

Chapter Twenty

Love Is The Answer

“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?” (Romans 6:1-2).

The Apostle Paul anticipated many questions that would be raised by his teaching of the grace of God and freedom from the Law for believers. Paul had taught that the believer in Christ is “*delivered*” from the Law (Romans 7:6); “*dead*” to the Law (Galatians 2:19); and “*redeemed*” from the curse of the Law (Galatians 3:13). He had shown that the sinner cannot be saved by the works of the Law, and that the believer cannot be kept by the works of the law. Again and again he repeats, ‘the believer is not under the Law, but under grace’ (Romans 6:14-15).

The legalistic Law keepers of Paul’s day were quick to accuse him of preaching a dangerous gospel. They followed him everywhere to undo his preaching of grace. And these attacks have continued to this day against all who teach deliverance from the Law by faith. Now, of course, the Law is still active today in declaring God’s righteousness, and in condemning the sinner. However, it is equally true that those who trust in the finished work of Christ are not only “*redeemed, not from just the curse of the penalty of the Law – but from the Law itself.*” A Law without penalties is powerless, and since the penalty of the Law was fully borne by Christ – the believer is forever delivered from its power. I will try to answer some of the objections that constantly are raised against this doctrine of “*grace to save, and grace to keep.*”

Objection # 1 - “*Grace Gives License To Sin*”

It is persistently argued by legalists that the teaching of absolute grace in salvation leads to looseness and carelessness in living. To teach the security of the believer by grace is condemned by our critics as an encouragement to sin, and even referred to by some a “*damnable*” doctrine. When anyone teaches freedom from the Law, they are accused of being “*Lawless,*” when as a matter of fact they are far more under “*Law*” after we are saved than before, but it is under a different Law, a more powerful Law, the Law of love, instead of the law of commandments. The true believer seeks to keep the Law of God, but it is from an entirely different motive. The believer is still obligated to observe God’s Law, but not as an effort to keep himself saved, or out of fear of punishment.

The believer has a moral obligation to live a holy life, not because the Law demands it – but because grace produces it! To say that freedom from the Law makes one lawless is to show complete lack of knowledge of what God’s Word teaches on the ministry of the Law and the power of the grace of God. The only service a believer can render, that is pleasing to God, must be generated by a grateful love for his deliverance. The Lord wholly rejects any service motivated by an effort to escape punishment or fear of losing salvation. The believer must live under “*the spirit of the Law*” – not by “*the letter of the Law.*”

The believer is under a new law given to us by the Lord Jesus Himself. It is indeed called "*the law of Christ.*" It is the law of love in contrast to the Law of commandments. Paul says in Galatians 2:19, "*I am dead to the Law, that I might live unto God.*"

The Law of Love

Jesus in speaking to His disciples in John 15 said:

"If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love"
(John 15:10).

Just what commandment was Jesus referring to when He spoke these words? It could not be the Ten commandments, as some teach. He explains in verse 12:

"This is My commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you" (John 15:12).

Jesus is explaining that this new commandment was "*the Law of love.*"

Paul calls this, "*the law of Christ,*"

"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ"
(Galatians 6:2).

The law of Christ is the law of *love*, the fruit of the new nature and the Spirit of God. We read:

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Galatians 5:14).

The Apostle John says in writing to believers:

"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight"
(1 John 3:22).

What commandments is John talking about? Certainly not the Ten Commandments, for he adds immediately after these words:

*"And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and **love one another**, as he gave us commandment"* (1 John 3:23).

We might go on and on to show that while we are delivered from the Law of commandments given by Moses, we are not left without law; we are not lawless, but are placed under another higher, more glorious law – the law of love, called also the "*perfect law of liberty*" (James 1:25).

Love, the Fulfilling of Law

There's one more Scripture that climaxes it all. Paul says:

"...Love is the fulfilling of the Law" (Romans 13:10),

Where love is the motive for service, no laws, rules, or regulations are not needed. To use an illustration, imagine a man employing a servant. To avoid any trouble or misunderstanding, certain rules and conditions must be agreed upon. The employer hands to his prospective employee a manual in which the relationships of employer and servant are set forth. The employer agrees to pay a certain amount of wages per week, with the provision for sick pay, vacation, coffee breaks, proper working conditions, and other fringe benefits. The servant or employee agrees to work forty hours a week, be at work at the appointed time, and produce a certain amount of work. They sit down at a bargaining session and an agreement is reached. Failure to abide by the rules will break the contract, and the employee will either go on strike, or the boss will fire him, as the case may be. The responsibilities of both employer and employee have been spelled out in detail. The servant is under Law – he received his wages and benefits upon condition of meeting all the responsibilities mentioned and demanded in the contract.

Love Steps In

Now let's suppose this employee is a young lady, and in the course of events the boss, a bachelor, falls in love with his servant. Finally they decide to marry, and they become husband and wife. She quits her job – (not her work) – and they move into their new home. The very moment she becomes the wife, she ceases to be a servant. She is no longer under rules, regulations and laws. She is not handed an employee's manual to tell her what is expected of her as a wife. She is in love with her husband, and now she does as much, and even far more, to please her husband as when he was her boss.

She is no longer under law; she does not punch a clock; she has no set of rules to observe; she is free, free to spend all her time pleasing her husband. No demands are made upon her, for she already anticipates all her husband's wishes. She is no more a servant, no more under laws, rules and regulations. But does this make her careless and say, now that I am not any more under law I can do as I please? No! She is under the *"law of love."*

The Commandments

Love is the fulfilling of the law; where love reigns, no laws are needed. Can you imagine the husband of this erstwhile servant posting a set of Ten Commandments on the wall of the kitchen to remind his wife constantly of her responsibility to him? Can you imagine this wife faced each morning with this set of laws posted above the kitchen sink? It reads as follows:

Ten Commandments for my wife

1. Thou shalt entertain no other husbands beside me
2. Thou shalt not have pictures, photographs, or mementos of other men for thee to worship
3. Thou shalt not take my name in vain or speak disparagingly about me

4. Thou shalt not sweep the dirt under the rug
5. Thou shalt faithfully prepare my meals, see that my laundry is taken care of, etc, etc, etc. All the way down – through ten commandments.

No! A loving wife does not even have to be reminded of these things, for love anticipates all the needs of her lover. She does not have certain working hours, she does not receive wages, although she is on duty twenty-four hours of the day. The husband does not have to say to her, *“These are your responsibilities, see that you perform them perfectly; for if you don't, I will punish you or even divorce you.”* The whole thing is silly. Love makes such a situation unthinkable.

A servant is only expected to do as much as is legally required, only as much as the contract covers; but it is not so with a faithful wife. She goes for beyond what a servant does. So, too, when we are saved by grace and we come under the law of Christ; the law of love, we not only seek to do all that we were required to do under the law of a servant, but go far beyond the demands of the Law. The loving wife does not say, *“Well, I've done all I am required to do; I've put in my time. Now I am free.”* Instead the service of love knows no limits.

Love, then, is the fulfilling of the law; the more love, the less law; and the less love, the more law is needed. All the requirements of the Law are met where love rules and controls. Listen to Paul in Romans 13:

“Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”

(Romans 13:8-10).

This same thing was expressed by Jesus in Matthew 19:19 and Mark 12:13, and repeated by Paul in Galatians 5:14,

“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Galatians 5:13-14).

Where this rule of love is practiced, there is no more need for any laws. You could discharge every police officer and close every court of law. If you love the Lord God with all your heart and mind and soul, and your neighbor as yourself, the Law has no power over you. If you love your neighbor as yourself, you will not commit adultery; if you love your neighbor as yourself you will not kill him; if you love your neighbor as yourself you will not steal from him, you will not bear false witness against him, you will not covet what belongs to him; and, says Paul:

*“...if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”
(Romans 13:9).*

May I ask you, “Are you under the Law of commandments or are you motivated by the law of love?” But you, say, “Who is sufficient unto these things? My love is so imperfect, often so cold, and I come so far short. When I fail to be motivated by perfect love, do I then come again under the Law of condemnation and the curse?”

The answer is a resounding, no! Because God knew our frailty and made provision by His grace for even this, and we repeat once more 1 John 2:1 and 1 John 1:8-10,

“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us” (1 John 1:8-10).