

The Difference between Grace and Law.

“The Truth As We Know It”

11/8/15

The doctrine of “Grace” is the most important concept in the Bible, Christianity, and the world. It is most clearly expressed in the promises of God revealed in Scripture and embodied in Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul tells us in Eph 2:6-8, "And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

In John 1:15-17 we read, "John (the Baptist) bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spoke, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Just as Moses brought the law, Jesus brought us grace.

What is the difference between law and Grace? The law was given to us to show us what is truly sinful and distasteful to God. The law was harsh and unforgiving. No one could truly live it to perfection. Sin is identified as breaking the law as we see in 1 John 3:4 where we read, "Whosoever commits sin transgress also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Paul tells us in Galatians 3:23-25, "But before faith came, we were

kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." In other words, the law was given to show us what sin really is so that we would now ask for and receive forgiveness for them from Jesus Christ. In Rom 3:19-22 we read, "Now we know that what things so ever the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe:"

Paul describes it in Romans 3:27-31, "Can we boast, then, that we have done anything to be accepted by God? No, because our acquittal is not based on obeying the law. It is based on faith. So we are made right with God through faith and not by obeying the law. After all, is God the God of the Jews only? Isn't He also the God of the Gentiles? Of course He is. There is only one God, and He makes people right with Himself only by faith, whether they are Jews or Gentiles. Well then, if we emphasize faith, does this mean that we can forget about the law? Of course not! In fact, only when we have faith do we truly fulfill the

law."

It is "Not of works, lest any man should boast." It is by faith and not of works. Grace was before the law. Paul tells us in Rom 4:3-5, "For the Scriptures tell us, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." When people work, their wages are not a gift, but something they have earned. But people are counted as righteous, not because of their work, but because of -their faith in God who forgives sinners." And in Rom 11:6-7 we read, "And since it is through God's kindness, then it is not by their good works. For in that case, God's grace would not be what it really is—free and undeserved. "

The Purpose of the Law then is that The Ten Commandments are intended to show us what sin is and we wouldn't even know what sin was except by the law (Rom 7:7). John writes that sin is transgressing the law because "Everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness; sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4) but just because the law has been lifted, this doesn't mean that we don't strive to obey it as much as humanly possible and by the power of the Holy Spirit of God. Here is where we must have gratitude for Christ's sacrifice because He "appeared in order to take away sins, and in him there is no sin" but it's important to note that "no one who abides in him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has

either seen him or known him” (1 John 3:5:6). We are not saved by the law or by law-keeping but anyone who is living a lifestyle of breaking God’s law is obviously not saved. John makes this clear by writing “Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God’s seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God” (1 John 3:8-9). The key word here is “practice” because if you are learning to play an instrument or playing a sport you continue to practice it because you love it so anyone that continues to practice sin, as a lifestyle, cannot truly be a person who has been born again because “No one born of God makes a practice of sinning.” That doesn’t mean that believers still don’t sin. We all sin and stumble and fall but that’s not the same thing as continually diving into it or practicing sin on an ongoing basis. We are not sinless but we strive to sin less!

Grace is God’s unmerited favor which He bestows upon all those who repent and trust in Christ. Grace has been called; God’s riches at Christ’s expense. God gives us what we do not deserve. If grace were merited, then it wouldn’t be grace anymore but salvation by works and no one is saved by works. Paul clearly defined this in Romans 11:6

writing “But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace” and “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph 2:8-9). That’s good news for us because no one can possibly keep the law perfectly. Only Christ could and did so He kept the law for us who couldn’t so that we could receive eternal life by faith.

Is the Law Void? Since we are under grace, does this mean that we don’t have to worry about the law? Paul answers the question about the law by telling the church at Rome, “Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it” (Rom 6:1-2)? Further, he says “What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness”(Rom 6:15-16)? Just because we are not under the law but under grace doesn’t mean that we are free to break the law. The truth is that we should desire to obey God because we love Him as Jesus said “If you love me, you will keep my commandments”(John 14:15). Love is equated with a desire to live an obedient life. We should want to obey

God because we love Him and we are indebted to Him by His freeing us from the eternal death penalty that we all deserved and that the law had brought. When Paul writes about the law he is writing about the Ten Commandments which have never been voided. How can we say that God has done away with “You shall not murder, you shall not bear false witness,” or “You shall not commit adultery?”

In conclusion, The law is there to teach us what sin really is. It is harsh and unforgiving, based on ones ability to live perfectly before God which is impossible. Grace is God's forgiveness and mercy given to us when we do not deserve it. When we are desperately wicked, God's grace reaches out to us in hope of our repentance and return to him through Jesus Christ.

Listen again next week.

This we do know, The Bible is God's Word, God's word is true, Jesus Christ is God's son, Jesus died to save us from our sin, Without Jesus we are eternally lost. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we might be saved. Atheism is a temporary condition, for every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord! Jesus stands ready to save you now, Will you call on Him today?

Until next week, God bless.

