

# The Law Verses Faith (Grace)

By B. D. Tate

Something that has been made clear to me lately is how **the law** being taught as part of the gospel **is actually hindering us from faith and walking in grace!** This verse has been pointed out and brought to my attention:

Ro 4:14 **For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void and the promise made of no effect,**

This is showing that we must understand that faith and the law are actually ***two opposing forces*** in our life ***because of sin***. We have often, if you are like me, **considered that keeping the law or trying to would be good and not be a problem**. In other words, I will use my faith and keep the law as much as I can. **To the average Christian this simply means I'm doing my best to be good.**

## A Wrong Foundation!

**It is trying to keep the law (trying to be good) as much as we can and then trusting that our faith provides that God's grace covers the rest!** Paul the apostle is teaching us that by keeping the law ***in any way*** we are actually making ***faith void*** and the promise of no effect. To the degree that we are trying to merge or marry or co-mingle **our efforts** to live ***for God*** through the law and faith we are in conflict with the gospel. **The law is about the natural man, the flesh**, and exposing sin nature; while faith and grace are about the Spirit, supernatural man, and ***living to God's nature in us!***

Gal. 2:16 "**knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law** but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; **for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.**

When we think about receiving from the Lord, walking in the Spirit, manifesting the power of God, doing the works that Jesus did; none of this can be achieved or worked through the law in any way (nothing of our effort), it is based on **the Word we believe.**

For example, if we consider what the problem might be in our inability to receive or accept what God has done for us in Christ—such as healing. Most of us immediately think that there is **something wrong with us.** The analogy is that God is broadcasting but there is something wrong with the receiver! There is something wrong with the receiver and there are a host of things that could hinder our receiving. Take the following list for example:

**The list includes:** ignorance of the truth, knowing the truth but from our heart we don't believe God will do it; loving the world and the things of the world; loving our family more than God; not loving God first and with all our heart; Not knowing what God's will is; unbelief that focuses on failure, lack, fear...unbelief that actually believes what others say more than what God said; natural unbelief where the symptoms and circumstances overwhelm our faith...living self centered, not denying self enough...praying with wrong motives, not being broken enough, not praying with our whole heart...

We think that the wrong in us is our sinfulness or pride, or the lack of faith; that in essence we are **unworthy!** When I was in High school my friend came to me asking how to be saved. I was thrilled to have this happen but soon learned that he was

completely frustrated and baffled because he'd done everything the scriptures ask us to be saved. I went through the steps with him too and yet he did not receive his salvation. I took him to my brother who was fresh out of bible school in Texas, he went through the steps of salvation too; but still my friend was hurting, looking, grasping and not receiving. Finally, my brother said to him, "If you have done everything God has asked with your heart but do not have salvation, then you are calling God a liar!" The moment my brother said that tears started flowing down my friend's face; He saw his problem, where he was missing it, and repented in his heart. He **immediately received his salvation.**

**I share this to say that locating our heart, which may seem like bad news, is vital sometimes in order to point it to the good news!**

There is however another problem with listing all of the possible hindrances to receiving or accepting our miracles, signs, wonders, and answers through the Spirit. **That is by listing all these things it can become a source of discouragement.** We can feel overwhelmed with all the things we must get in order before we're ready to receive. **We can feel disqualified** and see qualification as an overwhelming effort...AND THAT EXPOSES THE ISSUE!

**Unfortunately we have a strong tendency to fall back into works.** It seems that we by nature see most everything through the eyes of works. For example, we work for our pay check, we work for approval, we work for praise, we work for relationships, athletes work for acceptance and winning seasons; **just about everywhere we look and in every way we think we see works.**

When we hear of hindrances we immediately think **I need to work on that!** Then, if the hindrances are a long list I begin to feel like I have **a lot of work to do to get my ducks in a row** so that I'm worthy to receive! In fact, we can quickly develop a mentality that receiving is going to be a hit or miss scenario (mostly missing because of all the hindrances we see); it can be very self defeating.

When we see a lot of hindrances voiding the effect of God's promise in our life—**we feel disqualified.**

That is not the right response to hindrances but it is common, natural, and since we are sin and self conscious, in **most cases it is inevitable!**

The moment we begin to get to work on hindrances **the tendency is to take over in our natural man and try to fix it!** Through our own works, through the flesh, and through **human effort no man will be justified before God.** The moment we try to get our ducks in a row so to speak we are **most likely crossing over from faith in God's grace to works in order to become worthy again.**

God is not looking for us to fix it but to acknowledge it. God is not looking for us to be perfect and have most of our hindrances removed so that He can work in us. God is looking for us to realize that **grace covers every one of them.** **When we get to work trying to fix ourselves we are back under the law.** When we realize, acknowledge and confess our hindrances knowing we can't fix them; **we can accept in full measure what Christ has done for us! That through our born again experience we are fixed!**

**If we feel disqualified because of hindrances we have gotten the message wrong.** We have responded out of our own pride, sin, and self centered ways again. We are examining our own heart to see if there is any wicked way within us. **The truth is, God has cleansed us through the blood completely and has qualified us to receive every blessing! There is nothing hindering God towards us in Christ Jesus!**

**The hindrances are what prevents us from believing the truth!**

**We are not disqualified ever**; however, like with my friend we may be *stuck for the moment* in unbelief that once exposed can *be released in the power of the cross*. **I can never fix myself but I can accept that I have been fixed in Jesus!** The hindrances therefore do not disqualify me at any time—I am qualified through His blood.

*I do need to repent from or rebuke* my unbelief; I need to turn away from my sense of unworthiness or guilt. I need to let go of my need to prove I deserve it, or that I've made *myself* useful to God. I need to let go any ideas that I am a better saint than others because God has used me to perform signs, wonders, and miracles in my life!

## What is the Point to All of This?

**The hindrances point to our tendency to act according to the law!** I don't think any of us would think that what is voiding the effect of God's promise in our life *is our effort to keep the law!* We wouldn't think that trying to keep the law is THE problem! When we address our hindrances to fix ourselves so that we are worthy to receive we are performing works of the law! It becomes a works mentality again and again.

Someone might ask: The law is holy what could possibly be wrong with trying to keep the law? As long as we don't understand this dilemma we'll never get past it. **This verse is telling us that by acting according to the law we make faith void and the promise of God of no effect!** Now that is pretty bad. This is a serious issue because without faith it is impossible to please the Lord. If the promise of God is of no effect we are reduced to *being mere men again—powerless*. We may know Jesus as in being born again but we have no power because we are depending upon our efforts based in the law.

## What Was the Purpose of the Law?

Our first inclination is to think that if I can obey the law I will be righteous before God. If I keep the law (if I'm good enough) I will please the Lord. If I keep the law I will be blessed.

Duet 30:15 "See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil,

16 "in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, and to keep His commandments, His statutes, and His judgments, **that you may live and multiply; and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you go to possess.**

The scriptures do teach that **IF** we can keep the whole law we will be righteous, please God, and be blessed; however, it further concludes that **NO** one can.

Ro 3:20 **Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified** in His sight, **for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**

Then it goes on to teach that if we can't keep the law in every way **we are cursed**; we will not please God, and we will not be blessed.

Duet. 30:17 "But if your heart turns away so that you do not hear, and are drawn away, and worship other gods and serve them,

18 "I announce to you today **that you shall surely perish; you shall not prolong *your* days in the land which you cross over the Jordan to go in and possess.**

19 "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, **that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life**, that both you and your descendants may live;

The bottom line is God is giving us a chance to see that we can't earn it or do it ourselves. God knows what we seem so ready to forget that we can't keep the law or love God as commanded. He gives us the law as a standard to reach Him, be like Him, to walk with Him; however, it is fruitless. In truth, He is waiting for us to understand how bad we need Him; **without Him we all fall miserably short of God's glory.**

## What is the End Result of the Law?

Romans 3: 19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, **that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.**  
20 Therefore **by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.**

It was given to bring us under guilt and expose our sin problem.

## It Established Guilt in Sin!

Romans 4:15 because **the law brings about wrath;**

Roman 5:20 Moreover **the law entered that the offense might abound.**

Ga 3:24 Therefore **the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ,** that we might be justified by faith.

Ga 3:25 But after faith has come, **we are no longer under a tutor.**

The Law brings about retribution, consequences, judgment and wrath (justice)! **It was meant to show us our sin and point us**

**to Jesus! For no one can keep the law and if salvation is based upon our works—we all will miss it.**

Romans 4: 16 **Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed**, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

This verse in essence is saying that as long as everything was based upon the law (our effort), and earning our place with God, (His blessings, His promises), that **no one would make it or qualify.** God in His mercy for all of **us** made a way so that the promise might be sure to **all of us**. He made it sure through Christ by faith in what He's done; it is through His grace being believed and accepted by anyone!

Joh 1:17 For the **law was given** through Moses, **but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

Roman. 3: 28 **Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.**

This verse tells us that faith is alive, active, and effective **APART** from the deeds of the law! This means as Christians any part of our effort to earn, work for, make it based upon our strength, is doomed to fail. **Faith works through love that is received from God; not for God.**

Our righteousness is established and made certain by faith not by any works before or after we got saved!

Romans 4: 3 For the promise that he would be the heir of the world was not to Abraham or to his seed through the law, **but through the righteousness of faith.**

Romans 5:1 Therefore, **having been justified by faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,



2 through whom also **we have access by faith into this grace** in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Paul explains it again in Galatians:

Gal. 3: 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! **For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.**

22 But the Scripture has **confined all under sin**, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given **to those who believe.**

23 But before faith came, **we were kept under guard by the law**, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

24 Therefore **the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ**, that we might be justified by faith.

25 But after faith has come, **we are no longer under a tutor.**

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have **put on Christ.**

## Qualification Based on What We Believe!

**So the promise of God comes only through faith in grace that God has worked in Christ Jesus. We are qualified based on one attribute: that we believe in Jesus and that means everything that was accomplished in the cross.** The law was manifest to show that sin is the problem; sin is self rule, pride, and trusting in one's self. The law exposes our complete failure to be just and righteous on our own; therefore, understand **that God has fixed the problem** in Jesus Christ. We are to come to Him by faith trusting in the finished work of the atonement—this is what believing in Him means.

Any effort now to earn our salvation and work for the promise (to base our blessings on our efforts) is foolishness. If we try to take credit or to try to make up for wrongs, to appease, to pay penance, to atone for our sins, it is foolishness. If we take the other approach to show how sorry we are; to beat ourselves, to punish ourselves, to make deals, bargain, in order to twist, beg, or pressure God to do for us, it is foolishness. No kind of **works of the law** for self justification or redemption is worth anything. By these efforts we are making the promise, which is by faith, void. In fact, for God these efforts are like a dog returning to its vomit! This righteousness is like filthy rags. This effort is like a polluted well or stagnate body of water—it stinks, smells, and breeds death. God is well pleased to give us life in Jesus' name; but if we take the position that we have earned some part in our salvation, we act foolishly.

**It is obedience of faith in His grace not obedience to the law**; it's "right believing," not "right living" that sets us free in Him. It is when we believe the right things that we'll live the right way in Christ.

Ro 1:5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for **obedience to the faith** among all nations for His name,

**Faith is nothing more than seeing Jesus...if we see Him in His grace He sees us in our faith!**

The blood has qualified all of us to walk in faith, in blessing, in healing, in health, and His prosperity; it is a gift to be received, accepted and believed! **This is obedience of faith to believe in Jesus and what He accomplished in the cross!**

**God wants us conscious of Jesus and what He's done in us!** He doesn't want us conscious of self and conscious of our sin. When we are focused on ourselves and our sin we are under the law and we lose. When we discover our hindrances and they are exposed what should we do? Recognize that they are coming from our old man and sin nature. Recognize that we are believing the wrong things. Then repent and turn away from them in Jesus' name and consider the matter closed! We are the ones giving these hindrances power. We can turn to grace and what is true in Jesus for us and when we do we are empowering the new life of Spirit in us.

We need to address our weeds (fears & unbelief) by taking the Word of God and meditate upon His answers to them. We give the Word and the Spirit the power to re-direct our hearts as we are taught from Romans 12:1-2:

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service.

2 **And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,** that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

## **The Conclusion: The Law Has No More Claim Against Us!**

Our sins are fully paid in Christ; do we believe this? Do not pay attention to the law's judgments against us. We have passed from judgment to life in Jesus; we are dead to it as if we died. It is like a divorce our relationship to it is over; it has no more claim against us before God! The curse of the law has been satisfied in

Christ Jesus; therefore, we are free from the consequences of sin and the curse.

The judgment is gone because the sacrifice of Christ under grace in Christ makes us completely free. When we know this truth we are free indeed. THIS INCLUDES ANY DESIRE, INFLUENCE, SUGGESTION, OR GUILT, and PROVOCATION TO WORK **FOR** THE BLESSING OF GOD. We put these things aside. We stand in His blessing, we stand in His righteousness, and we stand in His peace (rest) having been QUALIFIED by the blood of Jesus. Amen.

This means we are justified, redeemed, and **reconciled** to God; we are standing in righteousness as much as anyone can. Through one man death reigned in all of us (we were born into sin); through the second man (Christ) we, who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness, reign in life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5:17).

This is true: **as much as any man's sinful behavior in this world reveals what manner of sinners we ALL are; so it is that as much as any man's righteous acts in Christ reveals what manner of saints we ALL have become in Him.**

The works of God are: that we would fight the battle of faith (to believe) to overcome law consciousness (sin consciousness); that we would not accept our own heart's condemnation and accept the free gift of right standing in Jesus; that we would stand in the truth of what has been done for us (through Jesus) and begin to walk in it; that we'd know the truth that Jesus is our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption; that we'd accept as born again believers we are in His kingdom of love.

**As we become Jesus focused, God's love focused,** and stop being self focused; the gift of the Spirit works in us what is to will and to do that is pleasing to the Lord. The works of the law will fade away as we remain fixed in His wonderful grace. Remember, God has freely given to us (Holiness and Righteousness through Christ Jesus) what we could never have earned through doing our best or trying to keep the law. The gift comes to us through believing the truth. It comes through His grace and grace alone. Amen.