

Law And Grace

What does it mean to be under Grace and not under the Law?

In this video I'd like to look at the difference between being under Law and being under Grace. Many people say that after a person has been saved by Grace, if there is sin in their life, even wilful, habitual sin, then it is not such a big issue because they are under Grace. However, as we look at scripture, we will see that when we are under the Law our sinful nature controls us but when we are under Grace, we are under the control of the Holy Spirit and rescued from our sinful nature.

To understand Law and Grace, let's start by looking at God's Law and see how our sinful nature rebels against it. Firstly, Rom. 8:7 says, "*the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so*", so we can see that our sinful mind controls us and we will not, in fact we cannot, keep God's laws. Then Rom. 7:5 tells us that, before we were saved, "*when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death*". This verse explains how God's laws stir our sinful passions to rebel against Him and lead us to death, which of course is hell. So, we can see that the lustful passions of our sinful nature control us and, in our own strength, we are absolutely powerless against it as Paul so clearly stated when he said, in Rom. 7:15-23, "*I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do ... I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out ... So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin [which is] at work within my members*". These verses make it very clear that, before we are saved, our sinful nature controls us and prevents us from keeping God's laws. We are held prisoners by the "*law of sin*" that rules our mind and makes us "*slaves to sin, which leads to death*" (Rom. 6:16). So, it is plain to see that when we are under the Law, we are under the control of our sinful nature. And now we need to look at what it means to be under Grace.

As we have just seen, by nature, we are slaves to sin but thankfully, in His Grace, God has provided a way for us to be released from its control. In Rom. 7:24-25, Paul said, "*What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?* [and then he answered his own question, saying] *Thanks be to God - through Jesus Christ our Lord!*" and it is by Grace, through faith in Jesus, that we receive the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Grace, who rescues us from the control of sin. Paul states this in Rom. 8:2, saying, "*through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death*", and Rom. 7:5-6 add to this, saying, "*For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. But now [now that we have the Spirit], by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code [which is the Law]*". So, we can see that through God's Grace we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit to be "*set free from the law of sin*" and "*rescued from this body of death*", to be born again into the new way of life, in the Spirit. Tit. 2:11-12 also explain this, saying, "*For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age*". From these verses we can see that God, in His Grace, sends the Spirit into our life to give us the power we so desperately need to escape from the control of our sinful nature so that we can live self-controlled, godly lives, and THAT is what it means to be saved by Grace.

Now, I'd like to sum up what has been said so far: By nature, we rebel against God's laws and being under the control of our sinful mind we are held prisoners to sin and Rom. 8:8 tells us that "*those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God*". So, to be under the Law means to be under the control of our sinful nature, unable to please God and the result is condemnation. However, Rom.

8:4 tells us that we receive the Spirit of Grace *“in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit”*. So we can see that being under Grace means to be under the control of the Holy Spirit with Divine Power to FULLY meet God's righteous requirements, and the result is eternal life.

Often, when believers are confronted with the fact that they must live a self-controlled, repentant life in order to be saved, they react strongly, saying things like, “I'm not under law now, I'm under Grace and if I have to do ANYTHING to be saved then that means I'm working for my salvation”. Well, Jesus disagrees with them as He said that there IS something we must do to be saved. In Luke 13:3, He said, *“unless you repent, you too will all perish”*. Now, since we must repent to be saved then it logically follows that repentance cannot be works because we cannot be saved by works. Also, because repenting to become saved isn't works then living a repentant life in order to remain saved can't be considered works either. Repentance is a change of mind toward sin and results in a change of lifestyle, but the question is, “How long do we have to change our lifestyle for to be saved?” Is it just for a few minutes or so, until Jesus sees that our heart is right and forgives us? Can we repent of sin for this little bit of time, or even for a long period, and then safely return to a sinful lifestyle because we are under Grace? Definitely not, as Rom. 6:15,14 say, *“Shall we sin because we are ... under grace? By no means! ... sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace”*. The fact of the matter is, repentance for salvation is a lifelong change of heart and not something we do for a period that suits us. Rom. 8:12-13 make it very clear that we are obliged to live our life under the control of the Spirit otherwise we will be lost. These verses say to Christians, *“brothers, we have an obligation [not an option, an obligation] - but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it. For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die [that is, you will end up in hell]; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live”*. From these verses, we can see that our salvation depends upon our ongoing response to the Holy Spirit who convicts us of sin in order to lead us to repentance.

Finally, to those who claim to be saved by Grace but are deliberately sinning, Jesus said in Luke 6:46, *“Why do you call me 'Lord, Lord' and not do what I say?”*, and Gal. 6:7-8 strongly warn believers, *“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life”*. There is absolutely nothing more important than your eternal salvation and I urge you to consider what has been said in this video. Being saved by Grace is not a magical term that we can use to excuse our sin. It is a supernatural act of God working within us and it requires a response from each individual. Phil 2:12-13 say, *“continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose”*. I have four short videos called Salvation Parts 1-4 which show that salvation is salvation from ongoing, wilful sin, through living according to the Spirit. This is not sinless perfection but deliverance from our sinful nature through living a humble, repentant life. The videos show that through the power of the Holy Spirit we can be rescued from deliberate sin and live a life which pleases God. Part 4 is on the Once Saved doctrine. They can be seen on YouTube at the link at the end of this video.

May the Lord bless you as you walk with Him.

Amen.

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