

Law and Faith, Not Law versus Grace

We hear so much these days about the Law versus Grace and that we are no longer are under the Law but, with the New Covenant, we are now under God's Grace. In some areas of Christian belief, this concentration on God's grace has led to a license to do evil by condoning sin and by saying we don't have to obey the law anymore. This is a flagrant abuse of God's willingness to grant us mercy under the terms of the New Covenant. Let's look into the Word of God and see what it says.

Jesus used the beatitudes of Matthew 5 through 7 to show us how the laws of God are now even more binding in their spiritual intent under the New Covenant. God has always had grace on Israel (Ex. 33:16-17 and Jer. 31:2) just as He does on us today; if He didn't, we would all be consumed. But the real difference between the Old and New Covenants is the gage used as the standard for righteousness. The old standard (gage) was the Law. It was the law that kept Israel in protective custody until Christ came. But now the new standard (gage) for righteousness is Jesus Christ. It is FAITH in Jesus that gives us access to the Father and right standing with Him.

In Galatians 3:10-13 NLT we read, "But those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under His curse, for the Scriptures say, 'Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the commands that are written in God's Book of the Law.' So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law. For the Scriptures say, '**It is through faith that a righteous person has life.**' This way of faith is very different from the way of law, which says, 'It is through obeying the law that a person has life.' But **Christ has rescued us from the curse pronounced by the law...**"

And it is now faith in Jesus Christ that keeps us in right standing with God the Father, "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6). All this is to say that God had mercy on us, drew us to His Son, and allowed us to believe. That is God's grace to us! All God's grace would mean nothing if we did not have faith! But **it is not our own faith that saves us!**

The Father draws you into a relationship with His Son. It is the Father's faith that attracts you to His Son, "No man can come to Me [Jesus], except the Father which hath sent Me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:44). You see, **it is the Father that gives you the faith to believe in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of all your sins. You didn't decide to come to Jesus Christ all on your own! The Father drew you and led you to understand all He had for you through His Son Jesus! The Father gave you the faith to believe!**

"Even as **Abraham believed God**, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that **they which are of faith**, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that **God would justify the heathen through faith...** So **then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham**" (Gal. 3:6-9).

In verse eleven of Galatians 3 we read, “But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, *it is evident*: for, **‘The just shall live by faith.’**”

There is no contradiction between the Laws of God and God’s promises through faith. But many are confused about God’s grace. God didn’t promise us anything through His grace. It was through faith that we receive His promises just as Abraham did. It is through faith in Jesus Christ that we receive the promises of salvation and eternal life.

“Is there a conflict, then, between God’s law and God’s promises? Absolutely not! If the law could give us new life, we could be made right with God by obeying it. But the Scriptures declare that we are all prisoners of sin, so **we receive God’s promise of freedom only by believing in Jesus Christ**” (Gal. 3:21-22 NLT).

God grants us His grace because we believe in Jesus Christ, “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Gal. 3:26). God has granted us faith and has extended His grace to all those who have faith in His Son!

The purpose of the law is to identify sin. And that is why Jesus said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled” (Matt. 5:17-18). And the Apostle Paul went on to say, “...I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, ‘Thou shalt not covet’” (Rom. 7:7).

James continues in his book, “...But your job is to obey the law, not to judge whether it applies to you. God alone, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to save or to destroy...” (Jas. 4:11-12 NLT). And Paul also obeyed the law in its spiritual intent when he explained, “When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law, I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ” (I Cor. 9:21 NLT). When Paul was around the Gentiles, he didn’t do any of the Jewish rituals that may have offended the Gentiles. He didn’t disobey any of the laws of God; he rather obeyed them in the spiritual intent as shown by Christ.

Therefore, the law remains, but the penalty of the law, which is death, is removed when we accept, by faith, the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to cover all our sins.

“Therefore **being justified by faith [not by grace or the law], we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ**: By whom also **we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand**, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom. 5:1-2). So, we see then that it is by faith in Jesus Christ that we are allowed to stand before God covered by His grace and mercy. **GOD HAS GRACE ON ALL THOSE WHO HAVE FAITH IN HIS SON JESUS CHRIST!**