

In Christ we are under Grace – in our flesh we are under Law

Rom 6:14 **For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.** NKJV
For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. ESV

Christian, where are you? Under law or under Grace?

Does sin still have dominion over you? The above scripture says when we are under Grace sin will not have dominion over us. The opposite is also true; if sin still has dominion over us then it is because we are still under Law and not Grace.

Andrew Murray, the highly respected Bible teacher, In his book titled “The Ministry of Intercession” writes: *In the Epistles to the Romans, and Corinthians, and Galatians, everywhere in the New Testament, we see the contrast between the law and grace, between the flesh, which is under the law, and the Spirit, who is the gift of grace, and through whom grace does all its work. For us, just as in the early Church, the great danger is living under the law, and serving God in the strength of the flesh. With the great majority of Christians it appears to be the state in which they remain all their lives. Hence the lack to such a large extent of true holy living and power in prayer. They do not know that all failure can have but one cause: Men seek to do themselves what grace alone can do in them, what grace most certainly will do.*

Where are you? Under the Law or under Grace, in the flesh or in the Spirit?

How do you see the Bible, as rules to obey (Law) or as Christ’s life to be imparted (Grace)

God’s first Covenant with man was a covenant of Law, His second and everlasting Covenant is a covenant of Grace. While every born again Christian began their relationship with God by grace (By grace are you saved through faith – Eph 2:8) Andrew Murray notes that most Christians then try, unsuccessfully, to develop this relationship on the basis of Law. Meaning they do their best to try and comply with the written requirements of the Bible, and do not understand that they cannot comply with them. They also try to get others to comply with scriptures not knowing that others, just as they, are incapable of complying with them. And because they are unable to comply with the righteous requirements of the law they are condemned by the Bible. They do not know the difference between seeing the Bible as Law and seeing the Bible as Grace.

SEEING THE BIBLE AS LAW – Means me doing my best to live in accordance with the principles and standards set out in the scriptures, in other words endeavoring to keep God’s commandments. This is the first or Old Covenant, a Covenant that failed.

SEEING THE BIBLE AS GRACE - Means my recognizing that the words of the Bible are in fact the very life and nature of Jesus Christ, which if I am willing, the Holy Spirit will

progressively cause to come to life, scripture by scripture, and write the words on my heart and once there the now living words will conform me to themselves thus actually making me more like Christ. This is the New Covenant which, if I accept it this way, cannot fail.

2 Cor 3:3 And you show that you are a letter of Christ ...written ... by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts ESV

The Law is God's word initially written on stone and now written with ink on paper.

Grace is God's word lifted off the paper and written by the Holy Spirit on my heart.

Some of the sharp contrasts between viewing the Bible as Law versus viewing it as Grace

Andrew Murray writes: *During one of our conventions a Christian gentleman called on me to ask advice and help. His complaint was that he had no relish for the Word, and that though he prayed, it was as if his heart was not in it. If he spoke to others, or gave a tract, it was under a sense of duty: the love and the joy were not present. He longed to be filled with God's Spirit, but the more he sought it, the farther off it appeared to be. He asked if there was any way out of his state.*

My answer was that the whole matter appeared to me very simple; he was living under the law and not under grace. As long as he did so, there could be no change. I reminded him of the difference, the absolute contrast, between law and grace.

- *Law demands; grace bestows.*
- *Law commands, but gives no strength to obey; grace promises, and performs.*
- *Law burdens, casts down, and condemns; grace comforts, makes strong and glad.*
- *Law appeals to self, to do its utmost; grace points to Christ to do all.*
- *Law requires effort and strain, urging us toward a goal we never can reach; grace works in us all God's blessed will.*

God's words when brought to me by God's Spirit are the Grace of God

Unfortunately many of us learned early in our Christian walk a snappy little definition for Grace, which definition, now acts as a barrier to God revealing to us the enormity of the true meaning of Grace. Grace is the word of God. Consider these scriptures:

Acts 20:24 ...**The gospel of the grace of God.**

Acts 20:32 **So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up...**

2 Cor 9:8 **And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound unto every good work.**

2 Tim 3:16-17 **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

God's word is God's Grace. Notice the similarity in the last two scriptures, in the one it says that God is able to make all Grace abound unto us so that we may abound unto every good work, in the other it says all scripture is given so that we may be thoroughly equipped (abound) for every good work. All Grace therefore means all Scripture or all the Word of God. But not the word of God merely written with printers ink on paper – which is Law – but rather the word of God given to us by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Only these words brought directly to us by the Holy Spirit are the words of Grace. Hence the Holy Spirit is referred to as the Spirit of Grace:

Heb 10:29 **...The Spirit of grace.**

God's word brought to us by God's Spirit, to be written on our hearts, is the Grace of God.

God's Grace is His living word in us – which is the measure of how much of Christ is in us

God's Grace is His word, made living by His Spirit and written on our hearts. In direct proportion to the amount of God's Grace (living word) we permit God to write on our hearts is the extent to which Jesus Christ abides in our hearts and we are conformed to Him:

Eph 4:7 **But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.** (more Christ more Grace, more Grace more Christ) KJV

Jesus Christ, God's living Word is the Grace of God:

John 1:16 **And from (or out of) His (Christ's) fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.** (verse upon verse, line upon line, glory upon glory) ESV

Rom 5:17 **...Those who receive abundance of grace ...will reign in life through.. Jesus Christ** (Who, as the Word of God, is the abundance of Grace).

2 Tim 2:1 **...Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.** (More Grace more Christ)

Many Christians live with a small Grace patch sown onto an Old Covenant Law garment

Andrew Murray: A true believer may still be living partly under the law, in the power of self-effort, striving to do what he cannot accomplish. The continued failure in his Christian life to which he confesses is owing to this one thing: he trusts in himself, and tries to do his best. He does, indeed, pray and look to God for help, but still it is he in his strength, helped by God, who is to do the work.

As Andrew Murray noted in the quote on page one, most born again Christians live their entire lives under law and not under Grace. That is, they were born again by Grace, but this little Grace patch is now sown into a garment of Law with the result that their spiritual lives are all torn up:

Matt 9:16 (Jesus) **No one patches up an old coat with a piece of new cloth, for the new patch will shrink and make an even bigger hole in the coat.** TEV

For Christians under the Law, unless they keep the whole law, they are under its curse

If as a Christian I choose as most do, and it is our choice, to live under Law and not under Grace, even though all of our Christian lives began under Grace, then automatically we are under the curse of the Law. The curse of the Law is that if I break the Law in one minute part then I am guilty of the entire Law:

Gal 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Since I have chosen Law (Old Covenant) and not Grace (a New and better Covenant) then I must fulfill the entire requirements of the Law or be guilty of it all and a law breaker. No one has ever kept the entire Law save Christ, therefore I will be a Law breaker, separated from God, under condemnation and subject to the direct influence of the original law breaker Satan. For most Christians to be living permanently in this state when Grace is freely available is a great tragedy and second only to a person not being born again. But to those who will receive it, Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law:

Gal 3:13-14 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us... that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

And what precisely does our redemption from the curse of the Law entail and require of us? Just this; that we receive by faith the Holy Spirit as God promised to Abraham and to Abraham's seed (that being Christ and any and all who are "In Christ"):

Gal 3:19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made..

How can I be under Grace and not Law – Be under the control of the Holy Spirit – In Christ

Gal 4:4-6 But when the right time finally came, God sent His own Son...to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might become God's sons. To show that you are His sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who cries out, "Father, my Father." TEV

And who are the sons of God who have been redeemed from the Law, and its curse, those in whom the Spirit of the Son, the Spirit of adoption, the Holy Spirit dwells, those who have chosen, after the new birth, to fully surrender their wills and their lives to God's Spirit:

Rom 8:14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Gal 5:18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

When we have been baptized with, in-filled by and are now, on a moment by moment basis, led by the Holy Spirit we are living in Christ, under Grace and free from the Law:

Rom 8:1 **There is therefore now no condemnation** (because they are not under Law and its curse) **to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.** - I pray that this is you