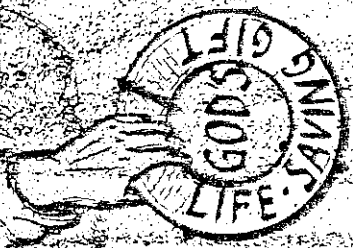


Wondrous Grace—



Wondrous Grace— God's Life-Saving Gift

Answering the Questions:

1. Do grace and faith supersede law and works?
2. Is salvation attained by faith alone?

INTRODUCTION

Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord... (Isaiah 1:18).¹

Surely that is the only logical way to approach a problem—with reason. God always has good advice. He understands that people are not drawn more closely together in purpose and thinking when a spirit of debate and antagonistic argument is present. Constructive progress (whether in religion or in business) can only be made when issues and points of difference are thought out and discussed with logic and reason.

We have a matter—the wondrous grace of God—which we wish to consider, and we

¹Scripture quoted in this tract has been set in italic type to give it emphasis and to make it readily recognizable.

invite you to pull up a chair and "reason" with us. We want to tell you about the grace of God—what it is and how it works.

After you have read the discussion of what we believe the Bible teaches, about this subject, you may still have thought reservations, but inasmuch as Solomon says:

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death (Proverbs 14:12), it behooves us to be constantly doing as Paul admonished Timothy:

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).

It is only by studying and reasoning together (exchanging thoughts and views) and doing as the noble Bereans, who "...received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so" (Acts 17:11), that we can know we are following God's ways and not our own.

There should be no hesitancy to "reason together" concerning the Bible, for it should be the uppermost desire of a Christian to know and do the complete will of God regardless of the cost. It is the way we show our love and appreciation to God and Christ for what they have done, and are still doing, for us. In this connection Jesus said:

If a man love me, he will keep my words... (John 14:23).

It is with these thoughts in mind that we would have you consider what has been revealed to us concerning *God's Wonderful Grace*. Pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal to you the Scriptural truths that are presented in this study.

GRACE—THE PRODUCT OF GOD'S MERCY

Being finite it is impossible to fully comprehend an infinite God, but of at least one thing we can be certain: He is the essence of love and mercy. If He were not we would not be here today. The Lord would have despised of mankind long ago because of man's constant and persistent refusal to honor his Maker and to walk in His way.

How grateful we should be that the Creator is the embodiment of mercy—that attribute which makes possible compassion so great as to enable one to forbear punishing even when justice demands it.

It is because of God's limitless mercy that we are the recipients of a product of it—*grace*. To this we shall give our attention in the study herein presented. We want to find out what the grace of God is, how it works, whether grace and faith supercede (replace or abolish) law and works, and if salvation is attained by faith alone.

GRACE DEFINED

The word *grace* appears 131 times in the books of the commonly called "New Testament," and in every instance except one it is translated from an original Greek

word (*charis*) which has the following meaning (we quote from the Greek dictionary section of *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*):

"*Charis* [grace], *graciousness* (as *gratifying*), of manner or act (abstractly or concretely, literally, figuratively or spiritually; especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including *gratitude*): acceptable, benefit, favor, gift, grace (-ious), joy, liberality, pleasure, thank (-s, worthy)."

The one exception is where the word *grace* is used in James 1:11. The verse reads: "*For the sin is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth.*..."

Here the original Greek word (*euprepeta*) carries this meaning: "*good suitableness, i.e., gracefulness.*"

Grace is usually said to be the unmerited favor of God, and according to the aforementioned definition that is entirely true; for it was when the human race stood in condemnation before the heavenly Father—not deserving any consideration or favor—that "*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).

The wonderful part is that God "... *com-mendeth his love* [grace, or unmerited favor or gift] *toward us... while we were yet sinners...*" (Romans 5:8). How did God manifest His grace? It was by giving Christ to die for us, that we might "... *have redemp-*

tion through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:14).

But Christ's death does not give us the freedom to live as we please after having once confessed, repented, and accepted His atonement. Even Christ-pardoned people can sin. This seems evident from 1 John 2:1, which reads:

My little children [people who had already accepted Christ], these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate [or intercessor] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.

When we accept Christ and repent (ask forgiveness) of our sins, we are readily forgiven, but when we sin after that (and "...sin is the transgression of the law"—1 John 3:4), we must seek forgiveness anew; and, because God's grace has not been withdrawn, forgiveness can be expected each time. The grace of God in no way releases us from obedience—from being subject to law. Grace would not be necessary if there were no laws to break.

GRACE PROVIDES FORGIVENESS

It begins to be evident that the grace of God has to do with forgiveness of sin, and remember that "sin is the transgression of the law." If there were no sin there would not have to be any grace—there could not be, for it provides the forgiveness of sin. Therefore, if we say we are living under grace we are living in a condition where it

is needed—where it is possible to become contaminated with sin, and "...the wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23).

If no law is broken there is no pardon to grant—no grace to be exercised. Suppose my son knows that, whenever he wishes, he may have an apple from the fruit room without asking my permission. Then suppose he comes to me and says, "Dad, forgive me for taking an apple."

He has violated no law of mine; he has not disobeyed. How, then, could I forgive him or manifest grace toward him? It would be impossible. "If here no law is, there is no transgression" (Romans 4:15), thus no sin, for law only establishes what sin is. If there is no sin there is no need of grace. It was because of sin that God provided a way of release from it—by extending His grace in giving Christ (an unmerited gift) to die for sin.

At one time in the United States there was no requirement concerning having a license on an automobile, and thus a person could drive around at will without fear of being apprehended by the law for having no license. There was no need of grace (pardon or favor) being extended to anyone, such as could be exercised by a judge before whom you might find yourself as a result of having violated a traffic law. Sensing that your offense was not deliberate, he might just give you a verbal warning and pardon you without penalty.

Why was there no need of grace when auto licenses were not required? Because there was no law which stipulated the neces-

sity of having them. But try the same thing today! What makes the difference? Is it any more wrong to drive a car down the road today without a piece of tin attached to it, with some figures and letters thereon, than it was some 50 years ago? Actually it is more wrong because to do so today constitutes a transgression of our state laws.

When there is no law there is no sin, but since there is still an abundance of sin, there must be law, for otherwise we would not know what constitutes sin. Likewise, if there is no law there is no grace, for it is only necessary when there is law. There is no need for grace if there are no laws to break. If law has been abolished, so has grace, for the only function of grace is to provide forgiveness when laws are broken—providing the offender, like David, acknowledges his transgression and seeks forgiveness (see Psalm 51:1-10).

TRANSGRESSION NOT NECESSARY TO OBTAIN GRACE

We do not have to sin to benefit from God's grace, but it was sin (breaking the commandments) which caused the Creator to exercise His grace in the first place. Sin came before grace. Man sinned, and the grace of God was manifested and exercised. It was first revealed when the Almighty, instead of destroying the people when they disregarded His commandments, provided a way (the sacrificial system) whereby the children of Israel could live free from sin and be justified in His sight until Christ would come to pro-

vide a different and better way of escape from sin.

Yes, we might say that as soon as the sacrificial laws were given to the people, they were under the grace of God for they were the embodiment of His grace. But we ask: "Did those Israelites sacrifice multiplied thousands of animals uselessly? Should they have understood that since God had manifested His grace there was nothing for them to do except to go on living as they pleased? Would God have been just as pleased had they disregarded the sacrificial laws and failed to offer the stipulated sacrifices?"

The obvious answer to each question is "No." Although grace had been extended to them, they had to conform to law. They only received the benefits of grace by obedience to law.

So it is with us. "...when the fulness of time was come, God sent his Son..." (Galatians 4:4), "...the Lamb of God... [to take] away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). Again we ask: "Have people since the advent of Christ needlessly spent their time and deprived themselves of many fleshly pleasures by trying to adhere to certain standards of righteousness? Should people now understand that because Christ (another expression of God's grace) came and offered Himself a perfect sacrifice that there is nothing to do, except perhaps to say: 'Thank you, Lord,' and go on living as they did before?" The answers are clearly "No."

The Christian world teaches that accepting Christ means living like Him and fol-

lowing His teachings, and that is most assuredly necessary. We only receive the benefits of grace by being obedient to Christ. If we accept Christ and have faith in Him we will surely strive to do as He did and as He instructed. At this juncture we might ask: "What did Christ teach?" For one thing, He taught that we should keep the commandments, for He said:

If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love (John 15:10).

CHRIST DIDN'T COME TO REMODEL

But someone will say: "Yes, but Christ's commandments are different from God's commandments." We fail to find any Scriptural proof for this. We do find, however, Christ saying:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil (Matthew 5:17), and fulfil does not mean to destroy or do away with; for it is translated from the same word from which fulfil is rendered in Matthew 3:15, which reads:

And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.

We would not say that Christ did away with righteousness, would we? Neither did He do away with His Father's "perfect law of liberty" (James 1:25). *Fulfil* means to make replete or perfect.

It is also quite evident from what Christ

said, as recorded in John 6:38, that He did not set up a standard of His own or undertake to remodel His Father's standard for righteousness, for He stated:

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

After saying that He did not come to destroy the law but to fulfill it, Christ (in His sermon on the mount) continued to say to the people:

For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 5:17-19).

If the Ten Commandments were a part of the Law of Moses, as some believe, and Christ came to abolish this law, then we ask: "To what commandments was He referring?" The answer is given by Christ in His conversation with the young man who came to Him asking: "...what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?" by answering: "...if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." When the young man asked: "Which?" Christ then quoted several of the Ten Commandments (see Matthew 19:16-19). This should show that Christ was teaching that there was a law to keep. With the sacrificial law com-

ing to an end with His death, there was only one law to which He could have been referring—the Ten Commandments.

Just as the offering of animal sacrifices did not change the Law of Moses, likewise when Christ offered Himself as the perfect Lamb of God (to replace animal sacrificing) His sacrifice did not change the Ten-Commandment law, the breaking of which necessitated the added law (mentioned in Galatians 3:19) as the remedy for sin. The Israelites still had to keep the Law of Moses, as well as the Ten Commandments, even though they offered sacrifices. Offering sacrifices did not change or abolish the laws. They still had to keep the Ten Commandments as well as to bear the "yoke" of the added law which prescribed remedy for sin.

Neither did Christ's coming and sacrifice change God's eternal law. True, His sacrifice brought to an end the necessity of the sacrificial system contained in the Law of Moses (Hebrews 10:12 and Colossians 2:14), but we repeat: It did not do away with or alter the original laws of God any more than did the animal sacrifices. The Saviour's work on the Cross only made a change in the way we serve God and keep justified in His sight.

Before Calvary, people served God through animal sacrifices. However, it was not possible for these sacrifices to take away their sins (Hebrews 10:4), but the offering of such sacrifices manifested faith in the blood of the "Lamb of God" which was to be shed for them in the future, and God accepted those sacrifices in a figure. Thus, by His

wondrous grace, through faith in the sacrifice yet to be made by His beloved Son, those worshippers received complete forgiveness of their sins.

From the foregoing, we see that none have ever been saved except "by grace through faith" in the blood of Jesus. However, in this present age of the world, when the true sacrifice is an accomplished fact, we no longer need to manifest our faith through the offering of animal sacrifices. Instead, we observe the Lord's Supper in memory of that wonderful manifestation of God's grace and love at Calvary—the sacrifice of His Son. Also, the realization of God's grace and love relative to our salvation constrains us to obey God in the keeping of all His commandments. The "royal law" (James 2:8) remains the same, and obedience to it is still required.

LAW DEFINES SIN

When there is law, there is the possibility that it may be broken, and then is when grace or divine favor is needed. Even though we still have an Advocate with the Father if we do err (1 John 1:2), God does not condone promiscuous breaking of His law. He still exacts punishment for sin, even though He will forgive if forgiveness is earnestly sought. The only way to be safe is to strive constantly and prayerfully to overcome those things which tempt us to sin.

Christ said: "Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation..." (Matthew 26:41), and James said: "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation..." (1:12). But if we

should get careless and break the law of God and sin, His grace is still available. Without it we would have to pay the penalty, which is eternal death in the case of unforgiven sin.

The Word of God says: "... by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20), and "I had not known sin, but by the law..." (Romans 7:7). The only law which defines sin, which expresses God's righteous will for our conduct, is His moral law, the Ten Commandments. To transgress any part of this law is sin, for "... sin is the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4).

The law which was written in a book by Moses and placed in the side of the ark (Deuteronomy 31:24-26) did not in any way define sin. It was only a remedial law, in that it outlined what had to be done as a remedy for sin—for breaking the law that tells what constitutes sin, which was written by the finger of God on two tables of stone (Deuteronomy 9:10) and placed in the ark.

There had to be a law before the Law of Moses was given to Moses by God, for this law is involved with stipulations regarding what had to be done because law had been broken. It did not tell what could not be done; it told what had to be done in order to be justified for breaking existing law.

We are told in Galatians 3:19 that a law was added (provided additionally) because of transgression. Something was transgressed. It could not have been the Law of Moses, for it was made necessary because of disobedience. Disobedience to what? Disobedi-

ence to, or the breaking of the Ten-Commandment law. We find in Romans 7:12 and Psalm 111:7 and 8 that

... the law is holy and the commandment holy, and just, and good, and that ... all his commandments are sure. They stand fast for ever and ever....

Paul warned the Corinthians against formalism, against depending on the ceremonies of the legal system, saying: "Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Corinthians 7:19). This was after Christ had come and gone, and still Paul taught that the commandments of God were to be kept—not the commandments of Christ, but the commandments of God. If Christ's death abolished both the Law of Moses and the Ten Commandments, we ask what commandments of God was Paul stressing?

In Matthew 19:16-23 and in Revelation 22:14 we find that it is those who keep the commandments of God to whom eternal life is promised, and the reference in Matthew clearly indicates that the Ten Commandments are included in the commandments of God.

GRACE IS FOR LAWBREAKERS

Those who transgress God's law are sinners. Although we are under grace, it is still possible for Satan to catch us off guard and entice us to sin, but if such should happen we can appeal to God in sincere contrition and seek forgiveness. And

since we are living in the dispensation of His grace, we have the wonderful assurance that we will be forgiven. Notice this verse:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Salvation has always been by grace through faith. Salvation through grace is not a plan that is peculiar to the Christian dispensation—as the time since Christ is commonly called. As soon as man sinned, the loving and merciful heart of God was touched. He knew what would have to be done if a way of escape from sin (caused by breaking His laws) was not provided, so His grace was put into operation. Law and grace have gone hand in hand from Adam's transgression on down through the ages, and, praise God! grace will always be available for repentant lawbreakers.

SIN IS TRANSGRESSION OF LAW

We do not understand that grace does away with God's law nor that law and grace are contrary the one to the other, or that salvation is now attainable by faith alone, or that since Christ died for our sins, works are no longer necessary. To contend that Christians are not subject to law and therefore cannot sin is to say that the thing that is sin to the unbeliever is not sin for the believer—that sin is different after one is born again. God forbid! Sin is still the transgression of the law (1 John 3:4), and the wages of sin is still death (Romans 6:

23)—whether committed by sinner or saint. Sin is the same today as it has been in every age: the transgression of God's commandments. God does not change; neither does His holy will for our conduct. If the law of God were set aside, there would be no sin, therefore no penalty, for there would be nothing to establish what sin is. So where and how could grace operate? The curse of the law—the death penalty—still rests upon the one who sins—who transgresses God's laws (Galatians 3:10).

WHAT ABOUT ROMANS 6:14?

Does this verse not say that we are free from the law? Let us examine this text:

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

We begin to find the answer in the next verse. Notice what is said:

What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

Does this mean that people under grace should not keep God's law? No, indeed. Paul was talking to persons who were not sinning or transgressing God's law, for he said: "... sin shall not have dominion [rule, lordship] over you..." (v. 14, first part). Why? "... for ye are not under the law, but under grace" (v. 14, last part).

These brethren had been made free from sin (vv. 17, 18) and were obeying God's law, and yet Paul says they were not under the law but under grace. This harmonizes

with his statement, in Romans 5:21, that grace reigns through righteousness. God's grace is surely not for transgressors of His law, except to free them from sin and the penalty which otherwise they must receive, which is death. *Grace is a remedy for sin and not a license to sin.*

RIGHTEOUS NOT UNDER LAW

Who, then, is under the law? If those who obey the laws of our land are under grace and are at liberty, what about those who disobey the laws? Are they not the ones who are under the law? Yes, those who break the law must pay the penalty set for breaking same. They are the criminals—condemned by the courts and deprived of the grace or mercy extended to those who obey.

The same is true in Romans 6:15: "*What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.*" Only those who obey God's law are under grace, but lawbreakers can come under it by repenting and being forgiven and ceasing to transgress law. The transgressor is condemned by the law and is not under grace. To conclude that since we are under grace we do not have to obey God's law is but to deceive oneself.

Sinners are not under grace but under law, for Christ is not the minister of sin (Galatians 2:17). Likewise, persons who claim to be saved and continue in sin are surely confused and deceived. The grace of God saved the Ephesian brethren from sin and made them obedient to God's law. If we continue a life of sin we are not

saved, and cannot be, because Jesus came to save from sin (Matthew 1:21). The law cannot save from sin. Christ by the grace of God does that. The law reveals what sin is so that we can keep under grace.

WE CANNOT ESCAPE WORKS

Our study would not be complete without considering the part that *works* have in the plan of salvation. But someone may ask: "But why do we have to be concerned about works when we have Paul's statement in Ephesians 2:8 and 9?" Let us look at these verses and then see if we can find the answer:

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.

Here it can be clearly seen that Paul is speaking of a condition these brethren were already in. "*By grace are ye saved*" shows that it was a present condition, and that it was brought about by faith and not by works. Does Paul contradict Christ's teachings—that only the faithful shall be saved? No, he does not. He spoke of something already obtained by faith, while Jesus spoke of something Christians are to obtain by faithful obedience—something to be received in the future by faithfully working out their own salvation, as is recorded in Philippians 2:12:

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence,

work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

If we will carefully analyze these verses, along with the context, we will see that Paul is speaking to the Ephesian brethren in the account given in Ephesians 2. He tells them that they *are* (present tense) saved by grace and not by works, and that they had received it by faith as a gift of God.

The salvation these Ephesians had received came as a direct gift of God through faith. Paul said they were saved by God's grace. That is true. They were saved, but from what? Had they received eternal life yet? No, they had not, for that is given at Christ's coming (Revelation 22:12): "... *behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.*" (Notice that Christ is to give men according to what their *work* shall be.) They had not yet received the redemption of the body, but they had received something. What was it?

They had received the free pardon of their past sins, by the grace of God through Christ, which released them from the *prison* house of sin, where they had been confined because of disobedience. They had been saved from a helpless condition from which they had no power to help themselves. What they received was a gift of the grace of God. They had been lifted up, cleansed, freed from condemnation, and given the opportunity of making a new start, as it were. But they were not released from any further obligation; they had only been given

an opportunity to live lives free of sin, and that is what the grace of God does. It works in our behalf when we unintentionally slip (break the law), that is, providing we petition with a broken and contrite heart, the Throne of Grace for pardon--more unmerited favor.

Paul apparently did not think that having accepted of the atoning blood of Christ and of the grace of God his future was secure from that moment, for he said:

But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (1 Corinthians 9:27).

He recognized the fact that it was constantly possible for him to sin and thus fall from grace and be subject to law. Why? Because we are only under grace when we are free of lawbreaking; and we are not under law as long as we do not break it.

NOT SAVED BY WORKS--ALONE

We find this record in Galatians 2:16:

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

There is one fact that is evident and can not be questioned: We are not saved or justi-

sified by "the works of the law," alone. Yes, we are saved by grace! We will be saved because of the grace of God!

Being under grace, we have been delivered from the penalty of sin, and we have a new power within us to enable us to obey—to deliver us from the influence of sin. No, we are not saved by works, alone. However, works are the fruit of our salvation. Works are the evidence to men that we have been justified by faith. Note carefully what James says about works in his epistle, chapter two, verses 20, 21, and 24:

But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead. Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.

No amount of works can remove the guilt of sin, whether past or future. We cannot, nor will not, be justified or forgiven by merely obeying the Ten Commandments. Neither the keeping of this law nor the Law of Moses could atone for sin. There is no atoning virtue in law. It only establishes what sin is and/or regulates punishment for laws transgressed. Thus, law (the Ten Commandments) is only a mirror which reveals sin in our lives, for we find Paul saying in Romans 7:7:

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. (Prohibition against coveting is only found in the Ten Commandments.)

After sin is revealed by the mirror (the law), we must have the grime of guilt removed by the blood of Christ.

Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for every human being (Hebrews 2:9), and through Him we now receive the forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7). This pardon and change of heart comes through faith in Christ and not by works, as we find in Romans 5:1 and 2:

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.

Does this faith that brings us into the grace of God make void God's law? According to Romans 3:31 we must conclude that it does not:

Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

Grace, then, does not make void (abolish or destroy) the law of God, for we have access into God's grace, or mercy, by faith, and this same faith establishes God's law. If law has been abolished and we can no longer sin, Christ would not have said:

And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved (Matthew 10:22).

WHAT DID HE MEAN?

Christ was speaking to His disciples, men who were at that time Christians and under the grace of God. He knew that there would be hard trials and persecutions ahead for them, so, in essence, He said to them: "You are now abiding in the grace of God, but unless you are careful there will be such trials and temptations come upon you as will cause you to stumble and fall away; therefore if you would make sure of eternal life you must resist sin as long as you live."

We are persuaded that Christ is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him. However, we share in this work of preservation. We are exhorted to be over-comers, to watch and pray, etc. God does not employ words uselessly, nor does He give empty warnings. Although we are grafted into the tame olive tree, signifying salvation, it is still possible to be cut off.

If by Christ's death the commandments were set aside, and if people are saved (never to be lost) at the time they accept Christ's sacrifice for sin, then why would John have written: "*My little children [Christian people who have accepted Christ and are under grace], these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous?*" (1 John 2:1).

He said it because He knew that the law was still in force. He was teaching that we

should live consecrated lives, serving the Lord "...with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (Matthew 22:37).

John continued by saying:

And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world. And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him (1 John 2:2-4).

Remember that Christ said: "*Think not that I am come to destroy the law,*" and "*I came ...not to do mine own will.*" Therefore, we must conclude that Christ did not abolish anything except the laws of the old sacrificial system, and that John was referring to the Ten Commandment law. It is evident that there are laws to observe, and since Christ "*...abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances...*" [not on stone] (Ephesians 2:15), commonly called "The Law of Moses," these commandments mentioned by John cannot be other than God's great eternal moral law--the Ten Commandments.

NOT SAVED BY FAITH--ALONE

We have shown that we are not saved by works alone. Now we cite Scriptures to show that neither is salvation attained by faith alone, but rather that it takes a combination of both. James speaks plainly about this:

Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast 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).

In the last verse of the same chapter James adds quite conclusively: "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

A WORD ABOUT GALATIANS 3:11-13

We have already made mention of justification—how that it does not come through law, but we have not dealt with the verses in Galatians the third chapter which are somewhat confusing to some. Let us take a look at them:

But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

How could anyone, in the light of this Scriptural quotation, think to say that after Christ had been made a curse for us we are free to live disobediently to God's commands, to transgress His law?

The curse of the law from which Christ redeemed us is death—eternal death, for

God told Adam and Eve that disobedience would bring death; and Ezekiel records: "...the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4).

It is true that no one is justified by the law, "...for by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). We repeat that the law only defines or points out what sin is. It takes more than merely keeping the law to be justified, but on the other hand God cannot consider one innocent who does not regard and obey His laws. We are justified by faith in Christ if we keep the commandments.

If it be true that Christ, by His death on the cross, repealed the Moral Law and delivered man from the demands of it, instead of saving him from the transgression of it, then since His death there has been no Moral Law—no written law or mandate by which God can convict or condemn a person as a sinner or transgressor. Hence there is no need of salvation nor need of a Saviour, and all the preaching about repentance and salvation from sin since the crucifixion has been a useless and expensive waste of time and energy.

We are reminded of an old maxim from which we wish to draw a parallel with which to emphasize this part of our study. It reads:

**"For the want of a NAIL the shoe was lost;
For the want of a SHOE the horse was lost;**

**For the want of a HORSE the rider was lost;
For the want of a RIDER the battle was lost;**

For the want of a BATTLE the KINGDOM was lost;

All for the want of a HORSESHOE NAIL."

The parallel we would draw is this:

"For the want of a LAW there is no transgression;

For the want of TRANSGRESSION there is no sin;

For the want of SIN there is no sinner;

For the want of a SINNER there is no Saviour;

All for the want of a MORAL LAW."

SUMMARY

It seems evident from the investigation of the Scriptures, which we have herein presented, that grace and faith do not supersede (or replace) law and works, and that salvation is not attained by faith alone. Even though we are under the grace of God, it takes both faith and works to round out the complete, acceptable Christian life. One necessitates the other.

It should also be apparent that there is still a law to be kept, the breaking of which is sin; and since sin results in death, unless it is repented of and forgiveness is sought for it, we should be very careful about complying with the requirements of this law. To keep under grace it is necessary to observe the law and refrain from breaking it.

AN ILLUSTRATION

As we come to the close of our Scriptural

investigation, we wish to give an illustration which we believe will, in a measure, summarize our study and show what it means to be under grace and how law fits in with it.

A man guilty of murder was serving a life sentence in prison. After a few years, friends, including relatives of the one murdered, asked the governor to pardon the man. The pardon was granted. The man was freed.

What saved this man? Was it works? No, it was grace or mercy of the governor. Did grace and pardon abolish the law as far as he was concerned? After being pardoned and released, was he free to commit other crimes and say, "Oh, I am under grace now; the governor pardoned me, and I don't have to keep the law any more?"

Obviously the answer is "No!" And the same is true of the grace and pardon given by God through Christ. They do not abolish God's law (the Ten Commandments), nor do they free those pardoned (whether for the first or hundredth time) so that they may disregard the laws of God. On the contrary, a definite obligation remains—"... go, and sin no more" (John 8:11).

CONCLUSION

As you consider the unbounded love of God, may you accept this grace that is yours because of Calvary. The grace of God forgives your sin and enables you to live this present life according to His will. Only by the grace of God are you born again, and

this new birth—this new life—is, in the final analysis, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Colossians 1:27).

Christ will come into your life to such an extent that you will say with the Apostle Paul:

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless, I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain (Galatians 2:20, 21).

The grace of which Paul spoke did not make him a lawless, sinful creature. It did, however, create within him the deep desire "...to walk, even as he walked" (John 2:6). Jesus is our pattern, our example, our guide, and our strength. When Jesus comes into our hearts, He brings with Him His eternal law, written "...not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart" (2 Corinthians 3:3).

As a result of having this law (the Ten Commandments) written in the heart by the Holy Spirit, the faithful followers of Christ will be able to detect any sin which may come into their lives. Not only is this true, but the same Holy Spirit will point us to "...the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29), for we have the promise:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to

cleanse us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9).

Thus we can see how essential the law of God is to the whole plan of salvation, for by it we can know what constitutes sin, and that we can be cleansed "...and made...white in the blood of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:14).

A PERSONAL APPEAL

If you have not already, will you now let Jesus come into your heart, cleanse you from sin, and then, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, point the way to a new life hid in His will? This you must do if you are to meet Him in peace with expectancy of eternal life. He is waiting for your decision at this moment. Eternity will reveal the answer you give in response to the call of the Holy Spirit. We urge you to resign yourself to His will and to walk in His steps from this day and until He comes to redeem those who have lived overcoming lives.

OUR PRAYER:

"Oh God, in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, help us to fully understand and appreciate Your wondrous grace. Amen."

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