

Law and Grace

Introduction:

No discussion of the doctrine of Salvation could be undertaken without careful consideration of the doctrines of Law and Grace. Two great themes in the Word of God are just those — law and grace. The two major divisions of the Bible are Law and Grace.

Dr. M. R. DeHaan in his book, *Law Or Grace?* identified 3 common errors amongst professing Christians in relationship to the Law of God. They are:

Legalism — men are saved by keeping the Law — Romans 3:28.

Antinomianism — men may live however they wish, for salvation is all of Grace — Romans 6:1; James 2:24

Galatianism — men are saved by Grace, but kept by obeying the Law — Galatians 3:1, 3, 10

I. The “Law” Defined

The Law of God (as given through Moses) is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government. It is holy, just, and good.

A. The Law of God is the Law of Moses

See: Luke 2:22-24, where these two terms are used interchangeably.

B. The Law of Moses may be considered in three Sections.

1. The Commandments

Exodus 20:1-17.

This is the moral or CONSCIENCE Law.

2. The Judgments

Exodus 21-24, and primarily Deuteronomy.

This is the CIVIL Law.

3. The Ordinances

Exodus 24-31

This is the CEREMONIAL Law.

C. The Dispensation of the Law is of Definite Duration.

The period of the Law of God had a definite beginning and a definite ending in relation to its PURPOSE.

1. It was added to existing revelation at Mt. Sinai.

Galatians 3:19 says the Law was added to what God had already declared to men. See: Romans 5:13, 20.

It did not supersede what God had previously given to man.

2. It was to extend for a definite period.

Note again in Galatians 3:19 the word “till.” See: John 1:17

II. The Purpose of the Law

Law and Grace

When we speak of the 'purpose of the Law,' we actually refer to God's purpose in giving the Law to man, for the Law itself is eternal. There are a number of reasons why God gave the Law.

- A. To Declare the Holiness of God.
I Peter 1:16
- B. To Define Transgression.
The Law was added to reveal sin as a transgression.

Romans 4:15; 5:13; Galatians 3:19; I John 3:4
- C. To Declare Guilt.
Although the Law was given only to Israel, it was showing the whole world that even a privileged nation could not be saved by works — Romans 3:19-20
- D. To Bring Us To Christ.
The Law brings the sinner to the realization of the futility of salvation by works, and to the place of calling upon the Name of the Lord — Galatians 3:24

The purpose of the giving of God's Law then, was to place before man God's absolute standard of righteousness and holiness, to settle legally the fact that he is indeed a sinner.

That the Law cannot save anyone is not a weakness of the Law, but a problem of the human heart.

III. "Grace" Defined

As noted in previous studies, 'Grace' is the unmerited favor of God shown to the sinner.

In the matter of salvation, Grace is the undeserved kindness God shows to the sinner in declaring him just.

IV. Law and Grace Contrasted

Law	Grace
Prohibits approach to God — Exodus 19:12-13	Invites approach to God — Matthew 11:28, Hebrews 4:16
Condemns the sinner	Redeems the sinner
Says, "Do, and live."	Says, "Done!"
Says, "Try."	Says, "It is finished" — John 19:30
Curses the sinner	Blesses the believer
Slays the sinner	Save the sinner
Shuts every mouth	Opens every mouth in praise
Condemns the best man	Saves the worst man
Says, "Pay what you owe."	Says, "It is paid in full."

Law and Grace

“The wages of sin is death”	“The gift of God is eternal life”
“The soul that sinneth, it shall die.”	Believe and live.
Reveals man’s sin.	Atones for man’s sin.
Gives knowledge of sin	Provides redemption from sin
Given by Moses	Comes through Jesus Christ
Demands obedience	Gives power to obey
Written on stone	Written on hearts
Done away with in Christ	Abides forever
Puts man under bondage	Sets a soul at liberty
Engenders fear	Brings peace and confidence
Sheep dies for the shepherd	Shepherd dies for the sheep

V. The Christian and the Law

How should a Christians live in relation to the Law? This is a vexing question for many.

The Bible declares that a Christians is delivered from the law — Romans 7:6; is dead to the Law — Romans 7:4; is redeemed from the curse of the Law — Galatians 3:13; and is not under Law, but under Grace — Romans 6:14-15.

Yet the Word of God also declares that a Christian should live a holy life. The question is, how? In reference to the Law? By legal observance?

Note the following:

- A. Holy Living is the product of Grace.
See: Titus 2:11-12

If a Christian lives a holy life because he is seeking favor with God, something is wrong. The work of God’s saving grace in the heart of a believer produces holy living — it is a matter of want to, not have to.

- B. Christians are under a New Law.
The law for the Christian is the “Law of Christ” — also called the “Law of Love.”

John 15:10-12; Galatians 5:14; 6:2; James 1:25; I John 3:22-23.

DeHaan gives a fitting illustration:

“Imagine a man employing a servant. To avoid any trouble or misunderstanding, certain rules and conditions must be agreed upon. The employer hands to his prospective employee a manual in which the relationships of employer and servant are set out.

Law and Grace

Failure to abide by the rules will break the contract, and the employee will either go on strike, or the boss will fire him, as the case may be. The servant is under law.

Now let us suppose this employee is a young lady, and in the course of events the boss, a bachelor, falls in love with his servant. Finally they decide to marry, and they become husband and wife. She quits her job (not her work) and they move into their new home. The very moment she becomes the wife, she ceases to be a servant. She is no longer under rules, regulations, and laws. She is not handed an employee's manual to tell her what is expected as a wife. She is in love with her husband, and now she does as much, and even far more, to please her husband as when he was her boss.

She is no longer under law; she does not punch a clock; she has no set of rules to observe; she is free to spend all her time pleasing her husband's wishes. She is no more a servant, no more under laws, rules and regulations. But this does not make her careless and say, 'now that I am not any more under law I can do as I pleas.' Ah, no! She is under the law of love."

VI. Liberty and Legalism

Over recent years the word "legalism" has come to be used in a derogatory way of many pastors and Baptist churches standing for holy living and, in particular, for setting forth standards in Christians conduct and service.

A. Legalism — The True and the False

1. What Legalism is.

As already noted, legalism is the addition of works to the Gospel of Grace. True legalism "frustrates" the grace of God — the two do not mix — Galatians 2:21. Any teaching which adds to the Gospel is another Gospel — Galatians 1:6-9.

Examples of this are seen in:

- a) Baptism Regeneration = Faith + Baptism
- b) Catholicism = Faith + Sacraments
- c) Pentecostalism = Faith + Holy Ghost 'Baptism'
- d) Seventh-Day Adventism = Faith + Sabbath Keeping

2. What Legalism is not.

- a) It is not Holy Living.
I Peter 1:13-16; II Peter 1:1-9; II Corinthians 6:14-7:1
- b) It is not asking women to wear modest, feminine apparel.
I Timothy 2:9; I Peter 3:2-5; Deuteronomy 22:5; Isaiah 47:2-3
- c) It is not asking men to be masculine in appearance.
I Corinthians 11:14
- d) It is not preaching against movie theaters and T.V. shows.
Psalm 101:3

B. Liberty — The True and the False

The word "liberty" means freedom. The child of God enjoys the blessing of Christian liberty - Galatians 5:1.

Law and Grace

1. What Christian Liberty is.

True liberty comes from the Word of God — John 8:32 — and gives the believer:

- a) Freedom to obey the commands of Christ.
See: Psalm 119:44-45

True freedom only exists when boundaries are well defined.

- b) Freedom from Sin.
See: Romans 6:11-14.

Only a 'free man' has the liberty to choose to yield to God.

Freedom from sin does not mean "sinless perfection" or the eradication of the old nature. It is not a case of, "I would sin but cannot;" but rather, "I can sin but will not."

- c) Freedom to Serve The Lord.
Romans 6:22

2. What Christian Liberty is not.

- a) It is not freedom to sin.
Romans 6:1-2

Liberty does not mean LICENSE — I Peter 2:16; II Peter 2:19

- b) It is not freedom to do what you want.
Galatians 5:13

- c) It is not freedom from responsibility.
The Christian is responsible for:

- (1) What He Knows — scholarship
- (2) What He Has — stewardship
- (3) Who He Meets -- soul winning