

100 BIBLE LESSONS

These lessons were originally given at Manila, Philippines, in 1958 and 1959 by former missionary to China, Alban Douglas. Give these lessons to people you visit, youth groups, hospital patients, church visitors and new members. Use them in Sunday School, bus ministry, jail services, nursing homes, Christian schools, small discussion groups and many other places. God's Word will answer your questions and help solve your problems.

LESSON 24 – LAW AND GRACE

INTRODUCTION

There are many Christians who are saved by grace but try to keep saved by obeying the law or keeping the commandments. This was the error of the Galatian church which Paul seeks to correct in his Epistle to the Galatians.

Gal. 3:3, "*Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit (saved by grace), are ye now made perfect by the flesh (keeping of the law) ?*"

Paul answers this provocative question in Galatians 3:11, "*The just shall live by faith.*" We are saved by faith; we live by faith, without law-keeping. But does this allow us to become a law unto ourselves and break the law of God and sin willfully? Paul answers this question in Romans 6:1-2, "...*God forbid...*"

It is sometimes hard to keep a balance between the teaching of Paul and of James. James says in James 2:14, "*What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?*" James 2:20, "*But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?*" Paul answers this in Phil. 2:12-13, "...*work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.*" By faith we yield to the indwelling Christ and He uses our bodies to do good works. The Savior works through us. Our work is to yield. He is the one who performs the works of righteousness.

After conversion we do works because we are saved already, not in order to be saved. A dog barks because he is a dog not in order to become a dog.

I. THE LAW - WHAT IS IT?

1. The law includes the ten commandment of Exodus 20:1-17, and all other commands.

Romans 7:12, "*Wherefore the law is HOLY, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*"

Psalms 19:7-8, "*The law of the LORD is perfect ... The statutes of the LORD are right ... the commandment of the LORD is pure...*" Thus we see that the law is holy, just, good, perfect, pure and right.

2. Grace is unmerited favor, the kindness and love of God our Savior toward us. Under law God demands righteousness. Under grace God gives righteousness. Eph. 2:8-9, *“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.”*

II. THE LAW – WHAT DOES IT SAY?

1. The law says, Obey me and live. Lev. 18:5, *“Ye shall therefore keep My statutes, and My judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them...”* Romans 10:5, *“...For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things (law) shall live by them.”* The problem is this: Who can keep the law perfectly? The answer is clear from Romans 3:9-23, that only Christ could fulfill every jot and tittle of the law.

2. Grace says that whosoever hears and believes on Jesus Christ has passed from death unto life, John 5:24 – a miracle that the law could not perform. Grace offers pardon and peace to sinners through the death of another – the Savior. Grace says that those who receive eternal life will never perish, John 10:28.

III. THE LAW – WHAT DOES IT DO?

1. Law condemns every individual ever born into this world for all have broken at least one commandment on one occasion. James 2:10, *“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”* Romans 3:19, makes the whole world guilty before God, *“...that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.”* The law sets up a standard, but people are helpless before it. Gal. 3:10, *“Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”*

2. Grace is willing and ready to save the lost, the guilty, the lawbreaker. Grace brings salvation. Titus 2:11, *“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men.”* Grace restores righteousness that law took from us through the gift of God. Grace is God’s riches at Christ’s expense in favor of the guilty sinner. Grace not only saves the sinner, but more grace is added daily to sustain him.

IV. THE LAW – WHAT IT CANNOT DO

1. The law could never justify a guilty sinner. Acts 13:39, *“And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”*

The law could not make anything perfect. Hebrews 7:19, *“For the law made nothing perfect...”* To get to heaven the sinner needs to be both justified and made perfect through the blood of Christ and the atoning work of the cross.

2. But grace through faith can bring justification to the sinner. Romans 3:24, *“Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”*

Grace can teach us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, Titus 2:11-12.

V. THE LAW – WHY WAS IT GIVEN?

1. The law was given to show us our transgressions.

Gal. 3:19, *“Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions.”*

Without law man would have no knowledge of sin. Romans 3:20, *“...for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”*

The law was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Gal. 3:24, *“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”* Justified by faith, for we cannot be saved by works or law.

2. Grace was given to man not because man merited it, but because God loved the world of sinners. John 3:16, *“For God so loved the world, that He gave ...”* Grace is given to us for we are too weak in ourselves to keep saved, to keep the law or to do good works. 2 Cor. 12:9, *“And He (Jesus) said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.”*

VI. THE LAW – BY WHOM GIVEN?

1. The law was given by Moses, Jn. 1:17; Ex. 20:19; Heb. 12:18-21.

2. Grace came from Jesus Christ. John 1:17, *“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”*

CONCLUSION

Is Christianity a mixed system of law and grace? No, it must be all of faith.

Romans 4:4-5, *“Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.”* (NIV)

Is the believer under law after conversion? NO. Romans 6:14, *“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”* Scripture could not be plainer.

How ought a true believer to walk before his fellowmen? As Jesus walked, 1 John 2:6, *“He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.”*
1 Peter 2:21, following in His steps.

Those who are in Christ while not saved or kept by the law, nevertheless love the will of God and do from the heart those things which please Him, not for salvation nor by constraint, but for love's sake, as they walk in the Spirit. (Goodman)

Gal. 5:18, "*But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.*" Rom. 8:4,5.

To be saved by faith and then to return to works is to fall from grace, Gal. 5:4.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the error of the Church at Galatia? (Gal. 3:3)
2. Does following grace allow us to sin more in order to enjoy more grace? Explain.
3. What is the great consoling truth of Phil. 2:12-13?
4. What is law? What is grace?
5. What is the message of the law? Of grace?
6. What does the law actually do? What does grace do? One Scripture for each.
7. If the law cannot save, why did God give it?
8. How can a person merit grace?
9. True or false: "Salvation is by grace but is continued by works." Explain.
10. A New Testament believer under grace may ignore the law. True or false? Explain.