9-11, cf. the following context as well. Neither the law nor circumcision ever had anything to do with initial salvation. Imputation of righteousness has always been by grace through faith.

### 3. Faith in present tense salvation without works as a way of life.

The Christian life is to be ordered through faith. We are to walk or order our lives through faith, not through sight as we live here at home in our present body away from home from the Lord, II Cor. 5:7. The anticipation is to depart and to be present facing the Lord, II Cor. 5:8. The details of our lives are to be ordered through faith as we live here in anticipation of the time when we will go home and be present with the Lord.

The Christian life is a life of faith. “The righteous shall live out from faith,” Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:38. Paul writes of this dealing with the results of both Spirit baptism and regeneration. He begins with positional truth, “I am in a state of having been crucified intimately together with Christ (position), but not I, on my part, am living, but Christ lives in me (regeneration), and the life which I am living now in a quality of flesh (humanity) I am living by a quality of faith concerning the Son of God, the one having loved me and having given Himself over in behalf of me,” Gal. 2:20. This life is not self-effort. We have died intimately together with Christ positionally and have been raised together with Him to resurrection life. Having died, gets us out of the way when we count ourselves to have died together with Him and to have been raised together with Him, cf. Rom. 6:11. This gets us out of the way so that the divine quality of life, i.e. eternal life, which Christ imparts to us, may be lived out as we live physically here on earth right now, cf. I Jn. 5:11-13; II Cor. 3:18. This living out from faith as the source of life, is simply taking God at His word.

Faith in the Christian life is not human faith. It involves no work. It is a part of the fruit of the Spirit, Gal. 5:22. The spiritual Christian can direct faith towards the circumstances of life by taking God at His word. God has made promises in His Word and we can take Him at His word that He will keep those promises which relate to our salvation, not only for past and future tense salvation, but also for present tense salvation. He has provided better things that belong to salvation, Heb. 6:9. He has given to Church saints all things that face life and godliness and “exceeding great and precious promises,” II Pet. 1:3, 4.

There is also a standing by faith. Paul speaks of the promises in Christ as being “yes”, II Cor. 1:20. We are established or made firm in Christ and anointed and sealed in Christ having been given the earnest, i.e. the Holy Spirit, in our hearts, II Cor. 1:21, 22. Paul spared the Corinthians by not yet going to Corinth, II Cor. 1:23, cf. vs. 15. Now he

introduces the subject of their faith, “Not that we are lording it over your faith, but rather we are co-workers with reference to your joy. For you have stood and are standing by faith,” II Cor. 1:24. There have been some improvements from the first epistle, for there is evidence here that they are spiritual now.

Everything a Christian does should be out from faith. Anything that one does that is not out from faith is sin, Rom. 14:23. This is in the context of the stronger-weaker brother issue. The weaker brother is doubting if he should eat something, but he goes ahead and eats it anyway. Eating, while doubting, results in a state of condemnation. The verb could be middle where the subject participates in the results or it could be passive where the subject is acted upon by an outside source. Since there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus this would be the middle voice. The one eating while doubting is in a state of condemning himself since he isn’t sure that he really should be eating such food, because he is not eating out from faith. He isn’t sure before God that he should eat yet he does so any way. Paul concludes, “But everything which *is* not out from faith is sin,” Rom. 14:23. To anyone else, it would not be a sin. But to the doubter, it is sin because he is eating even though he thinks God might have some restriction against eating that particular food. He eats any way and he eats doubting. If he understood grace, he would know that there are no dietary restrictions for the grace believer.

The last passage we will look at dealing with faith and works is often misunderstood. Some come to James two and say that James is teaching that you have to work to be saved. To set the record straight before we look into the passage, it is not dealing with works for God to see. It has nothing to do with salvation in any tense before God. James presents an imagined conversation between two men. The only way a man can see another man’s faith is by his works. God knows a man’s faith without having to observe his works. James asks the question, “What *is* the profit, my brethren, if a man should happen to say that he has faith but doesn’t have works? *Is* his faith able to save him?” Jas. 2:14. The question demands a negative answer. No, it cannot save him. Faith would be demonstrated to men by providing for another believer who was destitute, Jas. 2:15, 16. But there is no profit if one doesn’t meet the other’s need. James continues, “In like manner, faith also, if it should not happen to have works is dead measured by itself,” Jas. 2:17, cf. verses 20, 26. Now in verse eighteen we find that this is a discussion between two men. God is not in this picture. “Yet someone will say, ‘You, on your part, have faith, and I, on my part, have works, you show me your faith out from<sup>56</sup> your works, and I, on my part, will show to you my faith out from my works,” Jas. 2:18. James says “you show *me* and I will show you.” The passage isn’t contradicting what Paul said to the Romans and the Galatians, etc., that justification is out from faith, without any works of any kind of law.

## II. GRACE AS A WAY OF LIFE FOR THE BELIEVER DURING THE

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<sup>56</sup> Some manuscripts read  $\chi\omega\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ - (choris)- without. We accept the reading  $\acute{\epsilon}\kappa$ - (ek)- out from.

## DISPENSATION OF GRACE APART FROM ANY LAW.

### A. The Sources Of Law And Grace.

#### 1. The intermediate agent through whom the law came, Jn. 1:17a.

“The law was given through Moses.” As we pointed out earlier, God gave the law as the ultimate source but He gave it through Moses as the intermediate agent. John is drawing a distinction between law and grace here. Both law and grace are from God but, Moses, on the one hand, was the human intermediate agent in the giving of the law. But on the other hand, Jesus Christ is the intermediate agent of grace.

#### 2. The intermediate agent through whom grace came to be, Jn. 1:17b.

“The grace and the truth came to be through Jesus Christ.” Jesus Christ, the one who died on the cross for our sins and who is now the resurrected and glorified one is the source of both grace and truth. He fulfilled the law and as a result there is no more law to do. He could do this because He was without a sin nature. He alone qualified to fulfill the law and to die as God’s perfect Lamb for the sins of the race. He is the eternal Word who came to be flesh and tented among mankind and He was full of grace and truth, Jn. 1:1, 14. Paul says that the Corinthians experientially knew this grace when he says, “For you experientially know the grace from our Lord, Jesus Christ, that though being rich He became poor on account of us, in order that you might become rich by that one’s poverty,” II Cor. 8:9. He is the one through whom grace has come to be as a way of life. John points out that “out from His fullness have we all, on our part, received and grace instead of grace,” Jn. 1:16. He is full of grace and truth as the God-man. All the fullness of deity has settled down and is at home in Him in a bodily manner and we are in a state of having been made full in Him, Col. 2:9, 10a. We received grace instead of grace. God’s attitude of kindness whereby He bestows benefits which we do not deserve is given to us today and there is other grace for tomorrow. Grace instead of grace indicates that there is grace for every day and every occasion in our lives. We find particular instances of this. James says, “But He gives more grace, wherefore He says, ‘God resists the haughty but gives grace to humble ones,’” Jas. 4:6, I Pet. 5:5, cf. Prov. 3:34. In Proverbs the concept of grace is more that of “favor”. Under grace, God gives more grace, grace instead of grace. Enough grace for every moment.

Grace is directed to grace believers from both the Father and the Son. All of Paul’s and Peter’s epistles begin with “grace *is* to you” usually from the Father and the Son. John also has the same in Second John and Revelation. All of Paul’s epistles except Ephesians, Colossians, Second Timothy and Titus also speak of grace from the Lord, Jesus Christ alone usually at the end of the epistles. John also concludes the Book of Revelation with the same. The source of grace is the Father along with the Son. The benefits by God’s grace are always available for the grace believer.

### B. Grace In The Dispensation Of The Grace From God.

1. The responsibility delegated to those living in the Dispensation of the Grace from God.

The full title of the dispensation in which we are living is “The Dispensation of the Grace from God,” Eph. 3:2. Law will not mix with anything in this dispensation. As we pointed out above, law and grace cannot mix. You either have law or you have grace. The responsibility delegated to Christians during this dispensation is to live under grace. Under grace there is only one commandment, the New Commandment, to love one another as Christ loved His disciples, Jn. 13:34. This is accomplished by being Spirit filled and then directing this God quality of love which is part of the fruit of the Spirit. This is not a legal principle.

2. Peter’s understanding of present tense salvation through grace apart from law, Acts 15:10, 11.

When Paul and Barnabas returned from the first journey some Jews came to Antioch on the Orontes in Syria saying that the Gentiles had to be circumcised to be saved, Acts 15:1. The salvation here was present tense salvation. At the ensuing Church Council some believing Pharisees said that it was necessary for Gentile believers to be circumcised and to keep the Law of Moses, Acts 15:5. Peter then contends with them asking “why are you tempting God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were strong to bear?” Acts 15:10. Earlier in the paper we considered this that the law was a yoke of bondage to the Jews. Peter brings grace up in the next verse, “But we believe through the grace from the Lord Jesus we shall be saved measured by the same manner, even as those (Gentiles),” Acts 15:11. Some Jews were attempting to require the Gentiles to keep the law, but their fathers couldn’t keep it, nor could they in their present tense salvation. Both Jewish believers and Gentile believers will be saved through grace in present tense salvation in this Dispensation of Grace without any kind of law.

3. The strong suggestions of the imperatives in New Testament epistles.

Some might ask “What about all of the commands given to Christians?” The writer once heard of a speaker who was preaching through the imperatives of the New Testament as “Christian commandments”. What about the imperatives? Are they legal principles the believer is to live by? They cannot be, for law and grace do not get along together. The imperatives directed to grace believers in the epistles carry the notion of strong suggestions, not commandments. There are some things that a Christian ought not to do and some he ought to do, and God says you ought not to do this or you ought to do that. He suggests you don’t do or do for your own good. If a Christian does some things, he can expect to be disciplined in grace for his own good, so he won’t be condemned with the world system, Heb. 12:5f; I Cor. 11:32. God never refers to these imperatives as “laws” for the Christian. Christians are not under any kind of law but under grace. If a Christian does these things as laws either to show man how good he is as a Galatianite or

to show God how good he is as a legalists, he is doing it for the wrong motivation. When we do things out of love to please God as spiritual believers by divine enablement we bring glory to God, cf. II Cor. 4:15. It is not done out of necessity or because of some rules.

#### 4. The grace from God in the life and ministry of the Apostle Paul.

Paul was called to salvation through grace while he was still in his mother's womb, so that God would reveal His Son by Paul, Gal. 1:15, 16. It was recognized by Peter and John that God had given grace to Paul to minister to the Gentiles, Gal. 2:9. He was made to become a servant of Christ measured by the freely given (no strings attached) gift consisting of the grace from God, Eph. 3:7. That gift was his gift of apostle. The grace (gift) was given to him to gospelize among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches pertaining to the Christ (the Head and the Body together, cf. I Cor. 12:12), Eph. 3:8. Not only was Paul given a grace gift but all believers receive a gift, cf. I Pet. 4:10 (in the Greek- a quality of a gift). He says, "But to each one out from us the grace was given measured by the measure of the freely no strings attached gift from the Christ," Eph. 4:7, cf. vs. 11. As an apostle Paul was gifted to accomplish those works that God had prepared beforehand for him, cf. Eph. 2:10.

When Paul and Barnabas were sent out from the church in Antioch on the Orontes in Syria they were in a state of having been given over to (or commended to) the grace from God unto the work which they fulfilled, Acts 14:26. Their work was totally connected to the grace from God. Their whole ministry was by the grace from God and their message of salvation involved the grace from God. Apollos helped the saints who had believed and were believers through grace in Achaia where Paul and Silas had ministered, Acts 18:27. The message they left with believers also was living by grace apart from law.

Paul selected Silas to go with him on his second journey. When they departed from Antioch on the Orontes, the brethren once again gave them over (or commended) them to the grace from God, Acts 15:40. Paul emphasized his work by the grace from God later when he wrote to the Corinthians.

Paul labored and toiled as an apostle but he didn't do it under law. He commented on his apostleship after writing about his seeing the resurrected Lord. He wrote, "But I am what I am by a quality of God's grace, and His grace unto me didn't come to be empty, but I toiled more abundantly than all of them (other apostles), yet not I but rather the grace from God which *was* intimately together with me," I Cor. 15:10. Notice that, though Paul was toiling with blood, sweat and tears kind of toil, it wasn't himself but it was the grace from God which was toiling intimately together with him. As a Christian all that Paul was, was by God's grace. His was a life of grace. There was no self-effort on Paul's part, it was the grace from God enabling him to accomplish the will of God for him. He could say, "For our boasting is this, the witness from our conscience, that by simplicity and sincerity (that which is without mixture of motive) with reference to God, not by fleshly wisdom but rather by a quality of grace from God, we had our conduct in

the world, and more abundantly facing you,” II Cor. 1:12. Paul’s behavior was by a quality of grace from God, not by Paul’s efforts from the flesh. Eventually he received a thorn in the flesh so that he would learn that God’s grace was sufficient (enough) for him, II Cor. 12:9. When Paul was weak he had to depend upon the power of Christ which settled over him like a tent so that he could be strong, cf. II Cor. 12:9-11. Grace was the epitome of Paul’s present tense salvation.

We can trace through some of Paul’s toiling in Acts and see that the thrust of his message to believers was grace. In Antioch of Pisidia Paul and Barnabas went to the synagogue of the Jews where Paul preached to them Christ crucified and risen. When the meeting broke up we find many of the Jews and devout proselytes followed the apostles who were attempting to persuade them to continue in the grace from God, Acts 13:43. This is the first reference to New Testament grace. Paul’s message was built upon the Old Testament Scriptures and the fulfillment of prophecies concerning Christ. He emphasized the resurrection of Christ four times, cf. Acts 13:30, 33, 34, 37. He concluded that forgiveness of sins is through Christ and those who believe in this one are declared righteous from all things which the law of Moses could not do, Acts. 13:38, 39. The message of being declared righteous is a message of grace, not law. The recipients of this message needed to forsake the law of Moses and having believed in Christ, to continue in the grace from God. Salvation is by grace through faith and the Christian life is a life by God’s grace accompanied by faith.

We find a most touching scene when Paul meets with the elders from the church in Ephesus in Miletus, Acts 20. He reminded them of his work when he spent three years ministering to their spiritual needs. They need to take heed to themselves and shepherd the Church of God, for there will be wolves from outside and some from within who were not going to spare the flock, Acts 20:28-29. These would draw disciples away after themselves, so they need to pay attention and remember how Paul had warned them for three years, Acts 20:30, 31. He now comes to the grace from God and how it works in a believer’s life. “And now, I entrust you (for protection and safekeeping) to the God and to the word pertaining to His grace, which *word* is able to build *you* up (or edify) and to give *you* the inheritance among all the ones in a state of having been sanctified (or set apart),” Acts 20:32. Paul didn’t anticipate seeing the saints in Ephesus here on earth again. These were what he considered to be his final words to them (though he did see them again). No one could ever be built up and grow under law, but growth comes by the grace from God. Peter wrote, “But keep on growing by a quality of grace and by a quality of experiential knowledge concerning our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,” II Pet. 3:18.

##### 5. Works versus grace in the Christian life.

Between Romans and Galatians Paul makes it clear that righteousness is not out from works of any law. The promise to Abraham that he should be heir of a world (the new earth) was not through any law but through a quality of righteousness through faith, Rom. 4:13. “Assuming the heirs were out from a quality of law, the previously mentioned faith

has been and is in a state of being emptied and the promise rendered inoperative. For the law works out wrath, but where there is no law, neither *is there* transgression. On account of this *it is* out from a quality of faith, that *it might be* measured by grace, so that (as a result) the promise might be certain to all the seed, not to that which *is* out from the law only, but also to *the seed which* is out from a quality of Abraham's faith, who is the father of all of us," Rom. 4:14-16. Believing Jews and Gentiles as a result of Spirit baptism are Abraham's spiritual seed in Christ who is a physical descendent of Abraham, Gal. 3:26-28. This position as an heir is through faith, not through law, that it might be by grace.

Any kind of law relates to the sin nature. Paul says "...a quality of law entered in alongside, in order that the trespass (or offence) might abound, but where the sin (nature) abounded, the grace super abounded, in order that just as the sin (nature) reigned as king by the death, in like manner also the grace reigned as king through righteousness because of<sup>57</sup> life eternal through Jesus Christ our Lord," Rom. 5:20, 21. Living under the rule of the sin nature is to live in the realm of death, but living by grace there is victory in life as grace reigns through righteousness. This is not the believer's righteousness but the righteousness imputed to the believer out from faith through Christ, Rom. 5:1. This is the righteousness of God in Christ, II Cor. 5:21. Grace reigns as a king through this righteousness and when the believer counts his position to be true, and yields his members as instruments of righteousness, this righteousness is carried out in a practical righteousness, Rom. 6:11-13. The believers in Rome were to stop letting the sin nature reign as king in their bodies which were susceptible to death but to yield themselves as those who were living out from dead ones and the members of their bodies as instruments or implements of righteousness. A quality of sin will not lord it over them, for they were not under any kind of law but under grace, Rom. 6:14, 15. This grace is the super abounding grace of the previous chapter. Paul couldn't have said it any plainer, "You are not under any kind of law, but rather under a quality of grace."

To the Galatians Paul said, "I am not setting aside the grace from God, for assuming for the sake of argument a quality of righteousness *is* through any kind of law, then Christ died gratuitously," Gal. 2:21. If you could gain righteousness through the keeping of any law, then Christ died for no cause. For this to be the case, the grace from God would be set aside. Righteousness would come from works rather than through grace and faith.

6. The problem for Christians who do not take advantage of grace in present tense salvation.

Paul marvels at how quickly in this manner the Galatians followed false teachers who taught a different gospel for Christians to mature by. "I am marveling that you for yourselves have removed (from one place to another) in this manner so quickly from the

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<sup>57</sup> Causal use of the preposition εἰς- (eis). The believer has eternal life at the moment of salvation as a result of the indwelling of the Son of God who imparts life to him, I Jn. 5:11-13.



one having called you by grace from Christ unto a different gospel, which is not another *gospel* of the same kind, except there are certain ones troubling you to pervert (to change from one thing to another) the gospel concerning the Christ,” Gal. 1:6, 7. He is writing to those who are already Christians so he is not writing concerning the gospel for initial salvation, cf. I Cor. 15:3, 4. He is writing concerning the gospel concerning the Christ, i.e. the Head and the Body together, cf. I Cor. 12:12. This is the gospel by which believers are established (στηρίζω- steridzo- made firm), Rom. 16:25. Some were troubling them perverting the gospel by which they could be established and grow and they were removing themselves from this gospel. This gospel is built upon the grace from God, not upon works of some law as the rest of the epistle bears out. Believers can also stand firm in this grace, I Pet. 5:12. To the Hebrews Paul says that it is an appropriate thing that the heart is made stable (βεβαιόω-bebaioo) by grace, not with food, Heb. 13:9. Food refers to the law. You cannot mature by law and the law will never make the heart of a Christian stable but by grace it can be. Living by rules results in stunted Christians.

Paul encourages the Corinthians not to receive the grace from God in vain, II Cor. 6:1. They as believers are part of a new creation, II Cor. 5:17. They have been reconciled, i.e. changed from enemies to friends, to God through Christ, II Cor. 5:18. Yet in a practical way they need to be reconciled to God, II Cor. 5:20. They have also come to be a quality of God’s righteousness in Christ, II Cor. 5:21. On this backdrop, Paul says, “Now being fellow workers we also are exhorting you not to receive (welcome) the grace from God unto vanity, i.e. empty, without purpose,” II Cor. 6:1. Paul, as a worker for God, had brought the grace from God to these Corinthians. He is concerned about how they are receiving the grace from God. The grace from God he speaks of here is not for salvation as demonstrated from the previous context. It is the grace by which they are to live. They would have received it in vain, if they didn’t live by it. If they live by grace they can be established and grow. If not, there would be no purpose for their reception of grace. The grace from God is key to the Christian life.

When we consider rules and grace, they do not get along. In the Early Church, as well as today, there were believers who were attempting to live by law. This doesn’t work before God. God wants the believer to accept what He has already provided by grace and is providing moment by moment by grace. The Galatians had this problem amongst them. Paul told them, “Therefore you stand fast in the liberty by which Christ freed us, and stop allowing yourselves to be entangled again in a yoke of bondage,” Gal. 5:1. The law was nothing but a yoke of bondage to the Jews, cf. Acts 15:10. The Jewish Christians in Galatia were free from any kind of law and were to stop being enslaved to some law again. No Christian should try to live by any kind of law. Christ was of no value to the ones insisting on circumcision as a rule, Gal. 5:2. Insisting on any kind of rules for a Christian stymies the Christian life. Paul continued, “You, whoever are attempting to be declared righteous by any kind of law, were rendered inoperative from Christ, you have fallen out from grace,” Gal. 5:4. To live by any kind of law, is to put Christ out of business in the life of the believer. Paul has proved before that no one is declared righteous by any kind of law, cf. Gal. 2:16-21, etc. Those who are attempting

to be declared righteous (tendential present) by some law are fallen from grace. They are saved and cannot lose their salvation but what they have done is to fall out from living by grace. They no longer are availing themselves of the freedom which they have under grace as they try to prove to men how righteous they are by keeping rules. They are guaranteed not to grow, since growth comes by grace, cf. II Pet. 3:18.

Following the passage dealing with chastisement of God's sons in Hebrews twelve Paul encourages believers to continue overseeing<sup>58</sup> lest anyone fall short<sup>59</sup> from the grace from God, Heb. 12:15. Believers should watch out to make sure that no one in the church fails to live under the grace from God. A carnal believer in a church can draw others into carnality with themselves.

Life under grace is not promised to be easy. Even suffering for doing good is a thing of grace alongside of God, I Pet. 2:20. The Authorized Version translates grace "acceptable" but it is a proof of grace. A Christian who suffers for righteousness is happy, I Pet. 3:14. God may desire for a believer to suffer for doing good, I Pet. 3:17. But even such suffering is better than the life of a stunted believer who is not taking advantage of grace and attempts to live by law. The hope of the believer is found in grace, II Thess. 2:16.

#### 7. Positional aspects of grace.

God has graced the grace believer in the One being loved, Eph. 1:6. The American Standard Version reads "which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." The Authorized Version translates it "accepted in the beloved." The verb is the verbal form of grace. God the Father has graced us in Christ at the moment we were baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit, cf. I Cor. 12:13. It is also in Christ that we have been forgiven trespasses. "In whom we have complete redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of trespasses (those things which offend God), measured by the riches from His grace," Eph. 1:7. Throughout the ages of eternity future God "will show the exceeding riches from His grace by his kindness toward us in Christ Jesus," Eph. 2:7. Timothy is to be empowered (A. V. "stand strong") by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, II Tim. 2:1. He will also graciously give (A. V. "freely give") the previously mentioned all things to us, Rom. 8:32. God has also given us the Holy Spirit so "that we might intuitively know the things having been graciously given (A. V. "freely given") to us by God," I Cor. 2:12. It is because we have a High Priest having passed through the heavens that we can approach the throne of grace with boldness, Heb. 4:14-16.

#### 8. What's a believer to do?

We have emphasized that we are under grace and not under any law. Law is work.

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<sup>58</sup> ἐπισκοπέω- (episkopeo)= to take the oversight, a careful watching over. Only here and I Pet. 5:2.

<sup>59</sup> ὑστερέω- (hustereo)= to be behind; to come short, cf. Rom. 3:23; to fail.

But what about grace? Is there any work for those under grace? What shall we **do**? Under grace there are no “thou shalt not” rules, nor are there any “thou shalt” rules. But there are some strong suggestions of what a believer today should do. God does have works that He has prepared beforehand that we should order our lives in them, Eph. 2:10. These are not works based upon law. Christ came to do the Father’s will and having offered Himself once for all for our sins, He fulfilled the law, Heb. 10:7, 9; 7:27; Mt. 5:17. There is no more law to be done by the grace believer being in Christ. Initial salvation is “not out from works of righteousness which we have done, but measured by His mercy He saved us through a quality of washing, i.e. regeneration, even a quality of renewdness from the Holy Spirit,” Tit. 3:5, cf. Eph. 2:8, 9.

When it comes to present tense salvation believers are encouraged to do some things but not on a legal basis. Paul encourages the Galatian believers to join himself in not being weary in doing well, i.e. doing that which is appropriate for a Christian to do, Gal. 6:9. If they don’t become faint hearted, they will reap in its very own season of time. They are to do good to all men, especially to other believers, Gal. 6:10. The Spirit filled believer can also fulfill the New Commandment to love one another as Christ loved, Jn. 13:34. This love will meet another believer’s need and in so doing love God. This is loving in deed and truth, cf. I Jn. 3:17, 18.

Under the Mosaic Law, the Jew had to determine to do what God said and he had to attempt to do it by his fallen nature in his own strength. But that is not so with the grace believer. Paul describes it thusly, “For God is the one energizing in us both to be desirously willing and to be energetically doing His good pleasure. You keep on doing all things without murmurings and disputings,” Phil. 2:13, 14. We, as grace believers, would not even want to do God’s good pleasure, much less to actually be doing it on our own. God is the one who enables not only the believer’s will, but his actual doing what is pleasing to God. This is one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit. There is no law involved in this. One who is led by the Spirit is not under any kind of law, Gal. 5:18.

The Christian can become wrapped up in the world system and misdirect love towards it, I Jn. 2:15, 16. But the world system is passing away. Believers need to be in a spiritual condition to know God’s desirous will, for the world system is passing away but “the one doing the desirous will of God abides into the age,” I Jn. 2:17. God is the one who may “adjust or equip (A. V. “make you perfect”) you in every good work<sup>60</sup> to do His desirous will, doing in us the thing well pleasing before Him through Jesus Christ...” Heb. 13:21. Knowing and doing the desirous will of God is important for the believer. This again, has nothing to do with living by rules. These Hebrew Christians had endured some terribly difficult persecution so Paul reminds them that they have a better and enduring substance in heavens, Heb. 10:34. He also reminds them that “having done the desirous will of God, they would receive the promise,” for the Lord is coming soon, Heb. 10:36, cf. vss. 34-37. Doing God’s will involves doing what is right. John points out that doing righteousness is a proof that one is born out from God who is righteous, I Jn. 2:29,

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60 The Critical Text following a few manuscripts leaves “work” out but we include it.

cf. 3:7.

Paul has some other statements concerning what a Christian should do. To the Colossians he wrote, “And whatsoever you should happen to do in word or in work, *do* all in *the* name (character) of *the* Lord Jesus, while giving thanks to God *the* Father through Him,” Col. 3:17. Doing the will of God will never go against the character of the Lord Jesus. Paul continues, “Whatsoever you should happen to do, you, yourself, work out from a quality of soul (A. V. “heartily”) as for the Lord and not for men,” Col. 3:23. Christians should be concerned that all they do is for (dative of advantage) the Lord and not for men. If a believer does for the Lord, he will be doing righteousness and will be in the desirous will of God.

Under grace there is not a list of rules for the Christian. Grace believers are free. However they are not free to sin or to behave in any way they want. Christians are not under any kind of law, but under grace, Rom. 6:14, 15. The Christian who fulfills the New Commandment by loving as Christ loved, will not do things that will offend another believer. He also will not use his freedom as a toehold from which the flesh can operate, but will by love be serving the other believer, cf. I Cor. 8; Gal. 5:13. To the spiritual believer who is directing the fruit of the Spirit Paul says, “against such there is no law,” Gal. 5:23. There is no need for rules for the spiritual Christian for he will be doing what is right in the character of Christ according to God’s desirous will for him. There are also no rules for the carnal Christian, but there are warnings that God will deal with him as a son, Heb. 12:6, 7. Grace believers are free from any kind of law, but they are in-lawed (A. V. “under the law to Christ”) to Christ, I Cor. 9:21. Christ has made us free, Gal. 5:1. We are free to allow the Godhead to work in and through us to the glory of God. We are free from self-effort and any kind of law. Some spoke badly of Paul for what he ate, when he was eating by grace and gave thanks for it, I Cor. 10:30. But Paul’s advice to believers is to glorify God in everything. He told the Corinthians, “Therefore, whether you go on eating or drinking or whatever you are doing, you continue doing all things unto a quality of God’s glory. Don’t come to be a stumbling stone both to the Jews and to the Greeks (non-Jews, Gentiles), and to the Church of God,” I Cor. 10:31-32. Rules for the Christian? Glorify God in whatever you do, even the most mundane things in life, while not being a stone of stumbling to others.

## CONCLUSION

So then, what shall we do? Are there rules for us to live by? As we have seen many in Christendom believe Christians should live under the Ten Commandments, or keep the golden rule, or keep some other rules. If the Christian is under rules, which rules are they? Rules change. The first rule given to man was “Thou shalt not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” The rule was given to a particular man, at a particular time, in a particular place, and for a particular purpose. It was given to Adam during the Dispensation of Innocence while he was in the Garden of Eden and it was the responsibility given to him to give him opportunity to obey what God told him to do. No one is going to try to apply this rule to the Church. Just as the first rule was to a specific

man, the Mosaic Law was to a particular people, at a particular time, in a particular place, and for a particular purpose. The law was given through Moses to the Nation Israel, after they came out from Egypt and the responsibilities of the law were for that people in the land that God was going to give them. They had said they would do whatever Jehovah said, so He gave them the law to prove to them they couldn't do all that He said. They had failed to depend upon Him by faith.

God gave the law through Moses. There is no question that the law was given to God's chosen people, Israel. It began at Mt. Sinai and was fulfilled by the Lord, Jesus Christ at the cross. It was never given to the Church, nor does it have any application to the Church. The law in all of its parts was to the Jews. It was a Jewish law and it is always identified so in Scripture. It was referred to by the Jews as "our law" and by others as "your law" or "their law" referring to the Jews. It was made up, not only of commandments, but also had statutes, things to be observed and judgments.

There was nothing wrong with the law. The problem was the fallen nature of man. Paul could say that the commandment was holy, righteous and good. Law was not given for a righteous man but for those who were unrighteous. The law gave an experiential knowledge of sin. The law demonstrated the sinfulness of the sin nature. It also was the basis for transgressions. The commandments of the law brought the sin nature into activity within those who were under the law. The law said "don't" and through the sin nature the first thing one would do was break the law. The Jew, because of his sin nature, could not keep the law. Only the Lord, Jesus Christ, the God-man absolutely kept every detail of the law. Eventually the Jews came up with their traditions which they put above the law and failed to keep the weightier things in the law. Because of their circumcision they saw themselves above all other peoples and were very self-righteous. Yet, at the same time, they were guilty by the standard of the law, for to break the law in one point made them liable for the whole law. Christians who want to try to live by the law are selective about what parts of the law they accept. They leave out the judgments of the law, especially the death penalty where it applied. In the Old Testament, the Jews were under every aspect of the law.

No one was saved by keeping the law. The law was for the Jews' present tense salvation. It kept them alive and blessed emotionally, physically and materially in the land. The law was work. They had to work at it to keep it. There was no faith in the law. The law didn't provide spiritual life. No one under law could mature under it. This was true of the priests who ministered in the temple as well as to the most lowly Jew. The Christian who tries to keep some law cannot mature. He cannot be declared righteous before God by keeping any rules. He is living in carnality, in the realm of death. He is not utilizing what he is and has in Christ. He is a stunted Christian as the Corinthians were. The Jews, who were given the law, couldn't keep it, neither can a Christian. The Jews simply could not keep the law because of their sin nature. A Christian who attempts to live by any law will fail just like the Jews failed. The law was not easy. It was a hard master over those under it. It carried a curse. Most of the Ten Commandments carried the death penalty. The law worked out a quality of God's wrath

upon those under it who broke it. The law was good but those under it were not. Christ came to fulfill the law so there was no more law to do.

We have seen that the Lord, Jesus Christ was born and lived under the Mosaic Law. His birth and ministry was prophesied in the Old Testament. The Eternal Word came to be flesh and through Him came grace and truth in contrast to the law which came through Moses. The Lord Jesus was a priest under a different priesthood, that of Melchisedec. When He came to be a priest, there was a change in the law. He entered the heavenly Holy of Holies offering His own blood upon the heavenly altar. By the offering of His own blood He inaugurated the New Covenant for the Church whereby He imparts eternal life to the grace believer. This is a better covenant based upon better promises. During His earthly ministry He changed the law. His law, given in the Olivet Discourse for His earthly kingdom, is a tougher law than the Mosaic Law. Many Christians come to Matthew five to try to live by the laws laid down for the Jews during the Millennial Kingdom. Trying to apply either the Mosaic Law or the kingdom law to Christians is stealing what is for the Jews. None of these laws has anything to do with the Church. To try to live by them is a surety of failure and a stunted Christian life.

When God the Son came to earth to join His Person to the human nature in Mary's womb, He came to do the Father's will. This is exactly what He did. He fulfilled every detail of the law and by His cross work redeemed those who were under the law and freed them from the bondage of the law. In so doing He provided forgiveness of sins. He made it possible for humans to be declared righteous. Only one who was absolutely righteous could provide for the unrighteous to be righteous. The law could not do this. But Christ, as the God-man, qualified to make it possible for fallen men to be declared righteous in Himself. He broke down the barrier between Jews and Gentiles, the law, and created a new entity, i.e. the Church of God, made up of both Jews and Gentiles. He completely fulfilled the law during His earthly ministry and as a result He was hated and rejected by the Jews.

In the Old Testament the law made no one righteous in any tense of salvation. It couldn't, otherwise Christ wouldn't have needed to die. Today righteousness in past tense salvation is imputed to the believer in Christ. For the grace believer there is a law principle by the Holy Spirit by which he can have victory over the law principle of sin and death. This is possible for one who is walking by means of the Spirit and has nothing to do with keeping rules. If a Christian attempts to live by the law, he is rendering Christ inoperative in his life and failing to live by grace. To attempt to live by any law is to live by self-effort in disregard of one's position in Christ and to discount the work of Christ in behalf of that individual. It doesn't work.

From the Early Church on there have been Christians who have tried to put other believers under law. But as we have seen, the law was a yoke upon the necks of those who were under it or trying to put it upon others. The law was a burden. There are many examples in Scripture of those who tried to live by law and failed. To try to live by law means a Christian has fallen out from living under grace. The rule of life in the present

Dispensation of the Grace from God, is grace. Grace and law, as we have seen, do not get along. You can't have them together. You either have law or you have grace. The same is true of faith and law. The law was work but faith is not work. Work is not out from faith and the law was not out from faith. As Christians we are not under any kind of law. When we are led by the Spirit we are not under any kind of law. There is no law against the parts of the fruit of the Spirit. Whether we are carnal or spiritual we are not under any kind of law. We are not to attempt to prove ourselves to either God or men by attempting to keep the Mosaic Law or any other kind of law. We are not to try to live by the kingdom rules of Matthew five. We are to walk by means of the Spirit and to be led by means of the Spirit while being filled by means of the Spirit. The Christian life is not a life of self-dependency but a life of dependency on the Godhead in our lives. The only rule for the Christian is the law principle of Christ which is the New Commandment. If you love one another as Christ loved, there is no need for some law. You will do what you ought to do on the basis of the Holy Spirit producing that love as part of His fruit. This is seen by bearing another believer's burden and so fulfilling the law of Christ. Some go to the statements where parts of the Ten Commandments are quoted along with "love your neighbor as yourself" and see it applying to Christians. But these instances in the epistles are given as examples of loving your neighbor as yourself under law so that you wouldn't do anything that would harm your neighbor. However as we have emphasized, the believer is not under any law. To love in this way, in fulfillment of law, is to love in a selfish manner. The New Commandment is just the opposite. You do not love yourself but you are to love the other believer with this other centered, self-sacrificial divine quality of love. The New Commandment essentially eliminates the need for any other kind of rules to live by. If one fulfills the New Commandment, there is no room for any "thou shalt not's" or "thou shalt's" laid down as law. Grace eliminates any kind of rules to live by.

As we pointed out, the moment you insert some rule grace departs. At the same time, the moment grace is brought in, law departs. There can never be a mixture of law and grace. They simply are antipodal to one another. Grace is the rule of life now in this Dispensation, which eliminates any kind of rules. The same is true of law and faith. Law, as we have seen, is work. On the one hand if righteousness comes by keeping rules, then it comes as payment for the work done. But on the other hand if righteousness comes from faith it comes by grace. Righteousness is imputed to the one believing. Following initial salvation, grace believers are to live by grace and faith apart from any works of any kind of law. There are no rules for the grace believer. We, as grace believers, are to walk or order our lives by faith and live by faith. The Christian life is to be a faith life. But once again, faith is not human faith, it is part of the fruit of the Spirit which we are to direct to the circumstances in our lives. God has given us promises under grace and we are to simply take Him at His word. All that we do should come out from faith. Anything we do doubting is sin. Grace came through Christ and by His cross work He did away with any kind of law by His once for all sacrifice of Himself. To insist on living by rules is to say that Christ's work wasn't enough. If there is any law for the Christian, Christ died gratuitously without a cause. Thank God, there is no law for the Christian and that Christ did die for our sins and rose again making it so that we are free

from any kind of law. We are free to serve Him out of love for Him and other believers. We are free from the bondage of law and bondage to the sin nature. When Spirit filled, we can please God by our activity and behave righteously in our present tense salvation. But in our standing before God, in Christ His righteousness is imputed to us. We can do nothing to affect this in any way. In Christ we have come to be the righteousness of God. This imputed righteousness is the basis for yielding our bodies as implements of righteousness to God. When it comes to righteousness for the Christian, neither in past tense salvation, nor in present tense nor in future tense, are there any rules to live by. We are living under God's grace.

Yet some Christians insist on trying to please God living by some rules. It may be the Mosaic Law or some other socially or self made rule of life. There were some, especially Jews, in the Early Church who were insisting on living by rules. In Romans they were trying to prove to God how righteous they were by their circumcision and by their keeping the law. In Galatians some were trying to show men how spiritual they were by keeping either the Mosaic Law or some other law. In both instances, whether a Legalist or a Galatianite, they were carnal and attempting to please God from the flesh. It didn't work then and it won't work today either. They were those who were not benefiting from their position in Christ and Christ being in them. As Paul said, they had fallen out from grace by living under some rules. They were saved but not appropriating life under grace and faith. They were failing to utilize what God had provided for them by grace. They also could not grow. Growth comes by grace, not by works of any kind of law.

There are other Christians who believe that since they are not under grace they can do as they please. These are antinomian, i.e. against law. Are Dispensationalists antinomian? This is a common accusation used by the Reformed. They keep on pecking away at Dispensationalists saying that we are against law or don't believe in keeping the law. We, as Dispensationalists, are not against the law. The law was good for those to whom it was given, i.e. Israel. Are we antinomian because we don't apply it to the Church? No. We keep it where it belongs and apply it to the people it was given to. We do not appropriate what belongs to someone else. We are not antinomian for we do believe in fulfilling the New Commandment given to grace believers. "Love one another as I have loved you." This love is directed by deed and truth when we see another Christian in need. We do not misapply the Mosaic Law or any other law to the Church but we do, when we are spiritual, direct love, as part of the fruit of the Spirit, towards circumstances. A spiritual Christian will not use his liberty for a toehold for the flesh, but will by love be serving one another as a slave. There is no other rule laid down for the Christian. The Scriptures are clear, Christians are not under any kind of law but are under grace, period! If you are led by the Spirit you are not under any kind of law. There is no law against the fruit of the Spirit. Grace and law do not mix.

So, what are we to do? Nothing? The place to begin is to keep on being filled by means of the Spirit so that He makes up for our lack of Christ likeness. Be spiritual so that we will be in a condition to be willing and to be doing of God's good pleasure in response to God's working within us. We need to be spiritual so that we can walk by



means of the Holy Spirit and experience freedom from the reign of the sin nature over us. We also need to be spiritual so that we can be led by means of the Spirit in the decisions of our lives, remembering that He will not lead us contrary to the Word of God.

When it comes to rules, what should we do? As we have seen, the Mosaic Law has nothing to do with the Church. It was given to the Nation Israel. Hence we are not responsible to do any part of the Mosaic Law. And not being under any law, we are not to do anything by any law as a legal matter. We are under grace. Under grace there are some guidelines for what we should do given in the epistles. Whatever we do in word or work, we are to do in the character of Christ while giving thanksgiving to the Father. We are to work as for the Lord and not for men. Whether we eat or whether we drink we are to continue doing all things unto God's glory without coming to be a stumbling stone to anyone. We can accomplish this by God's grace. And we can grow by God's grace and in the experiential knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. To Him is the glory both now and into a day age.

When it comes to law, keep in mind:

**GRACE AND LAW DO NOT MIX!**

**FAITH AND WORKS DO NOT GET ALONG TOGETHER!**

**IF YOU ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT, YOU ARE NOT UNDER ANY LAW!**

**THERE IS NO LAW AGAINST THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT!**

**YOU ARE NOT UNDER ANY LAW BUT UNDER A QUALITY OF GRACE!**

**YOU ARE FREE IN CHRIST!**

**BY LOVE SERVE ONE ANOTHER!**