

# **Romans 3:27-31**

## *What About the Law?*

**Romans 3:27-31, “Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of what works? Nay: but by the law of faith. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”**

### *Introduction*

“Open our Bibles to the book of Romans the third chapter, again. Romans chapter three. We'll be looking at verses 27 through 31, the rest of the chapter today. You know, pride is a real problem of the human heart. We human beings are so obnoxiously proud that it's sickening. We'll boast about anything, no matter how sick it may be. The Duval County jail is having trouble with prisoners. The deputies were finding that the punishment that they were giving the trouble-making inmates was not working. They were putting them on bread and water in solitary confinement. In most facilities this kind of punishment had been very effective. But now they were really stumped, they could not understand why it wasn't working here. Why wasn't there any improvement among the inmates? Why did they come out more obnoxious than they were when they were put in? Why wasn't the punishment working? Finally after a lot of investigation and many interviews with the inmates, Sheriff Dale Carson discovered why it wasn't working. He

discovered that especially the young offenders were glorying in and boasting about they're having been put on bread and water. *'You know, I'm really tough, man, you know. I was so bad that I had to be put on bread and water.'* They were actually glorying in what was meant to shame them, boasting about what they should have never ever done in the first place. So, in what I think amounted to an absolute stroke of genius, old Sheriff Carson came up with a plan. Instead of putting the offending inmates on bread and water, which they boast about, Carson had them put on baby food. They'd go to solitary, and it was announced to everyone that now they would be eating strained peas. Now that's enough to make anybody repent, isn't it gang? Some of those things are so gross. I like the whizzed meats the best, don't you? *Aggh!* Well, it worked. Now offending inmates are given baby food and they eat it because they're hungry. But they don't brag about it anymore. *'I ate strained peas!'*, you know. Now Sheriff Carson says that one day usually gets the inmates on their best behavior. Only takes one day on Gerber's to do it. People try to find the craziest reasons to boast. Just about anything. So when I read verse 27 I see that the Bible teaches that there is nothing that we can boast about doing to earn our salvation. **“Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? Of works? No: but by the law of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith”** - - and Luther added "alone" in his translation into German [which is changing the Word of God, isn't it?] -- **apart from the works of law.” There's nothing to boast about (Romans 3:27-28)** When you get to heaven you're not going to stand there full of pride, singing *'Oh what glory for me.'* When you think about it, the sin of pride is the cause of the whole mess this world is in. There's tremendous peril in pride. This was Satan's undoing. As he was created an anointed cherub that guarded the glory of God, as he was in the very presence of God's throne, he was undone as pride began to grip his heart, and he sinned the first sin. Keep your finger here in Romans 3 and go back to the book of Isaiah and look at the 14<sup>th</sup> chapter, you'll see that the very first sin in all the universe was Lucifer's sin of pride. **Isaiah**

**chapter 14, verses 13 and 14.** There he was, beautiful being, one of the most awesome creatures God ever has created. And he began to see God on the throne and desired to be there himself. *'I'm more beautiful than God, I'm more lovely, I'm more powerful, I want to be in God's place.'* Listen to what he said. **Verse 12, "How have you fallen from heaven O Star of the Morning, son of the Dawn (or Lucifer, son of the Morning)? You have been cut down to the earth [cf. Luke 10:18]. You have weakened the nations. But you said in your heart 'I will ascend to heaven, I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of the assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds. I will make myself like the Most High.'"** He's got a problem, doesn't he? What's his big problem? "I, I will, I will, I will"--is our problem. What is in the very heart of the word pride? P R what?--I--DE, and that's the problem. **Me**, we live in a ME generation. A generation where we subscribe to magazines called SELF magazine. We will be proud about anything. The radical nature about the gospel of Jesus Christ cuts out boasting and pride. Why, because God is not saving us because of our good moral lives, or because of our wonderful accomplishments, or because of our intelligence, or even our Bible knowledge [and Who is it through his Holy Spirit that gives us real Bible understanding?--read John 14 and 16, it is **God** through His Holy Spirit who indwells us who imparts to us understanding of his Word]. We're not being saved because of anything we do, we're being saved only by what he has **done**--by grace through faith, the finished work of Jesus Christ [Yeshua haMeschiach]. Someone has well said that the ground at the foot of the cross is absolutely level. There are no doctorates there, there are no degrees there, there are no bank statements there, there are no pedigrees there. There are no genealogies there. It's level. None of us deserved to be saved. And all of us who are saved have been saved by sheer unmerited favor, we don't deserve God's kindness but he's given it to us anyway. It's called grace, it's the only way I'm getting to heaven [or for some, into the kingdom of heaven]. It's the only way you're getting to

heaven. And it's the only way anybody else is getting to heaven, there is nothing in us or about us to boast about. All the boasting should be about Jesus and what Jesus has done for us. The Bible says **“For by grace you have been saved, through faith.”** *‘Oh, it was my faith, though. I had to believe.’* See, there you are with your "I" in the way again. The Lord headed you off at the pass, **“For by grace” Ephesians 2:8-9** says **“you are saved through faith, and that”** -- that what? -- **that faith** – **“not of yourself, it is the gift of God.”** So you can't boast about 'Well, yes, *I* put my faith in Christ. *I had such strong faith, I had a mountain moving of faith.*' Sorry, you didn't have anything that wasn't given to you by God, your faith included. The **faith** was given to you to believe. You couldn't have believed if God didn't give you faith to believe, so don't boast in your faith. That too is from God. **“Not of works”** he goes on to say, **“lest any man should boast.”** **‘Don't you dare boast!’** the Holy Spirit is saying, about anything you've done. C.S. Lewis in his classic book *Mere Christianity*, says that *“the heart of pride is competition.”* He says it is essentially competitive, competitive by its very nature. "While the other vices are competitive only so to speak by accident. Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having **more** of it than the next man." You think about it. Pride doesn't get a lot of joy of having a car in the parking lot. Pride gets a joy out of having the only **Lexus** in the parking lot, or the only **Jaguar**. I mean, if there are fifty Lexus or fifty Jaguars or fifty Mercedes Benz's you couldn't walk out and say, "Ooh, yes, that's my car, the **only** one out there." Now if you brought that car, I apologize, I don't know who you are, I didn't know you were driving it, and I could care less, actually. The thing is, you see, it's not having something, it's having something **better**. Talk about our kids. It's not enough that our kids, all kids learn to talk and walk, don't they? *But when did yours begin to take his first step? Oh, very early, right? Why, before **any** of the other kids.* I mean, could you have a mediocre, boring kid that took a step with everyone else, no, oh very advanced, very intelligent. Pride is so sickening. It's everywhere in everything we do, it's sort of like a body odor you can't get rid of. Pride gets no pleasure

out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next man. We say that people are proud of being rich or clever or good looking. But they are not, they are proud of being **richer**, or **cleverer**, or **better looking** than others. If everyone else became equally rich or clever or good looking there would be nothing to be proud about. It's the comparison that makes you proud. The pleasure of being **above the rest**. Don't you love to be above the rest? Yes. How sick we are. **1 Corinthians 1:30** says **'Look gang, there's only one thing to boast about if you're going to boast.'** 1 Corinthians 1, verse 30, the apostle says, if you're going to be bragging and walking around and glorying in something, you'd better be careful about what you're glorying in, because there's only one thing that you'd better be boasting about, especially those of you who know the grace of Jesus and have been saved by what he has done. Verse 30, let's read it together, **verses 30 and 31**. And I don't even care if you're reading some other translation, that's ok, we'll sort of all begin and end at the same time. Verse 30, just make sure you're in the right chapter and verse. **Chapter 1 of 1 Corinthians and verse 30, "But by his doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, that just as it is written, let him who boasts boast in the Lord."** Now where are you going to be boasting if you're a Christian? In the Lord, right? Not in yourself. Not in your accomplishments, and not in the things that you possess. Paul said, **"But may it never be that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."** God is totally satisfied with what Jesus has done. God is absolutely thrilled with what his Son has done. He loves his son's perfect life, he couldn't keep quiet. Twice in the life of Jesus God could not keep quiet. He broke silence and said, **"This is my beloved Son, in whom I'm well pleased!"** He is so happy about his Son's work. You show that you are happy with Jesus work by trusting in that work that he's done for you, and trusting that alone. There's no place to boast or glory, because God is saving everybody the same way. There isn't an A plan, and a few years later, oh, we came up with a B plan, and a C

plan, and 'Oh, I was saved with the gold plan' 'Oh, well, I was saved on the Platinum plan.' 'I have more privileges than you do. Why I can use the crystal sea on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays all day long, but you saved with the bonds plan can only use it on Tuesdays.' Sorry, the next verse, as you go back to **Romans chapter 3, and look at verse 29**, you see that God is saying, '**Look, you all are saved the same way, so why are you trying to measure each other by each other, I saved you all the same way. I don't save one kid differently than I save another.**' Or is God the God of Jews only, is he just the Jewish God, or does he save Jews a little better? I mean, if you have a little Jewish blood in you, you get a little bit closer to God? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yeah, of Gentiles also.

*God Saves Every One Of Us The Same Way, Not  
On The Basis Of What We've Done*

**"Since, indeed God, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith is one."** In other words, he doesn't save Jewish people differently than non-Jewish people, Baptists different from Presbyterians, Calvary Chapel different from Methodists--hey there's one way of salvation, one door into the kingdom of God, and that's Jesus Christ, by believing in what he's done for you, by placing your trust of eternal life in him, and what he's done for you alone. That is what saves, and nothing else. One of the things that sort of bugs me, and this just, there are a lot things that really bug me. This sort of bugs me. And that is, and I'm 100 percent behind, and I think they're great, these organizations that are Jewish evangelism organizations--I believe you really need to understand the culture, to be able to witness to Jews, to be able to reach them, you know. I love 'em, I love everything about them, except sometimes as I listen to their radio broadcasts and I

watch their TV programs and I read their literature, sometimes a little bit of this comes across, 'We're a little bit closer to God because we can trace our lineage back to Abraham.' 'We're a little better in the church, we're a little bit higher than the rest of the ordinary Christians, because we're Messianic.' Sorry, you're no better than I am. You see, the blood that saves us is not the blood flowing in your veins, it's the blood that spilt out of Jesus' veins for you. And that blood saves anybody of any race and any color and any status, just as completely and just as wonderfully and gives us all the *very same* standing in Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male or female, we're all saved by the same precious blood of Jesus Christ. God saves us all apart from what we do. Look at Titus chapter 3. To the right, you'll hit a bunch of books that begin with T, and Titus is the last of those books. **Titus chapter 3, verses 4-7, "But when the kindness of God our Savior and his love for mankind appeared, he saved us" -- hallelujah, salvation is something you can have, and say "I'm saved", not "I hope to be saved, but "I am saved"--"he saved us "not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to his" -- what? -- "mercy by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being declared not guilty or justified by his grace, we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."** It says he saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness. ***Please, underscore that, let it sink into your heart.*** Why are you doing what you're doing? Is it to be saved? Then knock it off! You can't be saved by anything you do. The Bible says that all our righteous deeds are as filthy rags before God. [He's getting into an important point of doctrine here. But don't think just because we're saved by faith apart from works, that this now gives us an excuse to go out and party, actively breaking all of God's law with impunity. Wait and get the whole picture here.] And it's a very explicit term that I won't tell you what it means, and you know me, I'm not afraid to tell it like it is. It's a very gross thing that he's talking about. All our righteous deeds are as filthy rags. You're gonna present that

mess to God? 'Oh, but that's why I go and pray at the church every morning.' 'That's why I give my tithe.' 'That's why I got baptized, the righteous deed.' I'm sorry, he saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness. 'Well, I've been to the temple.' He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness. 'Well, I'm a vegetarian.' He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness. 'Well, I don't smoke, I don't drink, I don't dance.' He saved us not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness. You cannot be saved by anything you do. The apostle Paul tried. Chapter 3 of Philippians, go to the left. **Philippians chapter 3.** He says, '**Man, I was so religious, I had so much righteousness, so many good deeds, I was sickeningly good**' he said. That's my paraphrase, that's what he says, basically. **Verse 5 of chapter 3, 'Man, I was circumcised the eighth day, I was of the right nation, I had the very best tribe, the good family name of Benjamin [he actually was of the tribe of Benjamin, not Judah, so if this was so, Paul could never have been high priest], I was a Hebrew of Hebrews, as to the law of the denomination I was, I was a Pharisee. Boy was I zealous' vs. 6,** he says, '**I was so zealous, I even persecuted you Christians. As to the righteousness that was found in the law I was blameless, I kept all the little rituals, I kept the laws.**' But look at what he says in **verse 7, "Whatever things were gain to me, those things I've counted as a loss for the sake of knowing Christ. More than that, I count all things to be lost in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I've suffered the loss of all things, and I count them as but"** -- the word in Greek is -- "manure" -- rubbish, a pile of manure -- "**in order that I may gain Christ.**" **Verse 9, read it, "and may be found in him not having a righteousness of my own derived from law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith."** [and I might add, that faith, not of our own, but coming into us from God via his Holy Spirit, i.e. our obedience is faith-powered, and not of our own efforts. It is

God who in the terms of the new covenant described by Paul in Hebrews (where he is quoting from Jeremiah 31:31-33) 8, writes his law in our hearts and minds. We cannot take credit for observing God's law of love, or any commandment within that law, for it is God, Christ, who is empowering our observance, it is God who is actually keeping his law within us! That isn't legalism in any way, or stretch of the imagination.] Paul said, **'I had to throw it all away.'** Going into the stadium for the crusades, Friday nights, I saw people, they had their little pop-bottle carrying, what are they? -- help me out -- cooler chests with them, you know, full of their pop and all of their goodies. They're not going to pay that \$3 for a glass of pop, you know, or a cup of pop at the stands, and so their coming up, and they're stopped. You hear a voice from on high saying *"There are no containers allowed into the stadium, no glass containers, no cooler chests, no food may be brought into the stadium."* And then there's a guard standing there – *'Wrong, you're not coming in here with this.'* And they have to go all the way back, five miles, to where they parked, and get rid of what they were bringing in. It is safe to say that if you right now, try to walk into heaven with your cooler-chest full of righteousness, with all the cool things you've done, there is a voice that will say, *'Wrong, we don't allow junk like that in here. Trash it! Get a life!'* You see, unless you have Jesus' life covering you, you don't have a life. You don't have what it takes to get into [the kingdom of] heaven. There's a great big garbage can at the 'Pearly Gate', and you're going to have to trash it all. *'Well, how can I get in!? How can I get in!?'* I've been telling you, by what Jesus did for you. He paid the ticket. He paid the price. He did it all. Accept it. Accept it. So awesome. I wasn't going to tell you, but I will. 4<sup>th</sup> of July we were invited to go to a very special fireworks, the downtown Phoenix fireworks for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. We were invited to go, and we were given very special seats, right on the Supreme Court steps. And the whole fireworks, after we got there, we discovered, were aimed right at us. It was like the whole thing was put on for the people that were sitting on those steps, people like the attorney general, and you know all these people that were sitting around us. But we

got there late, the gate wouldn't open for us the way it was supposed to, so we had to fake out this gate to get it to open. That took us a little while to figure out how to make this automatic gate to open without a card, so we did it, and we finally got in. And just as we were trying to get in to where we were supposed to go and sit down, this guard came and said, "I'm sorry, there are too many people in here and you'll have to go." I said, "But, but I got the ticket right here in my hand!" And then old Ed Barrens walks up in his uniform, he swings the gate open and says "let them in," and he looks at this guy like 'You pip-squeak, let 'em in, they're with me.' The guy goes, 'oh, oh, oh, ok.' We go walking in, pride, yes [laughter]. We sat down. Now I could have said, 'Hey, look at my driving record.' 'Look at my credit rating. 'Look at how good a person I am, look at this, look at that.' I could have argued with him all night long. I could even have said, 'I got the ticket, I got the ticket.' **But you know what I had, I had someone on the inside, in authority, who opened the gate to me. That's who you have in heaven right now. You have Jesus Christ. He's in authority, he's seated at the right hand of God [the Father]. And he's going to open the gate for you, not because of anything you've done, but by everything he's arranged and done for you. Amen?**

### *Do We Nullify The Law Through Faith?*

Now as we end the chapter, the last verse, look at Romans chapter 3, that last verse says, **"Do we then nullify the law through faith? May it never be. On the contrary, we establish the law." (verse 31)** Now this verse has been so abused, I abused it myself for decades. In the church I was growing up in, we used this verse to prove that you were saved by faith plus works. 'Do we nullify the whole Law? No we establish the Law.' And so we then drop the Law on them and say, you'd better keep the law (Torah), we say, 'not to be saved, because you are saved, but if you didn't keep it, you

weren't saved.' So, what does that amount to? Confusion, yes. And I just want to look at this thought for a minute, and help you understand that we are not under law, we are under grace. And you need to understand these kind of verses. Because you're going to become in contact with people who will use verses like this to try to lay **Law** on you. His point is, 'Look, did I blow the law away, because the law said 'you're a sinner', so did I just get out my grace-gun and blow it way--Blam!--so the law evaporated? No.' He says, 'no, God's gospel actually established the Law.' and at the same time, you can say to me--'We'll how do you save me and establish the thing that says 'You sinner!?' 'The soul that sins, it shall die.' 'The soul that sins, it shall die' [quoted from two separate Proverbs]. How do you establish that thing and save me?' Now if I were doing it, I would just have blown the Law away, and said, accept me Lord. But God says 'No, I'm a righteous God too. I'm a law-abiding God too, so what I have to do is I have to satisfy the Law's commands and at the same time figure out a way to save you. And that's what the cross was all about. Jesus lived a perfect life, his life was more valuable than all the people who have ever lived, because his life was the very life of God. So Jesus not only lived a perfect life for him, Jesus the man, but as Jesus-God, he lived a perfect life for me and you, and everybody else who's ever lived and would accept him. And so if I accept Christ, his righteousness is credited to me, and now the Law when it looks at me, it says, 'All right, you're cool, perfect.' So God figured out a way to save us through the death of his Son, that keeps us from having to die and go to hell [die the 2<sup>nd</sup> death in the lake of fire, literally, cf. Rev. 20:14-15.], and at the same time establishes his Law. That's his point. But people will come and say, 'Yeah, but Jesus said he didn't come to abolish the law [cf. Matthew 5:17-19]!' Exactly, yeah, who's arguing with you? I'm not. **Galatians 4** says **“In the fulness of time God sent forth Son born of a woman, born under the law, in order that he might redeem those who are under the law, and make us heirs.”** So yes, Jesus kept the law, Jesus kept the Ten Commandments. Why? Because he was born under the law, he had to, to fulfill the law. Look at Matthew 5 for

a second, I just want you to really understand what's going on here. It's an important concept for new covenant Christians [and Messianic believers as well]. Because sooner or later you're going to have somebody coming to you, or inviting you to a meeting. And they're going to come and tell you, they'll show you this verse. They will show you this verse, I did it many times. Matthew chapter 5, verse 17. I would try to get Christians to keep the law, and they would say "We are" and I would say, "No, you're not keeping that 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment." The 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment says 'Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy', you're not worshipping on the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week, look it up, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday--what's the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week?--Saturday. If you're not worshipping on Saturday, you're not keeping the law of God." And they would say, "Well, the law's been abolished." And I would say, "I'm sorry, but well you go to Matthew 5:17 with me, and what does Jesus say?" "Do not think that I came to"--what--"abolish the law or the prophets, I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill." Gulp, and I had many a Christian in my hands then, and many of them joined the cult I was part of --because they didn't understand the law and the gospel. [And here's where I say that Pastor Mark is not in proper accordance with the teaching of Romans 14, in calling a Torah observant Sabbatarian group a cult. But due to space constraints, just go to the section on Romans 14 and read it to get the proper balance of how we ought to be treating (which includes speaking about) Sabbatarian groups

([http://www.unityinchrist.com/romans/romans12-14\\_2.htm](http://www.unityinchrist.com/romans/romans12-14_2.htm)

). Most aren't cults, they have the Holy Spirit indwelling them, but their understanding or take of what the Bible has to say about law and grace is different. **God has not used this apparent lack of understanding on their part to deny them the Holy Spirit -- so says the apostle Paul in Romans 14**--so we must not be calling them cults. Enough said. Read Romans 14 to learn more on this subject.] They didn't understand what I'm going to share with you in the next minute or two. So it's important to listen. OK? Jesus didn't come to break any law or to destroy any law, no he

didn't. It's true. Obvious, I'm not going to say what he said wasn't true, what an insult. Always what Jesus says is true. Amen? So take it for what it means. Yes, he didn't come to abolish any law at all. But he said, "I did come to"--what?--"**fulfill** the Law." What does fulfill mean? The way you understand what a word means in the Bible, one of the great ways, is to look up other places where this word occurs. If there's a word you don't understand exactly what it means, then look it up every other place it occurs in the Bible, and you'll get a better understanding of what the word means. It's called "doing a word study." Well let's just look it up in a few other places and see what this word means. Look at Luke 24, Luke 24. Now the interesting thing here is that the Greek word for "fulfill" is translated by different English words, but it's still the same Greek word. See if you can find it, obviously this will be pretty easy, gang. But they're getting harder. The next two verses are harder. Verse 44, Luke 24:44, "And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be **fulfilled**, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." There's our word, **fulfilled**. Well, you said Mark that by looking at other places we'd see what it means. It means **fulfilled**. Yeah but this puts it in a different context, you can maybe understand it even better here. He's saying 'Hey disciples, the reason why I had to die and be buried and rise again was because there were Old Testament prophecies that had to be fulfilled.' Now like the prophecy, where was Jesus going to be born? Where? In Bethlehem, right? Now there was a prophecy that said he had to be born in Bethlehem. Jesus fulfilled that prophecy, yes. But does that mean we have to go to Bethlehem now? No. Does it mean that prophecy is still in effect now for us? No. But we look at that prophecy and we can say, 'Look, this proves that he is whom he claims to be. He was born in the right place.' And there's three hundred of those other prophecies that we're not waiting and watching, and we're not saying that you got to be born in Bethlehem and go to Egypt, and you're father has to be of the tribe of Judah and your mother has to be a virgin. We don't put you under

any of those prophecies, but they have been **fulfilled, completed in Christ**. Look at Acts 19:21, see if you can find the word now. We're in Acts 19. It's not going to say "fulfilled", it'll be the same exact word in Greek, but a little different English translation. See if you can find it in Acts 19, verse 21. "And after these things were ended ["finished" in the version Mark is reading], Paul also purposed in the spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also go to Rome." Can you take a stab and guess what word you think is the word "fulfilled". What do you think it is? "Finished" right, or what does the NIV say? "Come to pass" is what it says [or in the KJV, "ended"]. So, I like the word "finished", because that's the word "fulfilled". Jesus says, "I didn't come to destroy the law, but to"--what--"finish it" or "have it come to pass", "fulfill it." That's beginning to have more sense now, isn't it? Hey, one more verse. Acts 7, Acts chapter 7, verse 30. Now this is really a toughie, Acts 7, verse 30. See if you can find where the word "fulfilled" is used, the Greek word is used. It will be translated differently again in English. Hey, this is like "Wheel of Fortune". "And after forty years had passed [KJV, "were expired"] an angel appeared to him in the wilderness of Mount Sinai, in the flame of a burning thorn-bush." Ooh, what do you think it is? "Had passed" ["were expired"], that's right. The word is translated "had passed", "finished", "fulfilled". Jesus is saying, "I didn't come to abolish any law, but I did come to "finish" it, "to fulfill it", to have it "come to pass." Nowhere does the word "fulfill" means "to continue on", "going." It means to fill up, to complete, to finish, to end. Now maybe to help understand the illustration, over two years ago it appeared to us that we needed to get out of Tumbleweed Schools auditorium and find a bigger place to meet. I don't know what our first clue was, maybe it was people sitting on each other's laps, that we just decided, you know, 'Lord, would you open up something else for us.' And so the Lord led us to this old shopping center which has really worked out perfectly for us thus far. And one of the first things we had to do was enlist the services of a really good architect who could draw up plans for us that would meet all of the

city code books, millions of requirements, I kid you not. That city code book is like the Law. OK? And it is bad news. There is so much that you have to, well we have blueprints after blueprints after blueprints. Here's some of them, this here is where you are sitting in the auditorium right here, and all the classrooms, and the stairways into the baptistery--we've got electrical drawings, plumbing drawings, we have elevation drawings, we got everything. OK, this is city demands, and so this sort of became the Law for us. The next thing we had to do was we had to get a contractor. That's where Vern Macht came in. He became our contractor, to help build out this place. And he had to follow the "Law" perfectly. The law had been put in terms that we could understand now, no longer were we left to wonder what the book says, it's been described on paper (the blueprints), sort of like the Ten Commandments, easy to follow directions now. And so Vern's job now as contractor was to make sure everybody did this "according to spec.'s", according to the "Law". About six months after we began the new place was done, and it turned out pretty good. Now it's comfortable at least, we fit for a little while, during the summer we fit all right, I don't know what's going to happen this fall [i.e. Calvary Chapel's are always growing in ministries like Pastor J. Mark Martin's, where such good connective expository sermons "feed the sheep".] But before we could actually move in we had to go through one more final inspection, they called it--that's when they're going to take these [blueprints], and they're going to make sure we did everything. And so the guys came, and they looked around, they never smile, they're paid by the city not to smile [laughter]--you offer them a coke, they snarl. Whew! We passed Judgment. Whew! We passed "inspection." Hurray! We all began to glory in the finished work, Vern you did it! Guys, you did it, everybody we did it! Praise the Lord, we could move in. And we moved in, and we've been enjoying it ever since. Now, what about these "blueprints"? They fulfilled the purpose for which they were created, right? Vern didn't come to abolish the blueprints, did he? But he came to fulfill the blueprints. Right? And now these blueprints have served their purpose. The

contractor was not obtained to destroy them, but to fulfill them. And now I don't have to destroy these blueprints either. They're sort of interesting to read and look at, but you know, I don't hang them on the wall either. They're not front and center here so we can all say 'Yes, we have met the requirements of the Law.' 'Yes, we are under Law.' And every week you come up, and you guys--'Oh I hope we met--it's got to be three feet tall,' you're measuring all the time, you know, 'Oh, I wonder if it's enough.' 'I wonder if they're going to come and close us down.' 'We'd better keep checking to make sure that everything's complied with.' No, you guys, you just walk in here and sit down. You didn't have to do any of the work, most of you weren't even around when we did all this work. Yeah, when we think about it, that sort of gripes me--no just kidding [laughter]. I mean, some of you, you weren't even saved when we were doing all the work. And you just move in here. And you just sit down, and you enjoy it. And that's the way it should be. The work was done by someone else. It's been finished, it's met the requirements of the Law, and now we don't need the Law anymore, it's been fulfilled. Do we throw it away? No! In fact, having the law there just proves what was built was right. Having the Law is great, because it just proves that the Gospel can be the only way of salvation. And we should rest in Christ's finished work. Just step into it. There are some people today, they want you to live in these (commandments). They say 'Come on, we got to live in the blueprints!' Why would I want to live in these when I could walk in here and sit down? Huh? And there are Christians today, and those who claim to be Christians today, who want to take you back to this, when you could be sitting in this. You see, don't go back to law. Paul says, "I want to be in him not having a righteousness of my own derived from law, but the righteousness which is in Jesus Christ by faith. So, does this mean that we can live any way we want to live? You don't have to live in a life of obedience to God? You know, whenever that question is raised to me, it's a question an unsaved person would ask. It's not the question a person who's heart has been touched by Jesus ever would think of asking. Because a person who's been

touched by God's grace *wants* to live for God. Look at Titus 2:11. This will be the last text we look at, by **the way**. **Titus 2:11. I'm going to read it to you out of the NIV. It says, "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It" -- what?, the grace of God -- "It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age while we wait for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13).** You see, the grace of God, when it dawns on your soul, it teaches you things [I will get into this right after the sermon, but the term "**the grace of God**" is another way of saying "**the entering in and indwelling of the Holy Spirit upon you,**" and the effect that has upon you. God's indwelling Holy Spirit is how God lives what in our lives? -- what is the new covenant anyway? -- **God writing his laws in our hearts and minds (cf. Jeremiah 31:31-33; Hebrews 8:6-10, esp. verse 10)** editor.]. The grace of God teaches you, you don't need this anymore, because the grace of God teaches you now. [The subject of Law & Grace is a complex one, and there are many interpretations of it. For some interesting articles on it that are quite balanced, one from a Baptist source, one a Calvary Chapel source and then a Messianic Jewish interpretation, see

<https://unityinchrist.com/whatisgrace/whatisgraceintro.htm> . The Law of God, as expounded in the New Testament is basically all the Ten Commandments, brought to their spiritual intent--and this "royal law" is something Christians are told by James, Jesus Christ's own blood brother, to look into and study (cf. James 1:22-25). This law of Christ is spoken of and amplified even by Paul throughout the New Testament in his letters to the churches. Some pastors, who have come out of a Sabbatarian and more legalistic background and into a new covenant church tend to lean too far from teaching about the requirements of the law of God -- requirements, obviously which cannot be met by humans except as God through his indwelling Holy Spirit, makes possible, so obedience to the Law of God is not a works trip, except if you want to call it a "work of God" in

your life. But many fall a little short in properly explaining law and grace when they come to a set of verses such as Romans 3:31. A further discussion of law and grace will follow this sermon, since his explanation is leaving out some important information about law and grace. But let me tell you right now, Pastor Mark perfectly nails the problem of those who use the Law as a bondage trip or as a pride trip. Read on.] Now for the amplified version **“For the grace, his unmerited favor and blessing, has come forward, appeared, for the deliverance from sin and the eternal salvation for all mankind. It trained us to reject and renounce all ungodliness, irreligious and worldly passionate desires, to live discrete, temperate, self-controlled, upright, devout, spiritually whole lives in this present world.”** Grace teaches in the new covenant, in the old covenant -- the Law commanded--it **demanded** -- **but grace [the indwelling Holy Spirit] teaches.** Grace can do and pull out of your heart what the law with all its commands and terrors could never do. M.R. Dehan, who founded the Radio Bible Class wrote this following statement in his book "Law and Grace", let me read it. I don't often read long quotes, but listen. It's not too long either, but it's so neat. He said *“Service is not on the basis of law, but of grace. We are not to serve the Lord in order to keep saved, or to escape chastening and punishment, but instead we are to serve God because we **are saved, and kept, and secure.** I pity those sincere people who live a life of bondage because they hear that they will be lost again if they don't live a perfect life. Let me repeat this truth, my heart goes out to those who hold themselves in bondage and restraint because they fear losing their salvation if they should fail. That is a low, mean, and unworthy motive for serving the Lord. God wants us to serve him through love, not fear -- but from a heart of gratitude, which rejoices in doing the things that please him [and we will read later what pleases God, what is the mind of God], who pleased not himself. But gave his all to redeem us.”* [here is the crux of the matter, not whether or not we should study the law -- whether the Law as written in the Old Testament, or it's spiritual intent, as written in the New Testament (called by some the Law of Christ), but with what

motive we serve God. That is what Pastor J. Mark Martin is getting at, and he is totally correct -- this is the crux -- and where most of the misunderstanding about law and grace seems to abound.] When I was in college a professor who helped me to understand the gospel, repeated just a couple lines of a poem that I've never forgotten, and really has changed my life. And he told us, he said, "*Men*", he says, "*you must understand this -- that nothing you can do can earn your salvation, and that what you do after you're saved is just your way of saying "thank you" to the Lord for what he has done to you.*" And then he recited these lines, he said: "I would not work my soul to save, for that the Lord has done. But I would work like any slave for the love of God's dear Son." You can't work to save your soul, that work's already been done. But if you want to work, you can work because you love him--not to get him to love you, but because he loves you, and redeemed you, and saved you." [connective expository sermon on Romans 3:27-31, given by Pastor J. Mark Martin, Calvary Community Church, P.O. Box 39607, Phoenix, Arizona 85069]

End [of transcript]

This subject of "Law and Grace" has been the crux of numerous inter-denominational arguments and disagreements due to the often vague language many denominations use to explain just what grace is, ***and how the law of God relates to grace.*** I have chosen to give the input from two major denominational groups, the Southern Baptist's and an explanation from another pastor from the same church group Pastor Martin is from, a Calvary Chapel somewhere in Florida. Both the Southern Baptist and this Calvary Chapel pastor say about the same thing, using different language. But there is a sort of interdenominational consensus of belief here showing a unity of interpretive spirit -- a sign the Holy Spirit is in on this interpretation. The Sabbatarian groups would agree

with this consensus view, but their interpretation of what is to be included in God's law differs, in that they believe the Old Covenant Ten Commandments are still in total force, which would include the 7<sup>th</sup> day Sabbath, which is Saturday, as the commanded day of worship. As the apostle Paul very strongly pointed out in Romans 14, if that is what you sincerely believe the Bible says, your actions of obedience had better follow your beliefs. So, except for disagreement between Sabbatarian and other Gentile Christian groups on the 4<sup>th</sup> of the Ten Commandments, there would appear to be a total agreement with the statements that follow. First the Southern Baptist article, followed by a quote from Calvary Chapel pastor, and then a Messianic Jewish interpretation.

## ***Law and Gospel***

**[Ernest Reisinger](#)**

### **Importance**

Why is the subject of "law and gospel" important? Let me state six reasons:

1. Because there is no point of divine truth upon which ministers and Christians make greater mistakes than upon the proper relationship which exists between the law and the gospel.
2. Because there can be no true evangelical holiness, either in heart or life, except it proceed from faith working by love; and no true faith, either of the law or the gospel, unless the leading distinction between the one and the other are spiritually discerned. The law and the gospel are set before us in the Bible as one undivided system of truth, yet an unchangeable line of distinction is drawn between them. There is also an inseparable connection and relationship. Unfortunately, some see the difference between them but not the relationship; however, the man who knows

the relative position of the law and the gospel has the keys of the situation in understanding the Bible and its doctrine.

3. Because a proper understanding between the law and the gospel is the mark of a minister who rightly divides the word of truth. Charles Bridges summed up this mark of a true minister: "The mark of a minister `approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed', is, that he `rightly divides the word of truth.' This implies a full and direct application of the gospel to the mass of his unconverted hearers, combines with a body of spiritual instruction to the several classes of Christians. His system will be marked by Scriptural symmetry and comprehensiveness. It will embrace the whole revelation of God, in its doctrinal instructions, experimental privileges and practical results. This revelation is divided into two parts--the Law and the Gospel--essentially distinct from each other; though so intimately connected, that no accurate knowledge of either can be obtained without the other...." (*The Christian Ministry*, [London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1967], p. 222).

The law, like Christ, has always been crucified between two thieves -- Antinomianism on the one side and Legalism on the other side. The antinomian sees no relationship between the law and the gospel except that of being free. The legalist fails to understand that vital distinction between the two. Some preach the law instead of the gospel. Some modify them and preach neither the law nor the gospel. Some think the law is the gospel, and some think the gospel is the law; those who hold these views are not clear on either. But others ask, Has not the law been fully abrogated by the coming of Christ into the world? Would you bring us under that heavy yoke of bondage which none has ever been able to bear? Does not the New Testament expressly declare that we are not under the law but under grace? That Christ was made under the law to free His people therefrom? Is not an attempt to over-awe men's conscience by the authority of the Decalogue a legalistic imposition, altogether at variance with

that Christian liberty which the Savior has brought in by His obedience unto death? We answer: so far from the law being abolished by the coming of Christ into this world, He Himself emphatically stated "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets [or the enforcers thereof]. I did not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law, till all is fulfilled" (Matt. 5:17, 18). **True, the Christian is not under the law as a covenant of works nor as a ministration of condemnation, but he is under it as a rule of life and an objective standard of righteousness for all people for all times. This makes it important.**

4. **Because the power of a holy life needs to be accompanied by instruction in the pattern of it. In what does sanctified behavior consist? It consists in pleasing God. What is it that pleases God? The doing of His will. Where is His will to be discerned? In His holy law. The law, then, is the Christian's rule of life, and the believer finds that he delights in the law of God after the inward man (Rom. 7:22). The Christian is not lawless but "under the law to Christ", a phrase from Paul which would be more accurately rendered "in the law of Christ" (1 Cor. 9:21).** Sin is lawlessness, and salvation is the bringing of the lawless one into his true relation to God, within the blessedness of His holy law. The law of Moses is not other than the law of Christ; it is an objective standard just as Christ is our pattern.

5. Because the Ten Commandments were uniquely honored by God, founded in love, and are obeyed out of affection for the One who provided redemption. A. W. Pink, writing about the uniqueness of the Ten Commandments, said, "Their uniqueness appears first in that this revelation of God at Sinai--which was to serve for all coming ages as the grand expression of his holiness and the summation of man's duty--was attended with such awe-inspiring phenomena that the very manner of their publication plainly showed that

God Himself assigned to the Decalogue peculiar importance. The Ten Commandments were uttered by God in an audible voice, with the fearful adjuncts of clouds and darkness, thunders and lightning's and the sound of a trumpet, and they were the only parts of Divine Revelation so spoken--none of the ceremonial or civil precepts were thus distinguished. Those Ten Words, and they alone, were written by the finger of God upon tables of stone, and they alone were deposited in the holy ark for safe keeping. Thus, in the unique honor conferred upon the Decalogue itself we may perceive its paramount importance in the Divine government." (*The Ten Commandments*, ([Swengel Pennsylvania: Reiner Publications 1961], p.5).

6. Because there is a need for a fixed, objective, moral standard. The moral law carries permanent validity since it is an objective standard uniquely sanctioned by God and goes straight to the root of our moral problems. It lays its finger on the church's deepest need in evangelism as well as in the Christian life: sanctification. The Ten Commandments are desperately needed not only in the church but also in society. We live in a lawless age at the end of the twentieth century; lawlessness reigns in the home, in the church, in the school, and in the land. The Scriptures tell us that "righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people." The Ten Commandments are the only true standard of righteousness.

### **Moral Measure**

Tragically, Christians have contributed to our society's moral decline by removing the Ten Commandments from their instruction. The law restrains sin. Without the moral law this world would be a field of blood, as is evidenced in place where there is no regard for God's commands. The puritan, Samuel Bolton, in *The True Bounds of Christian Freedom* ([London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1964], p. 79), said:

Blessed be God that there is this fear upon the spirits of wicked men; otherwise we could not well live in the world. One man would be a devil to another. Every man would be a Cain to his brother, an Amon to his sister, an Absalom to his father, a Saul to himself, a Judas to his master; for what one does, all men would do, were it not for a restraint upon their spirits.

Not only the wicked, but also followers of God need an objective, fixed, yes, an absolute standard of right and wrong. A devotional life cannot exist without regard to morality. We cannot separate devotion from duty. After all, what constitutes a devout person? Someone who is seeking to do the will of God, someone who is instructed in sanctified behavior. And in what does sanctified behavior consist? In doing the will of God. And where do we find the will of God in respect to morality? In the only true standard summarizing the moral law--the Ten Commandments.

This subject, law and gospel, is in the highest degree, important and edifying, both to saints and to sinners. To know it experimentally, is to "be wise unto salvation;" and to live habitually under the influence of it, is to be at once holy and happy. To have spiritual and distinct views of it, is the way to be kept from verging toward self-righteousness, on the one hand, and licentiousness, on the other; and to be enabled to assert, the absolute freeness of sovereign grace, and at the same time, the sacred interests of true holiness. Without an experimental knowledge, and an unfeigned faith, of the law and the gospel, a man can neither venerate the authority of the one, nor esteem the grace of the other.

The law and the gospel, are the principal parts of Divine Revelation; or rather, they are the center, the sum, and the substance, of the whole. Every passage of sacred Scripture, is either law or gospel; or is capable of being referred, either to the one or to the other. Even the Histories of the Old and New Testaments, so far as the agency of man is introduced, are but narratives of facts, done in conformity, or in opposition, to the moral law, and done in the belief, or

disbelief, of the gospel. The ordinances of the ceremonial law, given to the ancient Israelites, were, for the most part, grafted on the Second and Fourth Commandments of the moral law; and in their typical reference, were an obscure revelation of the gospel. The precepts of the judicial law, are all reducible to commandments of the moral law, and especially, to those of the second table. All threatenings, whether in the Old or in the New Testament, are threatenings either of the law, or of the gospel; and in every promise, is a promise either of the one, or of the other. Every prophecy of Scripture, is a declaration of things obscure, or future, connected either with the law or the gospel, or with both. And there is not, in the sacred Volume, one admonition, or reproof, or exhortation, but what refers, either to the law or the gospel, or to both. If then, a man cannot distinguish aright, between the law and the gospel; he cannot rightly understand, so much as a single article of Divine truth. If he does not have spiritual and just apprehensions of the holy law, he cannot have spiritual and transforming discoveries of the glorious gospel; and, on the other hand, if his views of the gospel, be erroneous or wrong, his notions of the law, cannot be right. Besides, if the speculative knowledge, of the law and the gospel, be superficial and indistinct, they will often be in danger of mingling the one with the other and they will, in a greater degree than can be conceived, retard their progress in holiness, as well as in peace and comfort. But on the contrary, if they can distinguish well, between the law and the gospel, they will thereby, under the illuminating influences of the Holy Spirit, be able, to discern the glory of the whole scheme of redemption; to reconcile all passages of Scripture which appear contrary to each other; to try doctrines whether they are of God; to calm their own consciences in seasons of mental trouble; and to advance resolutely in evangelical holiness and spiritual consolation. It is important to consider the difference between the law and the gospel as well as the agreement between them. The establishment of the law by the gospel, or the subservience of the gospel to the authority and honor of the law must be addressed. The believer's privilege of being dead to the law as a covenant of works, with a necessary

consequence of it is very important. To emphasize this importance of the law (Ten Commandments) I will call three credible witnesses.

### **The Testimony of Three Witnesses**

Consider the attitudes expressed by three of God's choice spokesmen regarding His law:

1. ***David, a man after God's own heart--the sweet singer of Israel.*** “Make me to go in thy path of thy commandments; for therein do I delight” (Ps. 119:35). “Indignation has taken hold of me Because of the wicked, who forsake Your law.” (Ps. 119:53). “Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day” (Ps. 119:97). “I hate the double-minded, But I love Your law” (Ps. 119:113). “It is time for You to act, O LORD, For they have regarded Your law as void” (Ps. 119:126).
2. ***Our Lord's chief apostle--Paul.*** “Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law” (Rom. 3:31). “Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good” (Rom. 7:12). “For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man” (Rom. 7:22). “Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24).
3. ***Our Lord Himself.*** “Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled” (Mt. 5:17, 18,).

We often hear the expression, "Be like Jesus." What was He like? He was perfect. How do we know? We must have a perfect standard by which to judge and that perfect standard is the perfect law of God (Ps. 19:7).

## **The Testimony of the Whole Bible**

The importance of this subject is seen in that the whole Bible is either law or gospel--or law *and* gospel related. For example:

- The history of the Old and New Testaments, as far as man is concerned, is nothing more than narratives of lives lived in conformity or opposition to the moral law, or lived in belief or unbelief of the gospel.
- All the threatenings of the Old and New Testaments are threatenings either of the law or of the gospel. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John 3:18). "...when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
- Every prophecy of Scripture is a declaration of things obscure and future and is connected with either law or gospel.
- Every promise is a promise related to either the law or the gospel, or both.
- Every good admonition, reproof, or exhortation is with reference to the law or the gospel, or both.

Thus the law and the gospel are the center, the sum, and the substance of the whole Bible. How important then is it properly to relate and distinguish the two? The closer we get to a clear view of the difference between the law and the gospel, and the connection between them as they serve to establish each other, the more we will understand the Holy

Scriptures and thus the will and mind of God, and the more useful we will be in His service.

### **Two Kinds of Knowledge**

Another indication of the importance of the law is that it reveals the two kinds of knowledge that are necessary for salvation:

1. *The law reveals the character of God.* God's law comes from His nature. The nature of God determines what is right, and the will of God imposes that standard upon all His creatures as a moral obligation. Since his will flows from His nature, and the law is perfect (Ps. 19:7), the law reflects the perfection of his nature.

Man is not answerable to an abstract law, but to God. Behind the law is the Lawgiver. Therefore, to find fault with the law is to find fault with the Lawgiver. The law is not the arbitrary edicts of a capricious despot, but the wise, holy loving precepts of one who is jealous for His glory and for the good of His people.

Christ was perfect. How do we know? He kept the law perfectly--He was the law personified. Christ perfectly manifests the Father : "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:9).

2. *The law reveals the condition of man.* To walk up to someone and say, "All have sinned" does not bring conviction unless that person knows what sin is. "Sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. 3:20). The knowledge of sin as violation of God's law brings conviction.

### **The Law and Evangelism**

Similarly, the importance of the law is seen in a subject that is dear to the heart of every true preacher and every true Christian--evangelism.

In days gone by, children learned the commandments before they learned John 3:16, because only then did John 3:16 make any sense. Likewise, John Elliot's first translation work among the Indians was not of John 3:16 but of the Ten Commandments, and his first sermon was on the commandments. Did John Elliot think the Indians would be saved by the Ten Commandments? Of course not, but the commandments would show them why they needed to be saved--they were law-breakers, and they needed a law-keeper to be their substitute. [Why we need Jesus becomes relevant.]

John Paton, a great Presbyterian missionary to the New Hebrides, first taught the commandments. Why? People will never be properly interested in a relationship with the Redeemer until they see the terrible breach in their relationship to the Creator. The commandments are the moral mandate of the Creator to creatures. The sharp needle of the law makes way for the scarlet thread of the gospel. The law is indispensable in biblical, God-centered evangelism.

Run and work the law commands  
But gives me neither feet nor hands.  
A sweeter sound the gospel brings;  
It bids me fly and gives me wings.

### **Summary**

1. The whole Bible is law and gospel, and the two are so vitally related to each other that an accurate knowledge of either cannot be obtained without the other.
2. The law reveals the character of God and the condition of man. These two kinds of knowledge are absolutely necessary for salvation. (See, for example, the first chapter in Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.)
3. The law is essential to true biblical evangelism because by the law is the knowledge of sin. It was the law that was effective in Paul's conversion: "I would not have known sin except through the law" (Rom. 7:7).

- 4. The law is the only biblical rule and direction for obedience -- that is, a sanctified life. In what does sanctified behavior consist? Doing the will of God. What is the will of God in respect to morality? The moral law summarized in the Ten Commandments.**
5. The law is one of three truths of the Bible that stand or fall together: (1) the law of God, (2) the cross of Christ, (3) the righteous judgment of almighty God.

First, if there is no law there is no sin because sin is the transgression of the law (The Ten Commandments).

Second, if there is no cross there is no hope for poor sinners--no forgiveness of sin.

Third, if there is no righteous judgment of almighty God who cares about sin or a Savior. These three truths stand or fall together.

The following statement by J. Gresham Machen, the principal founder of Westminster Theological Seminary will emphasize the importance of the place of the law.

A new and more powerful proclamation of that law is perhaps the most pressing need of the hour; men would have little difficulty with the gospel if they had only learned the lesson of the law. So it always is: a low view of law always brings legalism in religion; a high view of law makes a man a seeker after grace/ Pray God that the high view may again prevail. (*What is Faith?*, [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust], pp. 141-142).

Preacher, preach the moral law; and parents, teach your children the Ten Commandments. [taken from the Southern Baptist online publication "founders.org"]

***Calvary Chapel View***

Next the introduction to the new booklet series titled "The Grand Demandments, Living by God's Design" written by Pastor Bob Coy of Calvary Chapel of Fort Lauderdale:

## **Introduction**

“What place do the Ten Commandments have in the life of a New Testament believer? There are two very different answers to this question: one is "none" while the other is "everything." Actually, both views need some adjustment. The Law is a vital tool for us as Christians in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Jesus left us one thing to do until He returns:

***"But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." (Acts 1:8 NIV)***

The sad reality in many churches today is that the witness of Christ ***cannot be seen***. Those who claim to love God are breaking commandment after commandment, living lifestyles that are not very different from those in the world who don't claim to love God at all.

At this point, you may be inclined to say, "Hold on just a minute. I'm not saved by works but by grace." While this is certainly true, may I ask you a qualifying question: From what have you been saved? Simply from the consequence of sin, which is hell, or from sin itself? There is a huge difference and it is that difference that ties together grace and the law.

The Bible teaches us:

***"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age." (Titus 2:11-12 NIV)***

Grace is the empowerment of God to say no to unrighteousness. It is the missing ingredient between the law and the weakness of our flesh that the Apostle Paul spoke of: ***"For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit" (Romans 8:3-4 NKJV).***

God sent Christ so that we could have the power to say "no" to sin and "yes" to the righteousness of God that is found in the law: ***"For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17 NKJV).***

The law is still God's holy standard of perfection. The difference between then and now is Christ. He has fulfilled the law on our behalf, but he still warns us: ***"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:17-19 NIV).***

Did you catch it? The difference is that the penalty is gone [the penalty for breaking God's Law was death under the old covenant--Jesus paid that penalty for all believers

who put their trust in him]. If you break the law, you are least in the Kingdom of Heaven, but you are still in the Kingdom! Christ is your ticket into Heaven--not the Law. But the Law does have a purpose. It is still our tutor--or teacher--of what is important to God. That's why Jesus said if we obey the commands, we will be great in the Kingdom; our obedience is a proof of our love for God: ***"If you love me, you will do the things I command."*** (John 14:15 ICB) In Christ, this is now possible because we have the grace [Holy Spirit indwelling us] to accomplish it. So the next time you find yourself coveting, recognize that your teacher (the Law) is telling you that you are low on spiritual fuel--Christ has become small in you. It is time to shut yourself into the prayer closet and let Jesus become your first love all over again."

## ***A Messianic View***

Now for a description which Messianic Jewish believers would understand, given in part by the blood brother of Jesus or Yeshua--who became the chief ruler of the Jerusalem Headquarters Church of God, which had authority over all the early Churches of God throughout Asia Minor and the Roman world. James said in his Epistle that the "royal law" was a mirror that shows believers in Yeshua where the dirt is, where the sin is in their lives. Don't forget, none of us is without sin, only the Lord was. So we need to be looking into the "royal law" -- God's spiritual mirror -- to see where the sin is, so it can be washed off. Let's read what James had to say. ***"Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the Word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this,***

**not forgetting what he heard, but doing it--he will be blessed in what he does.**” (James 1:22-25) The apostle Paul said essentially the same thing in **Romans 3:20b**, “**for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**” But a spiritual mirror has no power of itself, just as the law applied to ancient Israel had no power to save them from sin or disobedience. A mirror has not power to wash the dirt off a person. Let us look at a fixture in the courtyard of the Temple which served both a physical purpose for the priests, and served also as a spiritual symbol of two very essential things to the believer--the law and the power imparted by Grace living in us, the Holy Spirit. Turn to **Exodus 30:17-21 and Exodus 38:8**, “**They made the bronze basin and its bronze stand from the mirrors of the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.**” This brazen basin was for the priests to wash up in before doing service in the Tabernacle or Tent of Meeting (Exodus 30:17-21, and later the Temple). It was symbolic of the Law of God. The priests could look at themselves all day long in this reflective bronze basin, every day of the year and never be able to cleanse themselves. They could see the dirt, but couldn't get it off. They could try, but they'd only succeed in rubbing it into their skin more. It took water being added to the bronze basin. In the Bible water is one of the symbols for the Holy Spirit. A New Testament believer in Jesus, Yeshua, has both the Law and God's indwelling Holy Spirit. We are meant to search out God's Law daily, and use God's Holy Spirit within us when we spot sin, to wash it from us, out of our lives. Now here's something that should make the whole Bible come alive and give it real meaning. We all know, as do the Jews, that the whole of God's Law is contained in the Torah, the first five books of Moses. That is the physical application of the Law of God, which God gave to physical Israel, a nation of people who did not have the indwelling Holy Spirit at that time. Do you remember Moses crying out to God that this burden of leading the children of Israel was too much for him? God heard him, and poured out his Holy Spirit on 70 elders in Israel, so Moses could have some help. Two of those 70 weren't in the tent at the time God's Spirit came upon them all. But the two missing persons

were out in the camp at the time. And they began to prophesy. Joshua got all up tight and asked Moses if he should go out and shut them up. Moses said something to the effect **'No, don't shut them up. I wish to God that all Israel had the Spirit of the Lord in them!'** (read Numbers 11:11-17, 24-30 for this vivid account). Israel had the Law, written especially for their human level of understanding. When Jesus came, God in the flesh (cf. John 1:1-11), he magnified the Law of God back to its spiritual intent. It was prophesied in the Old Testament that the Messiah would magnify the Law. Jesus brought the Ten Commandment Law of God back to its high spiritual intent in Matthew 5:20-48. And all throughout the New Testament the Ten Commandments are re-iterated, commanded for New Testament believers. They are brought to their spiritual intent. Paul in his letters lists and command nine of the ten. When commanding Christians to not steal, Paul commands, **"he who stole, let him steal no more, but instead let him work with his hands and give to those in need."** A positive and far more spiritual intent is brought to the Ten Commandment Law of God. **So the whole New Testament is the believer's Torah.** (Messianic believers need to understand that point, and realize why Gentile believers hold the New Testament in the same high esteem that they -- Messianic believers -- hold the Old Testament Torah. Think about that one for awhile, meditate on it.) But you may notice something about the spiritual intent of the Law of God, particularly in Matthew 5:20-48. It's much harder to keep. God's law was near impossible in the Old Testament version. But the New Testament version is even harder (if you don't have the indwelling Holy Spirit). What am I saying harder for? Both versions are impossible for man to keep on his own. They're both spiritual mirrors. The Old Testament Torah Law of God was like an old-fashioned mirror, you could see yourself in it, but it didn't show the true intent of the heart, didn't get to the real inner dirt in our souls. But the New Testament Law of Christ, now that's like the mirror in the Hubble Space Telescope. It gets to the heart of the universe in our lives. It is a spiritual mirror that goes straight to the heart and motive behind the actual

physical act of a sin. But mirrors are useless without water and soap. God's Holy Spirit must fill the bronze basin. One of the Old Testament requirements of a newly appointed king of Israel was that he was to write out a copy of the Torah, God's Law, and then he was to read from it for the rest of his life (Deuteronomy 17:18-20--read it). In **Revelation 5:10**, Jesus says **“And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”** We are to be made into nation of kings and priests when Jesus returns to earth, ruling from Jerusalem with Jesus, Yeshua. If a king in Old Testament Israel had this command in Deuteronomy 17:18-20 to write out on a scroll the entire law of God (i.e. the Torah), and this Law has now been brought to its spiritual intent in the writings of the New Testament, doesn't that mean we should be studying the New Testament (as well as Old Testament) versions of God's Holy Law on a daily basis? King David was and is the Bible's key example for believers of how a Holy Spirit led and filled king of Israel did this. The Psalms he wrote (one third of them) reflect the fact that he studied the Law daily and meditated on it, and loved it. We're to be kings and priests in God's kingdom, the kingdom of heaven. And we have a real purpose for looking into God's Law. We can actually do something, we actually have the power to cast the sins we see with God's mirror out of our lives. The poor Israelites must have been a real frustrated group of people, ever learning yet never coming to a real repentance, never truly living holy, godly lives with the righteousness of God within them. We can. But it takes the bronze basin made of women's looking glasses, filled with the water of the Holy Spirit. So as Paul asked, in **Romans 3:31**, **“Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.”** I hope this clears up some pretty big misunderstandings within the body of Christ on the issue of Law and Grace -- ***Mirror and Water.***

*In The Terms Of The New Covenant God Promises  
To Write His Laws In The Hearts And Minds Of*

*Believers, True Obedience Is A Work Of God, Not A  
Works Trip Of Man*

One other point which proves the "royal law" has a part in salvation -- God's law is a vital and integral part of the new covenant. Don't believe me. Read the terms for yourself. Paul in explaining the new covenant which was prophecied to come upon the House of Israel and the House of Judah at the time of the Lord's 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, quoted it's terms from **Jeremiah 31:31-33**, which states, "**Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:** not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord: But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; **after those days, saith, the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.**" Now as Zechariah chapter 12-14 points out, all of Israel (Judah) that survives WWII will come into this new covenant, accepting Yeshua as their Messiah and Savior. That's why Jeremiah 31:31-33 is a prophecy for the future Millennial nation of Israel. But Paul in quoting this was telling Christians that this prophecy is being fulfilled in advance in born-again Christians today, from the time of Acts 2 and the birth of the church to the present time. Let's see how Paul quoted Jeremiah 31:31-33 and explained its meaning for Christians today, in **Hebrews 8:6-10**, "**But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if the first covenant has been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, 'Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with**

**their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MIND, AND WRITE THEM IN THEIR HEARTS: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.’ In that he saith, **A new covenant, he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish.**”**

[emphasis mine.] Now what is the heart and the core of the new covenant? It is God writing into our hearts and minds--what?--his **LAW**. It doesn't get plainer or simpler. That's the plain truth of the matter. Part of God writing his law in our hearts and minds is the enabling understanding of that law God's Holy Spirit gives us as we read it. But we must do the reading, and studying of God's Word, including the law, whether OT, or the law in it's new spiritual application, explained by the New Testament. We have our part to do (just as David did), we have to do the reading. God then imprints what we study and read into our hearts and minds, in such a way that we have the power to live that royal law. Keeping the royal law of God in and through the power of God's indwelling Holy Spirit is not legalism, it's not a works trip, for it is a divine miracle of God that enables our obedience, and as Pastor J. Mark Martin points out, we can't take any credit for our own obedience. I know that for a fact, with some pretty tough sins I've struggled with. Then in God's time, through his supernatural power, I simply walked away from what I was struggling with, like it was a cake walk. No way I would ever think of taking credit for my obedience. I hope you have come to see the important relationship between law and grace, law and the gospel, however you want to put it.

*Which Set Of Law Should We Ask God To Write Upon Our Hearts and In Our Minds? Or Is The Choice Is Yours?*

One important point I wish to make. Which set of laws you make as your standard, whether the literal old covenant Ten

Commandments, then brought to their spiritual level and intent in the New Testament (cf. Matthew 5), or the new covenant Law of Christ version, which bring nine of the Ten Commandments to their spiritual intent, but never mentions the Sabbath or 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment, will determine whether you belong to and attend a Gentile new covenant Christian church or a Sabbatarian Christian church and/or a Torah observant Messianic congregation. Which ever way your Christian conscience and personal belief system takes you is fine, just so you practice what you believe, as Paul firmly points out in Romans 14:22-23. To understand how the Sabbath and Holy Day commands became **transformed** from their commanded physical observances to a far higher spiritual intent lived within each believer, click on <http://www.unityinchrist.com/lamb/markintro 5.htm> and <http://www.unityinchrist.com/lamb/holyday.htm>. Many new covenant Gentile Christians **assume** the Sabbath and Holy Day commands were done away with, and that just the 9 of the 10 Commandments were re-iterated in the New Testament--now called *the Law of Christ*. Nothing can be further from the truth. Just as the other 9 were brought to a higher spiritual intent, like not murdering now being commanded to not even hate, so the Sabbath command and Holy Day commands have been transformed within the believer by the indwelling Holy Spirit. Click on those links and find out how. Messianic Jewish believers, most being new covenant believers, still observe them for the deep significance that they convey, as well as the cultural meaning that are attached to them as Jewish believers. Other new covenant believers don't physically observe them, but chose Sunday as their worship day--and they're free to do so under the terms of the new covenant. For a fuller understanding of the New Covenant and click on <http://www.unityinchrist.com/newcovenant/whichcovenant.htm> where you will find several good articles on the subject. If upon reading all these, you still feel the Sabbath or 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment is still physically in force and commanded for Christians, you are free to worship that way, and should seek out a good Sabbatarian Christian church to

attend. The only difference in the way the Ten Commandments (whether from the Torah or New Testament) are observed and internalized by the believer into their standard of Christian living-- empowered by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit--is whether or not the physical Sabbath is observed by the believer or not. There has been so much haggling and name-calling back and forth across this doctrinal fence, that it's simply disgusting--and frankly it's just plain un-Christian. Be sure to read the article on Romans 14 to see the apostle Paul's view of this situation ([http://www.unityinchrist.com/romans/romans12-14\\_2.htm](http://www.unityinchrist.com/romans/romans12-14_2.htm)).

related link:

<https://unityinchrist.com/whatisgrace/whatisgraceintro.htm>