

Legalism: Law, Grace, and Works

“You are Legalistic! You don’t understand the grace of God.”

By: Sean Morris

Legalism - Law & Grace

In scripture, being under the law and fulfilling the law are two very different things. Likewise, seeking to gain God's approval by works (from the flesh) and seeking to gain God's approval by works (walking in the Spirit) are two very different things. In the scripture, the bible teaches that salvation was: "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us" (Rom. 8:4, 13:8, Gal. 5:13-24). There must be a careful balance in preaching, applying, and articulating the difference between the two.

Nevertheless, we are indignantly opposed to being under the law, i.e. seeking to gain justification with God by works of the law (dead works). However, "laboring and working" out the inward walk of Jesus Christ through righteous deeds is a fervent and righteous mind a Christian must have (see - Hebrews 4:11, 2 Cor. 5:9-11, Heb. 6:9-12, James 2:21-26). We must make a distinction between "dead works" (Heb. 6:1) and living works: those things which Jesus says are manifest evidence that you are maintaining saving faith in Him and His gospel - thus we must keep His works (see - Rev. 2:26, 3:2). Being burdened about works that are "not" products of genuine faith in the gospel/Christ is not a biblical burden for works, but works that are out-flowing products of saving faith in Christ, this was the burden of the Lord Jesus (see - Rev. 2:2-5, 9, 13-14, 19-20, 23, 26, 3:1-2, 8, 15).

Many do not fulfill the righteousness of the law (Rom. 8:4), yet they justify themselves believing that they have saving grace, but grace works (Eph. 2:10) *because* He works in us. Therefore, if you don't have righteous works, you don't have saving grace. Those who oppose the fruit of the Spirit oppose the Spirit of God! Those that deny the outworking of works in righteousness do not have imputed righteousness (the righteousness of God that is apart from and without works, Rom. 8:10). If you live after your salvation, there is no justification for a life without fruits. Many may reason within themselves, "Well, I am not under the law." However, if you don't have freedom from sin and works of righteousness abounding in your life (2 Peter 1:5-10), then you are not under the law of salvation (Rom. 8:2-4), which is the law of freedom that empowers a person to obedience, servant-hood, and righteous fruitfulness (see - Rom. 8:2, 6:16-23).

Whether someone believes in "eternal security" or not, the judgment of God is sure for the individual who does not die in a state of faith/repentance. Many people do craze in emotional outrage over the debate of, "whether or not you can lose your salvation," but it is most important to understand that fruits prove one has salvation, and we must understand what fruits those are. No matter which of the two camps one person is in, we can come into agreement on this most important question.

What fruits prove that you have salvation, and what evil deeds prove that you don't have

salvation? This is the question. The Bible gives the judgment to be black and white, and all the scriptures of God's promise for "eternal security" need to be interpreted beside these judgments of God. The one whose eternity is secure is the one who meets the descriptions herein defined:

Whether one professes to believe or not, the "unrighteous" by deed are condemned to hell if they meet this description - 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Notice that one of the manners of life is "covetousness." NOTE: a life that is free from covetousness is a narrow path of eternal salvation.

The evidence one has imputed righteousness is the works righteousness that follow. Whether one professes to believe or not, if they meet the description of Galatians 5:19-21, they "shall not inherit the Kingdom of God." Some of the characteristics of the condemned are "hatred, wrath (unrighteous anger), envyings, drunkenness, and revellings (unrighteous celebrations/partying, drinking parties)." If one "goes back to sin" and meets this description, then they will not go to heaven, except they repent - this is for sure. Now, whether that person who went back to sin was ever saved to begin with is a different controversy.

Similar scriptures of clear distinction are: Ephesians 5:3-6, 1 Peter 4:3-5, James 2:14-26, 1 Tim. 6:17-19, Heb. 6:4-8, Matthew 7:13-27, Matthew 12:33-37, Luke 6:20-27, Matt. 6:15, James 5:7-9, Galatians 6:7-9, 2 Peter 1:5-10, Hebrews 10:26-27.

First, establish *this principle* with those individuals or groups who seek to resist your words when you pour out fervent warnings about turning from sin and living for God. Many will resist your words if you are fervently warning against a damnable life of sin - many PROFESSING CHRISTIANS. They will resist because they seek to protect themselves from the eternal necessity and divine command to repent. They believe they will still go to heaven, or that "so and so" still went to heaven, though they fell into adultery, drunkenness, selfishness, envy, or covetousness. However, you can prove to them that this cannot be so, unless they came to biblical repentance and faith again (2 Cor. 7:10-11) before they died, and if they live on, such repentance will inevitably yield fruits of holiness (Heb. 12:14).

FALSE TEACHERS

They are zealous for salvation, that it is by grace "through faith and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). However, have you ever read, "he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (1 Cor. 7:22)?

"While they promise them liberty they themselves are the servants of corruption" (2 Pet. 2:19) therefore their liberty is "for an occasion to the flesh" (Gal. 5:13). "Ungodly men turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness" they therefore abhor any manifestation of grace which makes a Christian zealous "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4).

What they resist in true Christians they falsely allege to be "dead works" (Heb. 6), but it is

these works that Jesus called “my works” (Rev. 2:26): those things we must keep to be saved. The true grace of God is alive and therefore works, and for this cause it is written “that faith without works is dead” (James 2:20): “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). “What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid” (Rom. 6:15), “for the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11).

These are “lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God” who have no zeal but to defend their own heretical view of grace. They are drunken in a disgraceful intoxication of a counterfeit salvation that is, as they falsely claim, “not of works lest any man should boast,” therefore they are aliens to the boast and glory of Paul that was only “in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by whom the world is crucified to me and I unto the world” (Gal. 6:14). They are zealous to keep salvation with no works but Christ “gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, **zealous of good works**” (Titus 2:14). They are zealous to excuse themselves from works but true salvation makes an individual zealous for good works. It is true, salvation is by grace through faith, apart from works, but if God is not working through you the vibrant expression of His holy image and deeds to this wicked world then you have no part with Christ Jesus. He said, "If you love me, obey My commandments."

Do you know any false teachers?

Herein is your command from God:

- ✚ “From such turn away” – 2 Tim. 3:5
- ✚ “From such withdraw thyself” – 1 Tim. 6:5
- ✚ “Receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed” – 2 John 1:10.
- ✚ See also: 1 John 2:19, Jude 3-4, Phillippians 3:1-3, Matt. 15:13-14, 23:13, Gal. 4:29-31, 1 Thess. 2:16, 1 Cor. 5:11, 13, Luke 12:1, Matt. 16:6, 11-12, Jude 16, 2 Peter 2:3, 13-14, 18, 3:17, 2 Cor. 6:17-7:1.

What you sow that you shall reap. God wants us to understand this, and anything else is utter mockery (Gal. 6:7-8, Hos. 10:12, 8:7). "The wicked worketh a deceitful work: but to him that soweth righteousness shall be a sure reward" (Proverbs 11:18).

God will be famous to repay all sinners' sins by the record of His infallible memory, whatsoever they are (Psalm 137:7, 2 Thess. 1:6). Sinners will therefore confess, "as I have done, so God hath requited me" (Judges 1:7). "For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: **as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee**: thy reward shall return upon thine own head" (Obadiah 15). This judgment of God according to works "is a righteous thing" (2 Thess. 1:6), therefore judgment according to works is called "The Righteous Judgment of God" (Rom. 2). This is altogether for the heathen and the righteous (2 Cor. 9:6).

Those who have come speaking another thing are the "mockers" who have come "in the last time," which is now (Jude 18). They walk after their ungodly lusts (Jude 18) and are "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness" (Jude 4). They do declaratively state and preach –

“This is the amazing thing about the Grace of God”:

"You don't have to obey the word of God to be saved" - The scripture saith, "Let no man deceive you with vain words" (Eph. 5:6).

"God is not so much burdened about works as long as you have imputed righteousness which is apart from works. By this you are justified, therefore, don't burden yourself but rest when you consider works righteousness. We are not under the law but under grace" - The scripture saith, "**Be not deceived**" (1 Cor. 6:9-10).

"God wants you to rest from fear and doubt of your salvation even when you don't do righteousness, because He alone did righteousness" - The scripture saith, "**Let no man deceive you**" (1 John 3:7).

"You don't have to care so much about your words and tongue, they are irrelevant to your eternity" - The scripture saith, this man "**deceiveth his own heart**" (Jas. 1:26, Matt. 12:36-37).

"Who you are with is of no real consequence on your soul because God has called you to be a light. Therefore go out into the world and salt it by being in the places where they celebrate iniquity like Bars, Clubs, Entertainment Parks, etc. They will not corrupt you but you will be a witness to them in a dark place" - The scripture saith, "**Be not deceived**" (1 Cor. 15:33).

May the Lord our God expose it!

Sincerely,

Sean Morris