

*The*  
**TWO LAWS**

**“The LAW OF MOSES”  
and  
“The LAW OF CHRIST”**

**“The Law was given through Moses,  
but Grace and Truth came through Jesus Christ.”  
John 1:17**

**A Bible study concerning the contrast between the Law of Moses  
and the ruling principles of Grace, herein called “The Law of Christ.”  
Gal. 6:2; Rom. 8:2; 1 Cor. 9:21**

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## Chapter One—INTRODUCTION

### *A Great Conflict*

The first generation of Christians was soon beset by a serious conflict within its own ranks. Paul and Barnabas had returned from their first evangelistic trip throughout the region of lower-central Asia (modern Turkey). Their report to the assembly of Antioch, from which they had set out on this evangelism, was to the effect “*that God had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles*” (Acts 14:27). On the one hand, this report brought great joy to the Church. On the other hand, the report brought the Church to its first serious crisis in its dispensational direction.

Though there had been a family of Gentiles saved earlier under the ministry of Peter (Acts. 10 and 11:1), and though many more Gentiles were saved right there in the assembly of Antioch where Paul and Barnabas dwelt (Acts 11:19–22), yet it became obvious that on this mission the “door” was wide open to the Gentile peoples on a large scale. Consequently, this very well might lead the fellowship of the early Christian community in a new direction. Up until this time the early Church was nearly one hundred percent Jewish in composition and they were most certainly remaining “zealous in practicing the Law of Moses” (Acts 21:20). Therefore, this report by Paul and Barnabas was met with immediate concern from certain Jewish brethren who had also arrived in Antioch from Jerusalem. They appeared to reflect authority from Jerusalem and stated that “Unless [these Gentiles] are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, they could not be saved” (Acts 15:1). Of course, this caused a very heated controversy from Paul and Barnabas. Salvation was by grace through faith and not of works of Law keeping. In addition, Paul did not believe Gentile converts should be placed under the Mosaic Law system. Since these Jews seemed to represent a position held by leaders at Jerusalem, it was determined that Paul and Barnabas should go to Jerusalem in order to fully settle the matter. The contention of these Jews did originate in Jerusalem, but not from the apostles. With some modification, certain converts from the sect of the Pharisees contended that “it was necessary to circumcise them [the Gentiles], and to direct them to observe the Law of Moses” (Acts 15:5).

### *The Church Moves in a New Direction*

Now we must understand that it was true up until this time in Israel’s history that Gentiles who converted to the Savior of Israel and wanted to be recognized in fellowship with Israel had to become proselytes to Judaism, i.e., and become Law observant. That meant undergoing circumcision and taking upon themselves the whole Mosaic Law program. Actually, this had been standard procedure throughout Israel’s history. Consequently, these believing Pharisees were simply going by what the Law had historically demanded. However, times had surely changed, and God was revealing another economy for the Church. Though it was not yet revealed that the Jewish members of the Church should stop the practice of the Law, as we shall see, the apostle Paul had received new revelation from the Head of the Church to the effect that Gentile believers

were not to be placed under the Mosaic Law system. Therefore, Paul openly collided with this demand by these “believing” Pharisees.

One must also remember that Christ, the Head of the Church, specifically called Paul to a unique apostleship to the Gentile peoples (Acts 9:15; 26:17, 18; 22:21; 13:46, 47, etc.). In addition, Paul was coming to this conference in Jerusalem “by revelation” from the Head of the Church (Galatians 2:1, 2). One can piece together what happened at that conference by comparing Paul’s account in Galatians 2 with Luke’s account in Acts 15. Paul, wisely, first conferred “privately” with the apostles (Gal. 2:2) that Gospel which Christ had revealed to him, so that those in leadership would understand his position and perspective. Paul said of those who were causing the problem, “those who seemed to be somewhat, whatever they were, made no difference to me, because God shows no respect of person...” (Gal. 2:6). These individuals must have been the new converts from among the Pharisees that are mentioned in Acts 15:5. Paul was not impressed by them (of course, Paul had been an outstanding Pharisee, himself) and “did not yield to them for a moment” (Gal. 2:5 and 6).

We must keep in mind that these Pharisees were the “seminary trained,” highly respected clergy among the Jewish nation, whereas the 12 apostles were regarded by the religious rulers as “ignorant and unlearned men” (Acts 4:13). But in this case, religious prestige is not on par with Divine revelation and order. Actually Paul went so far as to believe, at least, some of those Pharisees were “false brethren, who had come in to spy out our liberty...to bring us unto bondage” (Gal. 2:5).

The contention on this issue was so strong that it could only be settled by the Holy Spirit overruling and leading the whole direction of those who had convened in counsel in Jerusalem to properly settle the problem (see Acts 15). Indeed, the important testimony of the apostle Peter, the testimony of Paul and Barnabas of miraculous confirmation to their ministry, and the conclusion of James the Lord’s brother, and above all, the Holy Spirit of God leading them safely through this crisis which could have split the Church wide open, brought them safely to conclusion. No doubt, those who were “pillars” in the Church—James, Peter and John (Gal. 2:9)—stood firmly with Paul. The conclusion was that Gentile believers were not to be placed under the Mosaic Law system. This conclusion certainly brought joy to the Gentile assemblies. Please keep in mind that this decision did not liberate the believing Jews from the observance of the Law—that would come later with progressive revelation in Hebrews, Ephesians and Colossians.

### **Ongoing Problems**

Sad to say, not everyone was happy with that conclusion. It seemed that certain Judaizers, who had reservations about Paul’s unique apostleship, would want to constantly attempt to place the Gentile believers under some form of Law observance. Therefore, this actually became a continuing problem. For this reason the apostle Paul would later write his most stinging rebuke to the Galatian assemblies who had been infected all over again. Even to this very day, there are those in Christendom who would want the Church to observe the Ten Commandments as the standard of righteousness for God’s people, and /or to observe the seventh day Sabbath, and/or to be observing the Feast days, etc., etc. In fact, the vast majority of Christians today do not realize how much of the Law system has been corrupted and carried over into Christianity. Such is

the case with water baptism which is nothing more than a carryover Jewish purification rite. The same is true with what is called “the Lord’s Supper.” It is nothing more than a carryover of “the Lord’s Passover Supper.” In addition, The Roman Catholic transfer of the Jewish Sabbath to Sunday observance only brings further confusion in Christendom. Therefore, this Bible study will explore once again the important theme concerning just exactly what the Law system consisted of in contrast to the present program governing God’s people for this age.

In one of Paul’s very last books (1 Timothy 1:6–11), he exhorted Timothy to be able to deal with certain false doctrines surrounding the issue of Law observance. In this passage Paul proclaimed that “*some men...have turned aside to fruitless discussion, wanting to be teachers of the Law, even though they do not understand either what they are saying or the matters about which they make confident assertions.*” How true this is even in our own time at the very closing of the age. Therefore, let us carefully review the subject of the Law system and God’s present program from the Scriptures. It would probably shock and amaze Christians today were they to realize how much modern Christendom has wrongfully borrowed certain tenants of the Mosaic Law system. It is also a fact that much of modern Christendom is merely a perverted application of rituals, either from Judaism or more often from paganism, which have been instituted as ordinances in their particular church belief system.

### **Use of the word Law**

Normally in the Scriptures the expression “the Law” has reference to the whole Mosaic system that was given to the nation of Israel to govern and direct its national identity. This is also the primary way the expression will be used in this Bible study (Galatians 5:3 and James 2:10). Breaking the Law into parts is actually a later device for theologians and Bible teachers to show the various aspects of that system. Because of the special “unity” of the Law system, the first five books of the Bible have also been designated as “the Law” or in the Hebrew, the “*Torah*” (Matt. 5:17; Luke 24:44; Acts 28:23, etc.). Actually the book of Genesis is designed to be the introduction, or background history, to the giving of the Law and the position that the nation of Israel has among all nations on the face of the earth. Sometimes any book from the whole body of the Hebrew Scriptures may be designated as from “The Law” (John 10:34 from Psalm 82:6 and 1 Cor. 14:21 from Isa. 28:11, 12). This is understandable because most all of the Hebrew Scriptures take place during the economy of the Law system.

### **Indications of Laws From the Beginning**

There are actually many indicators in the books of Genesis, Job and Exodus of certain laws and a sacrificial system having been revealed by God, but not specifically written out for our benefit. It was not until Israel became a nation before God that the specific collection of laws, ordinances, sacrifices, purification and dietary prescriptions were encoded. Some of these earlier ingredients are enumerated in the following.

There are many indicators of a sacrificial system being practiced at different times and in different situations, the first of which were the special offerings of Cain and Able (Gen. 4:3–5). Noah built an altar and offered burnt offerings (Gen. 8:20). Abraham offered certain animals in connection with the covenant God made with him (Gen. 15:9 & 10). Job offered sacrifices on behalf of his children and also “purified” them (Job 1:5).

His friends also offered sacrifices (Job 42:8). In Genesis 7:2 and 8:2 we are informed that Noah was to collect both “clean” and “unclean” animals into the ark. Yet, at that time, it is nowhere explained to the reader what the distinctions were. In Genesis 35:14 we are told of Jacob offering a “drink offering” on a stone pillar and also “pouring oil” upon the same stone.

In Genesis 26:5 we are told that God said He had blessed Abraham because he “obeyed My voice, and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” We are never told what all these various and sundry laws were but, no doubt, many of them are encompassed within the Law of Moses. Even in the book of Exodus before the Law was officially given from Mount Sinai, Moses was said to explain those laws from God that were known up until that time—Exo.18:16.

Various priesthoods were also known before the Law was officially given. See Genesis 14:18; 47:22; Exodus 2:16 and even among the Israelites in Exo. 19:22 and 24.

### ***The so-called “Noahide Laws”***

After the Flood in Noah’s day, it is evident that God intended to place some restraint upon natural man’s tendency towards violence which so characterized the pre-flood population. Genesis 6:11 says that in addition to its total corruption “the earth was filled with violence.” Therefore, when Noah and his sons stepped out of the ark, God instituted a new ingredient for restraining evil in the new world to come. In Genesis 9:6 God stated “Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God He made man.” This allows for “capital punishment.” In addition, God also allowed a new diet of animal flesh to be eaten, but also commanded that man “shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood” (Gen. 9:4).

In Jewish tradition there were seven basic laws that God instituted for the Gentile nations. These they called The Noahide Laws. There is some variation in the list, yet they generally consisted of the following:

- (1) Prohibitions against Idolatry,
- (2) “ “ Murder.
- (3) “ “ Theft,
- (4) “ “ Immorality,
- (5) “ “ Blasphemy,
- (6) “ “ Eating flesh with its blood,
- (7) The establishment of Human Government.

It is generally believed and recognized that in the decision of the early Church that the Gentile believers should not be placed under the Mosaic Law, they should however recognize the basic “Noahide Laws” which were originally given by God for the nations of earth. The Church leaders said it in the following manner (Acts 15:28, 29)—

“For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary essentials:

- (1) that you abstain from things offered to idols,
- (2) and from blood,
- (3) and from things strangled,
- (4) and from fornication.”

We shall see as we progress in this Bible study that the Gentile believers and, indeed, all believers in this “dispensation of the Grace of God,” are placed under the blessed management of “*the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.*”

## **Chapter Two—THE LAW OF MOSES**

### **The Giving of the Law**

Most are familiar with the Law of Moses as it is expressed by the Ten Commandments. Actually the Law of Moses was a unity of instructions that included a whole lot more than just the Ten Commandments. There was that aspect of the Law that consisted of many civic or national duties which would uniquely characterize the nation of Israel. In addition, there were many instructions concerning the ceremonial religious aspect of their lives. These latter laws consisted of sacrificial instructions, feast and special holy day observances, dietary laws and laws of special purification and separation for the people. The Ten Commandments more surely focused on the moral aspect of the Law. It was this aspect of the Law that appears to have actually been vocalized by God Himself from Mount Sinai as recorded in Exodus 20.

Exodus chapter 19 gives to us the introduction to the establishment of the Law Covenant with the nation of Israel. God had Moses convey the message to the people of Israel that He had “carried you (Israel) on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.” God had indeed delivered Israel out of Egyptian bondage with an unequalled miraculous panorama of events. “Now” God continued—“if you will obey Me fully and keep My Covenant, then out of all nations you will be My treasured possession. Although the whole earth is Mine, you will be for Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (vs. 4–6). To this the people of Israel immediately responded with enthusiasm—“We will do everything the LORD has said” (v. 8).

Then in preparation, the nation of Israel had been commanded to undergo purification before they would be the recipients of the Law. This involved their washing at the foot of the mountain (Exo. 19:10 and 11). In addition, they were commanded to not go near the mount, or to even touch it, lest they die (vs. 12 and 13). And then in seeming shock, the nation of Israel which stood at the foot of the mount were terrified by the voice of God and by all the other frightening displays. The mount was quaking; there was thunder, lightening, and smoke and the long blast of a trumpet (Exo. 19:16–19). The people cried out to Moses to intercede on their behalf lest they die, and speak to them the Law instead of God Himself speaking (Exo. 20:18–20).

The terrifying phenomena that took place at Mount Sinai at the giving of the Law places a mystery aspect to this Law Covenant. On the one hand, all mankind expresses admiration for the morality of the Ten Commandments. The Law expresses fundamental principles that seem to appear in the consciousness of all mankind (Rom. 2:14). No matter what tribe one meets on earth, the basic elements of the Ten Commandments ring true as a perfect standard by which to govern their lives. However on the other hand we ask, why should such a splendid standard of morality be accompanied by such a frightful display of lightening, thunder and even the very ground shaking—all of which terrified the people? The answer can only be found in the fact that the Law was designed to

remind Israel and mankind of the very *holiness* of God and the *sinfulness* of man! In this setting the Law spelled terror and death because it would demand a penalty. Indeed, it has been long observed that “where there is no penalty, there is no law—just good advice.” In this connection one should also take note of the fact that, in response to Israel’s fear and dread, God immediately gave instruction to the people on how to build an altar that would be acceptable to Him—Exo. 20: 22–26. This would mean, of course, that Israel’s redemption from the penalty of Law breaking could only come about by what the sacrificial system typified—the ultimate substitutionary sacrifice of Christ.

### ***The LAW as a Covenant***

There are several other important facts to remember in connection with God making the Law Covenant between Himself and the nation of Israel (Exo. 19:5). The Law contained “statutes and righteous judgments” that made the nation of Israel unique before all nations on the face of the earth—Deut. 4:6-8. In addition, in faithfully keeping the Law Covenant, Israel would be a “special treasure to God above all people”—Deut. 7:6 and 26:18, 19. When Israel pledged their allegiance to the Law Covenant they were officially accepted into covenant relationship with God. This was formally done by the sacrifice of animals and the sprinkling of “the blood of the Covenant” upon them—Exo. 24: 7, 8. The Ten Commandments were the epitome of the whole Law system and were written upon two tablets of stone by the hand of God Himself—Exo. 34:1–28 and Deut. 5:1–22. These two stone tablets were then placed inside the ark which became the centerpiece of the Tabernacle. The ark from then on was designated as “the Ark of the Covenant”—see Deut. 10:1–5. To the degree Israel would be respectful and observant of the Law, they would receive abundance of blessings from God—Lev. 26:3–13. To the degree Israel would ignore and violate the Law, they would receive corresponding judgments and desolations—Lev. 26:14–39. God also spoke to them of their ultimate restoration were they to see their sin and disobedience and make confession—vs. 40–45.

Even for us living today in our own generations, we see that mankind as such has been totally frustrated in efforts to live up to this standard of morality. The Law is excellent; however, the Adamic family has not demonstrated the ability to even come close to keeping the Law. First, the League of Nations—created after World War I—was an effort to end wars, yet it seemed impotent to abolish hatred and violence among the nations of earth. And now after World War II, the creation of the United Nations to abolish hatred and war seems to almost be a mockery in its effort to reach a realistic and desirable goal of peace, which always evades nations in performance. In fact, the very citadel for their national conferences has an image out in front from Isaiah 2:4 of one “beating his sword into a plowshare.” Yet the same conference tables have become the beckoning platform for lies, slander, intrigue and war. The perversion of justice that emanates from the counsels of that august body is actually sickening. Indeed, the world in which we live seems to be marching to its very own self-destruction.

### ***Rome Hides the 2nd Commandment***

Worldly governments are not the only institutions that cannot keep the Law of God. It seems that the major religious institution on earth today, the Roman Catholic Church, is also a major Law breaker. A fundamental violation of the Law mandate to not make any kind of graven images and bow down to them is flagrantly violated by Rome.

A condensed form of the Ten Commandments was probably what was actually written by the finger of God upon two tables of stone. They are generally displayed in the following manner, at least by Protestants and Jews (KJV)—

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.                  | 6. Thou shalt not kill (murder).      |
| 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.           | 7. Thou shalt not commit adultery.    |
| 3. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain. | 8. Thou shalt not steal.              |
| 4. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.                 | 9. Thou shalt not bear false witness. |
| 5. Honor thy father and thy mother.                          | 10. Thou shalt not covet.             |

Because of the Roman Catholic intoxication with images, icons, religious murals and unending relics of jewelry and trinkets and their people genuflecting before them, the leaders were obviously embarrassed by the fact of the second commandment—“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them...” Consequently, in the process of time the leaders of the Roman Catholic system thought it was to their best interests to rearrange the commandments so that the second one would not be so obvious to their congregations. This would avoid the people having guilty consciences as they bowed before their relics and images. Therefore, in the normal abbreviated listing of the Ten Commandments the Roman Catholic clerics simply hid away the second commandment and split up the last commandment into two separate commands so that they would still have Ten Commandments. Consequently, here is what a Roman Catholic member would normally see and never know the difference:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.                  | 6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.             |
| 2. Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain. | 7. Thou shalt not steal.                       |
| 3. Remember the Sabbath day to keep It holy.                 | 8. Thou shalt not bear false witness.          |
| 4. Honor thy father and thy mother.                          | 9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.   |
| 5. Thou shalt not kill (murder).                             | 10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house. |

It would not be until a Roman Catholic layperson read the full original text of Scripture containing the Ten Commandments that he would realize the actual prohibition against such idolatry as they practice. This would actually be very rare since they are really not encouraged to read the Scriptures. However, proof that they have tampered with the Ten Commandments can be confirmed by simply noting that the apostle Paul concluded the essence of the Ten Commandments with the simple—“Thou shalt not covet” (Romans 13:9). This means that the last commandment is one command, not two. In addition, a careful comparison will note that these last two statements in the Catholic arrangement are the reversal of the statement order given in Exo. 20:17, where “house (is

first)...wife (is second).” It reflects instead, the order given in Deut. 5:21, “wife (as first) ...house (is second).” Now this in itself demonstrates that the two statements no matter how arranged are a part of the same basic commandment to not covet.

### **“The Law came by Moses”**

Some have protested referring to the Law as “the Law of Moses,” saying that it was actually the Law authored by God which He in turn gave to Moses to present to the nation of Israel. It is true that God gave the Law to the nation of Israel through the intermediary of Moses and that it is actually God’s Law. Once is it said to be “The Law of the LORD given by Moses,” (II Chron. 34:14). However, it is noticeably a fact that the Law is repeatedly referred to in Scripture as “the Law of Moses” (Joshua 8:31,32; 23:6; 1 Kings 2:3; 2 Kings 14:6; 23:25; 2 Chron. 23:18; 30:16; Ezra 3:2; 7:6; Neh. 8:1; Dan. 9:11, 13; Mal. 4:4; Luke 2:22; 24:44; John 7:19, 22, 23; Acts 13:39; 15:5; 28:23 and 1Cor. 9:9). Thus, the designation of the Law by connecting it with its human mediator, Moses, becomes its common Scriptural designation. This fact makes it obvious that God wanted the Law to be identified by way of the one (Moses) who mediated the Law historically to the newly created nation of Israel. God had created and chosen a singular and particular new national entity on earth through which He would reveal and testify His will to the world. The total Law would be the governing rule over that nation. As stated before, this Law became a “Covenant” or contract with that particular nation. God did not make this contract with all other nations—only Israel, His chosen people (Deut. 5:2, 3 and Psalm 147:19, 20). It was God’s intent that this nation, with its unique governing principle of Law, be on display before all other nations on earth.

Therefore, when John was inspired to say “The Law came by Moses” (John 1:17), it had the designed effect in establishing the fact that the Law, as a system governing the people of Israel, had a distinct dispensational feature in God’s dealing with His people on earth. As a dispensational feature, it would also stand in contrast to the present “Dispensation of the Grace of God” (Eph. 3:2), which was given by Christ through the apostle Paul. It is also noteworthy that this present dispensational time period was distinctly given primarily to saved Gentile peoples. And consequently, John would continue to say—“but Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” This statement was obviously designed by the Holy Spirit of inspiration to characterize this present age. It is further interesting that in the Gospel of John, unlike the other Synoptic Gospels which portray Christ as Israel’s Savior and King, Christ is primarily portrayed as “Savior of the world.” However, before we go further in this line of truth let us observe—

### **The Character of the Law**

The first and foremost character of the Law was its beauty and perfection as a standard of righteousness. This is perhaps best reflected in those very emotional Psalms which demonstrate the love for the Law held by the saints of old. The very first Psalm says (verses 1–3)—

“Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly,  
Nor stands in the path of sinners,  
Nor sits in the seat of the scornful;  
But his delight is in the Law of the LORD,  
And in His Law he meditates day and night,

He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water,  
That brings forth its fruit in its season,  
Whose leaf also shall not wither;  
And whatsoever he does shall prosper.”

Then there is Psalm 19 which starts off with the testimony of creation (verses 1-6) and reaches a crescendo with the testimony of the Law (verses 7-11)—

“The Law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul;  
The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple;  
The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart;  
The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes;  
The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever;  
The judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.  
More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold;  
Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.  
Moreover by them is Thy servant warned,  
And in keeping them there is great reward.”

The whole 119<sup>th</sup> Psalm, with 176 verses, is taken up with the Word of God and in particular the Law of God’s Word—“Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the Law of the LORD!”

The apostle Paul would also characterize the Law in no uncertain language (especially in the very book wherein he will explain why the Gentile Christians are not under the Law system, and yet they will fulfill the Law). In Romans 2:17 and 18 Paul states that the Law is “*excellent*.” He mentions that the “Jew (who) rests on the Law, and makes his boast in God, and knows His will, and approves the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the Law.” In Romans 7:12 and 16 Paul states that “the Law is holy, and the commandment *holy* and *just* and *good*.” In Romans 7:14 Paul said “For we know that the Law is *spiritual*.” Paul explained that this spirituality rests in the righteousness of the Law in contrast to the “sinfulness” of man.

Consequently Paul would say in Romans 7:22 “For I *delight* in the Law of God according to the inward man.” In explanation in this particular context, Paul did not mean his “new man”—that is, the regenerate person—but simply his “inward” soul. Again Paul would state plainly that the Law was the essence of righteousness—“the Law of *righteousness*” (Rom. 9:31).

In the book of James, James makes reference to the Law as “the perfect Law of *liberty*” (1:25 and 2:12). It has been asked, “In what sense is the Law of Moses called the Law of liberty?” No doubt this is a reference to the truth expressed in Psalms 119:45 which states, “And I will walk at liberty for I seek thy precepts” (KJV). “Liberty” in Psalms 119:45 has sometimes been translated as “in a wide space,” so as to be free from the moral restraints of sin and disobedience.

Again, James makes reference to “the *royal* Law” (James 2:8). Here James is talking about the summation of the Law as it relates to our relationship to our fellow man—“You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (from Lev. 19:18).

### **The Messiah and the Law**

The following section will not only demonstrate Christ's attitude towards the Law, but also demonstrates a prophetic aspect towards the Law as a basis of management for the future Kingdom reign.

The prophets of Israel had long written that it was God's intent to create a world-wide Kingdom on earth in which the promised Messiah Himself would rule in and through the restored nation of Israel. The basis of Messiah's rule would be a new administration of the Law which would now be placed within the hearts of His people. Note the following few selected passages which demonstrate this truth:

“Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow into it. Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth *the Law*, and the Word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:2–4).

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Might God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end. Upon the throne of David and over His Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will perform this” (Isaiah 9:6 and 7, see also Isa. 11:1–9).

“But this is the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put *My Law* in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jeremiah 31:33).

The apostle Paul observed “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born *under the Law*” (Galatians 4:4). There are many indications in the Gospel accounts which demonstrate that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed a Law observant Jew. In His ministry He stated—

“Do not think that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill. For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from *the Law till all is fulfilled*. Whosoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whosoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven” (Matthew 5:17–19).

When Christ cleansed the leper He commanded him to “show yourself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, as a testimony to them” (Matt. 8:4).

To His own disciples He commanded, “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. Therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not according to their works; for they say, and do not” (Matt. 23:2, 3).

### ***The Administration of Law in the Kingdom***

At the very same time Christ gave very clear guidelines as to how the Law will be administered in the future Kingdom of Heaven. Six times Christ said, “You have heard it said to those of old (the old Law management)—***but I say unto you!***”—

1. Matt. 5:21, 22 concerning anger and murder, “whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger...”
2. Matt. 5:27, 28 concerning committing adultery, “whosoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery...”
3. Matt. 5:31, 32 concerning divorce, “whoever divorces his wife for any reason except sexual immorality causes...”
4. Matt. 5:33, 34 concerning taking oaths, “do not swear at all: neither by heaven...”
5. Matt. 5:38, 39 concerning response to evil, “not to resist an evil person...but turn the other cheek also.”
6. Matt. 5:43, 44 concerning your enemies, “love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you.”

It can be seen from these examples Christ gave that there will be drastic modifications of the Law in the Kingdom Age. In addition, Christ gives at least twelve new instructions that will govern the life of those living in the Kingdom Age—

1. Matt. 6:1–4 Christ gives new instructions concerning charitable deeds.
2. Matt. 6:5–15 Christ gives new instructions concerning prayer.
3. Matt. 6:16–18 Christ gives new instructions concerning fasting.
4. Matt. 6:19–21 Christ gives new instructions concerning treasures.
5. Matt. 6:22–23 Christ gives new instruction concerning guiding light.
6. Matt. 6:24 Christ gives instruction concerning having two Masters.
7. Matt. 6:25–34 Christ gives instruction concerning worrying.
8. Matt. 7:1–6 Christ gives new instructions concerning judging.
9. Matt. 7:7–12 Christ gives new instruction concerning asking.
10. Matt. 7:13–14 Christ gives new instruction concerning the narrow way.
11. Matt. 7:15–20 Christ gives new instructions concerning “fruits.”
12. Matt. 7:21–23 Christ gives new instructions concerning profession.

Christ summarizes all He has said regarding the Kingdom of Heaven by likening it to a man who applies these principles as building his house upon a rock foundation—his house will withstand the testing of the floods of life—Matt. 7:24–27.

All these principles show how different will be the administration of the Law in the future Kingdom Age.

There are many Scriptures which demonstrate conclusively that the Law will be in effect during the Kingdom age. As stated earlier, the New Covenant itself as stipulated in Jeremiah 31:31 is actually the administration of the law which has been “placed in the hearts of the people.” The whole last chapters of the book of Ezekiel are devoted to the full restoration of the Law system in the Kingdom age (Ezek. chapters 40–48). The Temple, the Feasts and the sacrificial system will be reinstated—Ezek. 45:18 and 46:4. Even the judges will be restored—Isa. 1:24–28. Many are the indications of the Law in operation in the prophecies of Daniel, the book of Revelation and of Christ in passages like Matthew 24.

### **The Potential of the Law**

In Luke 10:25–37 we have a very interesting encounter between a Jewish lawyer and the Lord Jesus Christ. The lawyer was apparently testing Christ’s fidelity to the Law of Moses. So the lawyer posed a question to Christ which presupposes that man could actually do something by his own moral stamina that would gain for himself eternal life. When this lawyer placed the question on that basis, Christ seemed to go along with it, and just allowed the lawyer to talk himself into an embarrassing position.

“And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him (Christ), saying, ‘Teacher, what shall ***I do*** to inherit eternal life?’

He (Christ) said to him, “What is written in the Law? What is your reading of it?”

So he answered and said, ‘ “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,” and “your neighbor, as yourself”.’

And He (Christ) said to him, ‘You have answered rightly, ***do this*** and you shall live.’

But he, wanting to *justify himself*, said to Jesus, ‘And who is my neighbor?’”

The lawyer correctly summarized the Law on the basis of the two most important commands taken from Deut. 6:5 (man’s relationship towards God) and Lev. 19:18 (man’s relationship towards his fellow man). Christ had agreed that this answer was correct, and then said simply, “*Do this and you shall live.*” Christ is thus indicating that the potential of the Law could hypothetically mean eternal life, “if” one could “**do this.**”

Obviously, however, there is not a man on planet earth, who is a descendent of fallen Adam, who could ever say he has “loved the LORD God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his strength, and with all his mind,” for one single day, or for even an hour in his life. Consequently, the smart lawyer in an attempt to get off the hook (“justify himself”) turned towards the lesser of the two commands and asked, “Who is my neighbor?” That led into a beautiful illustration of how prejudicial many religious people

are in the human family. At any rate, this encounter makes it very obvious that fallen man cannot be saved by Law keeping simply because he is incapable of keeping the Law as demanded.

Believe it or not, one time I actually heard a certain Pentecostal preacher quote this passage as Christ's plan of salvation. This preacher was actually a guest speaker at a certain Christian gathering which just so happened to make the bold profession of being the one and only "true Church." "Yes" he said, "all one has to do to get eternal life is to keep these two commandments." I could sense that the audience had mixed reactions to the highly impossible task before them, but they never objected so as to upset his wonderful message. Of course, after the meeting I protested to several people, and stated that this is not the gospel of salvation. Everyone seemed to agree that this was really not the plan of salvation. "Why didn't you stop him," I asked? "Oh," they said, "That is not the way we handle problems. Some of the elders will talk to the man privately." In fact, I was reported as a serious trouble maker for protesting this man's characterization of the plan of salvation. This incident serves to illustrate how seriously flawed is the thinking of much of Christendom, even when they know this could not possibly be the plan of salvation.

On another occasion a rich young ruler thought eternal life was to be obtained on some similar basis. Here is his exchange with Christ (Matthew 19:16–22)—

"Now behold, one came and said to him (Christ), 'Good teacher, **what good thing shall I do** that I may have eternal life?'  
So He (Christ) said to him, 'Why do you call me *good*?  
No one is *good* but One, that is God.  
But if you would enter into life, keep the commandments.'  
He said to Him, '**Which ones**?'  
Jesus said, 'You shall not murder, You shall not commit adultery,  
You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness,  
Honor your father and your mother, and  
You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'  
The young man said to him, 'All these have I kept from my youth.  
**What do I still lack**?'  
Jesus said to him, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell all that you have  
and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven,  
and come, follow Me.'  
But when the young man heard that saying, he went away  
*sorrowful*, for he had great possessions."

What actually happened in this case most certainly explodes the audacity of anyone who thinks that good works of Law keeping could bring eternal life. It should be obvious that when one in Christ's encounter thought that salvation comes by doing good works, Christ just lays down the Law right beside him to see how he lined up.

In this case, the young man did not realize it but he actually broke the first of the Ten Commandments and also the last. When confronted as to the "goodness" of Christ, the young man seems to drop what was really mere flattery. He apparently could not recognize Christ as God and thus broke the first commandment.

When he asked “What do I still lack?” seeing that he had kept all the commandments Christ listed, the text in the Gospel of Mark says, “Christ loved him.” That meant that Christ was very patient with this young man and wanted him to see the seriousness of his error. Christ then touched upon the *covetousness* of this young man’s heart. “Sell all you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven, and come, follow Me,” Christ said. This was most certainly not “good news” to this one who broke the last commandment (covetousness), and did not regard Christ as worthy of Lordship in his life.

Yes, the Law has potential were it not for man’s covetous nature. And so it will be for everyone who thinks salvation can come by Law keeping—they will inevitably go away “sorrowful.” Why is it that so many others went away “joyful”? Is it not because they took the place of sinners deserving death and hell, but God was gracious to them?!

### **Must Live the Whole Law**

We must keep in mind that the perfect righteousness obtained by Law keeping meant a life of obedience. Leviticus 18:5 says, “You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, *he shall live by them*: I am the LORD.” This principle is quoted by the prophet Ezekiel—20:11, 13 and 21. It is quoted again by the apostle Paul in Romans 10:5.

In addition, James 2:10 states “For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet stumble in one point, *he is guilty of all*.” In this same vein Paul says “For not the hearers of the Law are just in the sight of God, *but the doers of the Law will be justified*.” And this means a continuous life of obedient Law keeping.

Paul stresses in Galatians 3:10, “For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse, for it is written (Deut. 27:28) ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the Law, to do them’.”

In addition, one needs to keep in mind the heart’s attitude towards such things as murder and adultery, as brought out in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:22 and 28). God reckons a man guilty by the very thought of murder or adultery.

In light of these foreboding qualifications of Law keeping, it becomes evident that no one could ever be saved by such obedience. Therefore, the apostle Paul says, “For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the Law.” In other words, because of man’s sinful nature, there never was a Law that could have given life to that man. And again Paul says, “I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died in vain” Gal. 2:21).

This brings us to the all important question about—

### **The Purpose of the Law**

When we see that the potential of Law keeping can never be met, we naturally ask, “What, then, is the purpose of the Law?” This is primarily answered in the theology revealed by Christ to the Apostle Paul. Note the following, and I like to give this by ten Scriptures, just as if they were the Ten Commandments of explanation—

- I. **Romans 3:19 and 20**—“Now we know that whatever the Law says, it says to those who are under the Law, *that every mouth may be stopped*,

and *all the world may become guilty before God.*

Therefore by the deeds of the Law no flesh shall be justified in His sight, for *by the Law is the knowledge of sin.*”

Paul had earlier stated (2:14–16) that even the Gentiles had the moral precepts of the Law written in their hearts and consciences. Therefore, not only the Jewish nation which had the documents of the Law, but also the Gentile nations which had the inward consciousness of Law, all stood guilty before God as Law breakers. Therefore the Law served as an indictment against the whole human race.

**II. Galatians 3:19–24**—“What purpose then does the Law serve? It was added because of transgressions (man’s sinfulness), till the Seed (Christ) should come...But the Scriptures have *confined* all under sin, that the promise of faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. But before faith came, we were *kept under guard* by the Law, *kept* for the faith that should afterward be revealed. Therefore the Law was our *custodian* until Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

Newer translations (with proper recourse to the Greek Lexicons) have placed a slightly different picture upon this passage than was done by the traditional King James Version. It has been explained that the idea of a “schoolmaster” is not exactly what the original Greek conveyed. It is more in line with a child being placed under the guardianship of an appointed slave who acted as the child’s guard and custodian, until such time as the child was old enough to fend for himself. It may be true that the slave was often a tutor to that child as well as a guard. However, W.E. Vine explains that the Greek word is *paidagogos*, and is composed of two words, *pais*, a boy or child, and *ago*, which means to lead. It is not, therefore, the importation of knowledge that is in view, but rather the training or discipline of a guardianship. This is more in keeping with the contextual words “kept under guard” or “kept in ward,” and “kept” or literally “shut up.”

This would tell us that the Law acted as a controlling and restraining guardian, presumably upon our adamic natures, until our faith in Christ for salvation came to maturity.

**III. Galatians 3:10** very plainly says, “For as many as are of the works of the Law are *under the curse*; for it is written (Deut. 27:26), ‘*Cursed* is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the Law to do them’.” One can see, therefore, that the law brings an indictment against us because of our sins and we shall see that this indictment actually means one deserves the death penalty.

**IV. Romans 4:15** says—“the Law brings about *wrath*; for where there is no Law there is no transgression.” In other words, the Law is posted as an indictment for transgressors. This was its purpose. On the basis of that indictment, sinners under the Law system were deserving of the wrath of God.

**V. Romans 5:13 and 20** “For until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not *imputed* when there is no Law.” “Moreover the Law entered that the offense might *abound*.” This is telling us that the Law system made it judicially possible to impose a legitimate penalty upon sin and the sinner.

By way of illustration, we could say that it is not safe for cars to be driving fast in front of a school zone. However, if there is no speed limit posted, then technically a careless person could never be legally charged with violation. With the posting of the Law the violator can be stopped and charged accordingly.

**VI. Romans 7:9–11.** Note that once again it is clearly revealed that the Law, because of human weakness, ministered death—“I was alive once without the Law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and *I died*. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring *death*. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it *killed me*.”

**VII. 2 Corinthians 3:7 and 9** describes the Law as “the Ministry of *Death*, written and engraved on stones.” In the same context Paul adds—“The Ministry of *Condemnation*.” These are, as it were, titles or headings over the Ten Commandment Law system, designating for us God’s intended purpose in the Law.

**VIII. Colossians 2:14.** In describing the benefits of Christ’s death on our behalf Paul says, “(Christ) having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was *against us*, which was *contrary to us*.” Christ took the punishment the Law demanded against us.

**VIV. 1 Timothy 1:9 and 10.** In this passage Paul states, “knowing this: that the Law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine...”

It becomes even clearer from the frank statement of this passage that the primary purpose of the Law was to be an indictment against the natural Adamic family.

**X. Galatians 3:13.** Thank God, “Christ has 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’ (Deut. 21:23).” Jesus Christ voluntarily stepped in and took the curse of the Law in our place, granting to us eternal, everlasting life

### *The Law as a “Witness”*

A final aspect in the consideration of the purpose of the Law is brought to light by the apostle Paul’s statement in Romans 3:21 and 22—

“But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, *being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets*, even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ...”

If we take the “Law” in its broadest aspect, as including the whole Torah (the first five books), all of the Writings (Psalms and historical books), along with the Prophets, then all the prophecies and typologies in those books amount to an enormous amount of revelation about God’s gracious redemptive program through Jesus Christ. Beginning at Gen. 3:15, the first prophecy of the “seed of the woman” who defeats the serpent is found. And then, the amazing sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham pre-pictured the sacrifice of Christ two thousand years in advance. In addition, the multiplied examples in the sacrificial system told of the “Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world.” And

finally, the specific prophecies such as Isaiah 53, spell out the salvation that is available for mankind.

In this regard, the writer to the Hebrews says—

“For the Law, since *it has only a **shadow** of the good things to come* and not the very image of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near” (Heb. 10:1).

## Chapter Three—THE TERMINATION OF THE LAW

### *Peter's Vision*

As was brought out at the very beginning of this study, a change in the Law as an operating system for the early Christian community was indicated at the time the first Gentiles began to be accepted among the Jewish members of the early congregation. This first happened with the Apostle Peter as he received a vision from God Who commanded him to no longer consider Gentiles as unclean. Here is how it happened—

First, God gave a message to a devout Roman soldier, telling him to send men to Joppa to the home of a certain tanner who dwelt by the sea side and ask for Peter who would be dwelling there. Peter was to come and give him and his household a message of salvation (Acts 10:1–8). At the very time these men arrived in Joppa, Peter went up to the housetop to pray (Acts 10:9–16). Peter became hungry and fell into a trance wherein he saw a great sheet let down from heaven full of all kinds of unclean animals, and he heard a voice saying to him to take and eat. Peter, as a Law abiding Jew, instinctively recoiled from doing so because he had never eaten anything common or unclean. But the voice he heard kept saying “What God has cleansed you must not call common.” This happened three times.

Peter awoke and wondered what this vision had meant. While he was thinking about what he had just seen in a trance, the Gentiles knocked at the gate of the house. The Spirit of God then answered Peter's question by informing him “that he should not call any man common or unclean” (Acts 10:28). This was the Holy Spirit's meaning to the vision. Therefore, Peter went with these men to the city of Caesarea to speak to the first group of Gentiles in the Church's experience. Not only were these Gentiles saved, but Peter and the other Jewish brethren who came with him as witnesses beheld the miraculous gift of speaking in tongues by the Gentiles as evidence of their salvation. Therefore Peter and the other Jews with him stayed for several days at the home of these Gentiles and ate of their food. This was obviously new revelation.

Of course, there was an immediate conflict when Peter and the others returned to Jerusalem to report what happened. Some of the Jewish brethren exclaimed “You went into uncircumcised men and ate with them!” (Acts 11:3). This was obviously a violation of the Law system, but when Peter explained all that had happened, then everyone knew that a change, *to this extent in the Law*, had happened.

### *Decision Regarding the Gentile Believers' Relation to the Law*

As we stated earlier at the beginning of this study, there was further revelation given to the Apostle Paul that Gentile believers were not to be placed under the Mosaic Law system. This also came to be the understanding of the other Apostles and of James

the Lord's brother who seemed to be in charge in Jerusalem. Consequently there was a decree sent out to the various Gentile assemblies instructing them of their liberty in Christ. All this took place at the time of Acts 15. Acts 15 took place about A.D. 49–50. Here is how it came about—

When the Church gathered together in council, and after there had been “much disputing,” the apostle Peter began by rehearsing his own experience which was recorded for us in Acts chapters 10 and 11. Peter concluded his statements by asserting “*Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?*” This statement from Peter is very strong and emphatic. It says several things. First of all, to place the Gentile believers under the Law would be an affront to God Who is plainly leading them otherwise. Secondly, it is an acknowledgment that the Law itself was a heavy burden to both the early fathers of the nation of Israel as well as the Jewish people at that time. There is no mistaking the realism with which Peter addressed the subject. This certainly got the attention of everyone and consequently silenced the multitude of those arguing!

Then the apostle Paul and Barnabas rehearsed again the vast amount of miraculous confirmation God had given to their ministry of preaching the gospel of liberty for the believing Gentile converts.

James, therefore, issued a ruling—“*Therefore I judge that we should not trouble those from among the Gentiles who are turning to God...*” In other words, the Law was not to be imposed upon Gentile converts.

In addition, they made it very plain by a written document sent to the Gentile assemblies everywhere stating—“Since we have heard that some who went out from us have troubled you with words, unsettling your souls, saying, ‘*You must be circumcised and keep the Law,*’ to whom we gave no such commandment...”

It is clear from these Scriptures that the Holy Spirit led the leaders in the early Church to not impose the observance of the Mosaic Law system upon the Gentile converts throughout the world. In chapter 16 of Acts Paul and Silas “went throughout the cities delivering to them the decrees to keep which were determined by the apostles and elders at Jerusalem.”

### ***The Law Phasing Out in Corinthians***

The first clear statement in one of Paul's epistles as to the two different walks of the believing Jew and the believing Gentile is given in 1 Corinthians 9:19–21. This was written about 55 A.D. Interestingly enough, this passage still has a point of contention among scholars and certain groups today. The passage reads as follows—

“For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more: *and to the Jews I became as a Jew*, that I might win the Jews; *to those who are under the Law, as under the Law* [NU Greek Text adds- ‘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* (not being myself without law toward God [NU Text reads- ‘God's law’], but under law towards Christ [NU Text reads- Christ's law]), that I might win those who are without Law.”

There are many in the Church today who think it is inconceivable that Paul would actually say he was under the Law (meaning the Mosaic Law). These people do not see and appreciate the fact of a transition in the book of Acts. Therefore they believe that the insertion of the phrase that is found in the NU Text ‘though not being myself under the Law’ must be accepted as the genuine statement. This could be true. However, it is interesting that in most other cases of insertions of additional words or phrases, textual critics take the position that they are most probably insertions of copyists and should not be accepted as the genuine text. This could also be the case here.

Certainly we know Paul ‘was as a Jew’ to the Jews because he was, in fact, a Jew. In addition, it is not out of order to recognize that Paul was ‘as under the Law’ precisely because he was, along with all the other Jewish believers, allowed of God to still be under the Law during this time of transition. Would not Paul have been playing the hypocrite if he said he was “as under the Law,” when in fact, he was not under the Law?

There is, of course, a sense wherein Paul was positioned under a very unique “law” in respect to his service to Jesus Christ, God’s Son. Paul’s very unique position in service to Christ is demonstrated by the fact that he could genuinely be in two different positions during this particular time period. Paul was saved as a Jewish believer in the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. *He did not immediately stop the practice of the Law.* He went up to worship in Jerusalem like the rest of the Jews (Acts 22:17 and 21:26). He circumcised Timothy (Acts 16:3). He shaved his head and took vows (Acts 18:18 and 21:24). But on the other hand, as he states in this passage (1 Cor. 9:19–21), as to his calling as messenger of the Gospel to the Gentiles, he could and did step out of his Judaism and Law keeping when he was with the Gentiles. Were Paul to outlive this transition time period, I am sure he would drop his Judaism and Law keeping entirely, since after the book of Hebrews was written, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple took place in A.D. 70, Law keeping ceased for the Church.

The first clear exposition concerning the change of economies in this new dispensation was actually given by Paul in his second letter to the Corinthians. This was written about 56 or 57 A.D. In 2 Corinthians 3 Paul is inspired to make an amazing contrast between the “*Ministration of the Law*” (3:7) and the “*Ministration of the Spirit*” (3:8). One can actually itemize this contrast under ten headings—

	<u>Administration of the Law</u>	<u>Administration of the Spirit</u>
v. 3	(1) “Written with Ink (in the book)”	“ <i>Written by the Spirit</i> ”
v. 3	(2) “Written on Stone”	“ <i>Written on the hearts</i> ”
v. 6	(3) “The Letter (of the Law)”	“ <i>The Spirit (of life)</i> ”
v. 6	(4) “The Letter Kills”	“ <i>The Spirit gives life</i> ”
vs. 7, 8	(5) “Was Glorious”	“ <i>Is more Glorious</i> ”
v. 9	(6) “Unto Condemnation”	“ <i>Unto Righteousness</i> ”
v. 11	(7) “Passing Away”	“ <i>That which Remains</i> ”
vs.13, 18	(8) “Moses Veiled”	“ <i>Unveiled Face</i> ”
v. 14	(9) “Minds Blinded”	“ <i>Taken away in Christ</i> ”

It is clear that at the time Paul had these words written, he stated that the Law is “*passing away*” (No. 7.). This is stated in the present tense, which means the Law was in the *process* of passing away, not that it had already passed away. Compare this statement with what is given in Hebrews 8:13, where the transition process is indicated as having been completed,—“Now what is becoming obsolete (the Old Law Covenant) and growing old **IS READY** to vanish away.” In other words, by the time one reads the book of Hebrews, which was written about six years after 2 Corinthians (62 A.D.), he can understand that this phasing out of the Law system is completed, and the Law now stands “ready to vanish away.”

Of course, the comparisons between the two economies as given in 2 Corinthians 3 are very vivid and certainly most revealing as two contrasting economies. Much can be stated about each one of these contrasts. For instance, note No. (4), “The Letter kills,” whereas “the Spirit gives life.” At the time of the giving of the Law 3000 Israelites were slain because of idolatry (Exo. 32:30–35). In contrast, at the birth of the Church by the baptism of the Holy Spirit 3000 people are said to have been saved (Acts 2:41). Other contrasts will be seen as we continue through this study.

### **The Law Phasing Out in Romans**

In taking a survey through the book of Romans we see a comprehensive presentation of the Law subject and its relationship to the new economy of “*Grace*.” The economy of Grace is, of course, the same as the “*Ministration of the Spirit*” above in 2 Corinthians 3.

The apostle Paul had heard of the new believers in Rome and of their faith in Christ Jesus (1:8). He longed to go there and strengthen their faith (1:11). They were primarily Gentile believers (1:13). In this letter Paul will identify with them as the apostle to the Gentiles (15:16). He wrote this only a short time after 2 Cor.—about A.D. 57–58.

If we keep in mind what Paul said in 1 Cor. 9:21, how that when he was with the Gentiles he was “without the Law” as they were, we can better understand how in this letter Paul more surely spoke from their perspective as one without the Law. In other words, in this letter Paul was one of them, standing outside the Law. This is the perspective from which he spoke. This is vitally important to remember because within the same year after he wrote this letter, he was back in Jerusalem observing the Law as a Jew along with the Jewish believers who still practiced it—Acts 21:20. Many have stumbled over the fact of Paul’s Law observance in Acts 21 after he wrote the things he did in the books of Romans and Galatians about believers “not being under the Law.” They fail to realize that in a transition period you have two different economies in operation at the same time. One is phasing out while the other is phasing in. In this regard we must remember the principle of progressive revelation. God had not yet told the Jewish believers to stop the practice of the Law.

Paul started off mentioning “*the righteousness of God*” revealed in the gospel (1:17). This would be a key feature in the Gospel which he would take up again.

In chapters 1 through 3 of Romans Paul declared not only the sinfulness of the Gentiles but of the Jews as well. Indeed, “*all the world stands guilty before God*” (3:19 and 20).

Now Paul says that “*the righteousness of God apart from the Law is revealed*” (3:21–26). It is vitally important that everyone see and understand the distinction between the righteousness obtained by Law keeping and the “righteousness” imputed to the believers by faith in God’s gracious provision for them in Christ. This righteousness is not obtained by works of the Law, but is obtained by the “*grace*” of God through “*faith*.” In this manner man is justified “*apart from the deeds of the Law*” (3:28). This in itself does not “void the Law, but establishes it” for the purpose God intended for it, namely, to indict the world as guilty before God (3:31).

The outstanding examples of this salvation are Abraham and David. Abraham’s “*faith was counted for righteousness*” (4:1–4). David’s faith was also “counted for righteousness,” (4:5–8). This happened to Abraham while he was still uncircumcised. He received circumcision “*as a seal of the righteousness by faith*” and he is thus the “father” of both saved Gentiles and saved Jews (4:9–12). The promise to Abraham was not by means of the Law but by means of his faith “that it might be *according to grace*” (4:13–18). And in this same manner, it is “*imputed to us as well*” (4:23–25).

Having introduced the principle of “grace,” Paul would now say “this *grace* in which *we stand*” (5:1, 2). The purpose of the Law was to “impute sin” (5:13). Now however, we have received the “*abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness*” (5:17) to begin our new life in Christ.

Having been fully identified in the reckoning of God, with the substitutionary death, burial and resurrection of Christ (Romans 6:1–13), believers are now “NOT UNDER LAW BUT UNDER GRACE” (6:14 and 15). Herein is that great statement (given twice) expressing our present dispensational standing before God.

Paul then gave that important allegory of the woman under Law to her husband to illustrate this change (7:1–6). The woman is bound by the Law as long as her husband lives. In other words, under the Mosaic Law a woman could never divorce her husband. This privilege of divorce was only allowed for the husband to exercise. However, “if the husband died she is then free from the law of her husband.” So it is, Paul explained, we “have become dead to the Law by the (substitutionary) death of Christ” which was credited to us, so that now we are able to be “married to another—even to Jesus Christ Who arose from the dead.” And also important is the fact that now we “serve in *newness of the Spirit*” and “not in *oldness of the letter* (i.e., of the Law)” (7:6). Paul will enlarge upon this aspect in chapter 8. In the remainder of this chapter Paul further explained the purpose of the Law. Paul pointed out that it ministered death, not life (7:7–25).

In chapter 8 Paul focused upon this new administration—“*The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus*” (8:2–10). Under the administration of the “*Spirit*” we more than fulfill the Law. Every believer today is therefore positionally said to be “in the Spirit” and the “Spirit is righteousness.”

In Romans 10:4 Paul said, “*Christ is the END of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believes.*” He reminded us that “he who loves another has fulfilled the

Law” (13:8). Even though there remain differences between Jew and Gentile, as in foods, yet Paul is “convinced by the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in and of itself” (14:14).

Thus, in the book of Romans, Paul revealed the “righteousness of God” imputed to the believer in the gospel of Jesus Christ. This righteousness is distinct from that obtained by Law keeping. This righteousness is obtained by faith and not by works. It is illustrated by both Abraham and David. This places the believers today under the principle of “Grace” in contrast to Israel being under the Law system. Under the principle of Grace we are able to live righteous lives because of the Spirit of God within us, living out the life of Christ through us.

### **The Law Phasing Out in Galatians**

All seem to agree that the Epistle to the Galatians is a powerful little book, filled with strong rebukes and stinging indictments towards those who would try to implement Law observance upon Gentile believers. In all probability it was written shortly after the book of Romans. It has similar thoughts and examples as contained in Romans. The book of Romans contains a patiently laid out economy of God in a very systematic manner. In contrast in Galatians, Paul gave the material in an abbreviated and corrective fashion. The Galatians had been assaulted by those of the circumcision so that they had now been infected all over again, as it were, by the plague of a misappropriation of Law, the observance of which would place them in religious bondage. The corrective nature of Galatians would therefore ensure, not only that the Galatians, but the Church of Jesus Christ as a whole would pursue the right pathway as directed by the Holy Spirit throughout the course of this age or Dispensation of the Grace of God.

Two points are stressed right up front in Galatians. First is the fact that these Gentile believers have been called “in the grace of Christ,” and some would pervert that gospel (Gal. 1:6, 7). Second, is the pointed fact that anyone who preaches another gospel, other than salvation by grace, “let him be accursed” (Gal. 1:8, 9). This is given twice for warning with the emphasis on God-ordained retribution.

Notice that, as in the book of Romans, Paul herein identified with the Gentiles —“certain ones came in secretly to spy out *OUR* liberty which *WE* have in Christ Jesus, that they may bring *US* into bondage” (Gal. 2:4). This means that the attempt to place these assemblies under the Mosaic Law system would conflict not only with the revelation of Christ to Paul for Gentile liberty from Law observance, but also from Paul’s liberty to be free from the Law in his service to the Gentiles as stated in 1 Cor. 9:21.

In chapter 2 Paul reviewed the conference in Jerusalem (see also Acts 15). He also spoke of an incident that was not mentioned in the Acts account. This incident pertained to his public rebuke to the apostle Peter and the others in Antioch who, by their action of not eating with the Gentiles, were effecting a “judaising” (Gal. 2:14, literal) of the Gentiles (i.e., causing them to “live as do the Jews”). For Peter and the other Jews to stop eating with the Gentile believers would force the Gentiles to adopt the Jewish kosher meals if they wanted fellowship with their Jewish brethren. Consequently, Paul’s public rebuke was warranted. These Jewish brethren at Antioch were still being pressured by some from Jerusalem to not give up their Jewish separation laws in their association with the Gentile believers. They were probably being told that it was one thing to allow for Gentile salvation and for them to eat whatever they wanted, but this did not mean for

Jews to relinquish that aspect of the Law's demand for their own separation. In this they failed to appreciate what God originally revealed to the apostle Peter in Acts 10—that he should no longer consider Gentiles as unclean—and that God was allowing for the Jews to drop their kosher meals when in Gentile believers' company. In effect, eating what the Gentiles served. Indeed, this type of allowance spelled the beginning of the abolishment of the Law in the Church's practice.

The events of Acts 10 marked a gigantic crack in the Law system. A prime characteristic of the Law system was that it mandated a ritual *separation* of the Jews from the Gentiles. It was clearly explained to Peter he should no longer regard this separation in ministering the gospel to Gentile peoples. They were to no longer consider the Gentiles as unclean. In addition, they could now associate and eat with Gentile believers. The counsel in Acts 15 confirmed that aspect of change in the Law. The only thing that actually remained was the question of how long it would be before the Jewish believers themselves would walk at liberty from the Law system.

Paul's concluding words in chapter 2 were, "I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died in vain" (Gal. 2:21).

We have the following from Galatians chapter 3: (1) The Gentiles "received the Spirit "by faith," and they cannot "now be made complete by the flesh," meaning they could not be made perfect by the observance of the Law (3:1–9); (2) the Law brings a curse, whereas the blessings of Abraham came "upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that they might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (3:11–14); (3) the Law which came 430 years after the promise to Abraham "cannot annul the covenant" of promise of salvation by faith in Christ (3:15–18); (4) the Law served as a "restraining custodian" "until faith came." "But after faith has come, we are no longer under the custodian (i.e., the Law)" (3:19–25).

We have the following in chapter 4 of Galatians: (1) the Law served as our "guardian or steward" until the time came when we were declared as "sons." Christ was born under the Law for the purpose of redeeming us in order that we might be declared "sons." And God sent forth "His Spirit into our hearts crying 'Abba, Father,' so that we are no longer like slaves (under Law) but "heirs of God through Christ" (4:1–7); (2) now believers should not return to the elements that enslaved them to bondage, like the observance of days, months, years, etc. (4:8–12); (3) the two sons of Abraham serve as an allegory of our situation. First, Ishmael, born of the bondwoman, symbolizes Mount Sinai, the Law Covenant, which brings bondage, and was eventually cast out. Then Isaac, born of the freewoman, symbolizes the Covenant of Promise which brings freedom and we are children of the free (4:21–31).

In Galatians 5 we have two concluding statements: first, believers are to stand fast "in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and be not again entangled in the yoke of bondage (the Law)" (5:1), and second, those "led by the Spirit are not under the Law" (5:18).

### ***In Summary from Romans and Galatians***

It is of utmost importance to always remember that Romans and Galatians were principally written to Gentile believers. It was understood by all the Church from the

time of Acts 15 that Gentile believers were not to be placed under the Law system. Consequently, the truths of Romans and Galatians, pertaining to liberty from the Law, are primarily directed at the Gentile believers and not the Jewish believers. However, this is not to say that the Jewish believers could not read the “handwriting on the wall,” so to speak, that in the process of time they themselves would be at liberty from the Law system in practice as well as the Gentile believers. After all, many of the truths of spiritual reality which Paul gave in both these epistles would obviously have to be true of both Jew and Gentile believers alike. In fact, some of Paul’s arguments are given from the historical perspective of the Jew (see Rom. 7 and Gal. 4).

No doubt, this is the basis of an accusation that Paul faced when he returned to Jerusalem for the last time. In Acts 21 James recounted the report which had come back to them at Jerusalem that Paul was actually teaching the Jews to stop the practice of the Law (see Acts 21:20–26). Now we know it is true that Paul had given some liberating truths, specifically to the Gentile believers, that would eventually have an application to all believers and not just to the Gentiles. However, if we keep in mind that a transition, such as is taking place in the early Church, will sometimes seemingly bring conflicting conduct, yet it can be properly assimilated within the boundaries that are prescribed by God. Therefore in this case, technically speaking, it is not true that Paul taught the Jewish believers to actually stop their practice of the Law. He had given liberating truths to be sure, but he had not gone so far as to specifically teach the Jewish believers to actually stop their Law practices. Therefore, Paul’s conduct in his own observance of the Law at this time is perfectly within the limits of God’s Divine will as revealed thus far. Remember the principle under which Paul was still in operation as spelled out in 1 Corinthians 9:19–21. Many have erroneously come to the conclusion that Paul made a serious compromise in his observance of Judaism in Acts 21. This is simply not the case.

When we come to the revelations of Ephesians, Colossians and especially Hebrews, we come to the specifics that would directly mandate Jewish believers to cease their practice of the Law.

### ***The Status of the Law in Ephesians and Colossians***

In Ephesians chapter 2 Paul stated that God had now made of both believing Jews and believing Gentiles “*one new man*” for this present age. In order to do this Christ had to “break down the middle (lit., *dividing wall*) wall of partition” between the two parties. This wall acted as a partition on the Temple platform to separate the Gentiles and prevent them from entering into the inner court of the Temple. Notices were actually posted in stone on the wall warning Gentiles not to proceed further on pain of death. Archeologists have actually found the remains of one such notice. To break down this wall, Paul explained that Christ actually “*abolished*” by His own death “*the Law of Commandments in ordinances.*” Christ did this when He suffered the penalty that the Law demanded against sinners. From Ephesians 2:14–18 we read—

“For He Himself is our peace, Who has made both (Jew and Gentile) one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the Law of Commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one

body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”

Many Christians see this passage and think that since it says the Law was abolished in the cross-work of Christ, therefore, the Jews themselves should have stopped the practice of the Law just after the resurrection of Christ. However, they are not taking into consideration the fact of progressive revelation. This truth was not revealed to them at the time of the resurrection of Christ, but rather it was revealed over thirty years later when this epistle was written (approx. A.D. 32).

The same principle is stated in the letter to the Colossians in chapter 2 and verse 14, “...having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

### **Pertaining to the Sabbath Laws**

On the basis of Christ’s cross-work of “abolishing” and/or “wiping out” the Mosaic Law system, Paul went on to tell the Colossians, and beyond them, all of us—

“So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths” (verse 16).

Some legalists have responded to this passage by claiming Paul is herein only talking about the festival Sabbaths mentioned in Leviticus 23 and not about the regular seventh day Sabbaths. In this argument they forget that the Sabbath days of Leviticus 23 actually start off with the regular seventh day Sabbath—

“And the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: The Feasts of the LORD, which you shall proclaim to be holy convocations, these are My appointed times. Six days shall work be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of solemn rest, a holy convocation. You shall do no work on it; it is the Sabbath of the LORD in all your dwellings” (Leviticus 23:1 and 2).

Consequently if the Sabbaths of Leviticus 23 are in view, and I agree that they are, then of necessity it must begin with the regular seventh day Sabbath! This, indeed, is an insurmountable problem because all the Sabbaths are obviously grouped together.

Yet again, some legalist will still argue that the rest of the sentence that began in Colossians 2:16 goes on to say in verse 17—“things which are a shadow of what is to come; but the body *is* of Christ.” Thus they say, the little word “is” is wrongly inserted, so that the real meaning of the passage reads “So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths... but the body of Christ.” This they say changes the meaning so that it really is saying only the “body of Christ,” i.e., the Church, can judge you on this matter.

This is likewise an interpretation of desperation. First of all, the only time fellow members (Jewish Pharisees) of the body of Christ judged other members (Gentile believers in Acts 15) they judged them wrongfully in trying to impose the Law

observances upon them. Second, the very context of Colossians 2:16 and 17 goes on to give an exact parallel in verses 17 and 18. Note the similarity—

“so let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come— but the <i>body</i> (is) of <i>Christ</i> .”	“Let no one cheat you of your reward ...false humility and worship of angels ...vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind; Not holding fast to the <i>Head</i> , from which all the <i>body</i> , nourished...”
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In both cases, whether it be the Jewish Law in question, or otherwise the pagan ideologies which have invaded the assembly, they both receive the answer of the same solution, namely that the members of the “body” today get their strength and growth from the “*Head*” which is Jesus “*Christ*” and from no other source or philosophy.

### *Should we Observe Sunday as a So-called “Christian Sabbath”?*

There is probably nothing that men will give any more elaborate and eloquent argumentation for than the observance of Sunday as the so-called “Christian Sabbath.” And yet there is no subject in the Bible in which there is more *silence* on than this so-called Sunday observance. Most every Bible scholar and teacher will admit right up front that there is actually not one single word in all the “New Testament” either *commanding* or *instructing* Christians to observe Sunday in any way, shape or form. In addition, we shall see that there was also no traditional observation of that day by the early Church in the “New Testament” record. Though it was not long after the close of the Greek Scriptures and the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 that the observance of Sunday as a special day of worship began to be noted by “church historians,” yet it remains a fact that there is actually no traditional observance of that day to be found in the Scriptures themselves. By the third and fourth century Sunday observance was common.

In the absence of any specific command from the Bible to the extent of observing Sunday as some sort of special holy day, religious teachers will inevitably play upon people’s natural inclination towards religiosity by emphasizing or manufacturing great importance for the *day* upon which Christ arose from the dead. For instance they will usually proclaim—

1.) “*Wasn’t Christ resurrected from the dead on Sunday morning?* And therefore, should we not observe that day?” Yes, Christ was raised on the first day of the week, but he never instructed His disciples to ritually observe that day. Rather, He instructed believers to manifest forth the fact of His resurrection life in their own new lives—every day of the week. Believers in Christ are spiritually regenerated and said to be resurrected with Christ. Consequently, they are to demonstrate that new life perpetually.

2.) “*Wasn’t the Church born on the morning of Pentecost Sunday?* And should we not therefore observe that day as the birthday of the Church?” Yes, the Church began on the morning of Pentecost which fell on Sunday. However, Christ never wanted His new Spirit baptized body of believers to observe the Jewish ritual of Pentecost, did He? Of course not! In fact, we are learning in this Bible study that Christ strictly forbade the Church to continue in the observance of the Law. So the fact that the Church began on Pentecost does not automatically mean we should observe Pentecost! Neither does it

automatically mean believers are to give special observance to the day of the week on which it originally was created.

3.) “*Did not the Church habitually gather on the first day of the week as demonstrated by the assembly at Troas in Acts 20:7?*” Yes, the text says the brethren of Troas came together “to break bread on the first day of the week.” However, the text does not say this is what they always did. But the text indicates that the apostle Paul had been there for seven days (verse 6), and since he was leaving the next day (verse 7), they gathered for a common fellowship meal and for a special meeting to hear Paul before he left. It also means this was an EVENING gathering, not a Sunday morning observance.

In fact, some Bible translations indicate this was probably a Saturday evening dinner and the meeting was to follow. If Luke is writing according to the Jewish reckoning of days, then it was indeed a Saturday evening meeting because that is when the first day begins by the Jewish order of days. Sunset on Saturday begins the first day of the week. Nevertheless, if it was the close of the first day then it would have been Sunday evening. Any way one takes it, it was most certainly not the traditional Sunday morning service that Christendom observes today.

4.) “*Did not the apostle Paul instruct the Corinthian assembly to take their collections on the first day of every week in 1 Corinthians 16:2?*” Yes, Paul did give this instruction. However, many Bible teachers have noted that the word “*day*” is in italicized print. It does not necessarily mean Sunday, but only at the first of the week, whatever day that may be. In addition, Paul was not telling them to do this in their assembly meeting. Rather each household was to set aside whatever their contribution might be at the beginning of each week when normal distribution of funds might take place in the households. The contribution would therefore be “stored up” (verse 2) in each home.

5.) “*Is not Sunday called ‘The Lord’s Day’ in Revelation 1:10, and therefore, should not we give special recognition to that day?*” No, Sunday is not called ‘The Lord’s Day’ in Revelation 1:10! Certain scholars have pointed out for many years that this is talking about “The Great and Terrible Day of The Lord” and not the first day of the week, Sunday. The apostle John is simply saying he was transferred forward in time, by the Spirit of God, to the “Day of The Lord” as prophesied throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. The rest of the book of Revelation is the record of what John saw as taking place in that future brief time period of “The Day of The Lord.”

Remember the clear prohibitions against the Church’s religious observance of “days”—Galatians 4:9 and 10; Colossians 2:16 and Philippians 3:3.

### **Ten Clear Statements of the Termination of the Law**

From the information we have collected so far, we can list at least ten clear statements which indicate the termination of the Mosaic Law system for this Church age. Again I am going to list these as ten such statements to help in our remembrance of them. In contrast to being held to the observance of a ten commandment Law, we are instead reminded of ten factual statements of liberation from the Law—

1. **2 Corinthians 3:11**, “For if what (The Law System in context) *is passing away* was glorious, what remains is much more glorious.”
2. **Romans 6:14 & 15**, “For sin shall not have dominion over you,

*for you are not under Law but under Grace.”*

3. **Romans 7:4**, “Therefore, my brethren, *you also have become dead to the Law through the body of Christ*, that you may be married to another—to Him Who is raised from the dead...”
4. **Romans 10:4**, “*For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*”
5. **Galatians 3:24 and 25**, “Therefore the Law was our custodian (to bring us) to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith is come, *we are no longer under a custodian* (i.e., the Law).”
6. **Galatians 4:4, 5 and 7**, “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, *to redeem those who were under the Law* (as in slavery), that we might receive the adoption of sons... Therefore you are *no longer a slave* (as under the Law) but a son...”
7. **Galatians 4:21,22 and 28**, “Tell me, you who desire to be under the Law, *do you not hear the Law?* For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, *the other by a freewoman*. ... Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, *are children of Promise* (free).”
8. **Galatians 5:18**, “But if you are led of the Spirit, *you are not under the Law.*”
9. **Ephesians 2:14 & 15**, “For He Himself is our peace, Who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, *having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the Law of commandments in ordinances...*”
10. **Colossians 2:14**, “Having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

### **The Status of the Law According to the Book of Hebrews**

The book of Hebrews is obviously written primarily to Hebrew Christians. Of principle importance to us in this study is the fact that in this inspired document we have revealed a series of “*changes*” in the Law system, and a series of “*better*” things given for the people of God.

First, let us list a series of ten “changes” revealed concerning the Law system—

1. Hebrews 1:1 and 2. *A Change in Spokesperson.*  
In times past God spoke to us by His prophets but, now “He has *spoken* to us by His Son.”
2. Hebrews 3:5 and 6. *A Change in Households.*  
Note the contrast between the “house” of Moses and the “house” of Christ—“Whose house we are.”

3. Hebrews 4:14 with 7:12. *A Change in the Priesthood.*  
Believers now have a “great High Priest” Who has passed into the heavens directly in the presence of God on our behalf.
4. Hebrews 7:12, 18 and 19. *A Change of the Law.*  
“A change in the Law.” “There is an annulling of the former commandment...and the bringing in of a better hope...”
5. Hebrews 7:22 and 8:6. *A Change of Covenants.*  
“Jesus has become a surety of a better covenant...which was established on better promises.”
6. Hebrews 8:13 and 9:10. *A Change in Time.*  
“The Law is ready to vanish away...it was imposed until the time of reformation (or setting things straight).”
7. Hebrews 8:1 and 2. *A Change in Sanctuaries.*  
Christ has become “a Minister of the Sanctuary and of the true Tabernacle which the Lord erected and not man.”
8. Hebrews 9:11, 12, 23 and 10:9. *A Change in the Sacrifice.*  
“Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood ...better sacrifices than these...He takes away the first...”
9. Hebrews 10:19 and 20. *A Change in the Way.*  
We enter the presence of God “by a new and living way... through the veil, that is His flesh ( of His sacrificial death).”
10. Hebrews 12:25–28. *A Change in the position of the Speaker And consequently in things shaken.* Moses spoke “on earth” and men were accountable—whereas Christ speaks “from heaven” and men are more accountable. At the giving of the Law the earth “shook,” but now God has promised He would also “shake the earth and heavens.”

With this manifest tenfold change, the believing Hebrew Christians are instructed by God to change as well. The Law system has officially been “changed” for the “better.” The book of Hebrews not only indicates clearly the “change” in the Law system, but it is also a book supplying “*better things*” for the Jewish believers. Once again let us list these as they are given throughout the book—

1. Hebrews 1:4, Christ is “*so much better than the angels.*”
2. Hebrews 6:9, There are “*better things*” for the believer.
3. Hebrews 7:7, The antitypical Melchizedek is “*better*” than Abraham.
4. Hebrews 7:19, A “*better hope*” is brought in.
5. Hebrews 7:22, Christ is a “*surety of a better covenant.*”
6. Hebrews 8:6, Which covenant was “*established on better promises.*”
7. Hebrews 9:23, Heavenly things purified with “*better sacrifices.*”
8. Hebrews 10:34, Believers have a “*better and enduring reward.*”

9. Hebrews 11:16, Believers have a “*better, that is a Heavenly country.*”
10. Hebrews 11:35, The promise for the persecuted of a “*better resurrection.*”
11. Hebrews 11:40, A “*better*” ultimate family reunion of all the redeemed.
12. Hebrews 12:24, The “*blood*” of Christ “*speaks better things than that of Abel (Abel’s blood spoke to God of judgment, whereas Christ’s blood spoke of redemption).*”

## **Chapter Four—THE LAW OF CHRIST**

### *Scriptural Designations*

When John was inspired to write—“*The Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ*” (John 1:17)—he did not merely distinguish the two great ages but he stated the characteristic of the ministry of Christ which effectively announces the next age to come. The Mosaic age of Law was being terminated and the age of Grace was being inaugurated. The apostle Paul was further inspired to compliment this truth with the doctrinal teaching to the Christian today, epitomized by the words—“*For you are not under Law, but under grace*” (Rom. 6:14 and 15). This truth we might realize as the banner waved above the Christian household of faith today. Consequently, Paul was further led to characterize this age as—“*the Dispensation (stewardship or household economy) of the Grace of God*” (Eph. 3:2).

There are actually several different terms or designations whereby God sets in order His plans and blueprints for this present economy. So that one will know and understand the various terminologies that God has chosen to use in His revelation to us on this very crucial subject, I will arrange them in a sequential order in the following manner—

#### *I. “The Kingdom of God’s Dear Son”*

Everyone who places his faith and trust in Jesus Christ as Savior and LORD of his life has been “*delivered from the Kingdom of Darkness, and translated into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son*” (Colossians 1:13). This means that the repentant believer is transferred out from under the direct and exclusive rule of Satan and placed under the direct and exclusive rule of Jesus Christ. The present Kingdom of Christ is actually the spiritual phase of the Kingdom of God during this Age of Grace.

#### *II. “The Administration of the Spirit”*

Christ was gloriously seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven (Acts 2:33). Christ then sent the Holy Spirit to take up residence upon the earth in the hearts and lives of believers during this present dispensation. Christ had counseled His apostles that after His death He would send the Holy Spirit into the world to indwell believers and to minister to them His directives. “He (the Holy Spirit) shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you” (John 16:14). Thus the Kingdom of God’s dear Son

which is composed of every believer today is said to be under “*the Administration of the Spirit*” (II Corinthians 3:8, 9).

### III. *The Church as “the Household of God”*

The *ekklesia* (assembly or congregation) as a Divine institution was inaugurated on the Day of Pentecost by the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5 and 2:1–4), “*For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit*” (I Cor. 12:13). Then and thereby all believers in Jesus Christ were constituted as “*living stones*” in a new “*Spiritual House*” (I Peter 2:5). Both believing Jews and Gentiles are made “*fellow citizens with the saints and are of the household of God... a holy temple in the Lord*” (Eph. 2:19–21).

### IV. *“The Law of Christ”*

Everyone who has thus been translated into the Kingdom of God’s dear Son, so as to become living members of the “*Church which is Christ’s body,*” automatically comes under the household rule of Jesus Christ, as administered by the Holy Spirit of God. This rule is called “*The Law of Christ*”—Galatians 6:2; 2:20; 4:6, 7 and Romans 8:2—where it is called “*the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.*” The epitome of this Law is expressed by the words of Galatians 2:20—“*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.*”

### V. *“The Grace of God”*

The principles of “*the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus,*” which are being ministered to us by the Holy Spirit, are summarized as the principles of “*The Grace of God*” (John 1:17; Romans 5:2, 21; 6:14, 15; Galatians 5:4). All the riches the believer now possesses in Christ Jesus are bestowed upon us by God’s Grace or *unmerited favor*. As we shall see, this “*Grace principle*” will stand in clear distinction to rewards given as a result of “*Law keeping.*”

### VI. *“The Dispensation of the Grace of God”*

The age wherein the principles of the Grace of God are being administered to the believer is designated as “*The Dispensation of the Grace of God*” (Ephesians 3:2). As the Law of Moses characterized the time period from the giving of the Law to Israel till the death of Israel’s Messiah, so the Grace principle will characterize the age from the death and resurrection of Christ until His coming for the Church which is His body.

### VII. *God’s “Eternal Purpose”*

Not only does God have a purpose for the Church in the *present* “*Age,*” but God also has an “*eternal purpose*” in the manifestation of His special grace. Paul says in Ephesians 2:7 “*In order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness in Christ Jesus.*” Therefore, not only was this special Age planned by God in eternity past, as stated in Eph. 1:4, “*Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world...*” but now we learn that God has a purpose for the Church “*in the ages to come.*” All this is beautifully summed up in Eph. 3:10 and 11, “*In order that the manifest wisdom of God might now be made known through the Church to rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose*

which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Thus Paul would conclude (Eph. 3:20–21) “Now to Him Who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus to *all generations forever* (lit. *of the ages of the ages*) and ever. Amen.”

### ***Review of each of These designations—***

We will now review each of these first six designations in order, though we are going to spend the majority of our time on the subject of “The Law of Christ” and the principles of “Grace.”

#### **I. The Kingdom of God’s Dear Son**

There are at least five different applications of the term “The Kingdom of God” as used in the Bible. I will give them in the order in which they are found in the Scriptures. **First**, there is the *eternal, everlasting* Kingdom of God, that is co-equal with God, and is all inclusive over all realms—Jer. 10:10; Dan. 2:19–21; Ps. 10:16; 29:10, etc. **Second**, there is the *Israelitish phase* of the Kingdom of God, which had to do with the nation of Israel and her national kings and kingdom—I Chron. 28:5; II Chron. 13:8 and 29:23. This aspect of the Kingdom of God ceased when Israel was defeated by the Babylonians. **Third**, there is the *Messianic phase* of the Kingdom of God, which was prophesied by the prophets of Israel—Isa. 2:2–4; 9:6, 7; 11:1–9; Ps. 2 and 110; Jer. 31:31–34, etc. This was the Kingdom offered to Israel as a nation at the first coming of Christ. Of course there was a national rejection of this Kingdom and the crucifixion of the “King of the Jews.” Though temporarily postponed, this Kingdom will, however, be set up on earth at the glorious second coming of Christ as the Lion of the tribe of Judah. It will be a worldwide Kingdom with headquarters in Jerusalem and the restoration of the earth to near Edenic conditions. **Fourth**, there is the present *spiritual phase* of the Kingdom of God, i.e., the Church which is Christ’s body—Col. 1:13 and 4:11; Rom. 14:17; I Thess 2:12, etc. This Kingdom should never be confused, as many teachers and religious organizations do, with the Kingdom Christ offered to Israel as recorded in the Gospel accounts which will be set up as the future Messianic Kingdom. This present spiritual Kingdom will cease its earthly existence at the time of the rapture of the Church into heaven. **Fifth**, there is the final phase of the Kingdom of God wherein all evil is gathered out of the world and placed into the Lake of Fire. *Righteousness will reign for eternity* in a New Heavens and New Earth—Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:5; I Cor. 6:9 and Rev. 21:1–8.

The fact that there is a Kingdom of God in effect today in this present age should alert all believers to the realization of an authority over them in the Headship of Christ. As in any kingdom or dominion there is rule, order and guiding principles to follow. The Church which is Christ’s Body is not a lawless entity. It is most certainly not to be considered a “democracy” (rule “of, by and for the people”). All the members of this Kingdom will be held accountable for proper submission to the revealed direction and governing authority that God has designated on their behalf.

There are many amazing features about this Kingdom, not the least of which is the fact that every single subject in this Kingdom is held up in God’s sight as a “*co-heir*” with the King! In fact, God has chosen by His “grace” to implant the very life of the King into each and every member.

## II. The Administration of the Spirit

Some have balked in describing this age as “the Administration of the Spirit.” Therefore, I need to first explain it. The Greek word for minister is *diakonos*, and it is simply a noun signifying a “servant, attendant or minister.” The verb form of the same word is *diakoneo*, and it signifies “serving, attending or ministering.” However, there is another noun, *diakonia*, which signifies “the *office* and the work of a *diakonos* (minister).” Hence, in II Corinthians 3 where *diakonia* is used to contrast the Ministry of the Spirit with the Ministry of the Law, it should properly be understood as “a ministry, ministration or administration” in the sense of the office. Now, as to the inspired apostle applying this expression to the present age, one needs only to look at the book of Acts which opens up the history of the Church of Jesus Christ. The age virtually begins on the moment of the outpouring or “baptism” of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5 and 2:2). In addition, the Holy Spirit guides and directs in nearly every event as the Church grows into maturity. In addition, this Age will close when the Holy Spirit that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead will also quicken the bodies of all the dead in Christ of this Age along with all those still alive in Christ and transpose them into heaven (Romans 8:11 and 23).

Some have expressed the fact that the book of Acts would best be described as “The Acts of the Holy Spirit through His disciples.” Immediately upon the “baptism of the Holy Spirit,” it is the Holy Spirit Who gives them the miraculous gift of tongues—Acts 2:4. The Holy Spirit directs Peter’s message—4:8. The first disciplinary problem was because Ananias and Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit—5:3 and 9. Stephen spoke by the Holy Spirit—6:5 and 7:55. The Samaritans first received the Holy Spirit—8:15 and 17. The Spirit directed in the ministry of Philip and actually transported him—8:29 and 39. The Holy Spirit comforted the Church—9:31. The Holy Spirit fully directed Peter in his meeting and preaching to the first Gentiles—10:19 and 11:12. A famine was predicted by the Holy Spirit—11:28. The Holy Spirit selected Paul and Barnabas for their ministry—13:2 and 4. The Holy Spirit fully directed in the decision of the early Church regarding the Gentiles being free from the Law—15:28. And the Holy Spirit continues to direct Paul in his ministry—16:6, etc. One can easily see by all these examples that the Holy Spirit was in charge of the Church’s operations.

In 2 Corinthians 3 Paul contrasted the two different ministries. The ministry of the Spirit stands in contrast to that of the Law. Paul made two contrasts in regards to these two ministries. In verses 7 and 8, concerning the Law, it is called “the “ministry of death” which was said to be “glorious” in contrast to “the ministry of the Spirit,” which is “more glorious.” Again Paul drew the contrast for a second time in verse 9—“For if the ministry of condemnation had glory, the ministry of *righteousness* exceeds much more in glory.” Thus, the “Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” is the outliving of Christ’s “righteousness” in us by the Holy Spirit’s power and administration.

In Romans 7:6 Paul continued to explain, “but now we have been delivered from the Law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the *newness of the Spirit* and not in oldness of the Letter (the Law).” Remember, “If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His” (Rom. 8:9).

Romans 8:2—“For the law of the *Spirit of life* in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.” And again in verse 4, “That the righteous requirement of

the Law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to *the Spirit*.” In verse 10 Paul added, “And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but *the Spirit is life* because of righteousness.” Remember that in Galatians Paul revealed, “But if you are *led by the Spirit*, you are not under the Law” (Gal. 5:18).

The believers’ walk in the Spirit is the climax of the book of Galatians—

“I say then: *Walk in the Spirit* and you will not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things you wish. For if *you are led by the Spirit*, you are not under the law... But the *fruit of the Spirit* is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law...If we *live in the Spirit* let us also *walk in the Spirit*” (Gal. 5:16–18 and 22–25).

The work of the Holy Spirit is to minister Christ in the heart and lives of believers both individually as saints, and collectively as in the Church which is Christ’s body. Even the whole Church is encouraged to collectively grow up “to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:13). This is repeated in verse 15 as well, “may grow up in all things into Him Who is the Head—Christ.” In other words, the individual believer is to manifest the life of Christ through yielding to the work of the Holy Spirit in his life, but in addition, the whole Church can also demonstrate the same principle of manifesting Christ in its collective body. This is the great design and purpose of the Spirit of God in the Body of Christ today.

This is also the meaning of Colossians 2:16–19, where it says, “Let no man judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, *but the body is of Christ*. Let no one cheat you...not holding fast to the head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.” In other words the outworking of the whole Church, the Body of Christ, is simply the outworking of Christ.

### **III. The Church as The Household of God**

It is true that when Jesus came to His own people He found them in the main divided over Him. He then indicated there would be division in households because of Him (Matt. 10:34–39). In addition, He clearly gave indication that a new family order was in the making. His own physical family no longer took precedence, but all those who truly believed in Him and walked in His Word would be recognized as His true spiritual family (Matt. 12:46–50). The identification of believers as a new “household” is represented by seven Scriptures.

1.) In Hebrews 3:1–6 we are given these words which contrast the two “houses”—the household of Moses (under the Law economy), and the other household consisting of those who have placed their faith in Jesus Christ today.

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus Christ, Who was faithful to Him Who appointed Him, as Moses was also faithful in all His *house*.

For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the *house* has more honor than the *house*. For every house is built by someone, but He Who built all things is God. And Moses indeed was faithful in all His *house* as a servant, for a testimony of those things which would be spoken afterward, but Christ as a Son over His Own *house*, whose *house* we are if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end.”

2.) Paul in Galatians 6:10, refers to this same company of Church saints as “the household of faith.” This means, of course, all those who exercise saving faith in Jesus Christ, and who are walking in “the faith” revealed for this age.

“So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all men, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

3.) In Ephesians 2:19–22 Paul describes what God is building today by several different metaphors—“fellow citizens,” “the household of God,” “the whole building” and “a holy temple.” As “fellow citizens” we can appreciate that we are no longer foreigners and outsiders to God’s kingdom. All believers, whether Jew or Gentile, have been accepted as citizens together in the realm of Christ’s dominion. Yet, even more than citizenship is the close association indicated by becoming a vital part of the very “household of God.” We are a part of God’s family household. In addition, each believer is actually built as an individual stone in God’s building. The whole building is still in the construction process and actually becomes the temple of God on earth today. There is no other building, religious or secular, that can claim this reality.

4.) Obviously, this is similar to what Peter described in 1 Peter 2:5—“You also as living stones, are built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” Peter indicated that only those who have been “born again” (1 Pet. 1:3, 22 and 2:1) can be a part of the “spiritual house.”

5.) In 1 Peter 4:17 we are told, “For it is time that judgment must first begin with the *household of God*; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?” From this we can understand that God never winks at sin. Though the saints are exempt from everlasting torment in hell, they are not exempt from the chastening hand of God nor a loss of rewards at the judgment seat of Christ. God’s chastening of Israel through their wilderness wandering serves as a good example. Over and over again God exercised discipline upon His own people. Consequently, when Balaam sought to bring a curse upon Israel, God put a word in his mouth—“He (God) has not observed iniquity in Jacob” (Num. 23:21). Yes, God had already judged His people and there was no curse Satan could place upon them.

6.) In 1 Timothy 3:15 Paul told Timothy, and beyond him to all of us, how to conduct our lives in “the house of God, which is the church of the living God” (KJV). Of course, “the house of God” is not some “church” building or sacred sanctuary that men dare not desecrate. Another translation renders this “the household of God” (NASB). Either way it is to be taken, it means that as members of God’s family we must know and understand the rules of the household. Those are given by the Head of the household—Jesus Christ.

7.) In 2 Timothy 2:20 we read—

“Now in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some indeed are for honor, and some for dishonor. If anyone therefore cleanses himself from these (latter) he will be a vessel for honor, having been consecrated and useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.”

Many have asked “what is the great house?” Actually we have no reason to believe that it is other than “the house of God” mentioned in 1 Tim. 3:15. In the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ there are “spiritual” Christians and “carnal” Christians (see 1 Cor. 3:1–3). Every believer should, of course, want to walk as a “spiritual” person, fully trusting in the counsel of Christ to guide his life.

#### **IV. The Law of Christ**

The expression “the Law of Christ” is actually used only three times in Paul’s epistles—Galatians 6:2, 1 Corinthians 9:21 where Paul says he is “under Law to Christ,” and Romans 8:2 where the words are “the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.” However, there is an abundance of truths in Paul’s letters to demonstrate that The Law of Christ is simply the outliving of “Christ in you.” Notice some of the passages that spell out this amazing truth (the emphasis is mine in these next several verses)—

Galatians 2:20, “I have been *crucified with Christ*; 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 the faith of the Son of God*, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

This has been called “the one verse autobiography of every Christian.” In God’s gracious provision He identified every single one of us with Christ’s substitutionary death in our place. Christ’s death became our death in the reckoning of God. But not only that, God also has identified each of us with Christ’s resurrection, so that we have new life in Christ. Now God appeals to us to simply walk by faith in that new life of Christ.

Galatians 3:26-28, “For you are all *sons of God* through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were *baptized into Christ have put on Christ*. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for *you are all one in Christ Jesus*.”

Galatians 4:6, 7, “And because you are sons, God has sent forth *the Spirit of His Son into your hearts*, crying out, ‘*Abba, Father!*’ Therefore you are no longer a slave *but a son*, and if a son, then *an heir of God through Christ*.”

These passages make it very clear that practicing the Law of Christ is actually not our endeavor to somehow find the strength to implement the teachings of Christ, *but rather*, allowing by faith the very life of Christ to live out through us. The *enabling principle* is actually the very life of Christ within us, living out through us. Most people have the impression that Christianity is our miserable effort to imitate the life of Christ. Such is not the case. Christianity is actually the living out of the life of Christ in us.

Some teachers have thought and stated that there is actually no moral standard available for Christians today other than the Law of Moses. These false teachers totally miss the amazing truths that have just been stated above. What would you rather have, the Law of Moses to follow, or the very Law giver living out His life through you? Yes,

in God's gracious design, He planned that in this age the very life of Jesus Christ in us, through the agency of the Holy Spirit, can be lived out through us.

### *As Expressed in Romans*

This truth is expressed in detail, step by step, by Paul in Romans 6. Starting in verse 3 we read—"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" This baptism is not some water immersion whereby the candidate is plunged into a baptistery. This baptism means exactly what it says—it is a divine immersion into the very person of Jesus Christ. Christ is the element into which a person is placed and identified with. That means we are in Christ and Christ is in us.

The first stage of this immersion is our placement into the very death of Christ. When a person hears the gospel of the grace of God, "how that Christ *died* for our sins according to the Scriptures" (I Cor. 15:3), and he exercises faith in Christ, then God identifies that person with the very *death* of Christ. Paul goes on to say that in this identification of the penitent believer, "we are buried with Him through baptism into death" (verse 4). Paul explains that this death involves our "*old man*," which means our Adamic, sinful nature is "*crucified with Christ*" (verse 6). Paul says that this identification is "that the body of sin might be done away with; that we should no longer be slaves of sin, for he who has died has been freed from sin" (verse 7). So it is, that the death penalty has been leveled against our sinful selves in the person of our substitute—Jesus Christ. This places our sin-nature in a negative disposition in our lives.

The second stage in this immersion is our being "raised from the dead...even so we should walk in *newness of life*" (verse 4). This is now our identification with Christ's "resurrection" (verse 5). This means that we now "live with Him (Christ)" (verse 8). Please remember, this is not the resurrection of our "old man." The "old man" stays "dead" in the reckoning of God. God imparts *new life* to the believer—the very life of the resurrected Christ. Therefore we are said to be raised in "newness of life" in Christ, and we can "walk" in that new life instead of the old life. "Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be *dead* indeed to sin, but *alive* to God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (verse 11).

### *And What About Righteousness?*

In conclusion Paul said, "And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of *righteousness* to God" (verse 13).

Now there are two aspects to this subject of "righteousness." First of all there is that salvation "righteousness," which is freely credited to the repentant person the moment he believes in Christ. Paul stated at the very beginning of this epistle of Romans that the "*righteousness* of God is revealed" in the gospel, which we receive by "faith" (Rom. 1:16 and 17). Paul explained that this is "the *righteousness* of God through faith" (Rom. 3:21). This righteousness is separate and "apart from the deeds of Law" (Rom. 3:21 and 28). In this case the person's "faith" "is *credited to him for righteousness*" (Rom. 4:3, 5, 6, 9, 11, 13, 22 and 24). This is what theologians have commonly called "*imputed righteousness*," as it has been translated in the King James Version. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:30—"Christ Jesus, who is made unto us wisdom from God, and *righteousness* and sanctification and redemption." In Philippians 3:9 Paul said—"and be

found in Him (Christ), not having my own righteousness, which is from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the *righteousness* which is from God by faith.”

Second, in passages like Romans 6 Paul is talking about the righteousness which is the fruit of our new lives in Christ. This is our practicing righteousness, and again it is by faith that we yield to Christ in us so as to produce this fruit. The believer’s body can now be yielded to Christ in us as “instruments of righteousness to God” (Rom. 6:13). Paul explained, “Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin that works death, or of obedience that works righteousness” (Rom. 6:16). Paul continued—“And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness” (Rom. 6:18 and 19).

As stated in Ephesians 2:10, the believer becomes “His (God’s) *workmanship*, *created in Christ Jesus for good works*, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

## V. The Grace of God

All these amazing privileges are given to us on the basis of “the Grace of God.” GRACE is defined as “*unmerited favor*.” It has been said that “Grace is spelled this way—**G**od’s **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist’s **E**xpense.”

Under the principles of Law, God sought to exact from Adam’s family their utmost endeavor to be productive of the highest moral standards known to man. Of course, sinful man proved to be totally incapable of producing this perfect standard of righteousness. It was only redeemed individuals who could rejoice in the righteousness of the Law and found in it a delight for their spiritual relationship with God.

Under the principles of Grace, God chose to implant into redeemed man all the qualities of Jesus Christ Himself. In addition, through the agency of the Holy Spirit of God the possibility of living out those amazingly beautiful and righteous qualities was realized. Thus, under Grace, redeemed mankind became God’s very workmanship “created unto good works which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.”

Thus the principles of the Administration of Grace can be enumerated or listed under the three categories of the Holy Trinity—first, **Christ** in the believer; second, the energizing of the **Holy Spirit**; and thirdly, the overall workmanship of **God** as New Creations. All the Scriptures that spell out the many exhortations in this Administration of Grace can be listed under these three Personages. Note the amazing richness of these gracious blessings bestowed upon us—

### *First, Our Position IN CHRIST*

1 Cor. 1:2 “...to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus.”

1:4 “...for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus.”

1:7, 8 “...Jesus Christ, Who will also confirm you to the end.”

- 1:30 “But of Him (God) you are in Christ Jesus, Who became for us wisdom from God—and righteousness and sanctification and redemption...”
- 2:16 “...But we have the mind of Christ.”
- 3:21–23 “Therefore let no one boast in men. For all things are yours: whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas, or the world or life or death, or things present or things to come—all are yours. And you are Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”
- 2 Cor.5:21 “For He made Him Who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”
- 8:9 “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”
- Rom. 8:32 “He Who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not also with Him freely give us all things?”
- 8:34 “Christ...is at the right hand of God, Who also intercedes for us.”
- 8:37 “Yet in all these things we are more than conquers through Him Who loved us.”
- 8:38, 39 “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- 13:14 “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”
- Gal. 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ; 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 the faith of the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me.”
- 3:27 “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
- 4:19 “My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.”
- Eph. 2:5, 6 “Even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”
- 3:19 “To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.”

- 3:20 “Now to Him Who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think; according to the power that works in us...”
- 4:7 “But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift.”
- 4:32 “And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”
- Col. 1:11 “Strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy.”
- 2:6 “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.”
- 2:10 “And you are complete in Him, Who is the head of all principality and power.”
- 3:1 “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.”
- 3:3 “For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”
- 3:15 “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...”
- Philip. 4:13 “I can do all things through Christ Who strengthens me.”

***Second, Being Energized by the HOLY SPIRIT***

- Rom. 5:5 “...because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts By the Holy Spirit Who was given to us.”
- 7:6 “But now we have been delivered from the Law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.”
- 8:2 “For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.”
- 8:4 “That the righteous requirements of the Law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”
- 8:6 “For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”
- 8:10 “And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.”
- 8:13, 14 “For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God.”

- 8:15 “For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by Whom we cry ‘Abba, Father’.”
- 8:26 “Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.”
- 1 Cor. 2:12 “Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.”
- 12:1 “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren...”
- 14:1 “Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts...”
- Gal. 3:3 “Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”
- 3:5 “Therefore He Who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?”
- 4:6 “And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, ‘Abba, father!’.”
- 5:16 “I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”
- 5:18 “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.”
- 5:22, 23 “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control. Against such there is no law.”
- 5:25 “If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.”
- Eph. 1:3 “Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”
- 1:13 “...in Whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”
- 1:17 “The God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ... may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.”
- 1:19 “And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power...”
- 2:18 “For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”

- 2:22 “In Whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”
- 4:23 “And be renewed in the Spirit of your mind.”
- 4:30 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by Whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”
- 5:18 “Do not be drunk with wine in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit.”
- 6:10 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might...”
- Philip. 3:3 “For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

***Third, the Workmanship of God in the New Creation***

- Rom. 6:4 “...even so we should walk in newness of life.”
- 6:11 “Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
- 6:13 “...but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.”
- 7:4 “...that you may be married to another—to Him Who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.”
- II Cor. 4:7 “But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not us.”
- 4:16 “...Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day.”
- 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold, all things have become new.”
- 10:4 “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for the pulling down of strongholds.”
- Gal. 6:15 “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation (does).”
- Eph. 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”
- 3:16 “That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man.”
- 4:24 “And that you put on the new man which was created according

to God, in righteousness and holiness.”

Col. 3:10 “And have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him Who created him.”

Philip. 1:6 “Being confident of this very thing, that He Who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

1:11 “Being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

2:12, 13 “...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God Who works in you both to will and to do His good pleasure.”

With a treasure chest of true riches like these, who could not want but to serve forever, with all of his heart, the Divine Father, Son and Holy Spirit Who bestowed such unsearchable blessings upon us unworthy persons. This is the “GRACE” in which every believer today should be standing—

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through Whom also we have access by faith into this GRACE in which we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.” (Rom. 5:1, 2).

“...much more the GRACE of God and the gift by the GRACE of of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many” (Rom. 5:16).

“So that as sin reigned in death, even so GRACE might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Rom. 5:21).

“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him Who called you in the GRACE of Christ, to a different gospel” (Gal. 1:6).

“You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by Law, you have fallen from GRACE” (Gal. 5:4).

## **VI. The Dispensation of the Grace of God**

During this particular age God has chosen to emphasize His dealings with saved people under the principle of His amazing Grace. The spiritual soul salvation of sinners has actually always been on the basis of God’s grace, but now since the finished work of Christ as the sinner’s substitute the principle of grace can be highlighted. And not only the sinner’s salvation, but also now the very lives of all saved sinners is to be lived out as well on the basis of this principle of Grace. Salvation is just the first step. John first expressed it, “For of His fullness we have all received, and *grace upon grace*” (John 1:16).

The book of Acts records for us the history of the early Church for the first 32 years of its earthly journey. Ten times during this period the *Grace of God* is emphasized — Acts 4:33 “and *abundant grace* was upon them all.”

Acts 11:23	“(He) had witnessed <i>the grace of God.</i> ”
Acts 13:43	“urging them to continue in <i>the grace of God.</i> ”
Acts 14:3	“bearing witness to <i>the Word of His Grace.</i> ”
Acts 14:26	“they were recommended to <i>the grace of God</i> ”
Acts 15:11	“saved through <i>the grace of the Lord Jesus.</i> ”
Acts 15:40	“commended by the brethren to <i>the grace of God.</i> ”
Acts 18:27	“those who believed <i>through grace.</i> ”
Acts 20:24	“ <i>the gospel of the grace of God.</i> ”
Acts 20:32	“commend you unto God and to <i>the Word of His grace</i> ”

In keeping with Paul being the particular messenger of God’s grace for this age, every single one of his epistles plants the word “grace” in a prominent position at the very beginning—Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; Titus 1:4; Philemon 3. The one exception is Hebrews, but here it is placed as the very last verse of this very important book—13:25.

“Grace” is mentioned some 38 times in the whole of the Hebrew Scriptures (KJV), whereas “Grace” is mentioned some 109 times in the epistles of Paul alone.

#### ***Notes Contrasting the Principles of Law and Grace***

The Bible reveals several different Ages or Dispensations in the past and even one still to come. Yet only two, “the Dispensation of the Law” and “the Dispensation of Grace” actually concern the vast majority of the revelations in the Scriptures. The Hebrew Scriptures focus on the Age of Law and the Greek Scriptures focus on the Age of Grace. An interesting and important phenomenon in the Greek Scriptures is the fact that two of the inspired writers, John (to a lesser degree) and Paul (to a greater degree), often draw our attention to different facets of comparison between these two dispensations. These comparisons will not only show certain similarities between the two ages but quite often they will show striking contrasts as well.

It has been observed by others that as Moses stood in relationship to the Law, so the apostle Paul stood in relationship to the Dispensation of Grace. Moses was a faithful steward of God in receiving the Law and ministering it to Israel. So it is that Paul was a faithful steward in receiving the mystery of this age and delivering it to the Church. In fact, as Moses went up to the mountain top to receive the Law, so Paul was caught up to the third heaven to receive the revelation of Grace. Under the Law, God called out one nation to be His peculiar witness to the world. Under Grace, God is calling out of all nations a new spiritual entity, the Church which is Christ’s body, to be His witness before all the world.

When God gave the Law to Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai, Israel stood as a newly redeemed nation, called by God out of Egyptian bondage. Israel was now spoken of from a place of special favor by God—“My son have I called out of Egypt” (Exo. 4:22, 23). They had taken a “three day” journey out into the wilderness to serve God (Exo. 3:18; 4:3 and 8:27). That journey took them under the cloud and through the Red Sea. By analogy Paul said they were “baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea” (1 Cor. 10:1 and 2). In this regard Israel served as a remarkable picture of the Church of Jesus Christ. Those who were to compose the Church which is Christ’s body also took a

three day journey, being identified (baptized) with Jesus Christ in His death, burial and glorious resurrection three days later (Rom. 6:1–8). This redemption meant that all the members were made “sons of God” (Rom. 8:14). In a similar manner they were all set free. In the Church’s case, it was freedom from the bondage of sin.

In contrast, however, we must remember that Israel’s redemption was primarily physical. Theirs was a physical journey for three days out of Egypt, whereas the Church’s journey was spiritual and its redemption was entirely spiritual. In this regard Israel remained as a mixed company of people, both saved and unsaved spiritually. The Church is actually composed only of spiritually saved people.

The Law as given by Moses was basically designed to *RESTRAIN* the Adamic nature in sinful man (1 Tim. 1:9). In contrast, the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ is basically designed to *CONSTRAIN* the New Man. As such, the principles of the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ have nothing whatsoever to do with the unsaved person. They could not obey them if they wanted to.

Although the Law was basically *NEGATIVE*, “Thou shalt Not,” it also served as a *positive* for the saved person who counted it a privilege to serve God. In contrast, the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ is basically *POSITIVE*, “You can do.” However, this Law also served as a *negative* for the carnal appetites of the old nature. The old nature is said to be put to death. This is also a daily practical exhortation as well.

Under the administration of the Law, when Israel performed the righteousness of the Law they would be God’s “*peculiar treasure*” (Exo. 19:5). Under the administration of Grace God has made us “*His workmanship*” (Eph. 2:10); therefore we are admonished to walk in “good works” accordingly.

Under the administration of the Law to the degree you perform its righteous requirements you would be *blessed accordingly*. Under the administration of Grace God has *blessed us according* to His grace; therefore we can and should be submissive to perform God’s requirements.

Under the administration of Law when one performed its righteous requirements he would be made *acceptable* to God. Under the administration of Grace, we have been made *acceptable to God*. On that basis, therefore, we can and should be encouraged to perform His will.

Under the administration of the Law, the work performed is *your righteousness*. Under the administration of Grace we are God’s “workmanship” created unto good works, manifesting *God’s righteousness*.

The Law manifested a high standard of moral righteousness just by Moses going up into the mountain to receive it. However, there is a sense in which the principles of Grace are as high as the heaven is above the earth, because Paul was caught up into the “third heaven” to receive the revelation of Grace. And, indeed, the recipient of grace is, himself, “seated with Christ in heavenly places in Christ” (Eph. 1:20).

The Law was a perfect standard for the *Adamic family*, whereas the Law of the Spirit is a perfect standard for the *New Creation*. The teachings of Grace are accentually directed to the supernatural life of our New Man for performance. This is the man “born of the Spirit,” and “created in righteousness and true holiness” (Eph. 4:24).

Interestingly enough, the principles of Law were designed for Israel walking in the “Wilderness of Sin” (Exo. 17:1), whereas the principles of Grace are designed for the one who is walking “in the Spirit” and serving God in “newness of Spirit” (Rom. 7:6). Under the reign of the Spirit the old nature is “put to death,” “crucified” and “buried,” whereas the new nature grows stronger every day (2 Cor. 4:16).

Though the believer today is made FREE from the ritual and ceremonial system of the Law, yet the same believer is to more than FULFILL the moral requirements of the Law (Rom. 8:4). Christian “freedom” was never intended to serve the sinful appetites of the flesh (Gal. 5:13).

### *In Summation—*

The summation of the Law is expressed by Christ in Matthew 22:37–40. It is expressed in two commandments, the first directed towards God and the second directed towards our fellow man. Christ quoted from the Law—“‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ (From Deut. 6:5). This is the first and great commandment and the second is like it, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself’ (From Lev. 19:18).”

It is to be noted that the Law’s demand of love was from the maximum of man’s own human resources—“with all your heart, soul and mind.” No one doubts the high value of this love. It is the best that can be expressed from the capabilities of the natural man. However, it is to be noted that under Grace “The *love of God* is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (Rom. 5:5). This love is obviously *supernatural*. In addition, this love is said to be the “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal. 5:22). That means that under Grace God supplies a *divine enablement* in the exercise of it. This means, of course, that this love springs out of a divine nature and not the mere human nature.

Towards God, this love is expressed, not as a creature to the creator but, as a child to the Father—“whereby we cry, ‘Abba, Father’” (Rom. 8:15 & Gal. 4:6).

Jesus Christ stated to the disciples just before His death, “*A New Commandment I give to you, that you love one another as I have loved you*” (John 13:34 & 15:12). Obviously, this is the divine “love of God which is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.” Since God has invested this love within all believers He expects us to, in turn, reflect that love towards our fellow brethren. This is the exercise of the love of Christ within each of us. Therefore under the Law they were to “love your neighbor as yourself,” whereas under Grace they are to “love one another as Christ loved us.” In addition, the believers are exhorted—“let each esteem the other better than ourselves” (Philip. 2:3).

There are many exhortations by Paul for the believers of this present dispensation to be conscious of their privilege in the productivity of good works—Romans 12:1–8; 12:9–21; 13:1–10; Galatians 5:16–25; Ephesians 4:17–24; 4:25–32; 5:1–20; 5:22–33; 6:1–4; 6:5–9; Philippians 4:8, 9; Colossians 3:1–4; 3:5–17; 3:18–25; 4:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:1–12; etc., etc. Let it be understood that all these exhortations are given in the context of the fundamental principles of the marvelous grace that God has bestowed upon us. Thus Christ has “purified for Himself His Own special people, zealous for good works...” (Titus 2:14).

“This is a faithful saying; and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works” (Titus 3:8).

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Of course, it must be understood that none of these grace principles are to be undertaken in the energy of the flesh. Nor should any of them be assigned as a mandatory law, for in so doing they become purely legal in character, and thus lose their reliance upon the work of the Holy Spirit, reverting back to a Law system.

It is to be remembered that in most every dispensation man failed to follow the particular revelation of the mind and will of God for man. So it is also true of the Age of Grace. First of all the world has, in the main, failed to respond to the gospel of the Grace of God. Second, the Church of Jesus Christ has, no doubt, miserably failed to reflect the abundant grace of God invested in her.

## **VII. God’s Eternal Purpose**

As to God’s eternal purpose, simply read again what was initially stated on page 35. Amazing as it may seem, God reveals less about the future “New heavens and earth” (Rev. 21 and 22) than most anything else. No doubt, the glory of the future for the saints is beyond our capacity to understand and comprehend.

*THE END*