

## LAW VERSUS GRACE (6)

**(Reason #3)** - Because of faulty interpretation due to a lack of careful systematic study.

### **II Tim. 2:15**

The truth is when it comes to careful, systematic study and analysis of God's Word, very few actually pursue it. Most who own Bibles use the Bible for what they believe, but most don't give much thought to proper interpretation of the Bible for what they believe. Dr. Ryrie made an interesting observation on this very point when he said that "theologians have tended to bend the meaning of the word grace to conform to the emphases of their own systems" (*The Grace of God*, p. 11). Obviously this is eisegetical (reading into), not exegetical (drawing out of) and will lead to faulty conclusions.

But the question that must be asked concerning this is why? Why would one not want to carefully study the Bible to actually understand truth?

**Possibility #1** - The person is too proud to come to terms with truth concerning law and grace.

This may be especially true when one gets locked into a denomination. Some people would rather proudly hold on to the dictates of a denomination even if those dictates are wrong. Martin Luther, the great Reformer, ran right into this type of pride. When he started promoting pure grace and unlocked the truth just as it is revealed in Romans and Galatians—that man was justified by faith alone apart from any works of the law—most proudly and arrogantly rejected the Word of God and chose to stay in their hellish, self-righteous religious system. In fact, many wanted to actually kill Martin Luther. Pride is a terrible thing. It is an abomination to God (**Prov. 6:16-19**) and pride is one reason some do not understand law versus grace.

**Possibility #2** - The person is just ignorant of what the Bible actually teaches on the subject.

The Apostle Paul ran into some Christians who believed they had replaced the nation Israel. Apparently some of the people had quite ignorantly assumed that all of Israel's promises had become their promises. This presented some serious theological ramifications. Paul immediately combated that thinking and gave sound instruction (**Rom. 11:13-32, note verse 25**).

**Possibility #3** - The person is just in rebellion against what the Bible actually teaches.

There are certain people who have hard hearts and purposely rebel against the truth of God. These kinds of people know the truth but suppress it (**Rom. 1:18**). Instead of them saying, like John Newton, "I was blind but now I see," they say, "I was blind and intend to stay blind." There are many who take the position "my mind is made up; do not confuse me with the facts" for I intend to stay believing what I believe about the law even if it is wrong.

Many purposely twist and misuse the Bible, especially when it comes to mixing in law with grace and it is done out of total rebellion against written revelation.

## LAW VERSUS GRACE (7)

**QUESTION #4** – What do we actually mean by “law”?

In order for us to understand the connection between law and grace, we certainly need to know what is meant by the noun “law.” The word “law” is used many ways in the Bible:

**(Law Use #1)** - It is used in reference to the Ten Commandments. **Rom. 7:7-14**

On this point, M. R. DeHaan said, “There are also those who, because they do not understand the grace of God and the purpose of the law, make a distinction between the laws of Moses and the law of the Lord, or the law of God. They tell us the Ten Commandments are the law of the Lord, while the laws concerning ordinances, offerings, feast days, and the dietary laws are the law of Moses. However, the law of Moses and the law of God are one and to state that the law of Moses was fulfilled and abolished at Calvary, and not the law of the Lord, is a complete misunderstanding of the Bible” (M. R. DeHaan, *Law or Grace*, p. 19). Carefully notice from Romans that Paul classifies these commandments as “the law.”

**(Law Use #2)** - It is used in reference to O.T. laws governing Israel.

Now the entire O.T. law system was given to Israel and was for the purpose of governing Israel in her land. We may categorize the O.T. law as it relates to Israel in three ways, all of which interrelate and are interdependent.

**Category #1** - Israel’s commandments.

These were laws given to Israel which govern moral life as it relates to God. Laws such as the Ten Commandments fall under this category because they reveal the righteous will of God (**Ex. 20:1-17**).

**Category #2** - Israel’s relational judgments.

These were laws given to Israel which govern her civil and social life. These laws covered Hebrew to Hebrew relationship issues (**Ex. 21:1-24:11**).

**Category #3** - Israel’s religious ordinances.

These were laws given to Israel which govern religious and worship life (**Ex. 24:12-31:18**). This included the national and annual feasts.

Now this threefold breakdown of Israel’s O.T. laws was all connected and the only provision for a broken law was an animal sacrifice. If any of these laws were broken, the ritual of the animal sacrifice became the only plausible remedy.

## LAW VERSUS GRACE (8)

**(Law Use #3)** - It is used in reference to Biblical prophecy. **Luke 2:39**

In this context, the law refers to the entire legal and prophetic requirements which were necessary for Christ to fulfill. It included such things as circumcision, a trip to the temple after the days of purification and it also included a trip into Egypt (**Matt. 2:13/Hosea 11:1**). In this case, the term “law” refers to the entire prophetic picture pertaining to Joseph, Mary and Jesus. After they fulfilled these prophecies, they returned to Nazareth (**Matt. 2:22-23**).

**(Law Use #4)** - It is used in reference to rules. **II Tim. 2:5**

The word “rules” is a form of the word “law.” In this text it refers to rules and regulations of an athletic contest which, if obeyed, may enable one to win the prize.

In this case, it refers to the rules which govern an event, specifically, in its metaphorical imagery of athletic competition, which ultimately enables a believer to win rewards.

**(Law Use #5)** - It is used in reference to a general life principle. **Rom. 7:21**

The word translated “principle” is the word law. The point is that when a human wants to do good, there is an operative law, an evil principle that is always present, which is constantly warring against him.

Dr. C. I. Scofield observes there are six “laws” that must be differentiated in the book of Romans:

- 1) The Law of Moses, which condemns. **Rom. 3:19**
- 2) The law as a principle of life. **Rom. 7:21**
- 3) The law of faith which excludes self-righteousness. **Rom. 3:27**
- 4) The law of sin in our members, which conquers our mind. **Rom. 7:21, 23, 25**
- 5) The law of the mind, which consents to the Law of Moses, but cannot keep it because of the law of sin. **Rom. 7:16, 23**
- 6) The law of the Spirit, which has power to deliver a person from being condemned by the Mosaic Law and deliver a person from being defeated by sin. **Rom. 8:2, 4**

*(New Scofield Reference Bible, NASV, Study Notes Romans 7:21, pp. 1597-1598)*

**(Law Use #6)** - It is used in reference to the Spirit’s power. **Rom. 8:2-3**

When it is used in this manner, it refers to the power of the Spirit of God to deliver a person from being condemned by the Mosaic Law and to deliver a person from being constantly defeated by sin.

As we may observe, the word “law” is used in a variety of ways in the Bible. The context determines what law is really in view.