

Sunday, January 1, 2012—The Case for Grace: The New You for the New Year

Introduction

- Grace has often by viewed as a crutch to excuse all manner of poor behavior. Some of those questions included:
 - If I am totally forgiven isn't grace just giving believers a license to sin?
 - What about the Law? Do we still need to follow the moral teachings of the Law?
 - What about those verse where Paul teaches that people who practice certain behaviors will not inherit the kingdom of God?
 - How can I over come sin on a daily basis.
- In order to accomplish what I have in mind I want to look at the following three points:
 - The Opposing Principles of Law and Grace
 - The Lawful Use of the Law
 - How to Walk in the Spirit as Opposed to Walking in the Flesh

The Opposing Principles of Law and Grace

- Romans 11:6—Law and Grace are opposing principals
 - Ephesians 2:8-9
 - Titus 3:5
- Deuteronomy 28—the Principle of the Law is If/Then. Under this system people are given what they deserve.
- Grace by definition is you and I not getting what we deserve. *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* defines grace as:
 - Favor—good will, kindness
 - The free unmerited love and favor of God, the spring and source of all the benefits that men receive form him.
 - Grace is unearned and underserved honor and favor from God.
 - God's Riches At Christ's Expense
- Romans 5:20—grace then by its very definition and nature implies that it can be abused or it would not be grace.
- Romans 6:1, 14—grace should not be abused. Grace ought to motivate us to do the right thing out of gratitude to God for what he has done for us. In contrast, the Law motivated people to obey out of fear of punishment.

The Lawful Use of the Law

- Romans 3:19-20, 28—the Law cannot save from sin.
 - Galatians 3:1-3

- Galatians 5:1-4
- I Timothy 1:6-10—all the Law can do is manifest sin. Therefore, the law is not made for a righteous man.
 - Defile themselves with mankind—one who lives with a male as with a female, sodomite, homosexual
- Romans 7:7—Paul only knew what lust was because the law told him not to covet.
- If you are saved this morning that Law has already fulfilled its purpose for you. It brought to place where you acknowledge your sin and reach out in faith to a redeemer to buy you out of your predicament.

How to Walk in the Spirit as Opposed to Walking in the Flesh

- Galatians 5:16-21—Paul identifies that fact that the believer is either walking in the flesh or walking in the Spirit.
 - Verse 17—the Flesh and the Spirit are contrary principles that are at war with one another in the inner man of believers.
 - Verse 18—God the Holy Spirit leads no believers to operate under the performance based system of the Law. It is the flesh that does that.
 - Verse 19-21—all of these sins are treated the same. We have the tendency to judge people that commit some of these sins harshly. If your honest with your self you will see your self somewhere on this list.
- I Corinthians 6:9-11—there are two kinds of people in this passage. The saved and the unsaved.
 - Verses 9-10—the people who commit these sins and therefore will not inherit the kingdom of God are clearly not saved people.
 - “Abusers of themselves with mankind” is the same word that is used in I Timothy 1 to describe those who “defile themselves with mankind.”
 - Verse 11—Paul tells the Corinthians that they used to be like the people in verse 9-10 but upon salvation have undergone a change in identify and affiliation.
- The people described in verses 9-10 are the people the law is for.
- Galatians 5—When the Galatians and us for that matter walk in these sins we are living like the unsaved that is Paul’s point.
 - Ephesians 4:17-23
- Grace then is hardly an excuse the walk in the flesh and manifest the behaviors listed in Galatians 5, They are contrary to our new identify.

- So then why do we continue to sin and walk in them?
- Romans 7:18-25—the law of sin is at work in our flesh.
 - Therefore all our flesh knows to do is sin.
 - The law of sin at work in our members is a natural law. Like the law of gravity which pulls all things down the law of sin pulls the believers flesh towards the only thing that it knows sin.
 - How then does one overcome the force that the Law of sin has upon the life of the believer? How can we overcome the flesh programming we all have and the natural ability to gravitate towards attitudes and behaviors that are not pleasing to the Lord?
- Romans 8:1-4—the only way to overcome one natural law is with another.
 - Gravity a natural law can be overcome by Physical Laws of Aerodynamics and lift. These natural laws allow for the force of gravity to be overcome thus allowing flight.
 - In like manner the law of sin can only be overcome by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.
 - When we walk in the Spirit the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us. This is not accomplished by following the law because the law is not for us, rather it is accomplished by walking in the Spirit on the basis of Grace.
- Colossians 2:11—the circumcision made without hands has separated the believers soul and spirit from the sin that resides in our flesh thus making it possible to not serve sin.
- Ephesians 4:22-32—notice that when we put on and walk in the new man we fulfill the moral principles of the law.
 - Notice also that this passage is bracketed with the language of Grace in verse 1.
 - Also notice that the way we put off the old man and put on and live in the new man is to be renewed in the Spirit of your mind.

Conclusion

- Romans 6:11—likewise—or in this manner (Strong's), or in like manner (Webster's 1828).
- Reckon—the same Greek word is translated as impute and reckon in Romans 4. The word is also translated as count, account, and number in the King James Bible.
 - Impute— Romans 4: 6, 8, 11, 22-24

- Reckon—Romans 4:4, 9-10, 8:18
- The word “reckon” deals with reality. If I reckon (logizomai) that my bank book has \$25 in it, it has \$25 in it. Otherwise I am deceiving myself. This word refers more to fact than supposition or opinion.
- In the context, Paul is saying there are some truths that we need to practically reckon or by faith impute as true and operative in our daily lives.
- Romans 6:3-5—believers have been spiritually identified with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection.
- Romans 6:6-7—our old sin nature was crucified and put to death through Jesus Christ. We have been made free from sin.
 - Romans 7:15-18—the body of sin that resides in our flesh has been destroyed. Thus making it possible to no longer serve sin.
- Romans 6:8-10—just as death no longer has any dominion over Christ so sin should not have dominion over us.
- Romans 6:11—there needs to be a practical accounting or reckoning in verse 11 of the truths presented in verses 3-10. We need to believe we are who the word says we are. We need to see ourselves that way Christ sees us. We no longer need to serve sin any longer. We have been made alive unto God through Jesus Christ.
- Romans 6:12-14—Reign—means to be king, the exercise kingly power. metaphorically it means to exercise the highest influence over, i.e. to control.
 - Romans 5:14, 17, 21
- Dominion--to be lord of, to rule, have dominion over (Strong’s), Sovereign or supreme authority; the power of governing and controlling (Webster’s 1828).
- Following the law is never going to produce life only more sin and heart ache.
- We need to reckon and bring ourselves in line with what God says is true about us. Through the process of spiritual identification we have been made dead to sin but alive unto God.
- Let’s function on the basis of the law of the spirit of life in Christ and be free from the law of sin and death.