

The Law and Grace

Does being under grace mean once saved always saved? Does grace do away with any obligation to obey God's law? What does it mean to be "under the law"? Is obeying God's law required for salvation? The answers to these questions are important for us to understand if we are to enter the Kingdom of God.

What is meant by being under the Law?

"Now we know that **whatever the Law says, it says to them who are under the law**: that every mouth may be stopped, and all of 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**" (Romans 3:19, 20). What is sin? "Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law [*contempt and violation of law, iniquity, wickedness*]" (1 John 3:4).

The law reveals what sin is, but the Law is not sin. "What shall we say then? *Is the law sin?* God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of covetousness. For without the law sin *was* dead....For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew *me*. Wherefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Romans 7:7, 8, 11-13).

The whole world is guilty before God, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). Therefore all are under the penalty of death, "For the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23). Being under the Law means one is under the penalty imposed for breaking the law. However, the law cannot remove sin; therefore by the deeds of the law no one can be justified in the sight of God.

The problem is not with the Law, but with the carnal mind of man. "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin" (Romans 7:14). In order for man to be justified, the penalty for breaking the law must be paid. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of **sinful flesh**, and by a sacrifice for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: **that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit**" (Romans 8:3, 4).

Therefore man, "Being justified freely [1432, *a gift*] by His grace [5485, *favor, kindness which bestows upon one what he has not deserved*] through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God has set forth to be a mercy seat through faith in His blood, to declare His

righteousness for the passing over of **sins that are past**, through the forbearance of God” (Romans 3:24, 25). The gift of grace is a pardon of past sins that have been repented of, but,

The Gift of Grace is not a License to Continue in Sin

“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? Know you not, that so 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**...For sin shall not have dominion over you: for **you are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.** Do you not know that when you offer yourselves as obedient slaves, you are slaves to the one you obey, whether you are slaves to sin leading to death, or to obedience leading to righteousness?” (Romans 6:1-4, 14-16).

There were teachers who came into the congregations teaching a false grace, which remains to this day. Jude warned that “...you should earnestly contend for the **faith** [4102, *belief, firm persuasion, conviction*] which was **once for all** [530, *one time only*] delivered to the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares...ungodly men, turning the **grace of our God into lasciviousness** [766, *immorality, sensuality, lewdness, licentiousness*], and **denying** [720, *to contradict*] **the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ**” (Jude 1:3, 4).

Jesus said, “This people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from Me. But in vain they do worship Me, **teaching for doctrines the commandments of men**” (Matthew 15:8, 9). Through their false teaching these teachers contradict the true teachings of Jesus Christ, and that is a denial of Him.

Grace is not Once Saved Always Saved

After a man is justified by the blood of Jesus Christ, if he turns away he is no longer under grace, but is under judgment. “**For if we deliberately sin after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remains no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.** He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose you, shall he be thought worthy, who have trodden underfoot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and have done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that has said, Vengeance *belongs* to me, I will recompense, says the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. *It is* a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:26-31).

If a righteous man, who is under grace, turns away from obeying the law and practices sin, then he will die under the penalty of the law. He is no longer under grace because he has turned from the way of righteousness. “When the righteous turns from his righteousness, and commits

iniquity [5766, *injustice, unrighteousness, wrong*], **he shall even die thereby**. But if the wicked **turn** from his wickedness, and do that which is **lawful and right, he shall live thereby**. Yet you say, The way of the Lord is not equal. O you house of Israel, **I will judge you every one after his ways**" (Ezekiel 33:18-20).

Obedience to God's Law is Necessary for Salvation

Those who walk contrary to the law will not be in the Kingdom of God. "Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but you are **washed**, but you are **sanctified**, but you are **justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

Only those who are obedient will enter the Kingdom of God. Jesus said, "Not everyone that says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that **does the will of My Father** who is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied [4395, *speak forth by divine inspiration; to predict*] **in Your name**, and **in Your name** have cast out demons, and **in Your name** have done many mighty works? And then will I declare to them, **I never knew [1097] you**: depart from Me, you that **work lawlessness**" (Matthew 7:21-23).

The word "knew" is *Strong's* #1097. It means: *to become acquainted with, to know, especially through personal experience*. We get to know our Savior by walking with Him. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3). Jesus did not know them because they were not walking with Him, but they were walking contrary to Him by not obeying God's law.

"If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in **darkness, we lie, and do not the truth**: but if we **walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin**" (1 John 1:6, 7).

Darkness represents the way of sin, and light the way of truth. "Through thy precepts [6490, *a mandate (of God; plural only, collectively, for the Law)*] I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way. **Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path**. I have sworn, and I will perform *it*, that **I will keep thy righteous judgments**" (Psalm 119:104-106).

The bottom line is this: Grace removes the penalty of sin when we repent of our former way, but it is not a justification to continue breaking God's law. "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law. For not the hearers of the law *are* just before God, but **the doers of the law shall be justified**" (Romans 12:12, 13).