

# LAW and GRACE

\*

Elder R. L. Chatfield  
Helen M. Chatfield

\*

3301 Ashby Rd  
St; Louis, Mo.  
63074

Read through the first four books: the Gospels. Why are there four? Aren't they repetitious? Not when you consider how crucial are these factual, eyewitness accounts of what Jesus said and did! Here is the basis on which our knowledge of Jesus Christ rests.

Read through the letters circulated in those early churches and study the depth of how these people that were making this new Christ--life part of their very beings, enabling them for world changing.

Read, too, The Revelation, a glimpse of another facet of Jesus Christ, the awesome Creator-God, with the fury of His judgment contrasted with the expanse of His love.

As you read, allow your mind to be stretched by the God behind these words. Let Him reach out to your thoughts, your emotions, your will. Then, as he fills you with himself, reach out to others with the fantastic good news!

## Law and Grace

This book was written for any person who desires to study the teaching of God's word in an orderly manner. In this book, the author does not pretend to have brought out all the gems of the Bible truths. It has been written for the sole purpose of revealing the false teaching that have infiltrated the Christian churches of today, and to encourage God's people to search the scriptures to see what is being taught can be proven by God's Holy Words. Our desire is that the truth will set you free and you will be free indeed.

Biblical Laws are more than a record of human laws. It is an expression of what God requires of man. It rests on the eternal moral principles that are consistent with the very nature of God Himself. Therefore, the Biblical Laws (Ten Commandments) are the summary of Moral Laws. As such as it sets forth fundamental and universal moral principles.

A Lawgiver is the one who gives a code of Laws to a people. John wrote that the Law was given through Moses (John 1:17; 7:19). But above and beyond Moses stands God as the supreme Lawgiver, "For the Lord is our judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver" (Isa.33:22).

Grace can speak of salvation past: justification. We were called of God, forgiven through Christ, and reborn of the spirit-by God's grace through faith, not by any work we've done (Eph.2:8-9).

A small view of Christ and His grace is often related to a small view of God and His law. To increase respect for grace, we should gain respect for His laws.

When we preach and teach God's grace as Paul did, some will misrepresent it as complete freedom from God's laws and use it as license to sin.

Grace can speak of salvation present: sanctification. As God works in us, we are continually renewed in mind, motivated in the heart, and empowered in the hands to do His will; in this grace, we also work (Phil.2:12-13).

The New Testament writers, at the end of their various epistles, frequently invoke God's gracious favor upon their readers (Rom.16:20, 24; Phil.4:23; Col.1:19; 1 Thes.5:28). In addition, the word "grace" is frequently used to express the concept of kindness bestowed upon someone undeserving thereof. Hence, undeserving favor, especially that kind or degree of favor bestowed upon sinners through Jesus Christ. "For God who is rich in mercy for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sin hath quickened us together in Christ--by grace we are saved" (Eph.2:4-5).

Read it and see for yourself.  
Here is some of its crucial  
truths which despite what you  
may have been told, have a great  
deal to do with eternal life.

Grace, therefore, is that unmerited favor of God towards fallen man, whereby, for the sake of Christ--who is the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). He has provided for man's redemption. He has from all eternity determined to extend favor towards all who exercise faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour.

So much of our modern experience  
echoes the scriptures: "Before every  
man there lies a wide and pleasant  
road he thinks is right, but it ends in  
death" (Prov.16:15).

The relationship between law and grace is one of the major themes of Paul's writings (Gal. 5:4-5; Rom.5:1, 17-18; 8:12; Eph.2:8-9). Grace is often used in a misleading language and avoided when answering definite questions concerning the real meaning of grace" (Titus 2:11).

## GRACE God's Gift of love

Let us view the words of God concerning this issue, for it is no small matter. When thousands of people are being bombarded by this do-nothing message, it is incumbent upon us to proclaim the truth concerning this most important doctrine.

There are two meanings of Grace in Scripture. In a general sense, grace refers to any action of one person toward another, whether on the part of God or man, which expresses good will and favor to the recipient: a gift, kindness, or a benefit that is unearned, unmerited, and underserved. This general meaning is characteristic of both the Old and New Testament.

In addition, the specific meaning of Grace in the Bible as it relates to salvation, is an underserved blessing that God freely bestows on us. In this sense it is the opposite of being paid for work done, earning that which one receives. In this instance, God's forgiveness. We must remember that works whether moral, ethical, or legal, will not earn salvation. Human effort is ineffective!

“Grace is a term employed by the Bible writers with a considerable variety of meaning: (1) Properly speaking, that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, charm, sweetness, loveliness; (2) Good will, loving-kindness, mercy, etc; (3) the kindness of a master toward a slave. Thus by analogy, it has come to signify the kindness of God to man (Luke 1:30-32). The New Testament writers, at the end of their various epistles, frequently invoke God's gracious favor upon their readers (Rom.5:21). In addition, the word “grace” is frequently used to express the concept of kindness bestowed upon someone of understanding thereof. Hence, underserved favor, especially that kind or

degree of favor bestowed upon sinners through Jesus Christ. “For God who is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we are dead in sins hath quickened us together in Christ--by grace we are saved” (Eph.2:4-5). “Grace, therefore, is that unmerited favor of God towards fallen man, whereby, for the sake of Christ--who is the only begotten son of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14). He has provided for man’s redemption. He has from all eternity determined to extend favor toward all who exercise faith in Christ as Lord and Saviour” (The Zondervan Bible Dictionary).

The operation of God’s grace has characterized the action of God in dealing with mankind ever since the first man; Adam sinned. In addition, the specific meaning of Grace in the Holy Bible, as it related to Salvation, is an underserved blessing that God freely bestows on us who believe. We must remember that works whether moral, ethical, or legal, will not earn Salvation.

But, one of the greatest fallacies of so-called “Nominal Christians” is that they assume that the only demand heaven makes upon the believer is for him to accept Christ as his personal Saviour. Most people have the novel idea claiming that no work is required of any believer, regarding his soul’s Salvation.

Paul views grace as a favor or gift underserved and unmerited--that which is freely bestowed: “Because of His kindness you have been saved through trusting Christ. And even trusting is not of yourselves; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good we have done, so none of us can take credit for it” (Eph.2:8-9). Paul also explains and says that “And if it is by God’s kindness, a gift, then it is not by you being

good enough. For in that case the free gift would no longer be free--it isn't free when it is earned" (Rom.11:6).

Before we continue on with this study on Grace, let us journey back to the beginning of being saved. Truthfully, there is nothing that any one can do to merit or deserve salvation, but there are some things that people are required to do in order to attain eternal life. Understanding, fulfilling said requirements does not make a person more deserving: it merely means he has met the special rights set forth by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul followed the teaching of all the disciples and even Jesus Christ when he required that a person first must meet all of the requirements in the messages laid before him. First, salvation represents the works of God to rescue man from eternal ruin and death caused by sin. Then, to be saved means dealing with the cause of being "lost." Being "lost" means being separated from and out of contact with God because of sin.

Each one of us owns an enormous debt of sin that we carry inside. Sin is not confined to indecent action, lies, murder, stealing, or the likes. It is rebellion against God. And where there is such disharmony, there is lack of inner peace.

It is true that no one can earn salvation by deeds or good works. It is also true that no one deserves to be saved. Therefore, all deserve death, not salvation. Only God's Divine intervention has made it possible for us to escape eternal fire. The kind of peace we should be looking for dwells in the care of our being. It helps us to deal with life outwardly because God has dealt with us inwardly.

Now when a person has responded to the wooing of the Spirit in surrendering his heart and soul to God, grace still has a part to play in his life, it must have a reflection upon his lifestyle.

In Paul's letter to the Corinthian Church, he wrote, that since Christ died for all, "That they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor.5:15). Take note of the fact that he is speaking of a Christian way of life. Here, self ends. The Christian cannot serve God and the world, it just cannot be done; it is impossible "to serve two masters" (Matthew 6:24).

He, who will faithfully study the Bible and the plain words of Christ and Paul, as they are presented in the gospels, will surely come to the conclusion that the Christians faith demands all the believer's life.

In each of the quotations below, there are conditions required for salvation that can only be accomplished by an individual. These are essential ingredients in the plan and fulfillment of salvation. God has already done His part: He sent His blessed Son to pay the price of redemption. He is perfectly justified in demanding that everyone who receives salvation must meet certain basic obligations, not to prove his worthiness, but to prove or testify of his sincerity and his intentions to follow Jesus Christ. Salvation is conditional. It is not free!

Believing: Placing our full confidence in Him.

Confession: Confess openly and acknowledge our sins of which one has been guilty.

Repentance: Having a change of heart with regard to sin, and sorrow for one's lifestyle.

Baptism: The believer dies to sin, and comes up with a newness of life.

Faith: Believe that He is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.

Being born anew: a new birth.

Obedience: keeping the words of God, and His Commandments.

Jesus taught the same in Revelation 22:14. “Blessed are they that do His Commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Throughout the New Testament scriptures, Jesus and His apostles said that only those who have a clear record of obedience to God’s holy laws would have eternal life at Jesus coming, emphasize this divine rule.

Before we go further, let us describe the Biblical definitions of the words above. The Bible only, has given us knowledge of eternal life. If we have taken time to prepare for a long happy life on earth, why not take the time and necessary steps to receive God’s gift of everlasting life? It all begins with believing.

Believing is the beginning of the long road that we must travel. This is what it means to believe in Christ. It is the opposite of ignoring His existence. Belief in Jesus is not head knowledge that He lived and was a great teacher, nor is it merely admitting that He is the Son of God, who died and was resurrected. It is to place one’s trust in God’s truth, one that takes God at His word and trusts in Him for our salvation.

A belief that saves is one that rests in the finished works of Christ, it trusts God alone for salvation (John 3:16). Believing is those who have trusted God with their will as well as their minds (Rom.1:16; 1 Thes.1:7).

Let us view the words of God concerning this issue, for it is no small matter. There are many scriptures that are used to prove the importance of believing and how it relates to salvation for all mankind. “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth” (John 3:36).

To the keeper of the prison, Paul and Silas replied, “Believe on the Lord Jesus and you will be saved, and your entire house,” (Acts 16:31).

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him” (1 Thes.4:14).

“These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God” (1 John 5:13).

“Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved” (Luke 8:12).

“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to saving of the soul” (Heb.10:39).

God makes people right with Himself through their strong belief in Jesus Christ. This is true for all who believes in Christ, because all are the same. All people have sinned and are not good enough for God’s glory. People are made right with God by His grace, which is a free gift. They are made right with God by being free from sin through Jesus Christ. God gave Jesus as a way to forgive through faith and believing. And all of this is because of the ‘blood of Jesus’ and His death (Rom.3:22-25).

When Jesus died on the cross, the blood He shed was the payment God required for our sins. Therefore, God stamped our debt “Paid in Full.” To have this payment credited to our account, no payment is required. All we must do is ‘believe in Christ Jesus and follow His requirements.’

Why? Because “whosoever will, let him come. He that is athirst, let him come, The spirit and the bride say, come” (Rev.22:17), “for he that cometh to God must believe that

He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Heb.11:6), and shall believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shall be saved. “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the heart confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:10).

We must start by believing and obeying the words of the Gospel. “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you, ye became the servants of righteousness” (Rom.6:16-18). The Bible says that when we believe in Christ, we are made right with God. Being brought into this relationship is the first step to finding peace of mind and eternal life.

This is what it means to believe in Christ. It is the opposite of ignoring His existence. Belief in Jesus is not just head knowledge that He once lived and was a great teacher, nor is it merely admitting that He is the Son of God who died and was resurrected.

Rather, believing in Christ means placing our full confidence in Him. It is resting the entire weight of our hope on Him, that He is the only Saviour who can release us from the penalty of sin.

The “reflection in the life” depends entirely upon whether the person responds to the “divine influence.” The Holy Spirit is faithful and will do whatever is necessary to help the person to make proper decisions to follow the Lord and be obedient to His word, if we ask for his help.

Please pay close attention to these words, which came from the lips of our Saviour. Salvation requires, yea demands, that a person believe in Him in order to be saved! No belief; no salvation. God’s love for mankind was the cause for His sending as a free gift, His blessed, holy and pure Son, as the necessary sacrifice and atonement for man’s sins,

“without the shedding of blood there is no remission” (Heb.9:22), and it is only as the blood of Jesus is applied to one’s heart that man’s sins are forgiven, cleansed and cast into the bottom of the sea.

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom.10:9).

If salvation is a “free gift” why did Paul say confess and belief were necessary? A “free gift” would make no demand whatsoever on anyone to receive eternal life.

Jesus also set forth the following stipulations: “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned” (Mark 16:16). The issue is clear, is it not? We have no less than four prerequisites for the obtaining of salvation (1) believing, (2) confession, (3) repentance, (4) baptism; if even one of these is declared necessary for salvation, it follows that salvation is not, can not be, a free gift! If a person must do anything at all prior to being saved, then the idea of a free gift is null and void.

Confession is an admission of sin and the profession of belief in the doctrines of Jesus Christ our Lord. The Bible also describes an open, bold, and courageous proclamation of one’s faith in anything, as in the existence and authority of God, or the sins of which one has been guilty. In the Bible confession of sin before God is recognized as a condition of forgiveness. Christ taught the necessity of confessing offenses committed against other men (Matt.5:24).

For every believer, confession is the second step in conversion and repentance. For every believer, confession is an on-going work necessary to sustain a pure relationship with the Father. From conversion to resurrection, confession is an integral part of the

believer's life. No one can live the abundant life Jesus promised or receive eternal life without wholehearted, honest confession.

Like the other disciplines, confession is both a divine grace and discipline. It is a divine grace because, unless God gives His grace through Jesus Christ, confession is simply words. By His grace and blood of Jesus, we can seek His complete forgiveness. It is also by His grace that we can approach other believers and confess our faults to them, realizing in others the forgiveness of God. But, confession is a discipline because we must do something of our own free will. God never makes us confess; we must do it ourselves.

Confession must be preceded by self-examination (Matt.7:1-5). A general confession such as "Please forgive me for everything I did wrong today," doesn't get to the heart of the matter. We don't sin generally--we sin specifically. Therefore, my specific sins, which represent my true nature and character, need to be recognized and followed with confession and repentance. Specific confession allows for no "errors in judgment" or avoiding personal responsibility. It not only brings individual accountability, it brings personal victory and purity.

When we realize that God has worked out our salvation by offering His dear Son, we feel a sense of sorrow for our sins. This sorrow leads us to confess our sins. This sorrow leads us to confess our sins to God with assurance that He will forgive and purify us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

This is not a new law of confessing one's sins. Moses gave it to the people of Israel after they came out of Egypt. In Leviticus chapter 5 verse 5, "And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things, that he shall confess that he hath sinned in that

thing. Three types of sins which fell in this classification were: (1) keeping for one's own use some holy thing which belonged to the Lord, (2) an unwritten sin not covered by the sin offering but for which no restitution was possible, (3) taking something which belonged to one's neighbor. It should be noted that a sin against one's neighbor was also considered a sin against God. Then there was David in the book of Psalms; the way of forgiveness, in Psalms chapter 32. This is only one of seven Psalms dealing with confession and forgiveness, in Psalm chapter 6: 38, 51, 102, 130, 143). The first two verses in chapter 32 sets the theme, "happy is the man who finds forgiveness."

Much is said about confessing one's sins in the New Testament. Jesus said: "Whosoever shall confess me before men, Him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God" (Luke 12:8). Also, "whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32).

Paul now addresses himself to the Philippian church by stating! "Yet it was because of this that God raised him up to the height of heaven and gave him a name, which is above every other name," "That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord" (Phil.2:10-11).

"If you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." "For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom.10:9,13).

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us" (1 John 1:8-10).

Like the other disciplines, confession is both a divine grace and a discipline. It is a divine grace because, unless God gives His grace through Jesus Christ, confession is simply words. By His grace and the blood of Jesus, we can seek His complete forgiveness. It is also by His grace that we can approach other believers and confess our faults to them, realizing in others the forgiveness of God. But, confession is a discipline because we must do something of our own free will. God never makes us confess; we must do it ourselves.

A key word in this passage is “confess.” It means we must openly agree with God that we are sinners and that the sinful nature in us stands in rebellion against God, then we must acknowledge that Jesus died in our place and paid the penalty for our sins, that He was raised again to set us free. Therefore, He is entitled to be Lord of our lives.

“Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out” (Acts 26:20). “I have declared that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ” (Acts 20:21).

The key words in these passages are “repent” and “repentance.” When we repent of our sins, and sincerely invite Jesus to be Lord of our lives, He accepts the invitation.

The epistle was written by John to counteract the fellowship of the Asian churches. Fellowship makes necessary the confession of our sins and the forgiveness and cleansing which confession brings. To say that we have no sins is to claim that sin is not an inward principle of our lives. To “say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and His word is not in us” (1 John 1:10), is to claim that we have never committed acts of sin, so we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

The process of feeling sorry for our sins and confessing them is called repentance. Genuine repentance always brings about changes. Paul writes, “Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation.” Peter reminds us to, “repent and be baptized, two important assignments we must make before forgiveness of our sins” can be utilized” (Acts 2:37-38). Baptism comes after one has started his spiritual journey down the road to eternal life. First comes Believing, then Confession, Repentance and the act of Baptism, but it does not stop there. Let’s finish our study on Repentances before we journey into Baptism.

“Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that Repentance and Remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations” (Luke 24:46-47). What importance is placed on repentance?

Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel, saying, the time is fulfilled, the kingdom of God is at hand: “Repent ye, and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:14-15). “Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19). “For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Rom.3:23). So the call goes out to all mankind.

What does it mean to Repent? How does it affect our salvation? “Except ye repent ye shall all perish” (Luke 13:3)? Conviction is a strong sense of guilt with the realization of a need of help. This works out in two ways: man’s part and God’s part. Man’s part has to do with conscience, that inward knowledge of right and wrong. “And they which heard it, being convicted, by their conscience, went out one by one” (John 8:9). This inner knowledge, or conscience, is given to every rational person as a personal guide for protection and well being. This conscience can be strengthened or abused (1 Tim.4:2).

But with the right conscience and motivation it can be the meaning of leading a person to God.

Let us begin with Jesus' exhortation. Twice in these five verses Jesus said, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:1-5). Repentances are an absolute necessity in order to obtain salvation. Not only is it required for sinners, or unconverted persons, it must remain a necessity for everyone who walks with God.

Jesus places repentance in front of, or with belief of the gospel, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). And the great commission was given that they were to preach "repentance and remission of sin in the name of Jesus" (Luke 24:47). Paul obeyed the commandment in his entire ministry; he kept back nothing that was profitable to the Jews and to the Greeks. To all, the message was "repentance towards God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:20-21).

Repentance is mentioned so much in the New Testament, it is amazing that anyone could think they could be saved without it. Paul stated that God "Now commendeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Notice that he didn't say, "be baptized," he said, 'repent.' It is of the utmost importance to be baptized in the name of Jesus, because it is an act of faith that is required, sealing our part of the New Covenant with God.

The process of feeling sorry for one's sins and confessing them is called repentance. Genuine repentance always brings about changes. "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret" (2 Cor.7:10). In other words, God uses our sorrows for sin to lead us to a change of heart that leads to sanctification. Before we repent, we accept sin as a normal way of life. But when we repent, we see how serious it

is. Sin brings death, a spiritual death. Therefore, repentance causes us to be aware at all times of God's will for our lives.

Repentance is a deliberate act of the will. It is a recognition of the sins of the past and present, with all due remorse for sins, and it includes a promise and determination that those sins will never be repeated. True repentance is an absolute necessity in order to obtain salvation.

Repentance means that one will no longer take part in the practices of the worldly people around him, that he will separate himself from the common pagan beliefs and life styles of today.

Much repentance in most modern churches has been the result based on sentiment rather than on faith in revealed truth. The music and sermons are not designed to focus on truth, but to stir up feelings. Biblical repentance is never motivated by mere emotion or sentiment, but is generated by a process of reason based on facts of the gospel. To a large extent we have exchanged reason for emotion and sentiment. The emphasis is on one's experience and feelings. This may be mistaken for repentance, but when the circumstances change, so does our faith. Emotional exhortation may stir up people to feel that they are having a religious experience, but if it is not grounded in a reasoned belief in the gospel it is devoid of power. It is the power of God that brings men to repentance and it is in the gospel, when understood and believed.

Repentance means to turn around your life, to change with God's help from living sinfully to a life in Christ. It is an emotional experience, a crushing to our ego; self reproach that is really costly to our human spirit. It means a complete change in our way of thinking and living. There is only one cure for wickedness: repentance. It is foolish to

suppose that God will submit Himself to man's sub-standards and approve that which His nature is opposed to. Preachers need to forget their books of illustrations, the tear jerking stories from the latest books by popular writers, and concentrate on the rich gold mine of the Bible. "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16).

The Bible states, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:37-38), a command from our Lord as well as from His apostle Peter. Why is it important? What is the meaning? Baptism is one of many steps in becoming a Christian, a new creation in Christ. We must express faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God and as our personal Saviour, we may be sorry for our sins and confess that we are sinful; and may even determine to obey God's word. But until we are baptized in water in the name of Jesus, our response to God's offer of eternal life is incomplete.

Jesus commanded that all his believing followers be baptized. Just before His ascension to heaven, He told His disciples: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt.28:19-20).

Baptism is not the final step in becoming a Christian in Christ. It alone cannot save us. Water alone cannot wash away sins (Acts 22:16). Many a sinner has gone into the water a dry sinner and came out of the water a wet one, because they have not truly repented, and changed their lifestyle, becoming a "new creature."

In the New Testament, it describes the Christian baptism as a burial ceremony. To be baptized means, "immerse" or "put under, buried." Thus, the Bible's symbolic picture of

baptism as a burial is not mere coincidence. It describes the act of baptism as a complete immersion in water, symbolizing the believer's participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

“Know ye not, that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom.6:3-4).

External application of water cannot cleanse internal parts; neither can physical scrubbing remove spiritual filth. Jesus tells us, “Now ye are clean through the Word that I have spoken unto you” (John 15:3). “Not by works of righteousness that we have done (baptism), but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration (a new birth), and renewing of the Holy Spirit, through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Titus 3:5-6).

Paul uses symbolic participation in the death and resurrection of Christ to teach us the true significance of baptism. He explains that through baptism the believer symbolically illustrates the death of his sinful nature by burying it, then rising from burial to live a new life in harmony with God's Word.

“If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is free from sin” (Rom.6:5-7).

“For in baptism you see how your old, evil nature died with you, and was buried with Him; then you came up out of death with Him into a new life because you trusted the word of the mighty God who raised Christ from the dead” (Col.2:12).

Growing spiritually also involves shunning worldliness. We must not compromise here. Paul wrote, “Abstain from all appearance of evil” (1 Thes.5:22). If we act and talk and live like sinners, how can we expect people to have confidence in our profession of Christianity? John said: “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (1 John 2:15).

And so we enter upon a new life with new desires, new aspirations, and new hopes. However, it is not enough to start, we must also finish. As new converts, we are but “Babes in Christ” (1 Cor.3:1), and we then must start a new walk, become a new person; as new creatures we must grow. “Yes, grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18).

As new creatures in Christ Jesus, we must become His followers, His disciples, His servants, and do His will. “For you were bought at a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your heart and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor.6:19-20).

Being baptized in water by immersion has no cleaning or saving power of itself; but it is the completion of the act of becoming a new person called conversion! We arise to walk in newness of life, a new person. Old things indeed are passed away and the sins of old are buried. For the true converted man, all things become new (2 Cor.5:17-18)!

When we believe the Gospel and turn to God in repentance we die to sin. And in baptism we, by faith, bury that past life of sin, and with Christ we walk a new life thereafter.

To get or receive the justification, note, in Paul’s writing to the Roman church: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus

Christ, by whom also we have access by faith into this Grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Rom.5:1-2).

Faith is of the utmost importance and essential to Salvation, for “Without faith, it is impossible to please Him: for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him” (Heb. 11:6). “Yet faith comes from listening to this good news--the good news about Christ” (Rom.10:17).

In the New Testament, which tells the good news of Jesus Christ, salvation is declared to depend upon believing in Christ, or having faith in Him. Faith is the firm confidence and trust in the existence of God and the works of salvation that He has completed for us through Jesus Christ.

“We are saved by faith, not by works.” There is a misunderstanding about God’s word about the transformation accomplished by a relationship with God through Jesus Christ. The focus is so narrowly upon Jesus as Saviour, they seem to forget that Jesus is also Lord.

When you truly receive Jesus Christ by faith, He transforms you from the inside out. He transforms you. First, your very desires begin to change. Then your attitude, your choices, and your behaviors begin to change--not to be saved nor how to stay saved but because you truly are saved. Jesus is making you a brand new person, who now loves God, as you never could before. But if our lives truly are saved, they will display a commitment to obedience.

You may say, nothing like this could ever happen to me. But it has! In fact, it has happened to thousands of people just like you. We cannot ignore sin or cover it up. No matter how many ways we divert our minds; the burden of discord inevitably weighs us

down. Something must be done. Indeed, something has already been done to pay our debt of sin: the death of Christ.

God makes people right with himself through our faith in Jesus Christ. This is true for all who ever believed in Christ, all are the same. All people have sinned and are not good enough for God's Glory. People are made right with God by grace, which is a free gift. Being made free from sin through Jesus Christ makes everyone right with God. God gave Jesus as a way to forgive sin through faith. And all of this is because of the blood of Jesus' death (Rom.3:22-25).

A true faith is a belief in, or has confidence, in our attitude toward God, involving commitment to His will for one's life. Faith was already present in the experience of many people in the Old Testament as a key element of their spiritual lives. In chapter eleven of Hebrews the various heroes of the Old Testament is described as living by faith.

The author of this book of Hebrews encourages the people to have faith by recalling their previous faithfulness, their suffering and privation (Heb.10:32-34). They are exhorted to live by faith (35-39). Since faith as a life principle is the way of pleasing God, it is necessary to understand what faith is and how it works. "To have faith is to be sure of the things we hope for, to be certain of things we cannot see"(Heb.11:1). The element of certainty and confidence in God's promises about living by faith is exactly what Christians must do.

Faith as a life principle is not new. From the day of the old covenant the writer used many illustrations to signify that it has been set apart for a particular use and it is necessary under the new covenant (Heb.11:2-38). These put faith to the test-- Abel, offered a more excellent sacrifice (v 4), Enoch, testimony that pleased God (v 5-6),

Noah, prepared an ark (v 7), Abraham obeyed, and Sarah conceived (v 8-19), Isaac blessed Jacob (v 20), Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, (v 21), Joseph, remembered the children of Israel (v 22), Moses' parents; they were not afraid, (v 23), Moses himself, forsook Egypt (v 24-29), Israel under Joshua; walls of Jericho fell down (v 30), Rahab the prostitute received the spies (v 31), and a long list of others who crowd in on the author's limited time and space, subdued kingdoms, (v 32-38). All of these won their victories by faith. Yet God has provided in Christ better promises, "An even better plan for us. His purpose was that they would be made perfect with us" (v 39-40).

Proof seen in the lives of these heroes of faith under the old covenant is motivation for greater faithfulness by those who live under the new covenant (Heb.12:1).

Faith is a part of the Christian life from the beginning to the end. Faith is the instrument that receives the gift of salvation. Faith is thus distinct from the basis of Salvation, which is Grace, and from the outwardly working of salvation that is God's work. The Apostle Paul declared that Salvation is through faith, not of works alone (Eph. 2:8-9).

Since faith is a gift from God and is an essential part of salvation it must be kept alive and operating else it dies. And when Faith dies, the person dies also (spiritually). Dead faith is worthless. It is a dead person that is buried under a mount of worldliness, pleasure, greed, carnality, and self.

The faith that pleases God is not the mountain moving or miracle working faith (Matt.17:20). It is the trust that a little child shows when he puts his hand into his father's hand as they walk through the darkness. The child has confidence that his father

will be there and protect him and lead them home safely. The Christian needs to practice that kind of faith if he wishes to please God.

“When thou passes through the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burned: neither shall the flame kindle upon thee” (Isa.43:2). This is faith in action. We, as Christians, should believe and live it.

God-given faith is a reward for being born again in obedience. The more we grow and obey the will and the words of God; His word will be our faith that is the gift from God.

Repentance, baptism, and being born again a new creature are synonymous in it's meaning. Repentance is when we confess our sins; baptism is when we are baptized which is symbolic of coming up from the watery grave a new person to walk anew for the truly converted, “Behold, all things are become new!” The old man of sin is buried. We receive justification (Rom 6:6-12). We are cleaned; we start all over as a newborn baby, “Seeing ye have purified your soul in obeying the truth through the spirit--being born again” (1 Peter 1:21-23). Also, we must become obedient to God's law--the result and requirement of the Gospel.

This all began when Nicodemus a Pharisee visited Jesus one night and Jesus told him that he could not enter the kingdom of God unless he was born again (John 3:3). Jesus was referring to a spiritual, inward change. A right standing with God must be based upon a personal performance. The teaching of Jesus shows that a person can't become better over time on his own and thereby be saved. Salvation does not mean just gradual growth or overtime becoming well toward God, but a new birth in God--in God--a new spiritual--start. We must be born again of God's spirit (John 3:7).

It may come as a surprise to some that Salvation and being born again are not and is not synonymous. As we all know, a child's birth is an event that happens to him once at the beginning of life. Jesus told Nicodemus, Ye must be "born again" (John 3:7). He then explained that he was speaking of a spiritual life. As with a physical birth, the spiritual birth also is the beginning of life, a spiritual life. It is often referred to as being saved, but unlike being "born again," to be "saved" is an ongoing rather than a once only event. In brief, being born again is an event, only once in a lifetime. Being saved is a process (1 Cor.15:1-2). The babe in Christ was forgiven and saved from sin, from then on we are "being saved," and as long as we walk upright and grow spiritually, we must "endure unto the end, and only then will we be saved" (Matt.24:13). The scripture gives no credence to such doctrines as once saved, always saved.

We must believe and repent, and then be baptized into the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way to be born into the family of God. We are not only a new born baby into the family of God, but now, most of all, we have a new relationship with God. It is plain that God desires a relationship, not mere obedience to His Commandments. Like a father, he wants a loving trust, not fear. When any person exercises that faith in Christ, the resulting life can only be described as having come from "being born" all over again, a new birth.

Perhaps the concluding part should suggest a related truth. After birth, comes growth and maturity. That is as much a part of God's plan as the first step of spiritual rebirth.

There are prerequisites to being born again, or saved. Believing, baptism, and repentance are the first steps toward being born of the spirit. Jesus began to preach, and to say, "repent; for the kingdom is at hand" (Matt.4:17). Paul speaks of Jesus as "The

author of eternal salvation unto all of them that obey Him” (Heb.5:9). Repentance is the most important act of obedience to God in a Christian life. There is no other way to be born (as a new born baby) into the family of God and be saved.

Peter advises that, “As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word that ye may grow thereby “ (1 Peter 2:2). Thus babes become children, but adolescents need more nourishment than milk alone can provide. We must grow to maturity. But some Christians never grow, and stay a baby their entire life (Heb.5:12-14).

And so we enter upon a new life with new desires, new aspirations, and new hope. However, it is not enough to start; we must also finish. As new converts, we are but “babes in Christ” (1 Cor.3:1), and we must therefore grow.

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). Yet, we cannot expect to grow in grace if we neglect the meaning of grace. If we are to be strong and healthy Christians, we also must grow spiritually.

If a newborn does not receive proper nourishment, he will die in infancy. Sadly, this has happened to many. Why? First, we must recognize the fact that, “It is not in man to direct his own steps” (Jer.10:23). “The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom.8:7).”For to be carnal minded is death; but to be spiritual minded is life and peace” (Rom.8:6).

Being born again is an inner spiritual renewal as a result of the power of God in a person’s life. The phrase, ‘new birth’ comes from John 3:3,7, where Jesus told Nicodemus, “unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Jesus meant that all people are so sinful in God’s eyes that they need to be regenerated--recreated and renewed--by the sovereign activity of God’s spirit (John 3:5-8).

For every believer there is a particular foreordained hour when he discovers the Son of God, who has always been there, but who has waited patiently for the moment when He is to reveal Himself. In that particular hour, internal and external factors, which have been prepared a long time ago, come together in order to produce this rebirth.

The activity of God's spirit that regenerated sinful men comes about through faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:10-21). Without faith there is no regeneration, and without regeneration a person does not have eternal life. Regeneration occurs the moment a person exercises faith in Jesus Christ, at that point his sins are forgiven and he is born again by the power of the Holy Spirit that was working on behalf of Jesus Christ. The new birth is a decisive, unrepeatable, and irrevocable act of God.

Similar words are used elsewhere in the Bible to describe the same general concept. Paul said, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Cor.5:17). Although our "outward man" is perishing, the Christian's "inward man is being renewed day by day" (2 Cor.4:16).

The final requirement for man is his obedience to God's laws. The Divine purpose of Grace is to give pardon to man and produce obedience. We're all under sin (Rom.3:9), condemned by the Law. For by the law (Ten Commandments) is the knowledge of sin (Rom.3:20). "What things so ever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law: that every mouth may be stopped, and the entire world may become guilty before God" (Rom.3:19-20). The world is Guilty of what? The whole world is Guilty of sin. What is sin? "Sin is the transgression of the Law (Ten Commandments)" (1 John 3:4).

Paul said that he would not know sin but by the Law (Rom.7:7). “Wherefore the Law is holy, and the commandments holy, just, and good. For we know that the Law is spiritual: but I am carnal: sold under sin” (Rom 7:12-14).

As sons of God, we are to obey the Law, “That the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit” (Rom.8:14; 1-4). This Law is established by faith! “Do we then make void the Law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the Law” (Rom.3:31; 5:1-2). James calls it the Ten Commandments: “A perfect Law of liberty” (James 1:23-25), and he further tells us we must keep the whole Law. “For whosoever shall keep the whole, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10). The Ten Commandments will judge us, “which” is called the Law of liberty (James 2:11-12).

How, then, do we adjust to this predicament? There is only one way, through the practice of Spiritual obedience to God’s laws. The freedom Christ spoke of is available only through self-control. There is no easy way, no “back door,” no alternate route that we can take which will change us into the image of Christ.

Yet, we cannot say that obedience is the only reason Christ’s righteousness and freedom are lived out in us. By our own effort we can’t become like Christ, because no external exercise can earn the grace of God. By His grace and His grace alone, He changes us (Phil.2:12-13). On the other hand, obedience paves the road for receiving God’s grace--they are the avenues in which we must travel in which God works.

This is the case with Spiritual obedience. We can’t transform ourselves into the likeness of Christ, but obedience provides the favorable environment for the grace of God

to be worked out in us. When we purposely and diligently provide the environment for God's grace to work in us, then our harvest will be great.

To complete the plan for salvation, we must be obedient to God's Laws: the Ten Commandments. To believe that we must repent of our sins and accept Jesus Christ into our hearts is true; we must also make a commitment to live by all the rules of righteous living given by God and taught by Jesus Christ. Paul wrote, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the Law, but under grace? God forbid." Then only will we be effective and productive Christians if we love God and keep His Commandments. The fact remains that keeping the Commandments that Jesus gave is the only acceptable evidence that we love God (John 14:15).

The great commission should forever be sufficient cause for anyone to recognize the importance of obeying the Commandments, which Jesus gave to His disciples, irrespective of any other portion of the Holy writ anywhere else in the Bible. We are saved by grace through faith, but that does not relieve us of the obligation of obeying whatsoever Jesus commanded His people to do. Grace is the empowerment needed to observe (obey, keep, do), His Commandments.

Jesus did not abolish the Ten Commandments at Calvary. They are independent of the Mosaic Code. They preceded the Law of Moses, coming to us from Creation; therefore, the ending of the Moses' ministration, or Civil Code, did not mean the End of the Ten Commandments, as Mediator of the Old Covenant. Under the New Covenant, our Mediator, the Lord Jesus Christ, enforces obedience to the same basic Universal Laws,

the Ten Commandments from the heart, with no change of the original law. Although, while setting aside some of Moses' administrative code. Jesus recognized the full authority of that original law, the Ten Commandments. To Jesus the Ten Commandments does hold an independent place from the Mosaic Law. The same is true of Paul's Epistles.

What we want to consider is when these Laws appeared, what they consisted of and why they stand or fall. Paul speaks of an Added Law, an Abolished Law, and he also speaks of blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us (Col.2:14; Eph.2:15)! He also tells us the first covenant had Ceremonies of Divine service, and worldly sanctuary. What was that middle wall of partition between us that was broken down by Christ? What Laws was abolished at Christ's death? Are we to keep God's Holy Laws (the Ten Commandments) in this dispensation?

We found that without the Law there is no sin! The first law on record was "thou shalt not," found in Gen.2:17. The "Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil," contained the knowledge of what constitutes sin. "By the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom.3:20). The "Covenant Law" (the Ten Commandments) began at Eden! Though not spelled out until Sinai as a code, it was known and was the yardstick by which the world was judged! Others were added to it to further define sin as the world continued on. Cain, motivated by jealousy and hate, slew his brother Able and was condemned by the Law (Gen.4:8-12). Placed under a curse by God, he became a fugitive and a vagabond.

As man multiplied in number so did his sins! Then came the "point of no return" recorded in Gen.6:6-7. God destroyed the world; it was then estimated to be up to 2 billion souls! Out of which only eight souls were saved! Sodom and the plains of

Gomorrah were destroyed for sin. The record of destruction of Sodom is found in Gen.19. The reasons for this destruction, (Lev.18:22) was known in Abraham's time! Ham, one of Noah's sons, was cursed for making sport of his father's nakedness. Then, there was Joseph, the son of Jacob, who was approached by his master's wife for extra marital sex, while in slavery in Egypt. Joseph's answer was, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen.39:7-9).

These examples are just a small portion of those that could be given. These are to show that a list of 31 laws taken from the "Book of Moses" had to pre-exist at the time of Moses, with the exception of the Passover.

Let us establish the fact from the Bible that there were two separate laws. God declared these precepts with a great voice, and all the assembly of Israel heard them. God wrote His Laws on two tables of stone with His own finger (Ex.31:18). These Ten Precepts were complete Laws; "God added no more" (Deut.5:22) and God called them, a "Law" which I have written (Ex.24:12). Moses himself placed this Law, written on two tables of stone by the finger of God, in the Ark. There we have one Law, the Ten Commandments, placed in the Ark by the hand of Moses, after being written by God Himself on two tables of stone.

Having established these facts that the Ten Commandments were given by God without a mediator, that He declared with His own voice, and wrote them with His own finger on tables of stone, we are ready to give Bible proof that "the law of Moses" is a separate and distinct law "Added because of transgressions" of the Ten Commandments. "For the law was given by Moses, but Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). This is positive proof that it was the "Book of the law," not the Ten Commandments, that

was given by Moses (2 Chron. 34:14), that was done away with. The “Added” law is called “The Book of the law.” This “book of the law” which was “given by Moses” is referred to throughout Paul’s letter to the Church of Galatia. Remember, it was the “book of the law” and not the Ten Commandments that Paul was speaking of in his rebuke for going back to the “works of the law.” This added law; “The Book of the Law” was called a schoolmaster by Paul in (Gal.3:25).

“And Moses wrote this law” (Deut.31:9-11). And it came to pass, when Moses had made an end of the writing of this law in a book, until they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, which bare the Ark of the covenant of the Lord, saying: take this book of the law and put it into the ark next to the Ten Commandments which was in the Ark of the Lord your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee” (Deut 31:24-26). “This book of the law” containing “Precepts” was given by Moses (Neh.9:14).

By the handwriting of ordinances, the Apostle most evidently means the ceremonial laws. The laws of Moses that was against them, they were bound to fulfill. It was contrary to them, as it condemned them for their neglect and transgression of the laws of Moses. These were curses that were written in the book Containing Ordinances. (Col. 2:14). When Christ was nailed to the cross, our obligation to fulfill these ordinances was done away with. Those religious rites and ceremonies contained in ordinances were made merely for the purpose of keeping the Israelites a distant people and pointing out the Son of God till He should come. We must hold fast our Christian profession; it brings spiritual liberty. On the contrary, Judaism brings Spiritual bondage.

Can the same law be abolished by Christ and at the same time be established by faith in Christ? There were definitely Two Laws recognized back there-the one having

fulfilled its purpose ended at the death of Christ, while the other one is still Holy, Just and Good--to give knowledge of sin. The one is a perfect law by which we are to be judged (James 2:10-12). The other was called a yoke of bondage.

The key to the whole matter then was the priesthood administered the sacrificial system; offered the blood of atonement, stood in the gap between the people and God! The people could eat the Manna, follow the cloud by day, the pillar of fire by night, observe the Tabernacle service from a distance, bring their sin, trespasses, or thank and peace offerings to the tabernacle, but the Priest must make the final approach to God on his or her behalf for atonement of trespasses, whatever the kind!

This was an imperfect priesthood offering sacrifice that could never take away sins. "To obey is better than sacrifice"--God did not desire sacrifices but obedience (Isa.1:1-18). "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not" (Heb.10:5b). "Sacrifices and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened; burnt offering and sin offering hast thou not required. "Then said I, Lo, I come" (Psa.40:6-7a)

Gradually a light dawned. The people realized that the Mosaic religion is of necessity a false religion, because it has unlimited power--a religion in which one's salvation depends on one's own action. Eternal life, however, is a gift of God.

As a perfect Priest, Jesus, the perfect Sacrifice, brought down the "middle wall of partition," the Temple Veil, the handwriting of ordinances (rites and ceremonies) that were against us (including the Levitical priesthood). This then was the added law of (Gal.3:17-19)! Laws of National Inheritance naturally fell by the wayside with the loss of their inheritance 600 years before Christ! What stood between them and God? The Levitical Priesthood!

“The Lord is well pleased for His righteousness sake.” He will magnify the law, and make it honorable (Isa.42:21; Matt.5:27-28).

“Seeing then that we have a great High Priest, that has passed into heaven; Jesus the Son of God, so let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb.4:14-16).

God, after this, said of His Salvation for bringing people from this fallen world into an Eternal and perfect life with God: “My salvation is gone forth... My salvation shall be forever...that knows righteousness, the people in whose heart is my Law” (Isa.51:5-7). No wonder the psalmist exclaimed, “The Law of my mouth is better than a thousand of Gold and silver...Oh How I love thy Law! It is my meditation all the day” (Psa.119:72;97). “Wherefore the Law is Holy, and the Commandments Holy, and Just, and Good” (Rom.7:12). “He that hath my Commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me“ (John 14:15; John 15:10).

Let me give two points of the Bible truth here and now. First, grace was needed, and came, when man transgressed God’s Law (1 John 3:4). Second, without God’s moral law no grace is needed--there would be no sin (Rom.3:20).

Jesus taught, “Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city” (Rev. 22:14). Through the New Testament scriptures this divine rule is emphasized by Jesus and His apostles, that only those who have a clear record of obedience to God’s Holy Laws will have eternal life at Jesus’ coming (Matt.5:17-19).

In the beginning, is set forth the seven stipulations necessary for salvation. Now, if even one of those is declared necessary for salvation, it follows that salvation is not, cannot be a free gift! This to many people would be considered works or its equivalent, and if so, it would no longer be free.

Let it be known that obedience to the Word is not synonymous with earning or deserving one's salvation. There is neither a single act nor a pile of acts that a person can do to earn or deserve salvation. It is not a case of becoming worthy through certain works a person performs. It is merely meeting the simple demands of the Lord.

Let us look at the misunderstanding text in Ephesians 2:8-9. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."

In the light of the many other texts in the Bible, let us look at verses 1-9 over prayerfully and carefully. They had been saved (past tense), but what from? What was their condition before receiving this great salvation, God's gift to them? Verses 1-2 say that they "were dead in trespasses and sins," and obeyed the spirit of disobedience (Satan). But God had saved them from that life of sin, forgiving the past. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for His love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened (made alive) us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved)" (verses 4-5). This is the salvation they received by grace--not by works, but by the grace of God.

Those Ephesian brethren had been forgiven and given a new heart by the grace of God. What was God's objective in making them new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17)? "For we are His workmanship, created in Jesus Christ unto Good Works (obedience to God's Laws), which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10).

Grace brings us from guilt and bondage of sin unto a life of obedience. It is a gift from God so we can do good deeds or works.

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, thou have faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works” (James 2:17-18).

Jesus expected you to work not for meat only that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you (John 6:27). “The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few.” He told His disciples. “So pray unto the one in charge of the harvesting, and ask Him to recruit more workers for His harvest field” (Matt.9:37-38).

Look around you! Vast fields of human souls are ripening all around us, and are ready now for reaping. The reapers will be paid good wages and will be gathering fruit unto life eternal! What joy awaits the sower and the reaper, both together! For it is true that one sows and someone else reaps. “I sent you reapers where you didn’t sow; others did the work, and you received the harvest” (John 4:35-38).

The person who does the planting or watering, both are very important, but God is most important because He is the one who makes things grow. “Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his works. For we are labourers together with God, ye are His building” (1 Cor.3:7-11). The labourer is worthy of his reward (1 Tim.5:18b). Jesus said that, “I know thy works, and thy labors, and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name sake hast laboured, and has not fainted” (Rev.2:2-3).

The faith that does not produce works of charity and mercy is without the living principle, which animates all true faith; that is love to God and to man. My works will show that I have faith; He who has no good works has no faith at all (James 2:17-18).

Truthfully, there is nothing that anyone can do to merit or deserve salvation, but there are some things that people are required to do in order to attain salvation. Understanding, and fulfilling said requirements does not make a person more deserving: it merely means he has met the special rights set forth by the Captain of Salvation, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the seven quotations that were given in the beginning of this study, I stated that there are conditions that must be made for salvation that can only be accomplished by each individual. These are essential ingredients in God's plan that has to be fulfilled for salvation. God has already done His part. He is perfectly justified in demanding that certain basic obligations, not to prove our worthiness, but to prove or testify of our sincerity and our intentions to follow Jesus Christ.

It is vital to remember that man is powerless in himself to honor the Laws of God. God's grace certainly hasn't lowered the perfect standards of God to make it possible for mankind to achieve a lesser standard of holiness! The very nature of sin creates such an impassable gulf between God and mankind that only the limitless grace and mercy of God can form a bridge across it. We are entirely powerless to "work" our way back into fellowship with God. No good deeds can we do, no sacrifices can we make, no price can we pay, would ever accomplish atonement with God. One who was Himself entirely sinless could only meet that high price! That man was the Son of God, Jesus Christ.

Now let us look back at the divine order of Law, Sin, and Grace in Eden. In Genesis 3 we have the history of Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit and of the results; death.

They were driven out of that beautiful Garden of Eden; they lost the right to the tree of life, with a curse replacing that perfect Edenic kingdom given at creation.

Then, there is the story of Noah and the great flood. The world was so filled with wickedness that God had decided to destroy every living thing. He was angry with the evil men and determined that no trace should be left on earth of the sin and corruption (Breaking of God's Law) that Adam and Noah had grown up in, this beautiful world of His creation (Gen.6)

Then, there was the tribe of Judah in the days of Jeremiah, when God warned them of their sins and unless they repented that He would let them fall into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. What should have been written on the hearts of God's people? God's Laws! But instead, their sins were engraved there. Judah had adopted the idols of the nations around them and made these false gods more important than the true God. They built altars to various gods in high places in the hills and worshiped them. Their false gods and obscene practices defiled the whole land. Jerusalem was destroyed and the people of Judah were taken captive into Babylon for their sins. The word tells us to study the children of Judah and Israel as an example, that we do not fall into the sin of disobedience that causes God to withdraw His blessings from us.

Law and grace! Now let us look at the divine order of Law, Sin, and Grace in Eden. What a contrast between Adam and Christ who was yet to come! With Adam's sin, the whole human race lost that gift of eternal life. "Wherefore, as by one-man, sin entered the world, so death passed upon all men for all have sinned" (Rom.5:12). So, without the Law, man would not have needed any Grace, because without God's moral Law there would have been no sin in Eden, hence no death penalty.

When sin entered, then grace abounded to take care of the sin that brought death to the human race. All mankind was sold into sin and death, and only God's divine plan of grace could save him from the penalty of death (Rom.3:23-25).

It is easily understood that God's Law was given to Adam to abide by before Eve took the forbidden fruit that resulted in the death sentence upon them, and that caused Adam and Eve to lose the right to stay in the beautiful Garden that God had prepared for them (Gen.3:22-24). Paul also makes it plain that God's Law was in Eden, when sin entered--both law and grace entered, but God's law was first (Rom.5:19-21). "Sin is the transgression of the Law" (1 John 3:4). God has a perfect law that He gave to man in Eden, and without it Adam could not have sinned or become a transgressor.

When sin entered, then grace abounded to take care of the sin that brought death to the human race. All mankind was sold into sin and death, and only God's divine plan of grace could save him from this penalty (Rom.3:23-25).

God already had a plan "Foreordained before the foundation or creation of the world" (1 Peter 1:17-22) to redeem man and restore to those who accepts God's plan of salvation for what we lost through Adam's sin. This plan of Grace and love was to give His "Only begotten Son" to pay the death penalty (Physical death) for our sins on Calvary and to raise Him from the dead (John 3:16-17). "When the fullness of time was to come, God sent forth His Son to redeem them who believed."

The cross of Christ, demonstrate the catastrophic results of violating the law of love. Hate crucified truth and the Deity. But at the same time the cross of Christ is an expression of God's love. Because He loves, Christ takes upon Himself the sins of the ones who killed Him, and gives them the opportunity of starting life afresh. This truth is

the knowledge of which we can exercise the religion of Christ, the religion of love. Dear friends, let us practice loving each other, for love comes from God and those who are loving and kind show that they are the children of God, and that they are getting to know Him better. But if a person doesn't love and is kind, it shows that he doesn't know God--for God is love (1 John 4:7-8).

Calvary is a place not far from the walls of Jerusalem where Christ was crucified and close to where He was buried (Luke 23:33).

#### AT CALVARY

Years I spent in vanity and pride. Caring not my Lord was crucified. Knowing not it was for me He died on Calvary. By God's word at last my sin I learned. Then I trembled at the law I'd spurned, till my guilty soul imploring turned to Calvary. Now I've given to Jesus every thing, now I gladly own Him as my King. Now my raptured soul can only sing of Calvary. Oh, the love that drew salvation plan! Oh, the grace that brought it down to man! Oh, the mighty gulf that God did span at Calvary! Mercy there was great, and grace was free. Pardon there was multiplied to me. There my burdened soul found liberty, at Calvary.

Sin is not represented in the Bible as the absence of good, or as an illusion that stems from our human limitation. Sin is portrayed as a real and positive evil. Sin is more than being unwise, inexpedient, calamitous behavior that produces sorrow and distress. It is rebellion against God's law--the standard of righteousness (Psa.119:160).

Sin involves the denial of the living God from whom beings draw their life and existence (Acts 17:28). The consequence of this revolt is judgment and death in the lake of fire. Death is the ultimate penalty imposed by God for sins (Rom.6:23).

Against this dark background of sin and reality, the gospel comes as the good news of deliverance that God has provided through His Son. Jesus bears the penalty of sin in place of His people (Mark 10:45). He also redeems us from lawlessness and makes us long for good works in service to God and others (Titus 2:14).

Now, let us get one thing clear, let us view these elements of salvation from the human perspective; once we have accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour, and are baptized, become a new creature, confess our sins, repent, be converted, we become obedient to God's Law: the Ten Commandments. We are not saying these must be done in any certain order or sequence. In fact, several of these may be accomplished simultaneously, but none of them can be overlooked or neglected. They are all essential to salvation. In each of the above quotations, there are conditions stated for salvation that can only be accomplished by each individual. These are essential ingredients in the plan of salvation.

But, it still is not good enough to be saved. Why? Because we still sin, maybe not intentionally, but we are still a sinner, "that" is when Grace comes in "if we confess our sins he is willing to forgive our trespasses" (Rom.10:9). "Draw nigh to God and He will draw nigh to you" (James 4:8). "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find Grace to help in time of need" (Heb.4:16). "God is longsuffering towards us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins be blotted out" (Acts 3:19).

Paul says that love is the greatest gift in man. Without it, nothing avails; the most effective talents go for nothing, if they are used with a spirit of self-display or with

disregard for others. Here, as throughout this chapter, Paul employs the first person when he has to speak of possible defects--a characteristic note of humble courtesy.

“A person can speak with tongues of angels and have the gift of prophecy; understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and can have strong faith, but without charity (love) it is nothing. A person can give all of his goods to the poor and even be burned at the stake, and not have charity (love) it profiteth him nothing” (1 Cor.13:1-3).

This person will proceed with some of these gifts that is also practical and, on the surface, utterly unselfish, but which nevertheless may be spoiled by egotism and lack of consideration for others

“Love is very patient, very kind. Love knows no jealousy; love makes no parade, given itself no airs, is never rude, never selfish, never irritated, never resentful or rash; not a bragger or boaster of one’s self; love is never glad when others go wrong, love is gladdened by goodness, always slow to expose, always eager to believe the best, always hopeful, always patient, love never disappears” (1 Cor.13:4-8) “Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (Rom.13:10). “Love will cover a multitude of sins” (1 Peter 4:8). In fact, “Love covereth all sins” (Proverbs 10:12). “And now abide in faith, hope, love, but the greatest of these is love” (1 Cor.13:13).

Make love your aim, and then, only then and thus, by setting your heart on the spiritual gifts which involve faith and hope that will bring on eternal bliss.

The reflection in this life depends entirely upon whether the person responds to the divine influence. The Holy Spirit is faithful and will do whatever is necessary to help the person make proper decisions and to follow the Lord through obedience to His word.

However, the Spirit does not use force; he does not coerce, or make anyone do anything against his or her own will.

The primary work of the Holy Spirit in the individual, and the Church, is with the gospel (Rom.1:16-17), to cleanse and sanctify each person from all sins, making them a new creature in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph.4:24-27; 2 Thes.2:3). Then, after purifying and cleansing us from all iniquity (Acts 15:9; 2 Cor.6:14-18), thus making us a clean temple for God to dwell there. What was the purpose? To give power to maintain a holy sanctified life before God.

Conviction is the work of the Holy Spirit. Jesus explained in John 16:8 that the Spirit convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness and judgment. The Holy Spirit regenerates the believer; Jesus spoke of it as a New Birth, being Born Again of the Spirit (John 3:1-8). He is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit who leads you into all truth. The world at large cannot receive him, for they are not looking for him and does not recognize him. But you do, for he lives with you now and shall be in you (John 14:17). The Holy Spirit seals the saints with a promise (Eph.1:13). A seal preserves and protects; it identifies the Holy Spirit as God's stamp of approval, of acceptance, of adoption into the family of God. The Holy Spirit will comfort and Guide the believer. When the comforter (Spirit) comes, "He will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). The Holy Testament pledge has promised our inheritance, it is just a small sample, a foretaste, of the marvelous things of God that has been prepared for those who love Him (1 Cor.2:9-10).

The New Testament contains examples of those who abandoned or made shipwreck of their faith. There is also a warning about falling from grace. The writer of Hebrews

notes the possibility of letting truth slip from or allowing bitterness to defile us, and in Christians holding on to anger, resentment, bitterness, and hatred, that is sin. While there is time to stand for the principles of God, most disputes come from selfish desire, not righteous conviction. We understand then, that our Salvation is complete only in the future.

If we fail to live the holy life required by the gospel, then what? Paul answers in Hebrews 12:14-17. “Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.” It means the loss of eternal life.

“Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? Saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways and live?”

“But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abomination that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.”

“Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live. He shall not die” (Eze.18:24-27). (Grace).

“So, there is therefore no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom 8:1-4). Those who are walking after the spirit are God’s children (Gal.3:26-27). They are new creatures in Christ, living obedient lives to God’s Ten Commandments. No condemnation.

Let us reiterate: prior to receiving salvation, a person must believe, must repent, must confess and be baptized, all of which add up to works, or deeds, or acts of obedience. There are no short cuts, no substitutes, and no compromise. Let's do away with all of the false teaching and tell the truth about this all important topic: anyone who does not fulfill the required prerequisites for receiving salvation will not be saved, but will be damned, or condemned, or judged (Mark 16:16). The persons who does meet these requirements, does not do so to merit or deserve salvation (nothing a person does is good enough to deserve salvation), but he does so out of a heart of remorse and guilt for his wickedness, and in response to the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and in obedience to the words of the Lord. Anyone who tries to be saved any other way is a thief and a robber (John 10:1).

The salvation that comes through Christ may be described in three tenses: past, present, and future. When a person believes, this is the first step in being saved (Acts 16:31). But we also are in the process of being saved from the power of sin (Rom.8:13; Phil.2:12). Finally, we shall be saved from the very presence of sin (Rom.13:11), Titus 2:12-13). God releases into our lives today the power of Christ's resurrection (Rom.6:4), and allows us a foretaste of our future life as His children (2 Cor.1:22; Eph.1:14). Our experience of salvation will be complete when Christ returns (Heb.9:28), and the kingdom of God is fully revealed (Matt.13:41-42).

The power of the Gospel forgives/passes over past sins, and cleanses. "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you;" (John 15:3). It gives strength to press on. "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil.4:13).

As sons of God (Rom.8:14), we are to obey God's laws, "That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit" (Rom.8:1-

4). This law is established by faith! “Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yes, we establish the law” (Rom.3:31; Rom.5:1-2). It is called the law of liberty” (James 1:23-25), and he further tells us that we must keep the whole law. “For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (James 2:10). Which is the law of liberty that God will judge us by? (James 2:12).

So we can see that Grace and God’s moral Law works together in the New Testament times. Paul speaks of this in Romans 5:19-21 “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. More over the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.” Paul is speaking of Adam’s sin in Eden, and you will note that the Law was there that sin might abound, because where no law is there is no transgression, or sin (1 John 3:4).

So we have both law and sin in Eden, but that is not all. We have grace there to, abounding for their sins. Here we have grace working with the Law of God, not contrary to it. The Law gives the knowledge of Sin (Rom.3:19-20), and grace gives the remedy for sin. They in the Old Testament looked forward to Calvary for salvation, and it shows their faith by sacrifices offered, and we look back to Calvary for salvation, and show our faith by “putting our body on the altar as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God” (Rom.12:1), this is an accomplished fact. But it is salvation by the grace of God in the Old Testament as well as the New.

Two misunderstandings of the good news about Jesus are common. On the one hand, some people focus so narrowly upon “We are saved by faith, not by works” that they miss all of God’s Word that tells about the transformation accomplished by a relationship

with God through Jesus Christ. They focus so narrowly upon Jesus as Savior, they seem to forget that Jesus is also Lord.

When you truly receive Jesus by faith, He transforms you from inside out. He transforms you; first, your very desires begin to change. Then, your attitude, your choices, and your behaviors begin to change, not to be saved, nor to somehow stay saved but because you truly are saved. Jesus is making you a brand new person who now loves God, as you never could before. “And we, who with unveiled face all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever--increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit” (2 Cor.3:18). Our lives are not saved by our obedience. But if our lives truly are saved, they will display a commitment to be obedient. On the other hand, there are people who focus so narrowly on obedience that they seem to miss what God’s word says about salvation by God’s grace through faith in Jesus and specifically, not by works. These folks sometimes become so focused on Jesus as lord that they seem to forget that Jesus is also our Savior. But James instructed us “Faith without works is dead” (James 2:17).

The lives of those who truly have received Jesus certainly are marked by obedience to Him. What more, if our lives truly are saved, we will confess that our best efforts to know and fulfill God’s will--even our very best efforts--fall short of God’s perfection. (Rom.3:23). We are totally unable to live lives that deserve to be saved. We need God’s forgiveness and His grace. We need Jesus as our personal Savior. This is of vital importance to have eternal life or we must suffer the consequences.

We are guilty of sin and deserving of death. But God sent His son to die in our place, not because we’ve earned it, but simply because He loves us. Another verse in the Bible

says it is like this: Christ Himself died for you. And that one death paid for your sins. He was not guilty, but He died for those who are guilty; He did this to bring all of us to God (1 Peter 3:18; 1:18-19). This is called reconciliation.

Not only are we undeserving of God's grace, we can't do anything to earn it. It is free. Note the passage from Romans 3:24, "People are made right with God by His grace, which is a free gift." To receive this grace, we can't contribute time and money to charity; we can't help the less fortunate; we can't even attend church or follow a set of rules. The only way to accept and enjoy God's grace is to receive it as a gift through Jesus Christ. We have been saved by grace because we believe. We did not save ourselves. It was a gift from God. We cannot brag that we are saved by the work we have done. God has made us what we are (Eph.2:8-9).

We must begin by living lives of daily consecration. "Present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God" (Rom.6:13). As new creatures in Christ Jesus, we have become His disciples--His servants--and it is our business to do His will. "Do you not know that, you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor.6:19-20).

Paul added: "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to man, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Jesus Christ" (Col.3:23-24).

We must follow Christ only, not man. "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:6). And let us not forget these words; "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17).

There is a difference between a man of the world and the true child of God. “He who is not with me is against Me” (Matthew 12:30). There is no middle ground. God must come first--first with our time, first with our energy, first with our talents. If we give Him the second place in our lives instead of being first in our hours and days, can we expect that He will give us back eternity? If we give Him leftovers, can we expect that He will give us true faith? If His main business is saving sinners, and we are not active in His business, would we be comfortable with Him through eternity?

The book of Acts expands our insight into grace as a New Testament concept “Great grace” expresses the effectiveness of the apostles’ preaching: “With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33).

Grace was so compelling in Paul’s mind that he spoke of it as “The gospel (Good news) of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24). And no wonder: “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them that are sanctified” (Acts 20:32). Paul also talks about “Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ” (Rom. 3:24).

The grace of God, being upon His Children, was a favored concept in the minds of the apostles; they began to use it as a standard form of salutation and closing in their letters (Col. 1:2; 4:18).

Two truths are shown in the gospel of Peter and Paul and that is grace and it has but one source: God, which operates to perfect the saints.

“But grow in Grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18). Why is that important? Because, “My people are lost because of lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shall be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the Law of God, I will also forget thy children” (Hosea 4:6). We are expected to grow in manifestation of the divine influence in our lives.

The concept of God’s grace being on His people penetrates every aspect of worship and behavior: “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly--singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord” (Col.3:16). “Praise ye the lord. Sing unto the Lord a new song, and His praise in the congregation of the saints” (Psa.149:1). “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Col.4:6).

As Christians and children of God, we have a tremendous responsibility to know and obey God’s will. The New Testament is very clear on the importance of obeying God’s will (John 14:15; Rev.12:17; Matt.19:17). We obey, not in order to gain acceptance by God, but because we have already been accepted by Him. We obey because we are His beloved children, and perhaps, to a degree, because we fear His punishment for disobedience. However, we do not obey to be saved, but because we are saved.

The joy of the gospel is that our relationship with God is not in daily jeopardy based on our performance of works. Although, works is necessary to show that we are saved: the message of the new Covenant is that we have a right to be in God’s household because we are born of Him. He chose us. He called us. He brought us to a spiritual new birth

and placed us in His family. He made us heirs of the universe through Jesus Christ. In that we can rejoice greatly.

God's children are commanded to lead an obedient, holy life (1 Peter 1:13-15). Our heavenly Father promised in Jeremiah 31:31-33 that He would write His laws in our hearts. This was, and is, done by His spirit, as attested to by Paul. "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Cor.3:3; Psa.40:7-8; John 14:21). God gives us a new heart and mind as He promised, "ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness (sin) and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, I will take away the stony heart (rebellious) out of your flesh, and I will give you a new heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:25-26). For us to be able to maintain that new life of obedience, what did He promise us? "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them" (Eze.36:27).

The New Testament verifies that this came as promised. God does give and fill His followers with His spirit, giving them power to live that holy, obedient life that Jesus taught and lived as our example. Paul stated: "As ye have always obeyed, not in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil.2:12-13).

"That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by love; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints

what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth all knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph.3:16-19). There is no limit to God’s willingness and ability to give us all the help that is needed. “Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” (Eph.3:20).

The effects of grace on mankind could not possibly allow man to continue in sin, for the very reason that we are not under the law, but under grace. God’s grace removes sin! It cleanses our hearts, giving us a new outlook on life.

The Bible’s basic definition of sin is that it is transgression of the law (1 John 3:4). So Paul’s question really is, “Shall we continue breaking God’s law because we are not under the Law?” His answer literally means, “How shall we who are dead to transgressing the law continue breaking the Law?”

It is absurd to think that a Christian can practice breaking God’s law; Grace does not free us of the responsibility to obey God’s law that defines sin. Instead, it enables us to obey.

Jude warns that there were some in his day who turned “The grace of God into lasciviousness” (verse 4). He then goes through a list of different people who followed sinful ways and results of their sinning.

The writer of Hebrews speaks of what some have “Done despite the spirit of grace” (Heb.10:29), and says for those who sin willfully after they receive knowledge of the truth, “there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for at judgment” (Heb.10:26-27).

So what do we conclude by studying the various manifestations of God's grace? How is it to affect us? Let us read what Peter has to say, he summarized it best: "Since Christ suffered and underwent pain for us in the flesh, you must have the same attitude He did; you must be ready to suffer to. For remember, when your body suffers, sin loses its power, and you won't be spending the rest of your life chasing after evil desires, but will be anxious to do the will of God." You have had enough in the past of evil things the godless enjoy--sex, lust, wild parties, drinking bouts, the worship of idols, and other wicked sins.

Of course, your former friends will be very surprised when you don't eagerly join them any more in the wicked things they do, and they will laugh at you in contempt and scorn. But just remember that they also must face the judge of all, even those who are living and those who are dead. For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead (spiritually dead, dead in sin), that they might be judged according to God in the spirit. But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore earnest, watch unto prayer. "And above all things having strong feelings and love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man has received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Peter 4:1-10).

Sin involves the denial of the living God from whom human beings draw their life and existence (Acts 17:28). The consequence of this revolt is death and the torment of the lake of fire. Death is the ultimate penalty imposed by God for sin (Rom.6:23).

Against this dark background of sin and reality, the gospel comes as the good news of deliverance that God has provided through His Son. Jesus bears the penalty of sin in

place of His people (Mark 10:45). He also redeems us from lawlessness and makes us long for good works in service to God and man (Titus 2:4).

The salvation that comes through Christ may be described in three tenses: past, present, and future. When a person believes in Christ, he is saved (Acts 16:31). But we are also in the process of being saved from the power of sin (Rom.8:13; Phil.2:12). Finally, we shall be saved from the very presence of sin (Rom.13:11; Titus 2:12-13). God releases into our lives the power of Christ's resurrection (Rom.6:4), and allows us a foretaste of our future life as His children (2 Cor.1:22; Eph.1:14). Our experience of salvation will be complete when Christ returns (Heb.9:28), and the kingdom of God has been fully revealed (Matthew 13:41-44).

Conclusion: We find that God's grace and God's Moral Law works together in the New Testament times. When sin entered, then grace abounded to take care of sin that brought death to the human race. All mankind was sold into sin and death, and only God's divine plan of Grace could save him from sin and death in the lake of fire. (Rom.3:23-25).

God already had a plan "Foreordained before the foundation of the world" (1 Peter 1:17-22), to redeem man and restore to those who will accept what we lost through Adam's sins. This plan of Grace and love was to give His "only begotten Son" to pay the death penalty for our sins on Calvary and to raise Him from the dead (Heb.2:9-14; Rom.10:8-13).

By promise, God pointed to His Son and redemption, when the curse was being pronounced upon man in Eden (Gen.3:15). That promised Seed was Jesus, as Paul explains in Romans 16:20, Heb.2:14-15. Here grace entered by God's promise of a

redeemer; His only Son to be born of a woman, as Paul also explains in Gal.4:4-5. “But when the fullness of time was to come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law” (death sentences). “That we might become the Adopted sons of God.” This promise of a redeemer was repeated throughout the Old Testament with details about His birth, His ministry, death and resurrection, so that there could be no mistake about His time of birth, and His identity as God’s only begotten Son and the promised Redeemer of Gen.3:15; Luke 24:44.

Remember, that we had laws before sin entered and made grace needful. The entrance of grace did not annul the law, but both worked together: the law giving a knowledge of sin (Rom.3:19-20), and grace giving the remedy, and restoring us to the “Adoption of Sons,” or children of God as Adam and Eve were before sin entered (Gal.4:4-5; 3:26-28).

These texts, with many others prove that salvation has been by grace since sin entered in Eden, as Paul said in Romans 5:20-21. Those before Calvary looked forward to the cross, and we look back to it for redemption from sin. Remember also, that God’s moral laws continued to do the work before it was ordained to do. There is perfect harmony between God’s Holy Laws (Rom.7:7-13) that give us the free pardon for past sins, and makes us free from bondage of sin; with a new heart filled with the love of God that enables us to live holy, obedient lives, in this present world (Titus 2:11-14). This law (the Ten Commandments) is established by our faith in Christ as our Saviour (Rom.3:31).

But can a person who has been saved backslide and be lost, or does salvation by grace give us eternal life regardless of how we live after we have accepted Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour? There are preachers who teach salvation (justification) by faith alone, with no works of obedience required after justification. Such an idea teaches open-ended

indulgence, regardless of sins after that one time justification. “You can not be lost!” In other words, once one becomes saved, he cannot be “unsaved.” He is locked into salvation forever, regardless of one’s lifestyle. This doctrine is believed and taught by many Protestants today in many churched and leading Theological schools. For that reason it is one of the most dangerous errors believed by millions of people in today’s society. We should seek Bible answers and be open to God’s will as we deal with the question: can a saved person ever be lost--ever backsliding into sin?

Responsibility accompanies grace. Some believe that a person once saved is totally free from obedience. Being free from the penalty for past sins is not the same as permissiveness regarding future sins. This extreme view turns God’s grace into license to sin. Paul made no allowance for continued deterioration of one’s conduct.

Can we worship God in Vain? (Mark 7:7). The idea that any worship of God could be “in vain” has never occurred to most people. Even those who might concede that “vain worship” is a possibility would never consider for a moment that it could apply to their worship and their church.

Consider these words, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I (Jesus) profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:22-23).

Surely this will be a terrible awakening for those people who feel they have had more than a nominal acquaintance with the Lord. They have actually worked with some miraculous power, yet He (Christ) did not know them as His own. Their worship has been in vain and their works also have been in vain (1 Cor.13:1-13). “Not every one that

saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Many Bible teachers and ministers today lay great stress on belief, but forget about works. And as to the doctrine--the “Commandments of men” are fast becoming the standard of the day.

Not many ministers venture to tell the people of their congregations that each individual must obey the words of Christ in order to continue to be a child of God.

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him” (Titus 1:16). “This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Matt.15:8-9).

Many of the commands of Christ have been modified to suit those who want only “a form of godliness” (2 Tim.3:5; 4:1-4). Such doctrine does not disturb a man’s way of life. It gives him enough religion to ease his conscience, yet not enough to overthrow his own personal plans and ideas.

But what good does it do for a man to have any religion at all if it is the kind that is vain? The only thing gained by merely appearing before others; to be righteous is a little bit of earthly esteem of pitifully short duration--yet those who practice their religion to “be seen of men” already have their reward (Matt.6:5).

God’s grace is freedom from sin, not freedom to sin. Grace has an obligation for us to live as Christ lived. In our struggle to live as Christ lived, we will fail from time to time. And we will never reach the stature of the perfection of Jesus Christ.

Jesus' parable of the prodigal son illustrates that our Heavenly Father is always willing to accept truly repented children. When we approach the throne of grace in full faith and assurance of reconciliation, we will find forgiveness.

When we fail, stumble or fall from grace by sinning against God's Holy Laws, then come before God and "confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart" (Rom.10:9) that you have sinned, not deliberately, but you have sinned, "for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom.10:10). "We all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Rom.3:23). "They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no not one" (Romans 3:12), (all believers sin in words and deeds every day).

The New Testament contains examples of those who abandoned or made havoc of their faith. There are also warnings about falling from grace. The writer of Hebrews notes the possibility of letting truth slip from us or allowing bitterness to defile us. We understand then, that our salvation is complete only in the future. But the grace of God takes advantage of even the smallest opportunity to find entrance to the soul.

From the experience of many who practice this discipline of confessing and praying will be revealed the things of the world that control us: pride, anger, bitterness, hatred, sexual immorality, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God (2 Tim.3:4). Time of confession and prayer seem to bring our weaknesses to the surface. When we confess, this not only fulfills the purpose of "loosening the band of wickedness," but fulfills the promise that our "righteousness shall go before us." There may be very little in us for His goodness to take hold of, but such as it is He makes use of it.

Jesus repeatedly taught this same thing in His Gospel. In Mathew 7:13-14 we read of that broad way that leadeth to destruction, and **many** go that way. In contrast, He says, “because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and **few** there be that find it.” Verses 15-20 gives the warning about false prophets, or teachers that pose as God’s ministers, and will lead many away from that narrow way that leads to life eternal.

“My little children, I am telling you this so that you will stay away from sin. But if you do sin, there is someone to plead for you before the father. His name is Jesus Christ, the one who is all that is good and who pleases God completely. He is the one who took God’s wrath against our sins upon himself, and brought us into fellowship with God, and He gives us forgiveness for our sins, and not only ours but for the whole world,” all of those who repents (1 John 2:1-2) “If we claim we have not sinned, we are lying and call God a liar, for He says that we all have sinned” (1 John 1:8).

An Advocate is one who pleads another’s case before the judicial court. We Christians need an advocate, because the adversary, the devil, or Satan accuses us before God day and night (Rev.12:10). Why is God doing this for us? Because he “is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9).

So, will the unrepentant backslider be saved though he dies deep in sin? Backsliding means to revert back to sin after one has repented of wrong doing, to lapse morally or in the practice of religion. “Behold all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: The soul (man) that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4). But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity (sin),

and doeth according to all the abomination that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die” (Eze.18:24).

“But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he has committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die” (Eze.18:21). Verse 22 says, “all of his transgression that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live.

Countless scriptures points to the possibility of losing one’s salvation if one so choose to go back into sin. The parable of the seeds, “where God’s words fell by the way side, some on rocky soil, some among the thorns, but the care of the world soon choked them out” (Matt.13:1-9). “And when a person has escaped from the wicked ways of the world by learning about our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and then be tangled up with sin and becomes a slave again, he is worse than before. It would have been better if he had never known about Christ at all than to learn of Him and then afterwards turn his back on the Holy Commandments that were given to him. “It is like a dog that turned to his vomit again, and a pig that is washed clean only to come back and wallow in the mud again” (2 Peter 2:20-22).

“There is no use trying to bring you back to the Lord again if you have once understood the good news and tasted for your self the good thing of heaven and shared in the Holy Spirit, and know how good the Word of God is, and felt the mighty powers of the world to come, and cannot bring yourself to repent again (denies the existence of God), you have nailed the Son of God to the cross again by rejecting him, holding Him to mocking and to public shame” (Heb.6:4-6).

Whether you believe it or not, you can fall from grace, “so try to stay out of all quarrels and seek to live a clean life, for one who is not holy will not see the Lord. Look after each other so that not one of you will fail to find God’s blessing. Watch out that no bitterness takes root among you, for as it springs up it causes deep trouble, hurting many in their spiritual lives” (Heb.12:14-15).

#### HOLD THE FORT

Ho, my brothers! See the signal waving in the sky!  
Reinforcement now appearing, victory is nigh.  
See the mighty host advancing, Satan leading on,  
Mighty men around us falling, courage almost gone!  
See the glorious banner waving! Hear the trumpet blow!  
In our Leader’s Name we triumph over every foe.  
Fierce and long the battle rages, but our help is near,  
Onward comes our great Commander, cheer, my brothers, cheer!  
“Hold the fort, for I am coming,” Jesus signals still,  
Wave the answer back to heaven, “By thy grace we will.”

“So, dear Christian friend, work hard to prove that you really are among those God has called and chosen, and then you will never stumble or fall. And then God will open wide the gates for you to enter into His eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 1:8-10). “If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins” (Heb.10:26). “But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil” (Romans 2:8-13).

As we come to the close of this study on Law and Grace, we must understand the responsibility that accompanies grace. God’s grace is freedom from sin, not freedom to sin. Grace has an obligation for us to live as Christ lived. In our struggle to live as Christ lived, we will fail from time to time. “But dear brother, if anyone has slipped away from God and no longer trusts the Lord, and someone helps him understand the truth again,

that person who brings him back to God will have saved a wandering soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins” (James 5:20).

Today, is it Legalism or Grace that is the question? It’s a burning question and an ever-present temptation.

On one extreme are Christians who live as if nothing is required and little is expected of them. This is called cheap grace. On the other hand are those who become consumed with their own performance and the outward appearance of a relationship with God. In keeping of the Law, which is called legalism, they lose sight of the grace found in Jesus.

Joy is part of the fruit of the spirit (Gal.5:22), it is the strength of Kings (Psa.22:1), it is commanded (Philippians 4:4), it is to characterize our care for others (Rom.12:15), it is the response of our hope (Rom.2:12), it is supposed to be the result of Christians knowing their names are recorded in the book of life (Luke 10:20), it is the response Christians are to have toward trials, tribulations, and testing (James 1:2), and it should be the Christian attitude toward giving (2 Cor.9:7).

Rejoicing is supposed to be an outward expression in every Christian’s life. Of all people on earth, Christians have hope, which should be the foundation for a life of celebration. We can celebrate not because of who we are but because of the God we serve and His grace. He has redeemed us from death and, even here on earth, we can enter into His promises of an abundant life.

As some might think, the enemy of celebration isn’t depression, sorrow, grief, or temptation. The greatest enemy against celebration is the two-headed beast of disobedience and legalism. Disobedience robs us of our relationship with the Father. In

the same way, the first word we offer in our prayers is a lie. We say: Father to Him whose commandments we do not fulfill. We lie, although the Father offers us the truth.

And, if we don't have the life of Christ flowing through us, there is nothing truly to celebrate. Equally as dangerous is legalism. Anytime the letter of the law outweighs the spirit, we lose sight of Christ and His death. No man can continue in joy if his focal point isn't Christ. "If any man open the door, Christ will come in to him." A very great responsibility lies on us. We can resist and refuse, or we can open our hearts and draw into ourselves His strength.

Nothing is more precious than a clear conscience. It puts a spring in the step and a gleam in the eye that wrongdoers can never know. Honesty, truthfulness, uprightness, sends a man on his way with his shoulders back and his head high, fearing nobody but God.

"Great peace have those who love Thy Law," said the psalmist, "nothing can make them stumble," (Psa.119:165). Calmly they surmount every obstacle in their way. Nothing can stay their triumphant march toward the kingdom of God

It is impossible for anyone to please God on his own merit, even if we were so inclined to obey every law, which we could not. We break God's Commands because of human nature, and sometimes we break them unintentionally.

Where, then, can we find our hope of being saved? In His grace toward us through Christ, through reverence to God's Commandments that will be a natural part of a Christian life. Grace speaks of what we are unable to do for ourselves.

A small view of Christ and His grace is often related to a small view of God and His law. To increase respect for God's grace, we should gain respect for His law. If we use

God's law to gain a right standing before Him, we frustrate the grace of God and set it aside (Gal.2:21).

On the other hand, if we abuse God's love, make it a license to sin, and disobey His laws, we receive grace in vain and turn it into disgrace (Heb.10:29). Such individuals place great emphasis on the finished works of Christ on the cross, and rightly so. But they have little or no appreciation for obedience to the Ten Commandments.

“God's kingdom can be entered only through the narrow gate! The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide enough for all the multitudes that choose its easy way. But the gateway to life is small, and the road is narrow, and only a few will ever find it” (Matt.7:13-14).

“For the time has come for judgment, and it must begin first among God's children. And if even we who are Christians must be judged, what terrible fate awaits those who have never believed in the Lord? If the righteous can barely be saved, what chance will the unbeliever have? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear” (1 Peter 4:17-18)?

The choice between eternal life and death originated as God's divine rule in the Garden of Eden. Obedience means retaining the right to the Tree of Life; disobedience means losing that right and eternal death. Grace originated in God's plans for man before the creation of the world (1 Peter 1:17-20). God foresaw man's need of grace, and had a plan.

It is true that we must recognize our imperfection, or we would have no need for the One (Christ) who leads to life more abundant (John 10:10) and is perfect in the father (1

Tim.2:5- 6; Heb.7:11,22; 9:14-15). But to accept forever our incompleteness and lack of perfection is to be forever lacking in Christ and liberty of God's truth.

We are called to good works (Eph.2:10; 2 Tim.3:17), but works do not make us complete or atone for past sins. Christ does. He is our perfection. Peace, harmony, and an "Easy Yoke" can ultimately be found only with Him and His true ways. Thank God who is full of grace, mercy, and love--for life-saving grace, knowledge and the opportunity. "We can re-enter paradise." But no man can come to the Father without Christ. Paradise only comes when Christ returns. Make no mistake about it: some will not enter into life. But true Biblical Christianity; and only the truth of God does lead to life eternal.

Only a very proud person could imagine himself capable of living like Jesus. The commandment to live like Jesus, like many other commandments in the Bible, was not given to us so that we should fulfill them, but merely so that we should understand—as a result of our constantly unsuccessful attempts--that it is impossible for us to accomplish it, and so that it should reveal to us the depth of our sinfulness. We should not be discouraged in our attempt to live like Jesus, but we should daily "polish" our hearts by concentrated meditation on His Word by faith. Then the beauty of Jesus will be reflected in us--it will give a still more beautiful picture than the picture we have of our own life, will be Christ living in us.

True life, and life more abundant, will be found only in sound study and appropriate response to the Words of God. This includes recognizing Christ as our perfection and as God's grace. That's the true source for peace and perfection in the face of our humanity.

God does not want us to sin; He hates sin. But He loves us despite our sins and offers us His way of salvation. Because we do not know the human heart, we cannot make righteous judgment of others. But be assured that God knows our inner thoughts and convictions. He knows whether we are sincere or whether we only excuse our lifestyle for our own selfish interests. He knows whether we honestly want to change and do His will, or whether we have a greater love for the ways of the world.

Remember, “For God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son so that anyone who believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved” (John 3:16-17).

With our unwavering faith in Christ as our Saviour (Acts 8:37-38), we must repent and turn from all transgressions (Eze.18:30-31), start a new life of obedience (Acts 2:37-38), and then we must, with faith, be baptized, and in baptism, by faith, bury that past life of sins with Jesus in the watery grave. Having done this, “we also should walk in newness of life” (Rom.6:3-6). “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body (old life) of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin” (Transgress God’s Holy laws), but live a life of obedience, as Paul says in Romans 8:1-4). We are saved from a life of sin unto a life of obedience through the Holy Spirit working in us “both to will and to do His good pleasure “ (Phil.2:12-13).

Salvation by grace and faith in Christ does not “make void” the Law of God. Faith “establishes it” (Rom.3:31). How? By writing that Holy, Just and Good Law (Rom.7:7, 12) in our hearts by the Spirit of God (2 Cor.3:3; Jer.31:31-34), so that it becomes the

rule of our lives, obeyed in love, given to us by God's Spirit (Rom.5:5; 1 John 5:3; Psa.40:7-8).

Thus, we have found in our study that God's Holy Law is not contrary to grace, but works with it giving us the knowledge of sin (Rom.3:20); and when we, by the grace of God, are made new creatures in Christ, it becomes our rule of life by our obedience from the heart. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev.22:14).

There were two sets of laws given at Sinai. One Law was written by God, the "Ten Commandments" being Eternal. The other Book of Laws, "Book of the everlasting Covenant," this was written by Moses. It was the laws of the Levitical Priesthood with the Sacrificial System that was nailed to the cross. That change would apply to both the beginning of the Levitical Priesthood at Sinai and its ending at Calvary.

There are many laws carried over into this dispensation from the Book of Moses that are binding upon Christians today. These that are binding today is beyond any argument: dietetic law of clean and unclean meats, bitterness, hatred, prostitution, divorce, sexual relation with animals, bribery, incest, swearing, jealousy, homosexuality, avenging one's self and many others. These all pre-dated Sinai.

But all the works of the law which men do to be saved by, that are the works of men's natural abilities, are therefore called the works of the flesh, but God is not willing that men should be saved by these, therefore there is no way but by His grace.

The grace of God helps us to overcome these difficulties, preventing us from losing our way in petty things, and helps us to understand the most important passages in the

New Testament. These passages, which are so clear, can by their teaching and practice bring sinners to Christ.

“Love is the fulfilling of the Law” (Rom.13:10)

“For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Gal.5:14).

“Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets” (Matt.7:12).

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” This is the first and great commandment. (The first four commandments of the Decalogue). And the second is like it: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (The last six commandments of the Decalogue).

“On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Matt.22:37-40).

All God’s promises are conditional on obedience to His will which in no wise sets aside Grace as spoken of in Eph.2:8-10, nor the role of Faith in the believers life (Heb.11:6). “But grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and forever, Amen.”

#### AMAZING GRACE

Amazing grace! How sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me!  
I once was lost, but now am found, was blind, but now I see.  
It was grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved,  
How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed!  
Thro’ many dangers, toil and snares, I have already come;  
It is grace that brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.  
When we’ve been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun,  
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise than when we first begun.

Of all the sources of courage none is more potent than the cross of Christ, for it is the crowning revelation of God’s love for mankind.

While its is comforting to know that God is omnipotent (almighty) and can do anything He pleases; while it is reassuring to believe that He is omniscient (all-knowing) and knows everything, past, present, and future; to be certain that He is love, that every

thought He ever had, every deed He ever performed, ever purpose He ever conceived, was inspired by love, is to possess the deepest secret of quiet trust and calm endurance.

Calvary removed all possible doubts of His love. The fact that He was willing to die such a shameful death when He could so easily have escaped it; to put up with such calamity and ridicule when He didn't deserve it; and to cry "forgive them" when He could have consumed His tormenters in righteous indignation; all this demonstrated a capacity to love beyond all human comprehension. Here was revealed a love without limit, a love willing to go to any lengths to accomplish its purpose, a "love that beareth all things, believeth all things, hope all things, endureth all things" (1 Cor.13:7). It is true, long before Calvary, which God tried to convince men of His love.

The chief purpose of the Ten Commandments was to inspire love-love to God and love to man.

On of the most beautiful revelations of God's love in the Old Testament is found in Psalm 103, where David says, "The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy, for as heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him" (Verse 8-11).

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

If you want the truth, you must renounce attitudes and opinions, for every attitude and opinion is also a blind spot that makes you quite incapable of understanding other views and opinions apart from your own. Reality knows itself, because there is a spirit in it. Christ is the truth. He is the reality, as it knows itself, without being distorted by being looked at through a transparent glass or from different angles. In His Word, the Bible,

we find the road to hope. The road is clearly marked in the pages above. “Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom.15:13).

Christians are to walk in freedom, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). Numerous times Paul wrote of freedom we have in Jesus Christ (Roman 6:18,22; 8:1-2; Gal.5:1). The only problem is this truth; “grace and law” seems more theological than it does practical. Christianity suffers from the glaring inconsistency that God calls every Christian to the disciplined life, but few actually walk therein.

Elder Richard L. Chatfield  
Sister Helen M. Chatfield  
3301 Ashby Rd  
St; Louis Mo. 63074

