

**AGAPE HOUSE OF WORSHIP
WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Topic: The Law Versus Grace
Texts: Romans 6:12-14

Wednesday, October 18, 2023
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Romans 6:14 For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.

John 1:17 "For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

The Bible is clear: in Christ Jesus, a New Testament believer is no longer under that law but under the grace. But what does this really mean? Does it mean the law is no longer relevant? Does it mean the Old Testament is no longer relevant? A believer must understand the difference between being under the law and being under grace to walk in the blessing of the new covenant. In tonight's study, we will take a deep dive into this subject of the law versus grace with the help of the Holy Spirit.

What is "the law"?

When "the law" is mentioned in the Bible, it generally refers to The Mosaic Law that God gave Moses on Mount Sinai after releasing the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. They include the Ten Commandments (the Moral Law), ordinances for living in society (the Civil/Judicial Law), and regulations for worship (the Ceremonial Law), which are requirements for priests, sacrifices, feasts, and the temple). The Bible gives several reasons why God gave the Law to His people:

1. The law reveals the holy character of the eternal God to the nation of Israel (Leviticus 19:2; 20:7–8).
2. The law sets apart the nation of Israel as distinct from all the other nations (Exodus 19:5).
3. Provides atonement and forgiveness through the sacrifice/offerings (Leviticus 1—7). To atone is to suffer the penalty for sins, thereby removing the effects of sin from the repentant sinner and allowing him or her to be reconciled to God. Leviticus 1:4-5
4. The law provides a way of worship for the community of faith through the yearly feasts (Leviticus 23).
5. The law provides the criteria and standards for the blessings of God. Deuteronomy 28:1

What Are the Weaknesses of the Law?

Several verses in the New Testament reveal to us that the law is not God's ultimate plan and state many weaknesses of the law system that gave way to the New Covenant. Here are some of the weaknesses:

- The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming—not the realities themselves. Hebrews 10:1-3
- The law was a temporary structure that God put in place until the ultimate fulfilment of God's covenant. *Galatians 3:15-20*
- The law does not deliver us from our sinfulness problem (sinful nature). Romans 7:14-25
- The law does not make us righteous - *Romans 3:20 "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in God's sight by the works of the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of our sin.*
- The law empowers sin by making us even more conscious of sin. 1 Corinthians 15:56, Romans 7:7-9
- The Law was given to reveal our sinfulness and convince us of our need for Christ. Galatians 3:24-25
- The Law also brings curses. Galatians 3:10-14

What does Matthew mean when he says Jesus fulfilled the law, but did not abolish it?

Matthew 5:17-18 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. 18 For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one [a] jot or one [b] tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

- Jesus became our perfect sacrifice by offering himself for us. Hebrews 10:11-14
- Christ is the culmination of the law. Romans 10:4 (NLT) *"For Christ has already accomplished the purpose for which the law was given. As a result, all who believe in him are made right with God.*

What is Grace?

The gospel message is the good news of God's grace, so it is essential to know what grace is and constantly seek a better view of what grace does in our lives. Grace inclines God to give gifts that are free and undeserved by sinners. Grace is God choosing to bless us rather than curse us as our sin deserves. It is His benevolence to the undeserving. The grace of God is what allows Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners. Grace is the system of God's plan of salvation that places the gift of God above His requirement from man.

Under grace, salvation becomes a gift from God and not a product of our human effort.

- *Ephesians 2:8-9* "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast."
- *Romans 11:6* "And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. [a]But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work."
- *Galatians 2:16* "know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified."

Under grace, our righteousness becomes imputed righteousness which comes by faith.

- *Phil. 3:9* "and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in[a] Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith."
- *Romans 4:5* "However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness."

Under grace, the emphasis is on the provision of God instead of His requirements. Under the law, demand comes before the supply, but under grace, supply comes before the demand.

- **2 Peter 1:3** "His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness."
- *Ephesians 1:3* "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

Important Questions

Does Grace permit sin?

Romans 6:1-2 "What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?"

What is the Place of Good Works Under Grace?

Ephesians 2:8-10 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do"

- Good works are evidence, not means of salvation.
- Our good works reveals our faith to the world and glorify God. James 2:18

Can Our Lack of Good Works (Fruits) Hinder God's Work In Our Lives?

- The grace of God should have effect in our lives: *1 Corinthians 15:10* "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me."
- Willful immaturity can cost us the full manifestation of the promises of God in our lives. Galatians 4:1-4

What Does the Bible Mean When It Says You Are Not Under the Law, But Under Grace?

- The ceremonial law is obsolete, it has been fulfilled by Christ. The spirit of the moral and civil/judicial law (love, mercy, kindness, honor etc.) is still valid.
- Obeying moral and civil law is no longer a means of obtaining salvation or righteousness. Salvation and righteousness are the gifts of God.
- Obeying moral law is only an evidence of salvation and not the means of obtaining salvation.