

“RELEASED FROM THE LAW”

New Me, Part 4
August 23rd, 2009

Many Christians have a relationship with God that consists of things I need to do or not do

Many Christians have no real relationship with God, but a significant relationship with law

Serious Problems Relating To God On A “Law” Or “Rule” Basis

1. Destroys your intimacy with God

When we live in a law based relationship with God, you live in a performance based acceptance relationship

In a performance based relationship there is always the element of fear

2. Destroys your relationship with others

Since we know we don't always live up to God's standards, we live with an element of condemnation

When we feel condemned, we in turn want to criticize or judge those around us

3. Hinders those we want to influence the most

There is nothing appealing about a “legalistic” type relationship with God

If we introduce our kids to a law based relationship with God, they will distance themselves from that as soon as they get the chance

Why God Gave Us Laws

God chose the nation of Israel as His own unique and holy nation to serve as “priests,” connecting mankind with God

Exodus 19:5-6 (NIV) “[God said] Now if you obey Me fully and keep My covenant, then out of all nations you will be My treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for Me a kingdom of priests & a holy nation.”

Deuteronomy 21:18-21 (NIV) “If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him, his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town. They shall say to the elders, ‘This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us...’ Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid.”

Israel's blessings that God wanted to give to them required obedience to the law

Christ came and did two things that were key to God's law: 1. He perfectly obeyed the Law; 2. He gave His life as a perfect sacrifice for sin

Romans 3:20 (NIV) "...through the law we become conscious of sin."

Romans 5:20 (NLT) "God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were."

Galatians 3:24 (NIV) "So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith."

Matthew 5:17 (NLT) "Don't misunderstand why I have come. I did not come to abolish the law of Moses or the writings of the prophets. No, I came to fulfill them."

Romans 10:4 (NIV) "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes."

The law shows us our need of Christ

A New Way Of Relating To God

God has instituted a new system of relating to Him based on what Christ has done; it's called grace

Romans 7:1 (NIV) "Do you not know, brothers – for I am speaking to men who know the law – that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives?"

Foundational principle of this series – "In Adam" I was bound by sin & the law; but "In Christ" there is a new me because of what Christ has done

Romans 7:2,3 (NIV) "For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man."

Romans 7:4 (NIV) "So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God."

Romans 7:4 (NLT) "So this is the point: The law no longer holds you in its power, because you died to its power when you died with Christ on the cross. And now you are united with the one who was raised from the dead. As a result, you can produce good fruit, that is, good deeds for God."

God offers us a relationship with Him through Christ that changes your life forever, and you'll never want to go back to the old system again.

Romans 7:6 (NLT) "But now we have been released from the law, for we died with Christ, and we are no longer captive to its power. Now we can really serve God, not in the old way by obeying the letter of the law, but in the new way, by the Spirit."

Romans 6:14 (NLT) "Sin is no longer your master, for you are no longer subject to the law, which enslaves you to sin. Instead, you are free by God's grace."

God wants you to take the finished work of Christ for you and relax, get off the treadmill of obeying the law and develop your Relationship with Christ

Galatians 5:1 & 13 (NLT) "So Christ has really set us free. Now make sure that you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law...For you have been called to live in freedom – not freedom to satisfy your sinful nature, but freedom to serve one another in love."

Chuck Swindoll "If you're not tempted to take advantage of grace, you don't fully understand it."

Law Keeper Quiz

1. Do you think of your time with God as something that keeps God happy?
2. When you sin do you want to distance yourself from God, i.e. clean yourself up, and then come back to Him?
3. Do you judge other's spiritual performance?

My Next Step Today Is:

- I am asking God to help me internalize, I am not living under a system of law, but in a new relationship with God based on grace because of what Christ did for me
- I will read the book of Galatians this week
- I will memorize Romans 6:14
- I can help at the Kids Festival on Saturday, September 19th