

GOD'S
ABSOLUTE
LAW

Copyright 1985,1993,2001,2007
Crossroads Full Gospel
International Ministries

All Rights Reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, mechanical, photocopied, recorded or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher. Short extracts may be used for review purposes.

Except otherwise stated, Bible quotes come from the King James Version. 1611 Elizabethan English is updated in some cases to reflect present terminology, without changing the true meaning of the word.

Extracts from "The Expositor's Study Bible" are identified as E.S.B. Copyright © 2005 Published by, and the sole property of, Jimmy Swaggart Ministries, Baton Rouge, LA, and extracts from the Swaggart Bible Commentary series are identified as S.B.C. Copyright © World Evangelism Press®

Extracts from the Amplified Bible are identified as Amp. Old Testament Copyright © 1962, 1964 by Zondervan Corporation. New Testament Copyright © 1954, 1958, 1987 by The Lockman Foundation.

Extracts from the New International Version are identified as N.I.V. Copyright 1973,1978,1984 by The International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.

Also used: The New Testament: An Expanded Translation (Wuest) translated by Kenneth S. Wuest. Copyright © 1961 by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Bracketed comments following some scriptures assist the reader in understanding the intended meaning of these verses

We acknowledge the additional works of the various Scholars and Bible Commentaries used in conjunction with the College material. This is not to say that we agree with all their theology, but we certainly value their contribution to the Body of Christ.

Published by:

*Crossroads Publications
10681 Princes Highway
Warrnambool
Victoria 3280
Australia*

CONTENTS

GOD'S ABSOLUTE LAW.....	1
WHAT IS LAW?.....	2
WHAT DID PAUL MEAN BY THE STRENGTH OF SIN BEING THE LAW ?.....	8
ARE WE UNDER LAW TODAY ?.....	10
WHAT THEN IS OUR OBLIGATION TO THE LAW TODAY ?.....	14
THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW.....	18
GOD'S MORAL ABSOLUTES.....	24
OUR POSITION TODAY.....	28

GOD'S ABSOLUTE LAW

There has been much controversy and misconception surrounding the subject of “law.” In this teaching we will establish, briefly, which parts of the law from the Old Covenant have been abolished and which parts remain today. We will also discover how “law” still applies today in New Testament times, and we will examine the benefits of obeying it and the consequences of not doing so.

Man lives, spiritually speaking, either under law and its penalties or under God’s grace. In the Garden of Eden, man fell from grace and came under the penalty of the law, thus becoming responsible for paying the penalty for his own sin. This of course he is unable to do because he is spiritually bankrupt and unable to pay the price. Calvary addressed man’s position and gave him opportunity to come back under grace.

So what is this grace? The dictionary defines “grace” as Divine favour by which man gains freedom from sin and help from God. With this help from God, we can come to a position of holy faith (belief and trust) in God’s Word. In this way we gain spiritual power to resist that which is not God’s will. By this power, we also gain what is needed to do God’s will. Anything less will bring man under law and its penalties.

Man was meant to obey God’s will, not by willpower but by God’s graces. This way has been brought back to us through the shedding of the Blood of the Saviour on the cross. Indeed perfect justice declared that Calvary’s sacrifice on behalf of man was sufficient to pay the price - for all of mankind’s sin. Once our sin is forgiven, by God’s grace we can live in His righteousness.

As it says in Romans 6:3-4, because “*we are buried with Him . . . unto death,*” then His Resurrection becomes our resurrection to “*newness of life.*” There is no other way to live in “*newness of life*” except by the way of the Cross - the Atonement that has given us resurrection power (which is “*newness of life*”) to live in His daily graces.

***“ . . .Man was meant to obey God’s will,
not by willpower but by God’s graces. . .”***

The truth of the matter, as found in God’s holy Word, is that man lives either under the penalty of law or in the freedom that God’s grace affords. Calvary’s grace begins with forgiveness through repentance and ends with spiritual empowerment. On this higher path, God will be glorified because it is He Who lifts man up to live at a far higher level than man is capable of doing by himself.

Every man, whether he wants it or not, has been given through the Gospel a pathway which reveals the way to spiritual life. But he must seek, find and embrace the will of God - not any other so-called “deity” but the one true God of the Bible Who can only be found through Jesus Christ. Then you shall have life and have it abundantly, not only knowing God’s will but even having the power to walk in it. Amen.

WHAT IS LAW?

Background Reading: Psalm 119:30-48, 165; Psalm 19:7-11

Primarily a law is a regulative or unfailing principle. As it pertains to God, the term “law” means a broad and basic rule or truth which maintains order in the physical or spiritual realm.

In scripture we have many different usages of the term “law.” We have, for example:

- The law of sin and death (Romans 8:2)
- The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ (Romans 8:2)
- The Law of God (Romans 7:22,25; Romans 8:7)
- The Law of the Lord (Luke 2:24; Psalm 1:2; John 19:7)
- The Law of Moses (Joshua 8:31; Josh.23:6; 1 Kings 2:3)
- The Law of his God (Daniel 6:5; Psalm 37:31)
- The law of truth (Malachi 2:6)
- The law of faith (Romans 3:27)
- The righteousness of the law (Romans 8:4)
- The law of my mind (Romans 7:23)
- The law of sin (Romans 7:23-25)
- The law of righteousness (Romans 9:31)

The law of liberty (James 2:12)
The Law of Christ (Galatians 6:2)

For the Christian, “the law” constitutes the principles of God by which we are to live our lives. We do this as we take up our cross daily (denying self-rule and the flesh), and rely on the grace of the new nature within us to give us the desire and empowerment to do God’s will. So “the law” to the Believer is “the will of God.” Unlike the Old Testament Saints, we are not under “Law” to obtain righteousness (to be accounted as righteous). Indeed Christ has put an end to that struggle for all those who are “in Him.” Rather we are under grace, not to excuse sin in our lives but to give us power to say “Yes” to God and so “No” to sin. Therefore it is God’s grace working in and through us via the Divine Nature that empowers us to obey all the Law - which was summed up by Jesus as follows: “*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind*” (Matthew 22:37). And also, “*You shall love your neighbour as yourself*” (Matthew 22:39).

***“. . .For the Christian, “the law”
constitutes the principles of God by
which we are to live our lives. . .”***

God is vitally concerned with showing to the world His righteous standards and the means by which we may live in the abundant life promised by Jesus. He does this through His Word, and, to this end, God’s Word reveals much to us about the subject of His laws. Indeed the Bible is full of laws (or commandments) which pertain to good living and victory. Hence we can call the Bible our “Manual of Life.”

The Scriptures were actually known in Old Testament times as “the Book of the Law.” They revealed to God’s people His laws and commandments, and showed them the way they were to live - for their consciences were not a sufficiently reliable guide, often being affected by environment, culture and sin. We see in the New Testament, however, that the Greek word “nomos,” meaning “law,” is used to cover a variety of different concepts. This is why there

tends to be a great deal of confusion, at times, in regard to the teaching of this important subject. Thus the word “law” can refer to:

1. The Old Testament or Mosaic Law which the Israelite people needed to live by in order to please God, a detailed body of laws which covered all aspects of life - civil, ceremonial and moral.
2. Divine revelation.
3. Universal spiritual laws which govern all that is in existence, e.g. the law of sin and death.
4. The commandments by which the righteous in Christ should live and conduct their affairs.
5. The Mosaic system as an attitude with which we approach our relationship with God - in other words, “legalism.”
6. The Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus.

In order to understand the teachings of the New Testament in regard to the subject of “law,” we need to be aware of these different applications and to be able to trace the ideas of the Bible writers as they make sometimes very subtle changes in describing different aspects of this general area of “law.”

***“ . . . God’s Word contains civil laws,
moral laws and spiritual laws which
pertain to both individuals and
communities. . . ”***

God’s Word contains civil laws, moral laws and spiritual laws which pertain to both individuals and communities. These laws were given so that we might have peace and order in the three general areas of life: society, the family unit and one’s own personal life. Sadly, because the majority of people do not comply with God’s laws, there is increasing unrest, immorality, violence and rebellion evident in the world today. And God shows us clearly throughout His

Word that these are the kinds of “fruits” which will result if people do not live within His Godly guidelines, that being in a true sense, His laws of life.

The law, in this context, could be described as all the principles which pertain to Godly or righteous living. Even though we are not saved through obeying “the law” (God’s commandments), living within the guidelines of “the law” (God’s universal spiritual laws) is an important requirement of the Christian life, absolutely essential for victory.

Christ fulfilled the Law in regard to sacrifice. Therefore the ceremonial laws of the Mosaic Covenant that pertained to sacrifice were also made obsolete. However, moral laws which God put in place to regulate the people’s standard of behaviour in relation to both Himself and their fellow man, remain. In fact today each one of the Ten Commandments - except the fourth - remains as a real guide for living. The power to live in these commandments was not available to man until after the Cross. Now by the grace of God made available through Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit will be at work in us, as we yield to Him. Therefore the power to live by and obey God’s commandments has come to us because of and through the Cross.

“ . . . If law is needed to police a person’s behaviour, then it shows that this person lacks character and power. . . ”

If law is needed to police a person’s behaviour, then it shows that this person lacks character and power. However, a person being truly led of the Spirit will flow, according to their faith, in the graces and energies of God through Christ. As such, when knowing the difference between good and evil and being presented with good or evil, they will instinctively do that which is good, holy and right - not in the power of self but in the power of God (the Divine Nature). Indeed He is meant to rule over us, not as in Old Testament times, in an external way. Rather the Lord is to rule in us internally through the graces of His Divine Nature enmeshing with our human nature,

and giving us the power to do right - to do His will (Romans 6:14; 2 Timothy 2:11-14; 2 Peter 1:3-4).

This is to live in and by grace rather than under law. When we live under law, we are operating in self-effort, and looking for recognition of our endeavours. However only God can receive the glory when we are empowered by Him to do that which is right. This is the difference between works done under law and works done by and under grace.

Man, saved or unsaved, has proven himself unable to do right - because he lacks the power in himself to do so. But saved man in God can do that which is right through the power of the Divine Nature. This of course involves loving, serving and obeying his Creator.

Man was created originally to function with God ruling his life on the outside and the inside through the power of His Divine Nature. Fallen man's missing link is God, with His grace flowing through our human nature so that we are able to love as He does.

As unregenerate sinners, we lacked character and the power to do right in God's eyes. So man needed the Law as a schoolmaster to show him how far from the mark he was. If we are under law to order our behaviour and we offend in only one part, then we become guilty "law-breakers."

It's not that we can do good things here and there, it is that we cannot keep the standard of the Law of God (moral law) because we will and do break it at some points in time and we then, as "law breakers," are unable to atone for our crime. Because we had nothing to offer, we stayed in our jail-cell of darkness until we accepted Jesus. God then accepted, on our behalf, the Atonement of His Son Who paid the price to set us free.

Even after regeneration, however, the Saint will always daily need to depend, even minute by minute, on the grace the Cross affords us. But it must be a focused, conscious choice. It then is not a matter of choose and let go but rather choose and flow with the Spirit of Grace, allowing Him to energize us because of what Calvary has done and, through the Atonement, is still doing for us today.

We even need God's holy laws, or the teaching of them, being God's standards by which we are to live, so that we can have proper focus - in spite of what is around us or what we are plugged into. In this life we are connected to things that would hinder and distract us

from doing right, e.g. the sin nature, our flesh, evil influences. But with focus that shows us the right way, we can boldly go to God in our time of need and ask in Jesus' Name for the grace we require to live in God's Light (Hebrews 4:16). So we need to know the light of truth, the light of the narrow way, so we can, with God's help, develop the faith we need to make proper demands on God's power. In this way, we can please Him and walk on this narrow way (Hebrews 11:6).

“. . . In this life we are connected to things that would hinder and distract us from doing right, e.g. the sin nature, our flesh, evil influences. . .”

Thus we can see that grace does not lessen our responsibility but rather adds to it, for to whom much is given, of them much is required. This is a scriptural principle (Luke 12:47-48).

Paul wrote in regard to the Law and the sin nature that:

1 CORINTHIANS 15:56 The sting of death is sin (the sin nature); and the strength of sin is the Law.

Now sin produced death, for the penalty of sin is death. Sin in fact introduced death, for if there had been no sin, man would not be subject to death. The very existence of death proves that men are sinners, and that they have been infected and affected by its sting or its evidence which is the sin nature.

In regard to this verse, it has been written: “*Sin means “missing the mark,” i.e. which is set by the Divine Law.*

In fact, even the smallest sin had in it the power to kill. Men try to play with “the sting of death” and hope to avoid its fatal stroke. That game is impossible; the thing cannot be done, at least in that manner.

The phrase, “And the strength of sin is the Law,” refers to the Law of Moses.

That Body of Legislation, given exclusively by God, defined sin, stressed its penalty (death), and showed man, even God's chosen, the

Jews, that man was so full of sin due to the Fall, so depraved, so without Righteousness, at least on his own, that he could not within himself, keep even the smallest Laws demanded by God.

WHAT DID PAUL MEAN BY THE STRENGTH OF SIN BEING THE LAW ?

How could the Law of God, which the Law of Moses actually was, and which was Righteous and Holy, be the strength of sin?

As we have stated, the Law as given by God told man what he must do, how he must live, how he must look to God and how he must treat his fellowman. However, even though that Law was Righteous and Holy, by its very nature of being Law, excited the sinful nature in man, which in fact it was designed to do. It was designed to show man how helpless he was to keep even the most simple Laws of God, at least within his own power. That is why the Law was the "strength of sin." It defined what sin actually was, and it showed man that he was a sinner, and portrayed his helplessness.

Men have an awful time admitting what they really are. And religious men most of all have a terrible time admitting the Truth.

Whereas man could deny his condition before the Law, after the Legislation, he could not deny what he was, at least not honestly, for the record was clear. He was and is a Lawbreaker.

Sin is always connected with God's Law, for His Law sets the mark, and by missing the mark the sin obtains its fatal reaction. The Law never submits or consents to be violated, for if it did, it could not be Law.

It always reacts against the violator, as all Law must. For the Law is not merely so many words of a code, it is the Divine Will itself. To challenge that Will is to declare war against God. In this way, the Law is the power of the sin.

Take away God's Will and Law, and all right and all wrong, and sin and all Righteousness disappear. But this means to take away God Himself - and us also.

In fact, sin does not try to thrust the Law and God aside as if they do not exist and could thus be treated with impunity. In this way, Law becomes the death power of the sin. It reacts instantly, makes itself and God back of it felt, with invincible power to strike and kill.

Thank God that Jesus perfectly kept all the Moral Law of God which we could not do, and upon Faith in Him, we are changed from the status of Lawbreaker to that of "Law-keeper." However, that is only through Jesus and Faith in what He did for us at Calvary and the Resurrection."¹

(underlines added)

As we have seen, the death power of sin is the Law of God. Without law there can be no righteousness, and if there is no righteousness, there will be no God (and therefore no humanity). If there is righteousness, there will be God. There is law because there is righteousness. Without Divine help, man reacts to God's Law and his sin nature will be excited by it because there is no righteousness in him. God's Law excites man to sin because he wants to justify his wrongs and be accountable to no one. The Word tells us that this is how man reacts to God's Law. The sting of death in man is the sin nature.

Man was created, however, to obey God not just externally but internally - which is even more difficult. In fact it is impossible for man to obey the Law of God (His moral laws) internally because at a heart level, "self" is always involved. Even the Christian struggles to put himself second and God first, often doing good in pursuit of recognition, God's favour, advancement, reward, etc. Therefore even the Christian will find himself obeying God from selfish motives.

“. . .Even the Christian struggles to put himself second and God first, often doing good in pursuit of recognition, God's favour, advancement, reward, etc. . .”

So how is it possible to obey from right motives? This only comes as we acknowledge our weakness, repent and then yield to the Lord and receive the empowerment necessary for change through the energies and graces of the Divine Nature. Then we are identifying with Christ not just positionally but experientially. Then we begin to seek to please God not to earn reward but because we see it as a privilege. Then indeed the glory for anything done will go to the Lord for it is His power alone which produces the result. Then

indeed will we not only be unable to claim any glory, we will have no desire to do so! Our reward will be the benefit of living in righteousness, e.g. joy of the Lord, faith, peace. Amen.

ARE WE UNDER LAW TODAY ?

Many people have a problem interpreting the phrase “*you are not under the Law but under grace*” as used by Paul in Romans 6:14. The phrase means that we are not under the Mosaic system as the means by which we please God. Some people take this phrase to mean that we now have great licence to act as we please, having been completely freed from responsibility to observe God’s laws at all. This is, of course, nonsense. It gives rise, in the extreme, to a system of thought called “antinomianism,” by which people hold to the view that moral law is not binding on Christians at all on the grounds that faith alone is the necessary requirement of salvation.

Paul refutes this approach entirely by saying “. . . *shall we sin, because we are not under the Law but under grace? God forbid*” (Romans 6:15). Then he goes on in Romans 6:16 to remind us that it is still up to us, as Christians, to choose, moment by moment, which way we will go. We can become the servants of Satan or God, in different areas of our lives, through our decision to yield ourselves either to sin or righteousness. And it is we who cast the deciding vote.

“. . . We can become the servants of Satan or God, in different areas of our lives, through our decision to yield ourselves either to sin or righteousness. . . ”

Also note that Christians who fall into unbelief that then causes them to deny Christ as Saviour and Lord will forfeit their salvation. Thus the old saying “once saved, always saved” is simply not true (Hebrews 3:12-14). Repentance and God’s forgiveness are needed to enable such people to be restored to Christ - to have their spirits cleansed of the pollution of darkness. While we are saved by grace through faith, we are, nevertheless, still subject to God’s eternal laws

and commandments, and are therefore accountable for obeying them. We will examine this point as we continue.

Adam was not under law but under grace in the garden, through Divine connection being a partaker of God's own Divine Nature. Yet he was still responsible for keeping God's laws. This is obvious for when he broke God's law by disobeying His direct commandment, Adam came under law and so did all his offspring - the whole world. Adam separated himself from the Father, and lost his privileged position of grace. Calvary has now addressed man's position and has brought saved man back under grace, positionally and also experientially (as he is led by the Spirit).

Now Adam was meant to obey God's laws, not by willpower but by God's graces through the energies of the Divine Nature enmeshed with Adam's human nature. This way has been brought back to us through the Cross, for Jesus has not only saved us legally but the power to live in the Father's will has been restored to us through the shedding of Christ's Blood and His Resurrection.

As it says in Romans 6:3-4, if "*we are buried with Him . . . into death*" then His Resurrection was our resurrection to "*newness of life.*" Indeed Jesus, as He said, is "*the way*" to obtain all things good, things only found in God's will, coming to us via God's power. There is no other way except the way of the Cross - the Atonement that has given us resurrection power which is newness of life - the graces and energies of God's Divine Nature enmeshing with our human nature. Amen.

The truth of the matter, as found in God's holy Word, tells us that man lives under either law or grace. Under law itself he will not live in Calvary's grace. But under grace, man will live according to God's laws. On this higher path, God will be glorified through man being lifted up to live at a higher level than he is capable of doing by himself. On this higher level, man will operate in the law of love, "agape love." This love in one's life causes the darkness to flee, and lights up one's life with the power of God. We are then given a clear, illuminated pathway which reveals the way to proceed.

There are certain types of sins, if practised, however, about which scripture warns us, that can give a heavy gravitational pull towards spiritual darkness, e.g. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. These kinds of sins can cause the Christian to deny God's ways and derail them from the Lord's prescribed order, placing them in a darkened valley of self-desire, self-rule and selfishness. The result will be a totally

blackened life, devoid of God's presence and light. Such former Christians will have allowed their relational truth and connection with Jesus to turn into historical truth (mental assent), which is to only know about Him. They will have thus journeyed into unbelief and therefore forfeited their salvation.

It is only as we choose to live under God's grace experientially, by yielding to the Holy Spirit, that love can come forth in our lives and light can illuminate the way of life before us. If we live under grace, we will not come under law or suffer its penalties.

Note: Law by itself works wrath because God's wrath is not averted by works of the flesh. The Gospel, by grace, enables the Law of God (His righteous standards) to be fulfilled in our lives. Openness causes grace to work on a man's heart to convict him of sin unto repentance (for justification or ongoing sanctification). Christians do not come under the Law of God in regard to judgement, for the Blood of Christ has paid the price.

*“. . .If we live under grace, we will not
come under law or suffer its
penalties. . .”*

Therefore while law is still alive, Christ has made us dead to it (i.e. its penalties). In Christ our spirit is made alive to God because Christ satisfied the Law of God in respect to sin through His sacrifice. Therefore we are no longer under the penalty of law concerning sin.

However, as we have said, the moral laws of the Old Testament are still incumbent upon us as Believers to obey today. Again God's grace has come to our rescue, for we must partake of God's provision through Calvary so that we can live under grace and so do the things we are required to do. Yes we are obeying God's moral laws when we do right, but it is not law we live by or under. Rather it is the grace of God that causes us to live according to God's moral standards.

So as New Testament Saints, grace rules our hearts and then outworks itself in the things we do and do not do. As we obey God's

laws through grace and by grace, we are dead to law and its penalties.

Scotfield writes in relation to this subject:

“The Christian doctrine of the law:

(1) Law is in contrast with grace. Under the latter God bestows the righteousness which under law, He demanded (Exodus 19:5; John 1:17; Romans 3:21, note; 10:3-10-; 1 Corinthians 1:30).

(2) The law is, in itself, holy, just, good and spiritual (Romans 7:12-14).

(3) Before the law the whole world is guilty, and the law is therefore of necessity a ministry of condemnation, death, and the divine curse (Romans 3:19; 2 Corinthians 3:7-9; Galatians 3:10).

(4) Christ bore the curse of the law, and redeemed the believer both from the curse and the dominion of the law (Galatians 3:13; 4:5-7).

(5) Law neither justifies a sinner nor sanctifies a believer (Galatians 2:16; 3:2-3, 11-12).

(6) The believer is both dead to the law and redeemed from it, so that he is “not under the law, but under grace: (Romans 6:14; 7:4; Galatians 2:19; 4:4-7; 1 Tim.1:8-9). And

(7) Under the new covenant of grace the principle of obedience to the divine will is inwrought (Hebrews 10:16). So far is the life of the believer from the anarchy of self-will that he is “inlawed to Christ” (1 Corinthians 9:21), and the new “law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2; 2 John 5) is his delight; whereas, through the indwelling Spirit, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in him (Romans 8:2-4; Galatians 5:16-18). The commandments are used in the distinctively Christian Scriptures as an instruction in righteousness (2 Tim.3:16-17; cp. Romans 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 9:8-9; Ephesians 6:1-3).”²

“. . . So as New Testament Saints, grace rules our hearts and then outworks itself in the things we do and do not do. . . ”

Christ not only paid the debt of sin, He also broke the dominion of sin. As we yield to the Holy Spirit in all that we do, we can be partakers at an experiential level of the Divine Nature. It is

this grace we are to live our lives by. Therefore we are to walk, run and speak under the rule of the Divine Nature. In this we indeed live by God's grace day by day. By this prescribed order through the Cross, Christ has destroyed the dominion of sin over the Saint. Amen.

ROMANS 6:11 Likewise reckon (consider) you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin (the sin nature), but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ROMANS 6:12 Let not sin (the sin nature) therefore reign (gain the upper hand) in your mortal body (showing that the sin nature can once again rule in the heart and life of the Believer, if the Believer doesn't constantly look to Christ and the Cross; the "mortal body" is neutral, which means it can be used for Righteousness or unrighteousness: E.S.B.), that you should obey it in the lusts (ungodly desires) thereof.

ROMANS 6:13 Neither yield you your members (of your body) as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin (the sin nature): but yield yourselves unto God (as we submit to God, the energies and graces of the Divine Nature will empower us as we believe for it), as those who are alive from the dead (raised up to walk in newness of life), and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God (by His grace).

ROMANS 6:14 For sin (the sin nature) shall not have dominion over you: for you are not under the Law (if we try to please God by living according to law of any kind, the sin nature will gain dominion over us), but under grace (we are to live under grace and by grace, allowing the Divine Nature to direct and empower us).

WHAT THEN IS OUR OBLIGATION TO THE LAW TODAY ?

We have seen that obedience to the Law (and indeed any law) cannot make us righteous before God, for the scriptures tell us:

ROMANS 3:28 *Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith (and only faith) without (apart from observing) the deeds of the Law (works will never justify anyone).*

What then is our relationship today to the laws of God? Though we are not under the Mosaic Law as a means of achieving acceptance with God, nevertheless we should seek to obey the will of God by conforming to the pattern of holiness contained within the Laws of God. This is our first duty as Christians, as shown by scripture:

ROMANS 12:1 *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God (not of yourselves), that you present your bodies a living sacrifice (we can't do this without the Holy Spirit's help), holy (again by means of the Holy Spirit), acceptable unto God (by taking up your cross of self-denial and continuing in God's Word), which is your reasonable service.*

1 PETER 1:14 *As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance (don't be ruled by the sin nature which ruled you before coming to Christ): (E.S.B.)*

1 PETER 1:15 *But as He Who has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation (in all your conduct, in everything you do);*

1 PETER 1:16 *Because it is written, "Be ye holy; for I am holy." (Leviticus 11:44) (Only through being yielded to the Father's will, and being focused in faith to receive the grace needed can we fulfill this command - self-reliance and following rules will not do it.)*

The Laws of God can help us gain a proper focus in relation to God's will on any matter. We need the wisdom contained within His laws, as written in the Bible, to guide our pathway.

“ . . . Being under grace does not lessen the obligation of man but rather increases it. . . to whom much is given, of him will much be required. . . ”

Being under grace does not lessen the obligation of man but rather increases it. The reason for this is revealed in the scriptural principle, to whom much is given, of him will much be required.

In Christ, while we are set free from the law of sin and death, we are set free in order to serve God by the power of His grace at work in us. We are not set free to do as we please. Before salvation we were slaves to unrighteousness, but as Christians we should be servants (even slaves) of righteousness - for we are not our own any more (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

ROMANS 6:16 Know you not, that to whom you yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness (through the graces of the Divine Nature energizing our human nature)?

ROMANS 6:17 But God be thanked, that you were the servants of sin (dominated and enslaved by the sin nature), but (now in Christ) you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine (“Jesus Christ and Him crucified” - 1 Corinthians 2:2) which was delivered you.

ROMANS 6:18 Being then made free from sin (freed from the power of the sin nature - but only as we yield, focus and believe to receive the grace needed), you became the servants of righteousness (conformity to the will of God in your lives).

ROMANS 6:19 I speak after the manner of men (in human terms) because of the infirmity (weakness) of your flesh (natural selves): for as you have yielded your members (parts of your body) servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity (in the past); even so now

yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness (only possible through the Holy Spirit).

ROMANS 6:20 *For when you were the servants of sin (the sin nature), you were free from (in regard to) righteousness.*

ROMANS 6:21 *What fruit (benefit) had you then (did you reap) in (from doing) those things whereof you are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death (the wages of sin is death - Romans 6:23).*

ROMANS 6:22 *But now (in Christ) being made free from sin (the domination of the sin nature), and become servants (bond slaves) to God, you have your fruit unto (resulting in) holiness, and the end everlasting life (or death, the choice is ours).*

“. . .Indeed Paul makes it clear that the fulfillment of the spirit of the Law is one of our primary Christian duties. . .”

As Christians, we should live by God-developed faith in willing obedience to the Laws (commandments) of God, being empowered by the grace of the Divine Nature. Indeed Paul makes it clear that the fulfillment of the spirit of the Law is one of our primary Christian duties, although, as we have said, we do not do this by willpower. It is by the Spirit's leading and through His grace that we live according to the spirit of the Law of God. Amen.

ROMANS 3:31 *Do we then make void the Law (Law of Moses) through faith? God forbid: yes, we establish the Law (the Law ever pointed to Faith in Christ). (E.S.B.)*

THE SPIRIT OF THE LAW

Background Reading: Romans 7:4-6

To say we are no longer under the Mosaic system does not mean we have no obligation to live a righteous life according to God's standards that were contained within it. We are saved by grace through faith, and therefore observing the letter of the Mosaic Law has become irrelevant as a means of pleasing God. This is because Christ fulfilled the requirements set out in the Mosaic Law so that perfect justice could be satisfied. However, as we have said, everyone in Christ is now obligated to observe the spirit of the Mosaic Law, that being encapsulated by the two commandments Jesus outlined in the Gospels (Matthew 22:36-40). This, of course, is meant to be done in the resurrection power supplied to us through the Divine Nature, of which we are partakers in Christ.

“. . . To say we are no longer under the Mosaic system does not mean we have no obligation to live a righteous life according to God's standards. . . ”

The moral requirements of God's Law that the Mosaic Covenant exposed, were always there. These moral standards, before Sinai, after Sinai and after Calvary are still God's will for man.

Neither Jesus nor Paul taught the “letter” of the Law, but they both taught that we need to obey the “spirit” of it, i.e. the moral standards or requirements that represent its foundation. For example, Jesus accused the Pharisees of attending in minute detail to the tithing of herbs but neglecting “*the weightier matters of the Law*”, in other words, what really mattered - justice and mercy and faithfulness” (Matthew 23:23). This, the spirit of the Law, which can also be identified as God's moral law, was in existence from the time of Adam, being concerned with a repentant or humble heart, faithfulness and love. Thus Abel fulfilled the spirit of the Law when he brought, with a proper heart attitude, offerings of sacrifice acceptable to God. Noah also pleased God by operating according to the spirit of the Law, i.e. in humility, faithfulness and love.

Those who had no knowledge of God were responsible for operating according to the spirit of the Law as it pertained to loving one's neighbour. (Paul outlines this principle in Romans 2:14-15. Here Paul clearly reveals that although the Gentiles did not have the revelation of the Mosaic Law, they were still aware of its basic moral requirements. This is because the spirit or intent of the Law has always been written on man's hearts.) The spirit of the Law of God, without any additional light given, is concerned with loving one's neighbour - that is, treating him as we would desire to be treated ourselves. Those who had been exposed to greater truth (i.e. the Israelite nation, Adam, Noah, etc.) were responsible also for loving God and trusting Him. So those with no knowledge of God were responsible for obeying the spirit of the Law according to the light given. And the spirit of the Law, or God's moral law, has been written on men's hearts since the creation of man.

We are of course unable to obtain salvation through observing the spirit of the Law. As we know, salvation only comes by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Everyone in Christ, however, is obligated, for righteousness' sake, to observe the spirit of the Law, expressed by Jesus in terms of the two great commandments - to love one's neighbour as oneself and to love God with all one's heart, soul and strength.

We who are alive to God in Christ can now obey the spirit of the Law through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. We who now owe allegiance to Christ, can, by His grace, walk in victory:

ROMANS 8:3 For what the Law could not do (was powerless to do), in that it was weak (weakened) through the flesh (sinful nature), God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh (man), and for sin (to be a sin offering), condemned sin in the flesh (in sinful man):

Another version reads:

ROMANS 8:3 For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh (those under Law had only their willpower, which is woefully insufficient; so despite how hard they tried, they were unable to keep the Law then, and the same inability persists presently; any person who tries to live for God by a system of laws is

doomed to failure, because the Holy Spirit will not function in that capacity), **God sending his own Son** (refers to man's helpless condition, unable to save himself and unable to keep even a simple Law and, therefore, in dire need of a Saviour) **in the likeness of sinful flesh** (this means that Christ was really human, conformed in appearance to flesh which is characterized by sin, but yet sinless), **and for sin** (to atone for sin, to destroy its power, and to save and Sanctify its victims), **condemned sin in the flesh** (destroyed the power of sin by giving His Perfect Body as a Sacrifice for sin, which made it possible for sin to be defeated in our flesh; it was all through the Cross): (E.S.B.)

ROMANS 8:4 *That the righteousness (righteous requirements) of the Law might be fulfilled (fully met) in us, who walk not after the flesh (sinful nature), but after the Spirit (being led and empowered by Him).*

Christ's death was vicarious, which means "on behalf of another." He was our substitute, for He stood in our place and took the penalty we deserved! The difference is that He was spotless and pure, and so able to become the sin offering - the offering that would appease God's wrath. We were sin-stained and hopelessly lost souls with a pervading sin nature. Nothing in us, and nothing we could do could have satisfied God's justice. As we have said, he paid a debt He did not owe - we owed a debt we could not pay.

“. . .The death of Christ as our representative was counted as the death of those He represents. . .”

Only Christ, the sacrificial Lamb, the atoning vicarious sacrifice could save us from God's wrath and sin's power. Jesus came to die specifically for us, and as our Kinsman Redeemer, our representative, He stood in our place. The death of Christ as our representative was counted as the death of those He represents. When we asked Him to be our Lord and Saviour, we were

identifying with the Christ (the Anointed One) on the cross. So as He died, we too have legally died. Only in Him and no other can this take place. The penalty of sin was borne for us personally by Christ at Calvary. Then by reason of His innocence, He was raised from the dead, being glorified by the Father. The courts of heaven agreed with Christ when He said *“It is finished,”* for sin’s penalty (after He breathed His last) had been paid and the law of perfect justice had been satisfied.

For our sake God *“made Him to be sin (the sin offering)”* (2 Corinthians 5:21). In other words, God made Christ the representative for sinful man, so becoming the “Sin Offering” at Calvary, thereby taking the penalty for sin in our place.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21 For He (the Father) has made Him to be sin (the sin offering) for us, Who knew no sin (Jesus was sinless before, during and after the cross - 1 Peter 2:22); that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

God, by imputing all our sin to Christ, enabled Him, “in our stead,” to deliver us from sin’s penalty. He did this by becoming a curse for us.

Christ’s death was not that of a martyr. Rather, as a substitute, He suffered and died in our place, so that we may live with God.

He allowed His life’s Blood to be shed for the purpose of death on our behalf so that we could be reconciled to God.

“. . . God, by imputing all our sin to Christ, enabled Him, “in our stead,” to deliver us from sin’s penalty. . .”

Now through the power of the Divine Nature, imparted to us at salvation through Divine connection, we can meet *“the righteous requirements of the Law.”* Our obligation, as Believers, is not lessened but rather increased, for we have been given the power and the means to resist the dictates of the flesh and to do the will of God on a day to day basis.

Jesus made it clear He had not come to abolish the Mosaic Law, for He said in Matthew 5:17-18:

MATTHEW 5:17 ***“Think not that I am come to destroy (or take away) the Law, or the (Old Testament) Prophets (their predictions): I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill (Jesus fulfilled the Law by meeting its just demands with a Perfect Life, and satisfying its curse by dying on the Cross [Galatians 3:13] : E.S.B.).***

MATTHEW 5:18 ***For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass (away), one jot or one tittle (not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen) shall in no wise (by no means) pass from the Law, till all (it foreshadows) be fulfilled.”***

The Law and the Prophets had constantly pointed to the time when people would be justified by faith. So Jesus’ work was a fulfillment of the Mosaic Law as it pertained to sacrifice, and an establishment of all that had been given.

Scotfield speaks of Jesus’ relationship to the Mosaic Law as follows:

“Christ’s relation to the Law of Moses may be thus summarized:

(1) Christ was made under the Law (Galatians 4:4).

(2) He lived in perfect obedience to the Law (Matthew 17:5; John 8:46; 1 Peter 2:21-23).

(3) He was a minister of the Law to the Jews, clearing it from rabbinical sophistries, enforcing it upon those who professed to obey it (e.g. Luke 10:25-37), but confirming the promises made to the fathers under the Mosaic Covenant (Romans 15:8)

(4) He fulfilled the types of the Law by His holy life and sacrificial death (Hebrews 9:11-28).

(5) He bore, vicariously, the curse of the Law that the Abrahamic Covenant might avail all who believe (Galatians 3:13-14).

(6) He brought out, by His redemptive work, all who believe - from the place of servants under the Law to the place of sons (Galatians 4:1-7).

(7) *He mediated by His blood the New Covenant of assurance and grace in which all believers stand (Romans 5:2), so establishing the “law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2) with its precepts or righteous living made possible by the indwelling Spirit.*”³

Jesus came to fulfill the Law. He did not put an end to it but was its proper goal and conclusion. The intent of the Mosaic Law is then fulfilled as Believers walk in the transforming power of the indwelling Spirit. Therefore the spirit of the Law is defined at its most basic level as operating in love. This then remains for us today, a true and accurate representation of the *“righteous requirements of the Law,”* i.e. to love God and man in the power of the Spirit.

“ . . . The intent of the Mosaic Law is then fulfilled as Believers walk in the transforming power of the indwelling Spirit. . . ”

As one writer puts it so well:

“Satan’s legal hold upon humanity is sin. This means that he has a legal right to place man in captivity because of sin; however, when Jesus satisfied the demands of the broken law, which had condemned man, which should be obvious, simply because man could not keep its precepts, Satan’s legal hold was broken. The Law of Moses, which in effect was the Righteousness of God, condemned all of mankind, simply because they could not keep its precepts. Law being law, not only portrayed these statutes and precepts, but as well, demanded that they be kept, with a severe penalty attached if they were not kept, which of course, applies to all law.

Man woefully failed to keep the Law, simply because he was incapable of doing so, as a result of the Fall. So the penalty was demanded!

Jesus came, perfectly kept the Law in every respect, doing so on our behalf, thereby gaining its Righteousness, again on our behalf, meaning that Faith in Him, grants us the privilege of Law-keeper instead of Law-breaker, which we actually were. He then went to the Cross to satisfy its penalty, which was death. But being a Perfect

Sacrifice, and having atoned for all sin, which He did by His death, death could not hold Him. The wages of sin is death, but if there is no sin, there is no death; consequently, death has lost its power; consequently, Jesus rose from the dead, once again, for all for us.

Simple Faith in Him, and what He did, which speaks of the Cross, grants to us a spotless, pure, perfect Righteousness, i.e., “the Righteousness of Christ,” and in brief, that is the “Word of Righteousness.” ”⁴

(underlines added)

“. . . Therefore the spirit of the Law is defined at its most basic level as operating in love. . . ”

GOD’S MORAL ABSOLUTES

When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, the real issues of right and wrong were addressed at a moral level. These absolutes have not changed.

Now it was and still is impossible for unregenerate man to produce anything that is good and lasting. Good only comes from God, and His laws are both good and constant. Man’s laws change with shifting cultural dictates and can become evil, and thus totally at odds with God’s inviolable moral absolutes. For example, today unregenerate man says according to law (the law of the land) that it’s acceptable to have an abortion if the mother chooses to do so. But God says, “You shall not murder.” See the difference! The water of God’s Word, being the holy standard of God’s law on the matter, does not mix with the oily contaminant of self-rule with no regard for human life. In fact the law of the land in many countries of the so-called “civilized world” gives mothers a legal knife so they can, in all “clear conscience,” stab the child in their womb, causing a mortal blow. Whether these babies die inside their womb or on a kidney tray gasping for breath is not even a consideration in their decision. Shame on the law makers and cowardly self-serving politicians who remain quiet on this abomination. They are guilty as well as the parents of the murdered unborn, and the blood of these babies is on their hands! All one day will be accountable for their atrocities.

Today society pays the price with a curse. But remember that our God of love is still calling all to repent and be saved, forgiven and cleansed.

“ . . .When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, the real issues of right and wrong were addressed at a moral level. These absolutes have not changed. . .”

The Ten Commandments constitute the moral heart of the Old Covenant. While the Old Covenant was a ministry of condemnation and the New Covenant is a ministry of righteousness, nevertheless, the moral laws of the Old Covenant are still incumbent upon us as Believers to obey today.

As it says in the Pulpit Commentary:

“The perpetual obligation of the Law given under the old covenant, . . . appears to be emphatically affirmed by our Lord : “I came not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil: for verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the Law, till all things be accomplished” (Matthew 5:17-18). And the recognition of this principle underlies all His moral teaching; as, for example, in the sermon on the mount; in His controversies with the Jewish rabbis; in such passages as Mark 10:19; Matthew 22:37-40. The moral Law given in the Old Testament amalgamates itself with that given in the New, forming one whole.”⁵

(underlines added)

The rule of life, however, is now not mere obedience to the directives of the Ten Commandments, with the exception of the fourth, but faith in the Word of God - and proper faith is only possible when man’s spirit is energized by the Divine Nature. Then we are empowered both to desire and to do God’s will.

So God’s gift is Himself flowing through us. In fact His Nature can infuse into our nature to cause a holy passion to flood our soul so that it rules our behaviour towards God and man.

The Mosaic Law was an external way of God establishing His moral absolutes in the lives of the Israelites. The New Covenant is an internal way of God establishing His moral absolutes in the hearts and lives of Christians. Because we are regenerated and so belong to Him, God now can write His moral absolutes on our hearts.

Prior to the Cross, God could not write His laws on men's hearts because He did not own their hearts:

JEREMIAH 31:33 ***“But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the House of Israel; After those days,” saith the Lord, “I will put My Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people.”*** (“The Covenant” spoken of here, as stated, is the “New Covenant,” that which we have in our present Bibles. The phrase, “After those days, saith the Lord,” refers to the intervening time from the days of Jeremiah even unto the Second Coming, at which time Israel will then accept the New Covenant, i.e., “Christ.”) (E.S.B.)

HEBREWS 10:16 ***“This is the Covenant that I will make with them after those days,” says the Lord, “I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them (this is the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit through the provisions of the New Covenant);***

HEBREWS 10:17 ***And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.”*** (Psalm 103:12)

Unregenerate man himself had to write God's laws on his own heart:

PROVERBS 3:3 ***Let not mercy and truth forsake you: bind them about your neck; write them upon the table of your heart***

“. . .we can see clearly that, despite the different means of bringing His moral absolutes to man, these moral absolutes are just that - God’s eternal and unchangeable standards of righteousness. . .”

However we can see clearly that, despite the different means of bringing His moral absolutes to man, these moral absolutes are just that - God’s eternal and unchangeable standards of righteousness. Therefore it has been said that:

“. . . the abolition of the whole Mosaic Law does not set man free from the eternal, unchangeable, moral absolutes of God. Although the Mosaic Law did present God’s moral absolutes, it was only one of His ways of administering His eternal, unchangeable absolutes to one nation of people (Israel) during one period of history (from Sinai to the death of Christ). Thus, the abolition of the Mosaic Law involved only the abolition of one way of God’s administering His absolutes, not the abolition of the absolutes themselves.”

Clearly *“. . . since God’s moral absolutes are eternal and unchangeable, they were in effect before God instituted the Mosaic Law at Mount Sinai. This means that prior to Mount Sinai God administered His unchangeable absolutes in ways other than the Mosaic Law. It also means that God’s eternal moral absolutes can be in effect without the Mosaic Law being in effect.”*

Finally, *“The Old Covenant Mosaic Law was an external way of God’s administering His absolutes. The Law was written on stone outside the people. Since the death of Christ, God has been administering His moral absolutes in the internal way of the New Covenant, with His rule of life written in people’s hearts (Jer.31:33; Ezek.36:26-27; 2 Corinthians 3:3). The internal way of the New Covenant is different from and superior to the external way of the Old Covenant Mosaic Law (2 Corinthians 3:3-11). The moral absolutes have not changed, but God’s ways of administering those absolutes has changed.”⁶*

(underlines added)

OUR POSITION TODAY

Background Reading: Romans 8:1-17

To the impossible situation of man's helplessness and hopelessness, God brought the Redeemer. The Holy One of God, the innocent Lamb, would first of all satisfy the just demands of the laws of God Himself by remaining sinless and pure for the whole term of His earthly life. As has been said, Jesus kept the Law of God totally and perfectly on our behalf, remaining sinless for His whole earthly walk. He then suffered the penalty of the Law on the Cross, becoming a curse for us, on our behalf and in our place (Galatians 3:13). Therefore as the substitutionary sacrifice (“... *without the shedding of blood there is no remission [forgiveness]*” - Hebrews 9:22), He paid the penalty for the sins of the whole world, thus enabling a holy and righteous God to grant mercy to the sinner on the basis that perfect justice has been satisfied:

ROMANS 5:18 *Therefore as by the offence (sinful action) of one (Adam) judgement came upon all men to condemnation (all are sinners and are lost, separated from God); even so by the righteousness of one (the one act of righteousness by Jesus) the free gift came upon all men (who believe) unto justification of life (union with God).*

ROMANS 5:19 *For as by one man's disobedience many (all in fact) were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (even unto death) shall many be made righteous (all who believe and receive Jesus as Lord).*

“... Jesus provided the legal means of freedom for humanity by giving Himself as the perfect sin offering. . .”

Jesus provided the legal means of freedom for humanity by giving Himself as the perfect sin offering. Thus the writer of Hebrews tells us that the sacrifices required by the ceremonial laws

under the Mosaic code were only “*a shadow*” or a type-pattern of that which was to come - Christ’s sacrifice. This was because “*it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins*” (Hebrews 10:4). As we have learned, these sacrifices, being a type of the Christ to come, only held eternal death at bay. They could not deal with it, nor wipe the slate clean - only cover over, atone. Because Christ fulfilled all righteousness, however, those who accept Him as Saviour and Lord can have His righteousness legally imputed to them. **This means that just as the sin of the world was imputed to Jesus, His righteousness is imputed to those who believe.** This is the mystery of the Gospel - the Great Exchange. Jesus paid a debt He did not owe, and we owed a debt we could not pay. It is only in accepting Christ’s work on our behalf that we can stand in a position of righteousness before God and fulfill all God’s righteous requirements through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. This is possible because the sin nature has been washed from our spirit, and is legally disengaged - and we now have the Holy Spirit dwelling within us. The power of the corrupt sinful nature has thus been legally broken.

While the power of the carnal nature has indeed been legally dealt with, however, the sinful Adamic nature continues to reside within the Christian - not in his spirit but in his flesh. The struggle with this aspect of our nature is well documented in Paul’s Epistles, e.g. Galatians 6:17, Romans 7:17. Our responsibility is then not to yield to the sin nature but to yield to the Holy Spirit so that we may be empowered by the energies of the Divine Nature to do the will of God. In this way we are therefore able to put to death the deeds of the flesh. In fact, scripture tells us we are now no longer under any obligation to the sin nature except to put it to death on a continual basis by yielding to the Spirit of Grace in order to do so.

“ . . . Our responsibility is then not to yield to the sin nature but to yield to the Holy Spirit. . . empowered by the energies of the Divine Nature to do the will of God. . . ”

ROMANS 8:12 *Therefore, brethren (fellow Christians), we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh.*

ROMANS 8:13 *For if you live after the flesh, you shall die (fail to walk in victory): but if you through the Spirit (by His power and His power alone) do mortify (put to death) the deeds of the body, you shall live (in the victory provided by the Cross).*

ROMANS 6:12 *Let not sin (the sin nature) therefore reign in your mortal body (in the heart and life of the Believer, we can allow the sin nature or the Divine Nature to have ascendancy), that you should obey it in the lusts (ungodly desires, drives, attitudes, ideas, plans) thereof.*

ROMANS 6:13 *Neither yield your members (the parts of your earthly body) as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin (the sin nature): but yield yourselves unto God (we are to yield ourselves to Christ and the Cross; that alone guarantees victory over the sin nature: E.S.B.), as those who are alive from the dead (raised into “newness of life” - Romans 6:4), and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God (by faith through the graces of the Divine Nature).*

ROMANS 6:14 *For sin (the sin nature) shall not have dominion over you (if and only if you walk according to God’s prescribed order of victory) . . .*

This then is the way we make our legal freedom an experiential reality in our day to day walk. We can now serve God without condemnation as we walk after the Spirit of God, not the flesh. In this way we are freed from the law of sin and death, as in “newness of life,” we purpose to live in the Law of Life in Christ Jesus. Amen.

ROMANS 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

ROMANS 8:2 *For the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.*

Wuest says about this verse: “*The law here is not a written law but a regulative principle which exercises a control over the life of the believer. This regulative control over his life is exercised by the Holy Spirit. This control is in the form of the energy given the believer both to desire and to do God’s will, this energy coming from the life that God is, which in the believer is given him by reason of his position in Christ Jesus. One could translate, “For the law of the Spirit, of the life in Christ Jesus.” One could interpret, “For the regulative principle of the Spirit, namely, the life which is in Christ Jesus,” this freed me from the regulative principle of sin and death (the evil nature), at the moment I put my trust in the Lord Jesus and was saved. It is Romans 6 in a nutshell. Alford says “This law of the Spirit of life having freed him from the law of sin and death, so that he serves another master, all claim of sin on him is at an end - he is acquitted, and there is no condemnation for him.” Denney explains, “It is subjection to the law of sin and death which involves condemnation, emancipation from it leaves no place for condemnation.” The Spirit which brings the believer the life which is in Christ Jesus, brings with it also the divine law for the believer’s life; but it is now, as Paul says in Galatians 3:21, a law which is able to give life, not an impotent law written on tables of stone, and hence righteousness comes by it; and it proves more than a match for the authority exercised over man by the forces of sin and death.”*

*“Translation. (Romans 8:2-4). For the law of the Spirit, of the life in Christ Jesus, freed you once for all from the law of sin and death. For that which is an impossibility for the law, because it was weak through the flesh, God having sent His Son in likeness of flesh of sin, and concerning sin, condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law may be brought to completion in us who, not as dominated by the flesh are ordering our behavior, but as dominated by the Spirit.”*⁷

(underlines and bracketed reference added)

‘ . . . The law here is not a written law but a regulative principle which exercises a control over the life of the believer. . . ’

So God condemned sin in the flesh through Christ’s sinless life. Vincent (Vincent, Marvin R., Word Studies in the New Testament) states that “condemned” in this context refers to sin being deposed from its dominion. This was impossible for the Law, which could pronounce judgement and inflict penalty, but not dethrone.

May you have the victory in Christ. Amen!

For further information or teaching material to help you grow in the Christian faith, please visit:

CROSSROADS INTERNATIONAL
FULL GOSPEL MINISTRIES
crossroadsministries.org.au

NOTES

NOTES

- 1 S.B.C. 1 Corinthians, pgs. 598-599.
- 2 Scofield, C.I., The New Scofield Reference Bible, Galatians 3:19 – 25.
- 3 Scofield, C.I., The New Scofield Reference Bible, Matthew 5:17
- 4 S.B.C. Hebrews, pg.275.
- 5 The Pulpit Commentary, pg.255.
- 6 Israel My Glory, Vol.49 Issue 5, 1999.
- 7 Wuest, Kenneth S., Wuest's Word Studies From The Greek New Testament, Romans 8:2-4.

*"We have a vision
to see people living
in abundant life
by the power of God
through Jesus Christ"*



www.crossroadsministries.org.au