

## “Grace vs. Law”

(Updated and reprinted excerpt from a previous writing)

*“If God’s commandment and instruction system for us, or His “law”, is no longer active, then what do we need His grace for, and what purpose does that grace then really serve?”*

There are a growing number of churches that find it not only acceptable to ignore God’s laws, but often sadly discourage even the very thought of those laws from the itinerary of their sermons, Bible studies, and lives.

It is with an aching heart that I find that I should have to defend such an issue, but I suppose after having thoroughly studied the lineage of the Catholic church and having seen just how they had lost sight of the basics of Christianity over the centuries, that it would be foolish to not expect an equally ungodly condition to also take place within the even less-disciplined practices of today’s similarly temporal Evangelical churches as well, as they now also steer mainly from the helm of unbiblical practices, following rather, the preferences of mankind such as self-esteem, materialism, emotionalism, and watered-down Bibles, to name just a few.

But to simply lump all of these churches and teachers into one category for the reader is not so easy to do since they seem to be interwoven with so many newly-created beliefs and theological/ideological classifications. Trying to therefore put a label on this massive movement is like trying to stuff about ten frisky puppies into a suitcase and shutting the lid without getting their noses or tails caught. Their tangents and divergent limbs are forever changing and flailing into every unbiblical avenue or spiritual adventure that they can dream up, while their delivery methods clearly but sadly mimic the world of the age-old snake oil salesmen and carnival shell game hucksters, making it very hard to keep track of which new false teachings are categorically being promoted by who. So to just simply give the ones that I wish to address here a name as one particular group or “denomination” is not possible as it is the *foundation* of this widely-varying system that is the common denominator, not the many splinter groups themselves.

Therefore, let’s look at that foundational error itself that fuels these many varieties, which is commonly referred to as “Antinomianism” (*Latin meaning: those against God’s law*). Those who hold to such beliefs are then “antinomians”. However, such a title is a bit out of the range of most people’s vocabulary, where perhaps it’d be best to use the term that Paul uses in I Timothy 1:9: “*Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient...*”. We’ll therefore use the term “lawless” here, as it is a more readily-understood expression, and is somewhat easier to remember than the word, “antinomians” as well. For a brief moment I had considered the use of the term “outlaw”, but decided right away that it was too harsh sounding, was also not technically a true biblical term, and might also be considered “name calling”, and we need none of that. So therefore, after having settled on the term that refers to these “semi-believers?” (in light of Rev. 14:12) who are only receptive advocates of the first half of that now-popularized, intentionally-polarized taboo subject of

“grace vs. law”, I would then point out that this “grace vs. law” issue wouldn’t itself even be an issue today if it wasn’t for these lawless people, because for roughly eighteen hundred years it was an accepted and routine understanding, that God’s law was indeed: a crucial part of the mechanics of the grace of God. The law must remain an interconnected component *in* His perfect equation to then genuinely (by grace) provide for that repentant heart’s salvation, and this is by the very definition of the word “grace”. (If the law had not been truly “active”, then the question arises: how could one then transgress an inactive law (or “break” it; i.e: “sin”), to then need such grace? Grace is the act of (sympathetically or otherwise) sparing one their due penalty when having transgressed one or more of your laws. Furthermore, if you don’t have a penalty for your law, then it is not a law, but at best, a suggestion. If the Savior then “paid the penalty for our sins” (as many of them will readily admit to, preach and profess), then the law is active. But the logic of this has been lost in the quagmire of politically correct religiosities, or, the leaven of their Pharisees (if you will).

Nonetheless these “lawless” that have been rapidly increasing in number over the last half-century or so, having incrementally acclimated themselves into comfortably accepting that this grace vs. law issue really exists somehow as a one-sided dichotomy in God’s organizational structure, now seem to view “grace vs. law” as one might view “good vs. evil”. One can’t then help but then wonder if they hadn’t accepted this inverted view out of ignorance or confusion, in ways that were not unlike how the Catholics had similarly and submissively accepted the changes that brought about purgatory or transubstantiation in *their* church many years ago. To be fair however, the Catholics of that time had a much more understandable excuse. They weren’t allowed to read their Bibles. For well over a thousand years during what’s known as the “Dark Ages”, Catholics weren’t even *permitted* to read the Bible to *see* what was being pulled over *their* eyes! But today?

Today, it would appear to our forefathers that our own time’s “self-oppressed” lemmings simply don’t care what the Bible says, so long as they “feel good” about whatever spiritual instructions are fed them, whether it comes from an unending supply of heretical television preachers, a plentiful cornucopia of mail-order gimmicks, or from wherever else it might be that they somehow find these unbiblical practices. The fact remains that today’s less-enthusiastic Christians are so unappreciative about discovering what the very words of the Father had been for them, (again, this very same Bible that so many dark ages faithful had gone to their deaths trying to get even just a glimpse of), that they won’t even bother to even read it unless someone else has already chewed it up for them before they will even taste it, let alone swallow it (easier-to-read Bibles). And no matter how harsh this may sound, they don’t want to have to chew (“think”) on the “tougher” meat and potatoes themselves, and are thereby missing the true spiritual nutrition that the Father has intentionally put into His message. But a popularly new heretical teaching this grace versus law issue is nonetheless, and Satan has once more found yet another way to distract “many” from the truth of God’s perfect Word.

Teachings that stray from any instructions that God gave us in Scripture were once considered “heretical”. This part seems routinely simple for those of us who are more diligent in our studies, but for a multitude of people in today’s churches who are being regularly taught and conditioned to accept such improper definitions of Biblical terms, learning to dislike that meatier Bible is becoming the norm nowadays, as again, people are seemingly getting even too lazy to think. Satan therefore seems to be following this type of strategy: if you can’t get them to simply outright ignore the passages that you don’t want them to know about, disguise the wording in any inconspicuous way that may discourage them from wanting to think, so that (through a lack

of desire to research the original sources for their true meanings) they won't be *able* to understand the true meaning of that particular word or phrase, and will just simply trust whatever they are being told. There's an interesting example of precisely that kind of "word twisting" that I'd specifically like to make mention of at this time, and that would simply be the way that our modern "Simon the sorcerers" have magically changed the meaning of the word "doctrine".

It's hard to describe the exact method in which these lawless types use that term, because they apply it in so many creative but negative ways, that it sometimes even leaves me tilting my head in disbelief. For the overall picture that they paint when they do use it, intentionally convinces their audiences into believing that the word "doctrine" itself is a very unwanted or nasty term as if it were some kind of serious threat to their church's emotional happiness. Simply put (and just like its partner in crime, the "law"), the word "doctrine" is similarly treated like a dirty word. The two then become like a "tag-team of destruction" when it comes to the Father's authority in the Bible, where the gullible are then conditioned to see the Bible as a mere mythical book without an ounce of authority or credibility. The way that they deliver the word doctrine has even been used as a pejorative term towards folks like myself when we are engaged in debates with them, as if the very word "doctrine" was somehow a frightening, dark gateway to evil or something. It is however a certainty, that most of these poor souls are unaware of the actual definition of the term (in quite a few that I've talked to) where it almost appears as if it were actually being taught as a whole new word in some sort of underground classroom of sorts, and almost as eerily as George Orwell had written about teaching the masses "newspeak" in his book "1984". The possibility of this word-manipulation being *intentionally* done to our society is also not that far-fetched, when held against the light of how it has almost become a known fact that our education system in this country is intentionally "dumbing us down", generation by generation. Is Satan trying desperately to destroy our language and thereby the way that we speak and hear the Word of God? You bet he is!

doctrine: (*Encarta*) a rule or principle that forms a basis of a belief, theory or policy.  
(*Webster's*) instruction; whatever is taught; a truth of the gospel.

"A truth of the gospel". Would these same people be so hard on the word "doctrine" if they knew that it meant, "a truth of the gospel"? probably not, but again, many of them are too busy or pre-occupied to look it up for themselves, and are therefore, left trusting in a word that is in fact, a key lie that has been placed as a trap for the "willfully ignorant" (II Peter 3:5). Those who are not much of a fan of the truth or the passage, "study to shew thyself approved", are resultantly going to find themselves in an even bigger world of lies, just as II Thessalonians 2:10-12 warns.

This is where the serious can zoom ahead of the "Type 2" kids in God's class. If, now that we know this, we then substitute the word "teachings", or better yet in some cases, "truth of the gospel" for the word "doctrine" in our minds (depending upon each textual situation) we can gain a much more accurate picture of the meaning of those passages, rather than had we just allowed that wrong meaning of the word to continue, where we'd have further been led into an entirely misguided way of seeing the things surrounding this topic. Just think: some people are going through life, trusting some very bad theology, all because of just one simple word that they've allowed someone to lie to them about. As I've preached many times, all it takes is one wrong turn when giving directions, to send an unsuspecting traveler way off course. One incorrectly understood term then, can be the determining factor as to where one might spend eternity. Could we lose our eternal reward for the sake of being too lazy to look up just one

simple word? This is why the rest of that passage from Timothy says: “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” Or, rightly “splitting hairs” (when needed) for each and every word to get its true meaning, studying each word also in the proper context, and so forth.

Now that we’ve learned the true meaning of the word “doctrine”, lets continue:

Paul warns that we not wander from the doctrine (teachings; truth of the gospel) that God gave us, in the commandment from God to Paul in I Timothy 1:3: “...*that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine.*”

Also, “charge” means to “command”. So, once more for the less-studied, it means that we are not to just “suggest” to those that are teaching other doctrines that it might be wise to stop doing so, he tells us that we are to command these people to stop doing so. This is also in stark contrast to today’s politically correct churches who discourage Preachers and Bible teachers from “telling others what to do”, because they say, “that would be mean”. Keeping the church pure is mean? This is why the church has fallen in the first place, as it has gotten too soft on sin and biblically-mandated protocol!

Very well. Enough of the preparatory and on to the heart of my subject for this section, and on with the fiery defense that I have been storing up within myself to put down in writing for so long.... the so-called “Grace vs. Law” controversy.

Where, in the first place, did recent evangelicals even get a theological foundation for a grace vs. law battle? It’s not in the Scriptures anywhere that we are to discontinue or push away any laws of God that we don’t like, so where’d it all come from?

It came from several areas, but for the most part, antinomianism was rarely more than a fleeting thought over the centuries until the visits to America from a fellow named John Nelson Darby in the 1860’s and 70’s. He brought with him a sect known as the Brethren movement. Select followers of Darby’s views of eschatology came shortly thereafter, including C.I. Scofield and his influences in the early 1900’s. The history of this “leavening” as we might again rightfully call it is well documented and there are some very reliable authors out there who have recorded these false practices and their origins for us to clearly see that these theologies just don’t hold water. Antinomianism was suddenly reappearing with the coming of these fellows among others from the same time period such as Westcott and Hort (the “higher-criticism” Bible redactors), as these were together responsible for many of the unbiblical practices that are out there today.

But not all of the fuel that fed the lawless that we now have came from this century-old movement, for it should also be blamed on each and every one of us whose natural man is all too eager to latch on to something like that anyway, as it accommodates the unsaved’s inner repulsion of the precisely-delivered Word of God. It was also fueled by a world that now thinks we somehow came from monkeys (also of the 1850’s era and European elite circle of people), where a resultant “Humanism” then provoked the world to think that we have “evolved so far”, that we must know as much (if not more now) than God. It’s all of these and others, in concert, that has led to the disrespect that many lawless Christians today now have when they are looking down their noses at this “old-fashioned, out of date”, God.

The dangerous boldness to disregard God’s law then, has many man-made illusions driving it to the forefront of this undisciplined but well-driven Evangelical movement. It additionally overflows and breeds an outright blatant contempt for the specifically-delivered life-instructions

we were given in what only a very few of us still consider to be a Sacred Bible.

That Bible is God's Will for us in writing. It's God's expectations of us, His plan for us, instructions for us, and laws for us, given as a gift that, should we pray for the ability to understand the true rendering (as opposed to just hoping to get "close enough" with a watered-down version), we might know the exact message that we were meant to hear, bringing us into that same "one accord" that the early apostles had enjoyed, as none among them would dare doubt the omnipotence of such an almighty Creator. -And it's also sad to think of all the misled people out there who don't think that their God is omnipotent enough to even preserve a simple book, let alone teach an uncorrupted version of it to the ones who are diligently seeking a pure, unclouded understanding of it:

*"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." – Psalms 12:6,7*

And of course He's not going to forcefully preserve His Word (as the precious heirloom that it is) among those who don't really appreciate or *want* a preserved version! Does this not make sense? He will only share such deeper intricacies of Scriptural understanding with those who do! Such advantage is verified in passages such as Daniel 12:10, and especially Psalms 111:10.

Some even think that the "law parts" (in the NT) are an oversight on God's behalf, in having not been able to see that Paul was going to be unnecessarily writing a huge portion of his epistle's contents for nothing, because much of it, is centered around what he wrote in maintaining and living righteously by the Father's system of law and justice. I suppose by their way of thinking, Paul could have saved himself a great deal of time if he would have just shrugged off the old testament before he started writing his epistles for the New Testament. How sad.

And sad it is when these law-denying folks are speaking one on one with me and are refusing to even hear that the law is for their own good. Many are so inwardly and unknowingly repulsed by "thy rod and thy staff" (rather than comforted) that they then refuse to hearken unto (pay heed to; obey) the slightest command or statute that then might oppose the sin that they don't want to let go of in their lives. It is at this point that they will unknowingly lose answers to their prayers from then on out (Prov. 28:9), and then wonder why God doesn't seem to be around for them, where many are sometimes further left feeling that God doesn't even exist. All because they were taught that they needn't pay any attention to the law and doctrine. TBN's Paul Crouch had even once on air stated that the Father's doctrine was "doctrinal doo doo". Mr. Crouch feels that God's "truth of the gospel" is "doo doo"? They therefore act very much as if the law should be completely erased from the Bible, or eternally eradicated as anything that even remotely resembles the responsibilities and moral standards that we once upheld as Christians in the past. This is so tragic.

Antinomianism however, wasn't always completely unfamiliar to our faith, because for a brief period (before Paul corrected their misunderstanding) there were people in the apostle's days who were practicing this (shall we say) "independent way of living" apart from God's law, making their own "if it feels good do it" rules above the Father's as if it were an acceptable way in which to admire him from afar or something (just like they do today), and we see this where

Jude had written about a similar type of misled following in his day: *“For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”* (Jude 4). The word “lasciviousness” [*Webster’s 1828 Dictionary: 1. Looseness; irregular indulgence of animal desires; wantonness; lustfulness.*] fits with those of today as well, in how some seem to approach God’s grace with a lustful attitude that also has no respect for the power of its authority, which can only become a “graceful” act when it is dispensed according to that very system of God’s law. They were “taking advantage” of this era’s newly re-emphasized grace as if it were merely a carte blanche check to cover any and all of their sins. Jude writes more on these unruly people, where, in his own descriptive terms he has apparently had to deal with a group of deceived souls, which are not unlike the Antinomians or lawless of today. In verse 8 he says, *“Likewise also these filthy dreamers... despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.”*

dominion: (Webster’s) *Sovereign authority.* (Encarta) *ruling power, authority, or control.*

dignity (*pl. ies*): (Webster’s) *Nobleness... honorable place; an elevated office; one who holds high rank.* (Encarta): *a high rank, position, or honor.*

Do today’s lawless “speak evil of dignities”? Yes they do. They call the more responsible preachers and teachers, “legalists”, “fanatics” and many other pejorative terms (and worse when angry or frustrated), additionally saying things about us such as how we who properly and biblically love the law are “cults”. Is this not “speaking evil of dignities”?

Throughout Jude, there is this sense that the author was anguished over this group of people, and had apparently tried previous to this letter in reaching them with the truth. He refers to them as *“Raging waves of the sea”*, and, *“wandering stars”* (in verse 13), which would again be ways to describe those that were without authoritative direction in their lives, running around in any fashion that they desired, which would technically make them anarchists, not caring about the disrespectful rebellion that they were exhibiting towards the Father’s law.

For those then that might refer to folks like myself as “legalists”, would it not be fair to say that they could not have even labeled us as such unless they, themselves had been “anarchists” first?

There are so many who cry out the “grace v. law” eulogized song, that you’d think it was some sort of life-ending definitive crossroads of choice for some of them that no one should ever even consider discussing. Again, it’s as if this “grace vs. law” issue was synonymous with something like “good vs. evil” somehow, and not just the irresponsible illusion that they’ve held on to their sins with. They argue as if they expect us to agree that the law is (at best) an extremely low “has been” to grace, where again, they do not realize that you can’t even necessitate grace in the first place, without having first transgressed an active law. I will never argue that God’s grace is not something that we shouldn’t be most thankful for as Christians, but it is in conjunction with how we now receive that grace through our Savior and His atoning blood, rather than through the animal sacrifices of the past that many are not familiar with. Yes my friends, we were saved by grace in the old testament as well by the way, as this is not some “new invention” of the New Testament, otherwise how would Adam and Eve have been forgiven for their sins? They did no “works” to achieve the Father’s forgiveness (having disobeyed His law), nor did they pay some kind of monetary penalty of any kind. Rather, a sovereign LORD “paid the price” and through

the first animal sacrifice, symbolically “covered them” with His very first act of Grace. That first animal (without doubt a lamb, I believe) was a typical blood sacrifice shadow of the physical coming of the Savior! Remember, that Christ (the word made flesh) “always was” as well! We must also remember that in any act of belittling the law (the word), we belittle the lawgiver, and the blessing of that gift of grace. Thereby, if we don’t have to obey his laws anyway, then what’s so great or even miraculous, about His gift of grace? Does not that Grace cover our sin? Furthermore, what *is* a sin? A sin is an unkept law, a *transgression of the law* (Romans 4:5; I John 3:4). And if God is going to cover the “sins” that we aren’t *able* to avoid in times of stumbling (as mortals), I am grateful for that. But I am not going to just start running around telling everybody that they don’t have to follow God’s laws anymore because He’s going to just forgive them all with His grace anyway when it’s all over....That’s blatant arrogance! But more than that, it removes the emphasis on the true grace he has promised the genuine believers, who are truly now *embracing* God’s laws out of a proper “born-again” respect for the God that He is, AND for the grace that He has given to us in this wonderful act of mercy.. “[*mercy given*] to thousands of them that ... keep my commandments” (2nd commandment, Exodus20:6, emphasis mine).

Just because you recently married the police chief’s daughter in your town, does not mean that you can now ignore all the traffic laws in his town upon doing so! In the way that *I* look at that, it might be nice that the chief would possibly forgive your penalty on one particular instance or so, should you *accidentally* run through a red light (without a resultant incident, I might add), but it doesn’t give you an “exempt from all traffic laws” card to abuse his town’s image with, agreed? That is *also* arrogance. Arrogance towards the police chief that granted you grace on the one or two that you, being imperfect, weren’t able to be perfect on. Arrogance towards him in the sense that you simply expect him to look the other way as you intentionally and willfully continue to disregard the laws that were so carefully “designed” to give the town (or kingdom, if you see my parallel) such a pristine, and wholesome harmony and image in the first place. Would heaven be the much hoped-for place that we’re expecting, if there are going to be murderers and thieves there? Of course, not! We are to rid ourselves of such things while we’re here through the power of Christ working on our remorse (repentance), to then eventually be positive participants of such a kingdom (not negative), perfecting holiness in the fear of the LORD (II Cor. 7:1). God states over and over again in the scriptures how we are to be righteous, holy and obedient, as example-setters for the rest of the world, and even “denying ourselves” (Matt. 16:24, et al) of all pleasures of the flesh that are wicked, that we would (in so doing) take up our crosses and shine the light of wholesomeness and righteousness to all those who would see it. –and that’s righteousness based on the Father’s system of goodness, not ours! How are we going to do that and stand out as a righteous people by being just as nonchalant and disrespectful of God’s laws as the heathen are? Or as common thieves are? Or as the prostitutes are? Or as even the “social drinkers” are, who “only get high on paydays”? Are we Holy (set apart) from them when we join them in the bars or in the foul language, or in the gambling casinos or when we fire-up another cigarette? Do you think that the image of a pure and wholesome community of people called Christians, is going to shine out of a person who cannot even admit that they should quit smoking cigarettes, and then might reason that they don’t think God would be “bothered too much” if they smoke..? That’s not a *repentant* attitude, but a *defeatist*. It’s an attitude of feeling that one is somehow able to excuse away God’s call for sinners to repent of these sins. How about a passage like this one: “*Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.*” –I Corinthians 3:16,17

Can we just simply ignore such a passage? Is this a law for the heathen only? How can God destroy one who defiles his temple, and “save them” at the same time?

If we are everyday, (especially willfully) defiling our temples, will God reward us by our reasoning? ...or will He reward us by His?

*“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law. So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.” (judged by the Father’s reasoning, which then as law, can only be responded to with either obedience or rebellion. Obedience out of a love for that law affords us the cooperative harmony to live together in a world of liberty, rebellion brings a judgment of destruction) (Jas 2:10-12)*

In using the above verse as an example, consider our police chief story again, where, if we had no laws to govern us (such as stop signs) we would then have no way to feel that we could safely go out into the world and travel amongst those who do not normally want to be courteous and yielding to the similar liberties of others. There’d be no “liberty”. We have to abide by the righteousness (what is good and lawful) of any given land to then enjoy that land’s pre-planned liberty. Even if and more so, with a system designed by God. Does this make sense? Is habitually running stop signs an endlessly forgivable habit? How about when one of those times happens to injure someone or even kills someone some day? Is it still so forgivable if such a well thought out law is being disregarded on a routine day-in and day-out basis out of a willful disregard for its purpose, which in the case of a stop sign is there for the safety of all in the town? Is this law then admired by the townsfolk who are protected by it? Or is it hated by them, as just another mean law that they don’t think they should have to adhere to? No, they that understand its function, embrace it! And in these times of ever-growing tyrannies, should we not all the more embrace a system that is timeless and fair, providing safety and security for all?

*“I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, even unto the end. ... I hate vain thoughts: but thy law do I love. Thou art my hiding place and my shield: I hope in thy word. Depart from me, ye evildoers: for I will keep the commandments of my God.”*

*(Psa 119:112-115)*

Notice how the Psalmist loves the law as it is a protector to him, a “hiding place and a shield”. He does not look at the law as if it were some oppressive opponent to his bad habits. Whose law system do we then love? The system of the Father? Or the system of the beast?

When we might then further respond by saying that we haven’t the strength to quit certain bad habits or lustful deeds, perhaps we are lacking in a true faith which sets us apart from the world which, when stood upon firmly brings the One that overcomes our weaknesses: *“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” – Phillipians 4:13*

The solution?

*“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, [deny thyself] and touch not the unclean thing [which then for some might then become as a cross to bear] ; and I will receive you [and thereby strengthen you].” --II Corinthians 6:17.*

If in that town, kept safe and harmonious from outsiders by the police chief, we can envision a



people who, (before the stop signs were found to be necessarily placed at these intersections) were already and routinely stopping their cars there because they (in their hearts) knew it was the safe and righteous thing to do, do you suppose that the stop signs were put up for them? Or were they put up for the spoiled son-in-law types who were arrogantly feeling that they were too good to stop at these intersections? They would have obviously been installed for the ones who weren't feeling that they should be told to stop, right? Right! And if you don't think that my analogy is backed by Scripture, try this on for size again: "...*the law is not made for a righteous man [who is already acting responsibly], but for the lawless and disobedient...*", or how about this one that says: "*They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.*" (Matthew 9:12). In other words, it's not the "whole" that are "coloring outside the lines" (or, are carelessly wandering outside the ways of truth) but the sick. The healthy or whole are called healthy by the Savior for that very reason, because they are staying within the Scriptural lines of righteousness. Mark also wrote of that same thing in 2:17, and both men added this phrase to the end of that message: "*I came not to call the righteous, but the sinners...* (and check *this* part out) ...*to repentance.*" As it seems to say, we no longer need to call for the physician if we are not ill, and therefore, we didn't need the stop signs if we were *already* stopping for the sake of the town's image, safety, and wholesomeness to begin with. The stop signs were put there for those who felt they were too good to stop as the townsfolk would be doing in a truly righteous town (true brotherly love). If only they could get the ones that they put the signs *up* for, to "repent" and obey them now! That they might be saved! Saved from the wrath of the police chief, by learning to cooperate with the town's righteousness! Then the only ones who wouldn't be stopping would be an occasional person who might honestly make a mistake or miss one or something. And those are the ones that the chief or a forgiving judge in the town would be more happily apt to forgive anyway, if they had been truly trying to do things the proper and righteous way. That's what true "grace" is all about, it's not about letting spoiled little hot-rodders get away with things all the time just because they're "family" now, and "Christ has already done everything on the cross" as if to say we needn't walk orderly now. That's "spoiling", not grace. And that's what our churches in America are doing today, "spoiling" their hot-rodders. And spoiling doesn't come from love, it comes from selfishness, or a *lack* of love. As true love yearns to reach the stop sign runners to then share the plan of stopping for the stop signs for both the good of the town, and for the joy it brings in the heart (remorse disappears) when one is no longer an offense to this plan. There's an order and protocol to Father's kingdom, and that's what the Scriptures are for: to settle these disputes and keep order so we can all be of one accord in "His ways".

<p>NOTE: If you are using an NIV, you may notice that the words "to repentance" are not present in your passage of Mark 2:17, and that's due to the fact that the NIV was translated out of the Vaticanus family of texts (Catholic) rather than the traditional texts or the "Received Texts" that the King James was taken from. The strong difference in meaning (without just those two words!) is just one of countless passages that help to emphasize the urgency that lesser "versions" should not be used if one wants the true intended message that God is trying to get across. Cheap imitations of God's book are just that... .. "cheap" ... "imitations" Be ye not deceived!</p>
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When I myself was acting like that spoiled hot-rodder, The Father seemed to chasten me with a merciless strap for years, until I woke up one day (and out of a more "repentant" attitude) began to become more obedient to His Will. He still chastens me, but nothing like the spankings (in a sense) that I *used* to get!

So, where the passage says: "...*the law is not made for a righteous man...*", the righteous are given that classification or title not because they are perfect in their own right (because none of

us are truly righteous (“*no, not one*” --Romans 3:10), but because they are believed to already be following God’s law as closely as humanly possible by means of a willing repentant heart that had at one point awoken to a love for those laws. They are then “qualified” as righteous by God because of their willingness to respect God’s law, which becomes a “conscience to *righteousness*” rather than (the old nature’s) “tendency to wickedness”, upon which they might then become “born again” with a new, true eagerness to become even *more* perfect in that righteousness, as they now feel refreshed (made whole) being righteous and thusly further grow in that new nature (now get *this* part) as Christians. If they weren’t growing, and were willfully claiming that they needn’t follow the law (as many do), the term “righteous”, by its very definition, couldn’t even apply to them:

righteous: “*always behaving to a religious or moral (set of laws)*”.(see glossary).

By the way, to set the record straight, if someone thinks they’re righteous, but feel that the law does not apply to them for *any* reason, then it’s they who are the walking contradiction, not God’s Bible. For only those who will at least acknowledge that the Father’s laws and commands for us are genuinely needful for us, can even be *considered* for the title of “righteous”.

Can the speeder in the police-chief story claim to be “law-abiding” if he never even *tries* to stop for the stop signs, and without a conscience barrels through every one of them? Of course not. And righteousness by definition means “law-abiding” even in following the moral code of *any* given faith or religion.

Those who are using man-made “reasons” (I’m being polite for once) for making God’s laws anything less than what they are... commandments, ordinances, statutes or ... “laws” (rules we’re supposed to obey), sadly have their own identity problems with their role in God’s Kingdom, in light of how disrespectfully that they then must be viewing what I feel is the most sacred authority of all, our Creator’s Scripture. For one cannot claim God’s Word as perfect, while at the same time removing select laws in God’s Word, as being unimportant, out-dated, or even a “small mistake by God”, or the like, as it does nothing but invite irreconcilable contradictions. You either believe that God is correct, or you don’t. There’s no “*lukewarm*” ground of “belief” in the middle. Either God’s truth exists perfectly, or it doesn’t. It is our responsibility to “study to shew ourselves approved”, and thereby find that pure truth! It is not our job to find convenient compromises that give us the necessary excuses to keep from reading the more accurate Bible versions, etc, of which I feel (in the English language) would be the 1560 Geneva and/or the 1611 King James.

Now I am fairly sure that by now I have perhaps sufficiently offended many out there who find themselves to be above God’s laws, or perhaps where they are only worthy now as mere examples, suggestions, or perhaps even regarded as oligarchic overkill from days gone by, but I had to condemn myself a good many years back as well for a similar irresponsible opinion, where I did a self-examination and thereby re-evaluated my own view of God and His Word from the top on down, when the world was beating up on me pretty badly. But just as it often is in the Father’s ways where good can come of the most desperate times, it was soon to become very simple once the dust had all settled, where I would see the hard to face truth: I had to finally admit that God made the world, not me. He was in charge, not me. Once I had not only accepted that, but then realized its beauty and how it lifted a great load off of my shoulders, had dwelled on it with the full reverence that it deserved, and then embraced it... *things became as the birds chirping on a fresh spring morning in one of those bright and shiny happy-endings that*

*we see in the movies!* His book *wasn't* full of out-dated or mis-quoted passages, but rather, it *had* to be perfect, that is, if the God that gave it to us was to be perfect as well. And I decided right then and there to get all of Satan's little "tricks of the trade" out of my life. This first included his NIV that had so cleverly kept the real meaning of the Father's message from me for so many years. This time in my life was my massive turning point, my "Damascus moment", and the point at which I hungered for the further perfection of the Father's tender-loving instruction for me. I wanted to make sure that I was getting the absolute exact words that the Father wanted me to hear. Why? Because I never wanted to disappoint Him ever again, that's why. I wanted to feel as if I was returning as much to Him as I possibly could, in return for this wonderful new peace that He had given to me. This eagerness to reciprocate my all to Him as he had given His all to me, this sudden gratitude, was uncontrollably maturing and exploding within me, once I truly understood the mechanics of willful obedience that lays the foundation in one's heart of a humble attitude which can only then be considered worthy of that Amazing Grace.

But I am a lowly worm in the shadows of this magnificent God. And if even for only one moment that I should ever again find myself second-guessing laws or commands from my Creator, I am then even lower than the worm, for at least the worm doesn't "talk-back" to God.

Therefore, for those of you who may still think that God's laws are just in his Bible as "leftovers" from a by-gone era or something, I'm forced as a preacher to then "*rebuke (you) sharply*" (Titus 1:13), or, "*rebuke (you) with all authority.*" (Titus 2:15), and possibly offend many of you out there, Sirs and Madams, for I'd have no other recourse *but* to offend with the instructions of God regarding rebuking those of whom are not following biblical commandments. But thereby, in my having needfully offended you by exposing some of your sin to the light, I would be willing that we may both possibly be able to then together approach God with your *repentant* heart, to then correctly seek His forgiveness, again, once having realized that the first one who had truly been "offended" was the Father and His authority, not us!

To humbly ask God for forgiveness with a genuine reverence and respect for His Will through an attitude of repentance? What a novel concept in our time! Nonetheless, is it becoming impossible to have an actual *respect* for his Will or ...law? Is that the hard part for some of us? Why? Because the rest of the world is constantly telling us that our own self-esteem and self-worth is far too important to ever consider being subservient to anyone... including our Creator! Well, yes. Positive-thinking gurus like Robert Schuller, Norman Vincent Peale and even today's Joel Osteen preach such politically correct trash like that all the time, which basically says that very thing—a *false* doctrine of self-esteem, which is self-focused and can thereby never be anything more than self-praising. These are not the only preachers of this religion of "self" as many of our government's secular programs preach this godless "mental health" in our schools and tax-supported rehab centers and so forth. We, as a nation, are being taught almost daily, that we are to be "in charge" of our own destinies, and that we can do anything if we put our minds to it, and "you deserve the best", etc., etc. Wrong. Our Savior never taught such arrogance. God is in charge. A true Christian must never forget that, and it's up to us *as* His creation to humbly respect every single word that comes from the true written Word of God. And that includes even down to the *exact* wording, in the uncorrupted versions of His Bible also, regardless of how much "easier" some of the more tempting Bibles are to: read, understand, believe-in, or (ahem) "cheat with".

So, if I have offended you for pointing out that God deserves more respect than the police chief

in my analogy (or even at the very *least* that much), then I hope it may have brought you to feel the weight that I had in having to be the one to have to tell you these things, for I don't like having to get into an enforcement mode as the Scriptures clearly expect of the truly obedient followers (Ezekiel 3:17-21, et al), because I'd rather that we were ALL stopping for the stop signs found commanded in God's Word, on our own. But then, that'd be too much like heaven then, wouldn't it..? And besides, just like any police officer that might be in the story, pulling the spoiled hot-rod over to let him know that he's not representing the rest of the people who are righteously doing their part, I also, am only doing *my* job... *"reprov(ing), rebuk(ing), and exhort(ing) with all long-suffering and doctrine."* --II Timothy 4:2. I am only doing what God has multiple verses to remind us to do, in showing truth in love, but rebuking sharply, they that won't listen, but... having said that, even rebuking is only to be carried out to a point. For, in Titus 3:9 it also tells us to *"avoid...strivings (struggling with others) about the law...for they are unprofitable and vain."* meaning that you could effectually go on in these things with the lawless, arguing to infinity, etc., and therefore you are to look upon these hot-rodgers thusly: *"A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject; knowing that he that is such subverted, and sinneth [transgression of the law], being condemned of himself."* -(verses 10 & 11). In such cases we are to *"withdraw [ourselves] from every brother that walk disorderly"* (II Thess. 3:6) and let them *"work out [their] own salvation with fear and trembling"* – Phillipians 2:12.

In other words, the scriptures are telling us not to drive ourselves into the ground over some of these "unrighteous" (or again by definition, these "lawless"), because they may never listen and may even become angry with you (see Matt 7:6). They may still be 'ruled' by their old nature, and therefore too rebellious to *even for one moment* consider being 'ruled', by God's "laws". Obedience, as some have already found, is key to the conversion process to begin with, in accepting that God's system of law and justice is perfect, and learning to love it and embrace it for our own lives. This is what begins the repentance process that ushers in true salvation. Today's lost and deceived are therefore (by their own unwillingness to let go of the entirety of their old nature) incapable of so warmly receiving God's "laws" or "rules". It is then at this very juncture, that they are then showing themselves to be, the very people that the "laws" were put in place for to begin with, i.e: those who refuse to admit that the law has a wonderful, prominent function in the Father's perfect system of 'forgiveness upon repentance', which as the final step is called "Grace". They never understood the passage, "thy rod and thy staff they comfort me" from the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm which signifies the correction and rebuke of our Loving Shepherd who keeps us within bounds of the sheepfold of that law for our own protection, and they therefore sadly see the law (the rod and staff of the Great Shepherd) as tyrannical or oppressive. They haven't matured in their hearts with the understanding that these laws are there as loving guideposts for all mankind whereupon, those who accept what they are really there for, can then live together in harmony in them, *as designed!* —just as the loving towns-folk in our police chief story! I'm also going to step in here and add that it's very possible in some cases, that at times you may not even be arguing with a truly converted person anyway, and may only be wasting your time and energies in *"vain"* because they may only be running on a synthetic emotional high from a biblically watered-down church that doesn't correctly bring about true converts in the first place. Some of these emotionally-charged assemblies are often not following the true Spirit of the kingdom of God, but a less responsible, often routine, weekly sequence of "experiences" that they can entertain one another with, as they then share these experiences on a "guess what God did with *me* this time" kind of "group mesmerization". For the most part, this type of emotional state is spiritism and does not come from the faith of a true believer, but from the spirit world of another, sin-friendly "lawgiver" who gives no laws at all, in

fact his one and only law is “anything goes”! They live therefore, under a ‘no-rules’ Jesus (aren’t we warned about being led astray by those who would teach “another Jesus” in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 11:3,4?). Therefore, I would caution many of you out there, that with a lost soul who is not truly or just partially converted, you could conceivably spend the rest of all eternity with them and never get them to actually see why they should embrace God’s laws as Christians, because in my opinion, some of them really aren’t truly saved, and therefore won’t have the same inner desire to please God in “perfecting holiness” ( II Cor. 7:1) as we would anyway.

Without a true conversion in their hearts due to a genuine act of repentance *upon* that attempted conversion, you could plead with them till the cows come home regarding how the rest of us have found such joy in pleasing God through obedience, because they won’t even understand what you are talking about in “pleasing God”, for the simple reason that “pleasing God” is not even a part of their vocabulary. For many of these people, the Man/God door of giving or “pleasing” is only supposed to swing one way. Without a true conversion through a totally repentant heart, the desire to please God is only at best, secondary, in how they want only to please *themselves* in getting all the gusto they can (and now) from this newly discovered “gift-giver”, or “genie in the sky” that they refer to as God. For many in congregations like the word-faith churches and other emotionally-motivated evangelical assemblies, there is little desire for most to want to come off of their “high” and deal with the reality of what God is trying to tell them in the Scriptures, because again, many without true conversions view the system of law of the Father (His rod and His staff) as a nuisance or a “chore” rather than as an automatic reaction of enthusiastically *wanting* to do as God has asked of us, such as is within the truly converted Christian, that the more humble of us feel secure in. So, before you get too heavily into this section thinking you now have all the new Scripture and illustrations you need, to help that disillusioned relative or loved one that you’ve been trying to offer these law evidences to, you might want to strongly consider that they must first see the truth of the meaning of a repentant heart and how repentance is actually a remorse for having done wrong. Again, if God’s commandment and instruction system for us, or His “law”, is no longer active, then what do we need His grace for, and what purpose does that grace then really serve? If there is no law, then there can be nothing to be remorseful for, that then *brings* the repentance that places the heart in the right frame of mind to then respectfully beg mercy to avoid the penalty for one’s sin, or in other words therefore... the *need* for grace. Without understanding this small part of the equation most may never see any reason to respect the laws of their God. But as it still stands in His timeless plan for us, it all works in harmony: repentance, love, humility, submissiveness, respect, etc. But without a healthy level of respect for our Creator’s system of law and justice, the true peace-bringing salvation chain is broken.

*“He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him.”*

*-I John 2:4*

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