

"YE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE"

GOD HAS ONE LAW only for His intelligent creatures. This Law, therefore, in whatever form it may be stated, whether more elaborate or more condensed, is applicable to angels, to men and to the New Creation. There is no higher Law and there could be none.

This Law is based on *Justice*, and finds expression in Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37-40; Lev. 19:18. It would not be reasonable to demand that one should do more for another than for himself. To do so may be invited; it may be suggested to us; but there would never be a *command* that a man should do more for another than for himself; for such a command would be *unjust*. Thus we differentiate between Justice and Love. "Love is the fulfilling of the Law" (Rom. 13:10) and might go much further than would Justice. In the case of the Church, however, there is a special proposition made – not merely that we shall love, but that we shall love on the highest plane of life.

A HIGHER COMMANDMENT

The consideration set before Jesus and before His followers for carrying out this proposition is glory, honor and immortality – the divine nature; and for this joy we have engaged, not only to keep the Law, but additionally to seek to have love beyond the commandments of the Law. Under this arrangement we have agreed to do more than to love our neighbors as ourselves. We have agreed to lay down our lives for the brethren. This is a special requirement, which could not be expected from anyone aside from sacrifice.

Our relationship with the Lord is under this special covenant of sacrifice, as expressed in the words, "Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice." (Psa. 50:5.) These, the Apostle tells us, are not without Law, but are under

Law in Christ. This Law in Christ is the law of their covenant, which is the Law of Love. A sacrificing love being beyond any requirement of Justice, it necessarily follows that anything which they would do *beyond* the requirement of Love would also *fulfil* the requirements of the Law laid down by Justice – the *lesser* being comprehended in the *greater*. This Law of Love would be a still higher law; as Jesus expressed it, "A new commandment [a higher commandment] I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." – John 13:34.

When the Apostle says, "Ye are not under the Law, but under grace," he probably has special reference to the fact that Christians who had come from among the Gentiles had never been under the Law arrangement, but that their first experience under law was under this Grace arrangement in Christ. However, in the case of the Jews who had been under the Law Covenant, he declares that they were freed from the Law to which they had been bound; and he speaks as if the Law was a very severe requirement which they had been unable to keep, and from which release was a great blessing. The Law Covenant proposed everlasting life upon the terms of keeping the Law. "This *do*, and thou *shalt live*." – Lev. 18:5; Rom. 10:5; Luke 10:28.

Since all the Jews, like the rest of mankind, were imperfect because of the fall, therefore no Jew could keep that Law, and consequently no Jew could ever attain everlasting life. Being unable to keep the Law he could not get a reward. But he was really bound by that Covenant; for there was no other Covenant offered to him up to the time when the Gospel was offered. Then, for him, a special arrangement was made – a Covenant of sacrifice. He was freed from the Law Covenant in the sense that he was released from the Law.

By becoming dead to the Law the Jews had an opportunity to get life in another way. By abandoning all hopes of getting everlasting life through the Law, they could receive a new hope in Christ; namely, that under the arrangement in Christ, the great Advocate, they might have

fellowship with Him now in His suffering and later in His glory, which, by the Father's arrangement, He will share with all those who become His followers.

From the time, then, that the Jew became dead to the Law, by abandoning all hope of getting life by obedience to it, he came into this one hope, which could be attained only through sacrifice. But he was still bound to *do* what is *right*. But this arrangement to do what is right is for the *New* Creature, not for the *old* creature, which is reckoned *dead*. The New Creature, however, has purposed to do God's Law and more. Such sacrifice all *earthly* hopes. So of these it is said, "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new!" (2 Cor. 5:17.) They are no longer under the Law Covenant, but under the arrangement of grace, or God's favor.

It is a great privilege to offer ourselves in sacrifice and to get so great a reward in return. This is a great favor under grace. But there is another sense in which we are under grace; namely, the arrangement was made not only by which we get so large a reward for doing so [R5073 : page 242] little, but by which our sacrifice is made acceptable. This also is *grace*. Grace means what the Lord does for us *freely*, not as a *reward* of any kind.

What our Lord does for us is to make our sacrifice acceptable. Then grace still pursues us and grants us blessings all the way; for, having *undertaken* to follow Jesus, we could not *carry out* our sacrifice. We find it impossible to do things perfectly, because we have imperfect bodies. But through the arrangement made for us in Christ, these imperfections will be forgiven. In order that these may be forgiven, it is necessary that we come with courage to the Throne of heavenly grace, that we may obtain help in time of need. – Heb. 4:16.

A REWARD IS NOT OF GRACE

So then we see three things: First, that there is a Law higher than Justice, a Law of Love, a Law of Sacrifice; second, that God proffers

us a reward for walking in the footsteps of Jesus, sacrificing self even unto death; and third, that He covers our unwilling imperfections by the Robe of Christ's Righteousness, in order that we may perform acceptably our part of the contract.

Now, a *reward* is not of grace. If we offer a man \$5 for doing a certain piece of work, we should not say after the work is done, "This is a matter of grace, and we will not give you the \$5, but \$1." To do so would not be right. To pay what we agreed to give is a matter of *justice*. So, then, it was *grace* to offer a reward for walking in the footsteps of Christ Jesus. But once the offer has been made, it becomes an *obligation*. It is a contract; it is a covenant, of *sacrifice* on our part, of *reward* on God's part. Jesus said, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with Me in My Throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with My Father in His Throne." To give the reward after the terms have been complied with, will not be grace, but justice.

Again, grace provides the Redeemer's sacrifice on our behalf – not only for our original sin, but for all trespasses on the way. When the Apostle says that the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, he is not speaking of the Church as under that Law Covenant; but he is saying that while the Jews could not keep that Law because of the imperfections of their flesh, yet the Church [R5073 : page 243] keeps that Law; for it does not apply to our flesh, but to our spirit. Hence, the ability to keep that Law we, as old creatures, do not have; and we could not thus keep the Law any more than they. But we as New Creatures should be *accounted* as not only keeping that Law, but as keeping the Law of Sacrifice.

The Little Flock will keep the Law of Sacrifice. The Great Company will keep the Law in the spirit of their minds; but failing to do more they will lose the great reward of glory and honor. So, then, those of the consecrated who keep the Law of Love, the Law of Sacrifice, will be accounted as worthy of glory and honor with Christ Jesus. And those who fail to keep this Law of Sacrifice, but who

maintain the Law of Justice, will finally be accounted worthy of everlasting life, but not of immortality.

