

Doctrines of Grace



Written By Rev.

John Marinelli

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Introduction

The term “Grace” is a translated word that comes from the Greek New Testament word *charis*. It means God's unmerited favor. It is kindness from God that we don't deserve. There is nothing we have done, nor can ever do to earn this favor. It is a gift from God. Grace is divine assistance given to humans for their regeneration (rebirth) or sanctification; a virtue coming from God; a state of sanctification enjoyed through divine favor.

Webster's New World College Dictionary provides this theological definition of grace: "The unmerited love and favor of God toward human beings; divine influence acting in a person to make the person pure and morally strong; a special virtue, gift, or help given to a person by God."

Two Schools of Thought

There are two schools of thought associated with Grace. One is Calvinistic. The other is Armenian. The main difference between the two is how they view Salvation. The Calvinists see a limited salvation just for the “Elect” that last for

eternity. Whereas, the Armenians see an unlimited salvation (for all) but it could be lost, once found.

I tend to follow most of the Calvinistic view of Salvation. Here's why:

1. **The Elect of God is a result of the foreknowledge of God and man's Free Will...Romans 8:29** says, "*For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*" The Bible is telling us that God, in His foreknowledge, knew who would believe in Christ and it is this group of folks, (The Elect) that God predetermines their destination. That destination is to be Christ-like. The purpose of God for doing this is so Christ can be the 1st born of many others.

This is a predestination based upon man's free will. It says that God could see ahead of when things actually happened and by looking ahead saw all those that chose Christ as their Savior. This is how the "Elect" is formed, not be God deciding to save some and damming others to hell but by whosoever wills.

2. **The Elect is not a chosen few but a harvest from all.** Jesus made this clear in **John 3:16**, "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*"

This is not a "some saved and some not theology" but rather an all-knowing God seeing before hand and operating in accordance to man's free will. The emphasis is on "Whosoever" The term implies everyone that chooses to qualify.

3. **Salvation is an eternal experience that is initiated by God, and kept by God.** Man will persevere until the end because of God's seal of ownership. This is also easily explained by the scriptures, "You were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance" (**Ephesians 1:13-14**)

Here is a excerpt from an article I found on the Interned, www.Gracetoyou.com.

God's Mark of Ownership

As one means of guaranteeing His promises to those who have received Jesus Christ, God has **sealed [them] in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise**. Every believer is given the very **Holy Spirit** of God the moment he trusts in Christ. “You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwell-s in you,” Paul declares (**Rom. 8:9a**). Conversely, he goes on to say, “If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him” (**v. 9b**). Incredibly, the body of every true Christian is actually “a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in [him]” (**1 Cor. 6:19**).

When a person becomes a Christian, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in his life. Life in Jesus Christ is different because the Spirit of God is now within. He is there to empower us, equip us for ministry, and function through the gifts He has given us. The Holy Spirit is our Helper and Advocate. He protects and encourages us. He also guarantees our inheritance in Jesus Christ. “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ” (**Rom. 8:16–17**). The Spirit of God is our securing force, our guarantee.

The sealing of which Paul speaks here refers to an official mark of identification that was placed on a letter, contract, or other important document. The seal usually was made from hot wax, which was placed on the document and then impressed with a signet ring. The document was thereby officially identified with and under the authority of the person to whom the signet belonged.

That is the idea behind our being **sealed in Him [Christ] with the Holy Spirit of promise**. The seal of God's Spirit in the believer signifies four primary things: **Security, Authenticity, Ownership, and Authority**.

Roots of Arminianism

Arminianism, as mentioned above, is based on the theology of Dutch theologian Jacob Arminius (1560-1609). His opposition to some of the teachings of the Belgic Confession was formalized into five articles of Remonstrance published by his followers in 1610, on the heels of his death. This Remonstrance was the basis for formal debates in the Reformed churches and resulted in the national

Synod of Dort (1618-1619) where *Arminianism* was condemned by the State church. Arminian theology later received official toleration by the State and has since continued in various forms within Protestantism.

John Wesley later adopted Arminianism and it has become the theological position of Methodism and the Wesleyan tradition. It was propagated in America through the revivalism of the *Second Great Awakening* and the revivalism of the Second Great Awakening and the burgeoning Methodist movement. It is also found today in other denominations such as the Nazarene, the Pentecostal, the Assemblies of God, the Churches of Christ, the Seventh-day Adventist and many Baptist groups. Elements of Arminianism (or its older sister Semi-Pelagianism) may also be found in Roman Catholicism.

Arminianism is perhaps most prominent in the Methodist movement and found in various other evangelical circles today. It stands in contrast to Calvinism, with which it has a long history of debate. Arminians as well as Calvinists appeal to various Scriptures and the early church fathers to support their respective views, however the differences remain — particularly as related to the sovereignty of God in salvation and the ideas of election and predestination.

“Doctrines of Grace”

The phrase “doctrines of grace” is used as a replacement for the term “Calvinism,” in order to remove the attention from John Calvin and instead focus on how the specific points are biblically and theologically sound. The phrase “doctrines of grace” describes the soteriological doctrines that are unique to Reformed theology, which is Calvinistic. These doctrines are summarized with the acronym **TULIP**. The **T** in **TULIP** stands for Total Depravity, **U** for Unconditional Election, **L** for Limited Atonement, **I** for Irresistible Grace, and **P** for Perseverance of the Saints.

Reformed Christians believe that all five of the doctrines of grace are derived directly from the Scripture and that the acronym **TULIP** accurately describes the Bible’s teaching on soteriology, which is the doctrine of salvation. The following is a brief description of each of the letters in the acronym **TULIP**.

Total Depravity - As a result of Adam’s fall, the entire human race is affected; all of Adam’s descendants are spiritually dead in their trespasses and sins (**Ephesians 2:1, 5**). Calvinists are quick to point out that this does not mean that

all people are as bad as they could be. Rather, this doctrine says that, as a result of man's fall in Adam, all people are radically depraved from the inside and that their depravity affects every area of their lives.

Unconditional Election - Because man is dead in sin, he is unable (and stubbornly unwilling) to initiate a saving response to God. In light of this, God, from eternity past, mercifully elected a particular people unto salvation (**Ephesians 1:4–6**). These people are comprised of men and women from every tribe, tongue, people, and nation (**Revelation 5:9**). Election and predestination are unconditional; they are not contingent on man's response to God's grace (**Romans 8:29–30; 9:11; Ephesians 1:11–12**) because man, in his fallen state, is both unable and unwilling to respond favorably to Christ's offer of salvation.

Limited Atonement - The purpose of Christ's atoning death was not to merely make men savable and thus leaving the salvation of humanity contingent on man's response to God's grace. Rather, the purpose of the atonement was to secure the redemption of a particular people (**Ephesians 1:4–6; John 17:9**). All whom God has elected and Christ died for will be saved (**John 6:37–40, 44**). Many Reformed Christians prefer the term "particular redemption" as they feel that this phrase more accurately captures the essence of this doctrine. It is not so much that Christ's atonement is limited as it is particular, intended for a specific people—God's elect.

Irresistible Grace - God has elected a particular people to be the recipients of Christ's atoning work. These people are drawn to Christ by a grace that is irresistible. When God calls, man responds (**John 6:37, 44; 10:16**). This teaching does not mean that God saves men against their will. Rather, God changes the heart of the rebellious unbeliever so that he now desires to repent and be saved. God's elect will be drawn to Him, and that grace that draws them is, in fact, irresistible. God replaces the unbeliever's heart of stone with a heart of flesh (**Ezekiel 36:26**). In Reformed theology, regeneration precedes faith.

Perseverance of the Saints - The particular people God has elected and drawn to Himself through the Holy Spirit will persevere in faith. None of those whom God has elected will be lost; they are eternally secure in Him (**John 10:27–29; Romans 8:29–30; Ephesians 1:3–14**). Some Reformed theologians prefer to use the term "Preservation of the Saints" as they believe that this choice of words more accurately describes how God is directly responsible for the preservation of His elect. It is clear in Scripture that Christ continues to intercede for His people (**Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25**). This continues to

provide believers with the assurance that those that belong to Christ are eternally His.

These five doctrines together form the doctrines of grace, so called because they summarize the salvation experience as the result of the grace of God, who acts independently of man's will. No effort or act of man can add to the grace of God to bring about the redemption of the soul. For truly it is "by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (**Ephesians 2:8–9**).

Hyper Calvinism

Hyper-Calvinism is a branch of Protestant theology that denies a general design in the death of Jesus Christ, the idea of an indiscriminate free offer of the gospel to all persons and a universal duty to believe the Lord Jesus Christ died for them. It is at times regarded as a variation of Calvinism, but critics emphasize its differences to traditional Calvinistic beliefs.

If anyone believes that God has created souls damned to hell, and predestined them to hell, then they would be a poster child for Hyper Calvinism." - Ergun Caner, President of Liberty Theological Seminary.

Let's look at these two in a simple comparison.

Election...Calvinist say God elected to save some and not save others. This is a hyper viewpoint but nevertheless a mainstay of Presbyterianism today. **Armenians** say the election is not limited to a select few but open to all as stated by Jesus in **John 3:16**

Eternal Security...Calvinism, because of its doctrine of election, says that those chosen for election will persevere until the end and thus are eternally secure. It's called the **Perseverance of The Saints**. However, **Armenians** say that once saved does not mean eternally saved. They believe one can fall from grace because they ...sin for whatever reason. They perceive grace as a sort of perfection that is attainable but can be slip away if not held as a law to fulfill.

Limited Atonement... Calvinism says the blood of Christ is shed only for those who He elected to be saved before the foundation of the world. **Armenians** say the Christ died for the sins of the entire world, everyone who

ever was or will be born into the Adamic race. Some will be saved and some will be lost but the ultimate choice is Man's free will.

Grace Explained

As I researched for this eBook, I came across an article by Joseph Prince. He is a pastor and evangelist with a clear message on grace. Here are some excerpts.

I asked the Lord once what it meant to live under grace. He said, "When you are conscious of My constant supply to you, you are living under grace.

Conversely, when you are conscious of the demand put on you to achieve, you are living under the law." Simply put, the principle of grace is *supply*, while the principle of the law is *demand*. The law says, "**You shall...You shall not...You shall...**" But under grace, God says, "**I will...I will...I will...**" (**Hebrews 8:10–12**) Can you see the difference? Under grace, **God is the one doing all the doing and supplying, not you**. Praise God, this is our relationship with Him under the new covenant of grace!

When you are demand-oriented, you see everything as a demand placed on you—"I must do this...I must do that..." The result? You feel stressed and pressurized to perform, meet people's expectations and achieve results. But when you are living under grace, you see the rich supply from God providing whatever you need for your situation despite the demands. The result? You walk in peace and always see God's provision because your eyes are focused on His unfailing supply. As we deal with life on a day-by-day basis, we can be demand-oriented or supply-oriented. So let me ask you this: Are you demand-oriented or supply-oriented?

Be Supply-Conscious

My friend, when you're supply-oriented, you'll see God work miracles in your life. Not long ago, I went to Universal Studios on the island of Sentosa, Singapore, with my family. While I was having some food at a food court, a lady who worked there walked right up to me and greeted me, "Pastor Prince!"

So I said, "Hi," and she said, "Wow, I'm so glad to see you here." She talked with me a little and then said, "You know, I've been having this pain in my

back for the past few days. I prayed and asked God to send me someone and He sent you. Will you please pray for me?"

I looked around me. The setting wasn't "right". There wasn't anointed worship music playing in the background. In fact, the food court was noisy with the chatter of people and the clatter of cutlery and crockery. I thought to myself, "You want me to pray for you here? Now?"

Then, I remembered what the Lord had been telling me about being supply-oriented. So I stood up, placed my hand gently on her elbow and said,

"Lord, I just thank You for Your supply of grace. I just thank You that there's more grace here than her pain. I just thank You that You are healing her back now, adjusting and restoring whatever needs adjusting and restoring. I thank You that she's completely healed in Jesus' name."

No fanfare, no feeling holy goose bumps running up and down my arms, just a simple, honest prayer. In the midst of the setting of that ordinary, noisy food court, I just saw the supply there for her healing.

After praying for this precious lady, I said to her, "Okay, don't worry about the pain anymore. Don't be conscious of it. Just ignore it. The Lord has healed you already." She thanked me and went on talking about her family and other things. Then, all of a sudden, she said excitedly, "Oh, hey, it's gone! The pain that's been there for a number of days is GONE!"

I remember just standing there, looking at her, warmed by God's love for the dear lady and amazed at the sheer simplicity of His grace toward us.

My friend, right in the ordinariness of everyday life, you can receive from the supply that is constantly flowing toward you. Do you need healing today? Do you need wisdom? Peace for a troubled heart? You can receive it right now if you can see His supply all around you, giving you what you need. It doesn't matter where you find yourself. You don't have to wait for the "right" time, place or external circumstances when it comes to asking and receiving from God. Simply look away from the demand, see His supply and receive by grace what you need.

Grace Over-Supplies Your Need

Jesus walked in supply-consciousness. In the account of the feeding of the 5,000, we see how the Lord was clearly conscious of heaven's supply in the face of scarcity. **(John 6:1–13)**

When Jesus saw the five loaves and two small fish, unlike His disciples, He didn't see the impossible demand placed on Him—feeding more than 5,000 hungry people with a boy's small lunch. He saw the supply. His disciples, on the other hand, saw the demand. It bothered them so much that they urged Him to send the people home. They were concerned that they did not have enough food for everyone nor did they have enough money to buy that much food.

But because Jesus saw the supply, He was able to thank the Father for the little that was in His hands, and the little multiplied and multiplied and kept on multiplying! Not only were the people fed till their bellies were bulging, but there were also 12 baskets full of leftovers! What an awesome miracle! When grace supplies, it's always exceedingly, abundantly and above all you can ever ask or imagine! **(Ephesians 3:20)**

Pause and think about this for a moment. Are you facing a five-loaves-and-two-small-fish situation in your life right now? Is there a situation of scarcity in your finances or family life? Are you struggling to find enough time to get your work done as well as spend quality time with your family? Whatever your area of lack, take some time to reread the last two paragraphs, and saturate your heart and mind with the largeness of God's heart and supply toward you. See the abundance Jesus wants to bless you with instead of your impossible situation and receive His supply with "12 baskets full of leftovers" in every area of insufficiency!

The Reason For Our Supply

Do you know why we can see that the supply is all around us? It's not because we are good or deserving. It's because 2,000 years ago, a lonely and beaten-beyond-recognition figure hung on Calvary's cross. Jesus chose to take our place and become a curse for us. Bearing our sins and our curse, He was cut off from all the blessings of God. He was cursed so that we can be blessed. He cried out, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

(**Matthew 27:46**) so that today, you and I can say, “My Father, my Father, why have You so blessed me?”

He was in darkness, so that we can be in eternal light. He took all that we deserved, so that we can be supplied with and receive all that He deserves **all the time!**

Grace Supplies Because Love Is Always Giving

My friend, it’s not hard to understand how the grace of God is always supplying when you know that the essence of God Himself is love and that LOVE GIVES. The Bible says in two places “God is love”. (**1 John 4:8, 16**)

John 3:16 tells us “For God so loved the world that He GAVE His only begotten Son...” Love **gives!** Love doesn’t take. Love gives! In fact, love gives more than you can take! So God, who is defined as love, and who personifies perfect love, is always giving, giving, giving.

If you read the Gospels, you’ll find that during His earthly ministry, God the Son was always giving. Jesus meant every word He said when He said, “...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but **to serve**, and **to give** His life a ransom for many.” (**Matthew 20:28**)

Even in His glorified, resurrected form in heaven, He remains a servant forever, signified by the golden girdle around His waist. (**Revelation 1:13, KJV**) Yes, He is Lord of lords, King of kings, but according to His Word, He is also a servant who delights in serving and giving to you!

“Grace Supplies, Love Gives, Faith Takes”

The Lord said this to me once: “Grace supplies, love gives, faith takes”. What does faith do? Faith takes. That’s our part as believers. Our part is to take. I’m not talking about greed. I’m talking about understanding what faith simply is—faith is the hand that takes from the hand of God.

“But Pastor Prince, the Bible says that it is more blessed to give.” (**Acts 20:35**)

Yes, that's true when it comes to our relationship with man. With our fellow man, it is more blessed to give than to receive. But when it comes to God, we please Him when we receive from Him. The Bible says that the lesser is always blessed by the greater. **(Hebrews 7:7)** Obviously, between God and us, God will always be the greater one. So when we humble ourselves and take our place as the receiver, we're letting God be God in our lives and He loves that.

Living A Life Of Thanksgiving

So here's the bottom-line: In God's kingdom, the supply never runs out. It only stops, as far as you are concerned, when you tell God to stop supplying. **You** decide. As your loving heavenly Father, God gives lavishly and freely to you. And He can do this judiciously because of His Son's finished work at the cross. God does not give with a miserly hand. He is not cheap or stingy. God loves you and His love gives. *His love over-supplies.*

Your part is just to exercise faith by taking from God. People often say, "Depend on God. Depend on God." Sometimes, this sounds a bit abstract. How do you depend on God? You choose to see His loving heart and generous supply when others see only the demand. And you reach out in faith and take from God.

When you realize that it's all about God's love and undeserved favor toward you, you'll be thanking God all the time. Instead of complaining and being stressed out when you are demand-centered, you'll be at rest and have more than enough to give to others. My friend, may you choose to live in the realm of God's constant supply and lavish love!

Grace Through Faith

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." **Ephesians 2:8-9.**

We have an abundance of grace available to us. More than we can ever use. However, that grace is hidden in the promises of God. It is our faith that appropriates the end result as we hook our faith onto the promise. By doing so, the grace of God fills our situation.

I can example this by showing you a scripture and how it brings the grace of God to us. Let's look at **Isaiah 53:5**

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

The scripture is a prophecy of Jesus' cross experience. Note that with His stripes we are healed. We gain our healing with the death of Jesus and His resurrection from the dead. If we hook our faith on this scripture and begin to thank God for healing us through the stripes of Jesus, we create a flow of Grace that will be sufficient for any situation. It will heal the broken heart, restore the soul, and mend the broken body.

Biblical Truths Associated With The Concept of Salvation By Grace.

In the New Testament, “grace” (156 times) takes on a special redemptive sense in which God makes available his favor on behalf of sinners, who actually do not deserve it.

There is tremendous emphasis in the New Testament upon the fact that human salvation is the result of Heaven's grace. This beautiful truth should never be minimized. At the same time, it must not be perverted.

Let us consider some of the precious Bible truths associated with the concept of salvation by grace.

- 1. God's Grace is freely given to all peoples.** It is not limited to a select few. “For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men” (**Tit. 2:11**).
- 2. God's Grace is conditional upon Faith.** We must receive it by exercising our faith. The principle is illustrated by the example of Noah, who “found grace in the eyes of the Lord” (**Genesis 6:8**); and yet, as the writer of Hebrews shows, the patriarch and his family were saved by preparing an ark in obedience to God's instruction (**Heb. 11:7; cf. Gen. 6:22**). Jehovah offered the grace. Noah, by faith, obeyed the Lord, and so was blessed. While God extends grace, human beings must be willing to receive the favor (**2 Cor. 6:1**).

3. God's Grace is not earned. We must constantly remind ourselves that humanity is not deserving of salvation. No one can "earn" pardon by works of human merit. If such were the case, we could boast regarding our redemption; however, that is impossible (**Eph. 2:8-9**).

Grace Verses Law

The Meaning of Law

Most people when they think of the law immediately think of the Ten Commandments. It is true that the Ten Commandments are a part of the law, but the law consisted of many more commandments and precepts besides the Ten Commandments. So when you read the word "law" in the Bible, it doesn't necessarily mean the Ten Commandments. When you read the expression, "the law," it means the entire law that God gave to Israel through Moses--ceremonial laws, judicial laws, morals laws, etc.

Never once do we read in the Bible of "moral law" and "ceremonial law." The Seventh-day Adventists, the Armstrongites, and other legalizers make a lot of to-do over the terms "moral law" and "ceremonial law." They contend that the ceremonial law was abolished at the cross while the moral law still remains. But the Word of God teaches nothing of the kind.

Take a few examples of the use of the term "the law." In **I Corinthians 14:34**, women "are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law." Where does the law say this?... In **Genesis 3:16**. So Genesis is in the law. Again: "the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." (**Romans 7:7**) Where does the law say this? ...In **Exodus 20:17**. So Exodus, also, is in the law. Once more: "Master, which is the great commandment of the law?" (**Matthew 22:36**)

Jesus then makes two quotations from the law: *First*, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart." This is taken from **Deuteronomy 6:5**. So Deuteronomy, too, is in the law. *Second*, He said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." This is from **Leviticus 19:18**. So Leviticus, likewise, is a part of the law. And then again: "Have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?" (**Matthew 12:5**) This is from **Numbers 28:9**. So it is plain to

see that "the law" simply means all of the commandments that God gave to Israel through Moses.

Don't pay any attention to those false cults who try to pigeonhole the law. **James 2:10** says: "Whosoever shall keep the WHOLE LAW, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

There is no such thing as part of the Law of Moses being abolished, while a part remains. Either it is all done away or it is all in force.

The Beginning of The Law

When did the law have its beginning? The answer is found in **John 1:17**. *Notice:* "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Could anything be more plainly stated? Could anything be more understandable? The law--all of the law--was given to a specific people, Israel, at a specific time. Moses gave the law to Israel exactly as he received it from Almighty God.

Does that mean that there was no law before Moses? Indeed it does not. God commanded Adam to eat freely of every tree in the Garden of Eden except one...the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (**Genesis 2:17**) God's command to Adam was law--not the Law of Moses--but a command from God is Law! And if broken, judgment must follow.

However, there was no written law prior to the time of Moses. It is true that people sinned and their consciences convicted them. (**Romans 2:15**) But the written law of God did not come until the time of Moses.

The Law was never given to any other nation or people but the children of Israel. This is the statement of the Apostle Paul. He says: "When the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves." (**Romans 1:14**) This language admits of no misunderstanding nor quibbling. Speaking by the Holy Spirit, the Apostle authoritatively says: "The Gentiles, which have not the law."

"The Gentiles, these having not the law." This is the Holy Spirit's definite, dynamic declaration that in Paul's day the Gentiles did not have the law. If

they did not have it in Paul's day, they did not have it before his day, because there is no account of it having been taken away from them at any time previous to his day. If they neither had it in his day, nor before his day, they have never had it at any time since his day.

If they did not have it before his day, in his day, nor since his day, they do not have it in this day.

The Law Was Given Not To Keep But To Break

Now I am going to make a statement, which no doubt will be, a shock to many of you. Did you know that the law was given to the children of Israel, not to keep but to break? *Listen:*

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." (**Galatians 3:19**)

Please notice--the law was added "because of transgressions." In other words, the law was added to reveal the true nature of unregenerate man.

There is no place in all the Word of God where the purpose of the law is more clearly set forth than in this verse.

God did not give the law to save men. The law has never saved a man and the law never will save men. Why? Simply because Jesus Christ is the only person who ever lived upon the face of this earth who kept God's law. And he kept it for us and died for us because we couldn't keep it.

If people want to know the truth concerning Christianity and the law, they could learn the truth by reading **Romans 10:4** and believing it:

"For Christ is the END OF THE LAW for righteousness to everyone that believeth."

When Christ died at the cross, He fulfilled the entire law. (**Matthew 5:17**) He said, "Not one jot or one tittle shall pass TILL all be fulfilled." (**Matthew 5:18**) Yes, Jesus came to fulfill the law, and He did exactly that. He fulfilled

every jot and every tittle of the law. He satisfied the demands of God's holiness and God's purity. In the closing hours of His earthly ministry He said, "I have glorified Thee on the earth: I HAVE FINISHED THE WORK WHICH THOU GAVEST ME TO DO." (John 17:4) Again, just before He bowed His head on His pulseless breast, He cried out from the cross, "IT IS FINISHED!" (**John 19:30**)

Jesus did for us what we could never have done for ourselves. Jesus came to fulfill all the law because sinful man could not keep it.

The Purpose of The Law

Perhaps you are asking the question, "If the law does not save us or help to save us, what is the purpose of the law?" The only place to find the right answer is in the Word of God. *Notice:*

"...By the law is the knowledge of sin." (**Romans 3:20**)

The law, therefore, is a revealer of sin. Sin was in the world before the coming of the law. (**Romans 5:13**), but when the law came it drove sin out into the open.

The law is like a mirror. When we look in the mirror, we see the dirt on our face. The mirror cannot cleanse your face. It takes soap and water to do that. The same thing is true of the law. The law shows us that we are covered with the rottenness and filth of sin, but it cannot cleanse from sin. It takes the blood of Jesus Christ to do that. Here is a verse that sums up the whole purpose of the law:

"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (**Romans 3:19**)

Paul tells us here that the law was given to Israel to stop the mouth of every person who would teach salvation by the law. The only nation who has ever had the law was Israel. See **Romans 9:4, Nehemiah 9:13-14 and Exodus .**

The law was given to one nation to prove that the law could save no one. God tried it out on the Jewish nation for 1,500 years and proved that not a single, solitary person on the face of the earth is able to keep the law.

Yet, there are great religious denominations that are built on the idea that man can live according to the law and keep the law. In spite of this, Jesus said to the Jews in **John 7:19**: "...NONE OF YOU KEEPETH THE LAW..." What Jesus said to that group of religious leaders at the Feast of Tabernacles is just as true today. No one really keeps the law.

Notice--the Scripture refers to the law as a mouth stopper, not a heart opener. The law of God is the best mouth stopper on earth. When a man reads the law, it will immediately shut his mouth.

The law says: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (**James 2:8**) How many of you would say that you love your neighbor like you love yourself? When you buy a new suit for yourself, do you buy a new suit for your neighbor? When you buy a new hat for yourself, do you buy a new hat for your neighbor? When you bake a cake for yourself, do you bake a cake for your neighbor? Do you see how the law tells you to shut your mouth--that you are not nearly as good as you think you are. This is God's mouth stopper.

Remember the rich young ruler who came to Jesus inquiring about eternal life? He had the popular idea that somehow he could be saved by keeping the law. But notice how quickly the law stopped his mouth. When he told Jesus that he had kept all the law from his youth up, he seemed to overlook what the law required. It demanded that he love the Lord with all his heart, soul, strength and mind. So Christ put him to the acid test.

He told him to go sell all he had, give to the poor and come follow Him. And the young man broke under the test because the Scripture says, "When the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful; for he had great possessions." (**Matthew 19:22**) You see how the law stopped his mouth. It showed him where his treasure was. It showed him that he loved his gold more than his God. He came to Jesus confident; he went away condemned. He came speaking; but he went away silent. The law had done its work. It proved itself to be God's mouth stopper.

The End of The Law

How long was the law to continue? This question is very plainly answered in God's Word. *Notice*:

"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, TILL THE SEED SHOULD COME to whom the promise was made."
(Galatians 3:19)

Now we know that the law was given to the nation of Israel. The Jews [Israelites] asked for it and they got it. **(Exodus 19:8)** For 2,000 years God had been dealing with the human race on a grace basis. Adam lived under grace. Noah lived under grace. Abraham lived under grace. But like so many people today, the Jews preferred law to grace so God let them have it.

Notice that Paul says the law was "added because of transgressions TILL the seed should come to whom the promise was made." Now Paul makes it crystal clear that the law had an end just as it had a beginning. "IT WAS ADDED...TILL THE SEED SHOULD COME." When the seed came (the Lord Jesus Christ), the law came to an end.

"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."
(Romans 10:4)

What The Law Cannot Do, Jesus Christ Did

In **Romans 8:3** we have this enlightening truth. *Please notice:* "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:"
(Romans 8:3)

Now let us notice that God's saving grace goes further than the law ever did or ever could! Here it is expressly said that there were some things "the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh."

Some Things The Law Could Not Do

- 1. The law could not give life** ...**Galatians 3:21** says: "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law."

The law could not give life because it could not be kept. If you think you can keep the law, then you are better than the Jews who tried to keep it for 1,500

years and failed. They broke every law God ever gave them. In fact, Peter said at the church council at Jerusalem when discussing the Christian's relation to the law: "Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which NEITHER OUR FATHERS NOR WE WERE ABLE TO BEAR (keep)?" (**Acts 15:10**)

No, the law cannot give life, but Jesus came to give us His life. He said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (**John 10:10**)

2. The law could not give righteousness... It could not give righteousness for the same reason it could not give life--because it could not be kept. And so Paul says: "If righteousness comes by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." (**Galatians 2:21**)

If keeping the law could make us righteous before God, then the death of the Cross--was the most criminal blunder ever committed, the most useless shedding of blood God ever permitted.

No, the law could not give righteousness, but what the law could not do, Christ did. Christ is the righteousness of God; and when we are saved, His righteousness is imputed to us⁶ so that God no longer sees us as the sinners we are by nature--but He sees us through the righteousness of His Son. (**Romans 3:21**)

3. The law could not grant remission of sins... Under the law the only blood ever shed was that of animals. But listen to what Paul says regarding such sacrifices: "For it is NOT POSSIBLE that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." (**Hebrews 10:4**) In **verse 11** we have this further statement, "And every priest stands daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, WHICH CAN NEVER take away sins."

Perhaps you are asking the question, "Are all those who died under the law of Moses lost?" No, because when Jesus shed His blood on the cross, it reached in both directions. It reached back to the creation of man and forward to the last man who shall ever be saved within this world. (**See Hebrews 9:15, Galatians 4:4-5 and Romans 3:25.**)

Conclusion

I will conclude with excerpts from an article I found on the Internet. It speaks to Grace as our teacher. I agree with all that is said.

Grace Is Our Teacher

Since we are not under law, how does God expect us to live today? The Word of God is very clear on this point. Notice: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (**Galatians 5:16**) "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (**Romans 8:14**).

According to the New Testament, born again believers are to be led by the Holy Spirit. We are not to be led by the law or by the preacher in the pulpit or by a denominational machine. We now have the Spirit of God indwelling us to convict us of things that are wrong and to comfort us when we are walking in the steps of our Lord and Master.

In **Romans 8:2** we are told that the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. We are now under a higher law, a better law, a greater law--*the law of the Spirit*.

When we believe on Christ, we receive a new teacher--one who not only will teach us what to do, but will give us the strength to do it as well. Listen to these Scriptures: "For the grace of God that brings salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." (**Titus 2:11-12**)

Here we are told very plainly that God's grace is now our teacher. It says, "For the grace of God that brings salvation teaches us." It doesn't say, "The law of Moses that brings salvation teaches us." No! No! It says, "THE GRACE OF GOD...TEACHES US."

The law is not the rule of life for the Christian. The law served until the coming of Christ. When Christ came and was made a curse for us, He redeemed us from the law; so today we have a new teacher--GRACE!

It is the grace of God that teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. It is the grace of God that teaches us to live soberly and righteously and godly. The law was Israel's schoolmaster, but "Grace" has become our teacher. Oh, how I praise God for that day when He delivered me from the thundering of the law and put me under His marvelous, matchless grace.

Beloved, if you want to be saved, do not trust in yourself to keep the law. The Lord Jesus Christ has already kept it to the letter and fulfilled it for you. He cried out at Calvary, "IT IS FINISHED!" And the work of redemption was finished. There is absolutely nothing that you can do, except acknowledge your lost condition and ask Him to save you. In His marvelous grace He will save you, for He has said, "Whosoever will may come." Won't you come to Him right now?

Excerpts from Exit And Support Network, World Church of God
November 16, 2006