

# L A W

For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

(Romans 10:4)

It took many years for me, even as a Christian, to understand the simple truth that as a New Testament believer I am not under the law, but under grace. It wasn't because I didn't read the Bible or didn't attend church. Why didn't I see it? Could it be because I had law on my mind and my heart? I was not alone. As far as I could tell, from visiting many different churches or listening to Christian radio or television, there were very few people who fully comprehended the difference between law and grace. "Galatianism" (mixing law and grace) was taught and practiced in most congregations. I believe that is now changing.

I thank God every day for setting me free from the bondage of the Law I put myself under in my ignorance. In reality, I am under a higher law now. It is called:

Law of faith	Romans 3:27
Law of the Spirit	Romans 8:2
Law of Christ	Galatians 6:2

The same applies to you, beloved, if you have been indwelt by the Holy Spirit—if you received Jesus as your Savior and Lord.

The term "the Law and the Prophets" means the entire Old Testament, including the Ten Commandments. In 2 Corinthians 3:6–9, the Ten Commandments are called the letters engraved on stones, and they are called the ministry of death, and the ministry of condemnation. We have to understand what God has said about the Old Testament. He said that it is done, that it is finished. Something better is here now—Jesus. He is the Reality. Why are we hanging onto the "shadow"? Is Jesus real in you life?

For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace.

(Romans 6:14)

Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, that we might bear fruit for God.

(Romans 7:4)

But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

(Romans 7:6)

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.”

(Galatians 3:13)

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

(Galatians 5:18)

According to the Word of God the Law kills. The Law is called:

- ministry of death
- ministry of condemnation
- enmity, which was put to death through the cross
- curse
- law of sin and of death
- law, which brings wrath
- law, which made nothing perfect
- law, which cannot give life
- law, which is not of faith
- law, by which works shall no flesh be justified

We can see these truths in the following verses:

God,

who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for *the letter kills*, but the Spirit gives life.

But if *the ministry of death*, in letters engraved on stones, came with glory, so that the sons of Israel could not look intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face, fading as it was,

how shall the ministry of the Spirit fail to be even more with glory?

For if *the ministry of condemnation* has glory, much more does the ministry of righteousness abound in glory.

(2 Corinthians 3:5–9)

Christ Jesus . . .

by abolishing in His flesh *the enmity, which is the Law of commandments* contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,

and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having *put to death the enmity*.

(Ephesians 2:13–16)

For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a *curse*; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the Law, to perform them.”

(Galatians 3:10)

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the *law of sin and of death*.

(Romans 8:2)

For *the Law brings about wrath*, but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

(Romans 4:15)

For, on the one hand, there is a setting aside of a former commandment because of its weakness and uselessness

(*for the Law made nothing perfect*), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

(Hebrews 7:18, 19)

Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! *For if a law had been given which was able to impart life*, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.

(Galatians 3:21–23)

However, *the Law is not of faith*; on the contrary, “He who practices them shall live by them.”

(Galatians 3:12)

*By the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight*; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.

(Romans 3:20)

Nevertheless knowing that a *man is not justified by the works of the Law* but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.

(Galatians 2:16)

Now that *no one is justified by the Law* before God is evident; for, “The righteous man shall live by faith.”

(Galatians 3:11)

### **Why then the Law?**

Paul addressed this very question in the letter to Galatians.

Let us start at the beginning, in the book of Genesis. We could say that the first law given by God was to Adam in the Garden of Eden. God told Adam not to eat of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. In the same verse we see that to that law, if it is broken, a punishment is attached.

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it *you shall surely die.*”

(Genesis 2:16, 17)

Adam and Eve broke the law and died spiritually—God withdrew His Spirit from them. Physical death followed many years later. Ever since then, everyone is born without the Spirit of God—spiritually dead and in need of life, a sinner and in need of forgiveness.

But God had a plan on how to redeem humanity. Until then, the Law was given.

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

(John 1:17)

But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

(Galatians 4:4, 5)

Jesus was born and spent His entire life under the Law. The New Testament didn't start until after His death. It is clearly explained in the book of Hebrews, chapter 9. (Read also chapter “Word of God.”)

Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed should come to whom the promise had been made.

(Galatians 3:19)

The Seed is Jesus Christ. The Law was our tutor to lead us to Him. It was a mere shadow of what was to come.

Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

*But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

(Galatians 3:24–26)

Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—

things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ.

(Colossians 2:16, 17)

Christ is the end of the Law, for He fulfilled the Law.

Jesus said,

“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish, but to fulfill.

“For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass away from the Law, until all is accomplished.”

(Matthew 5:17, 18)

Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament. He lived by perfect love. Jesus Christ is our Priest now and

For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.

(Hebrews 7:12)

The death of Jesus ushered in the New Testament, and the New Testament made the Old Testament obsolete (Hebrews 8:13).

God is our Savior, and He redeemed us from our sins. Thank you Jesus!

First, we have to see ourselves as sinners in need of forgiveness; we have to see ourselves as dead (spiritually) and in need of life. Why else would we come to Jesus? That is the purpose of the Law. The Law is like a mirror. It shows us our sinfulness, but it is not able to cleanse us. The blood of Jesus does the cleansing.

Ever since that day when Adam and Eve died spiritually, humanity was heading for the Cross, and the time of fullness (Galatians 4:4). From the Cross on, we look back to the Cross, thanking God for what He had already accomplished through Christ Jesus.

God is holy and perfect, and so is His Law. The problem, as always, is with us. We, of our own accord, cannot keep the Law. The Law was given to the nation of Israel through Moses, so through the Law would come the knowledge of sin. The Law aroused sin.

By the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for *through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.*

(Romans 3:20)

And *the Law came in that the transgression might increase*; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

that, as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

(Romans 5:20, 21)

For while we were in the flesh, *the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law*, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, *I would not have come to know sin except through the Law*; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "You shall not covet."

But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for *apart from the Law sin is dead.*

(Romans 7:5–8)

Jesus buried us under the Law. He pointed out that sin starts in our heart. I will use only one example, but we can see this principle throughout His teachings.

You have heard that it was said. "You shall not commit adultery";

but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.”

(Matthew 5:27, 28)

Sinful man just cannot keep the Law. We are not able to please God through our own righteousness.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.  
(Romans 3:23)

As it is written,  
“There is none righteous, not even one;  
There is none who understands,  
There is none who seeks for God;  
All have turned aside, together they have become useless;  
There is none who does good,  
There is not even one.”

(Romans 3:10–12)

Grasp to the fullest the meaning of this verse:

For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in *one point*, he has become guilty of all.

(James 2:10)

The Law showed us our sinfulness, and that is what it was supposed to do. Through the Law comes the knowledge of sin (Romans 3:20). Beloved, when we turned to Jesus—the Righteous One, and became identified with Him in His death, burial, and resurrection (salvation), the requirement of the Law was fulfilled in us. The purpose of the Law was accomplished in us.

Christ in you, the hope of glory.  
(Colossians 1:27)

For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh,

in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

(Romans 8:3, 4)

For through the Law I died to the Law, that I might live to God.

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.

I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly.

(Galatians 2:19–21)

Jesus did not die needlessly. There simply wasn't any other way for us to be saved. He accomplished what He came to this earth for. We have to believe God. If God says that we are released from the Law, once born again of the Spirit, why would we keep on living like we are under the Law? We are righteous, because The Righteous One lives in us. The Law is not made for righteous men, but for sinners. The Law is for the lost people, to show them their sinfulness, so they too, like us, would turn to Jesus for salvation.

But we know that the Law is good, if one uses it lawfully, realizing the fact that law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers

and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching,

according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

(1 Timothy 1:8–11)

Under the New Testament, God puts His laws into our minds. He writes them upon our hearts.

And [Jesus] said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

This is the great and foremost commandment.

And a second is like it, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

(Matthew 22:37–39)

Brothers and sisters, believe Jesus. Put your trust in Him, and let Him live His life through you. Get to know your new identity in Christ Jesus. (Read chapter “Christians.”) Get preoccupied with Jesus, who is your life now, for it is no longer you who live but Christ. You are under the perfect law, the law of liberty (James 1:25).

Your new identity—a child of God—is your motivation for godly living. Get to know God, your Father, and once you begin to understand His unconditional love for you, it will be His mercy and grace that will compel you to say *no* to unrighteousness.

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,  
instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,  
looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus;  
who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

(Titus 2:11–14)

The following verse should become our guideline for making any decision.

All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.

(1 Corinthians 6:12)

Our heavenly Father is renewing our mind. He is making us over into the image of Jesus. God deals with us on the basis of a new life. He is showing us a better way.

I will end this chapter with a gentle warning of love to my beloved brothers and sisters lost in the maze of legalism:

You have been severed from Christ, you who are seeking to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.

(Galatians 5:4)

This verse is not about losing salvation at all, even though it is taught in some congregations. It is you, the legalists, who have fallen from grace. We just cannot be under the law and grace at the same time. The moment we go to the Law, we give up grace. It takes only one law to nullify grace. In doing so, we become double minded and unstable in all our ways. I pray that God would reveal the truth of this very important doctrine to you, that you will grasp the contrast between law and grace. It will definitely set you free. Beloved, step boldly into the freedom we have in Christ Jesus.

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

(Galatians 5:1)

(Read the letters to the Romans and the Galatians, and chapter “Grace” in this book.)

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Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.

(Acts 13:38, 39)

Paul said,

“And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the Law, as under the Law, *though not being myself under the Law*, that I might win those who are under the Law;

to those who are without law, as without law, though not being without the law of God *but under the law of Christ*, that I might win those who are without law.”

(1 Corinthians 9:20, 21)

For the Law, since it has only a shadow of the good things to come and not the very form of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near.

(Hebrews 10:1)