

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

Leading criminologists declare that we are losing the battle against crime. Juvenile crime is skyrocketing. Law enforcement officers are gravely concerned with the disregard shown by people for the laws of the land.



What is causing the people of our time to be so lawless? One magazine, in an article that surveyed the morally depraved society today, analyzed the situation correctly when it stated that there is no longer a moral standard to guide the modern generation.

Even some religious leaders advocate a very different way of life from that which is taught in the Word of God. From many pulpits the people have been told, "The law of God has been abolished, so why worry about that old yoke of bondage?" Others state that it is impossible to keep God's law, so why try?

Persons who advocate the nullification of the law of God may be sincere, but they are mistaken. When we remove the standard of right and wrong, it is not long until society will abandon all moral principles. We are reaping the fruit today of the teaching and preaching that some churches gave society yesterday. The psalmist, said, "It is time for You to act, O Lord, for they have regarded Your law as void." Psalm 119:126.

Let us take a clear look at the Bible teaching concerning law and grace.



WHAT JESUS SAID ABOUT THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

“Do not think I came to destroy the Law and the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but fulfill.”

- Matthew 5:17.

As you study, be thinking about the Life Quest questions.

- What does this tell me about God?
- What difference does this topic make to my daily life?
- How does this topic help me in my relationship with Jesus?

HIS WORD SAYS

1. How does the Bible describe the law? Psalm 19:7; Romans 7:12.

As with everything God has made, His law is perfect, holy, just and good. From endless ages it has formed the foundation of His heavenly government and acted as the standard of righteousness that governs all of His creation.

2. What is one of the main purposes of the law? Romans 3:20.

The law defines sin and points it out to us. Only one definition of sin is provided to us in the Bible, it is "the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4). Without the law to define it and establish what it is, sin could not exist.

3. What helped Paul to recognize sin in his life? Romans 7:7.

4. To what law recorded in the Old Testament was Paul referring to in Romans 7:7?
Exodus 20:17.

This is one of the Ten Commandments which are given in Exodus 20: 3-17. This shows us that it is the law of Ten Commandments that ultimately defines sin. Without this law we would not know what sin is. While-ever sin exists this law must also exist to define it.

5. What does the Bible say sin is? 1 John 3:4.

6. Can sin exist when there is no law? Romans 4:15.

God gave His perfect law to point out sin. In the Ten Commandments we have the perfect rule of right living. To the sinner it brings a conviction of sin. To the Christian it serves as a standard of right living. It does not save from sin, it can only bring a conviction of sin so that the sinner might feel his need of Christ and come to Him for forgiveness and salvation.

7. Because the transgression of God's law has made us sinners, what was it necessary for Christ to do? Romans 5:8.



8. By and through what then are we saved from our sins? Ephesians 2:8-9; Hebrews 4:16.

Grace is "unmerited favour", it also encompasses the influence of divine power of God upon the heart that leads us into repentance and a new life. It is something that we cannot earn, nor do we deserve it. It is the free gift of God.

9. Through whom do we receive this gift of grace from God? Romans 6: 23.

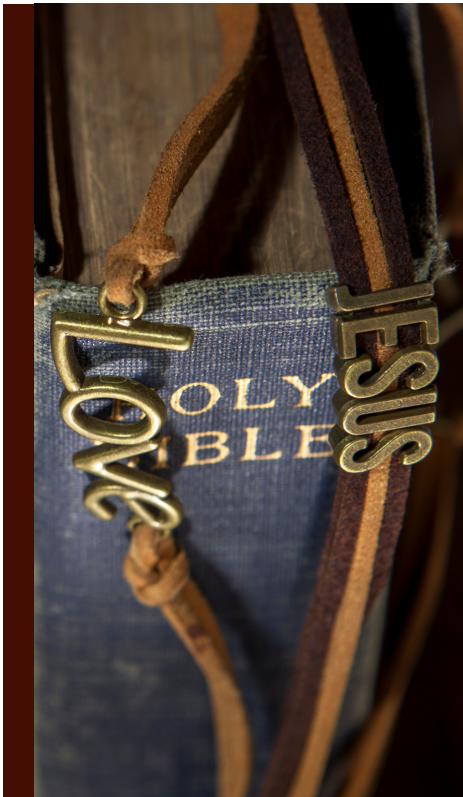
Jesus exchanged places with us. On the cross He received the punishment that we deserve. Thus the debt of our sins was paid. We may receive the reward that His perfect life of obedience deserves, a life that measures with the life of God.

10. How does Paul indicate that one who is saved by grace will not continue to live in sin? Romans 6:1, 2, 14, 15.

Today many feel that Paul's writings, particularly in the book of Romans, do away with the law. However, when we look carefully at what Paul is saying, we see clearly that he is always calling us away from sin. As we have seen, sin is when we break God's law, so Paul is calling us out of disobedience and into obedience to God's holy law. The true believer has died to sin and been raised into newness of life; a righteous life which we live by the power of God. See also Galatians 2:20.

11. Does our acceptance of Christ through faith abolish the law? Romans 3:31.

When something is established, it is set up on a firm or permanent basis. God's law is forever established.



12. What nature or mind do we still possess if we are opposed to God's law?
Romans 8:7.

The carnal mind, one which is controlled by the passions of the flesh, is a reference to our nature before we have been touched by the power of God. In this state we give into our sinful lusts and are powerless to overcome them.

13. How will the born again person show his love for God? John 14:15, 1 John 5:1-3.

True love for God will always manifest itself in obedience to His commandments. Love is the very essence of God's law and all who abide in that love will love to keep it.

14. What does the Bible say about the person who professes to know Christ and yet refuses to obey Him? 1 John 2:4.

We know a person by their fruits (Matthew 7:20). Disobedience is the fruit of an unconverted heart.

15. What will be the attitude of the person who does God's will and keeps His commandments? Psalm 40:8.

16. By what standard will the judgment we are to face be set? James 2:10-12

Each soul is judged against the perfect standard of righteousness: God's holy Ten Commandment law.

17. Who will be blessed by the Wonderful Jesus and will be entering in through the gates of Heaven in the last chapter of the Bible? Revelation 22:14.

God identifies His last day saints as those who keep His commandments (Revelation 12:17 & 14:12). For these same ones God will open the gates of the holy city that they may freely enter to partake of the tree of life and live forever in the presence of God.



Here God's Law stands fast for ever and ever. How long is for ever and ever?

In Matthew 24:35 Jesus says; "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

Read Exodus 20:1-17



LIFE QUEST:

Have you thoughtfully reviewed these Questions?

- What does this topic tell me about God?
- What difference does this topic make to my daily life?
- How does this topic help me in my relationship with Jesus?

YOUR TURN

Check the statements that most closely reflect your response to this study.

____ I still have some unanswered questions regarding the topic of Law and Grace. I need more study.

____ I believe I have adequate information on the topic of Law and Grace and have a clear understanding of it all thanks to Jesus.

____ It is my plan to accept the free gift of salvation and to fully follow God's commandments and all the teachings of the Bible.

____ Other _____