

# GRACE GAZETTE

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*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed.*

*Hebrews 12:12-13*

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## THE LAW OF EXPEDIENCY

*All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. 1 Corinthians 10:23*

The LORD GOD JEHOVAH delivered a law to the children of Israel, (in the wilderness wherein they wandered), on their journey to the promised land of Canaan. That law was delivered to them through the prophet Moses. That law consisted of many commandments which governed every aspect of their lives, both as to the manner in which they were to worship GOD and also how they were to interact with their fellow man. Much of it was summed up in what is generally called the "ten commandments" although it was more far reaching than this "Decalogue", since even the foods which they could and could not eat were spelled out in great detail. Not only was this an exact and comprehensive set of rules but it also carried with it a "principle" (or law) which undergirded its every jot and tittle, "Do this and live, disobey and perish". (Deut.27:26; Gal.3:10)

This "law" could not minister life unto it's hearers because there was a flaw in the fulfilling of it. Man's sinful flesh rose up in rebellion against it and could not (or would not) keep it. The law as GOD gave it (as are all things which HE does) was perfect, just, and holy and totally above all reproach. When Israel disobeyed this law they could not blame GOD nor could they escape the law's condemnation. (Rom.3:19;8:3; Heb.7:18,19)

Much error has been perpetuated concerning the giving of these laws to Israel. Men have sought to use these laws to bind others into religious conformity or to establish a standard of righteousness which they have assumed sets them apart from the heathen. The Pharisees during the time of CHRIST's ministry on earth were the epitome of such error. They delighted themselves in its letter yet had no regard to its intent. They were (as are all religious men who are not acquainted with their own natural enmity to the law of GOD) convinced that GOD gave these laws to establish righteousness in the earth. But the main reason that these laws were given was to establish and demonstrate man's inability and unwillingness to submit himself to GOD. (see Rom.3:20;Gal.3:21; Rom.7:5-11) Not only in the jot and tittle of the law as given to the Jews but in its "principle of law" (do this and live) which was given not only to the Jews but to the gentiles as well. (see Rom.2:12)

This very "principle" brings condemnation upon all in that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom 3:23) whether one is a Jew or a Greek. There was a law (principle) given by Moses, but there is a greater one given by CHRIST which speaketh better things than condemnation(see Heb.12:24) and goes beyond the deadly "do this and live" with great power to transform the lives of its subjects. Yes that "principle" of law which CHRIST has established in the earth is the fulfillment of the prophecy "*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.*" (Jer 31:33) Whereas the old law principle was weak through the flesh, this new principle is not dependent on the flesh for it's fulfillment but on what CHRIST has done in satisfying the claims of the law which were against us and in HIS power to make us new creatures whose delight is in the things of GOD.

As the old principle was “death and destruction to those who disobey” the new one centers on this *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law(principle) of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law(principle) of sin and death.” (Rom.8:1-2)* We are no longer under a schoolmaster but are the LORD’s free men. (see John 14:15,16; Gal.4:28-31)

Now while there is a natural enmity in man’s heart against the law of GOD there is an even stronger enmity against submitting to HIM with our whole heart. The natural man would rather embrace a law principle which is satisfied with letter obedience than he would to submit HIMSELF to the principle which CHRIST demands. (see an illustration of this in Mat.19:16-22) The principle of “expediency” is to be our guide rather than “lawfulness” for as the apostle says all things are lawful to us but all things are not “proper”.

What may be permissible under “law” is not necessarily permissible under “expediency.” Because something is “lawful” does not mean that it is edifying (i.e.; enriching) This is exactly what the apostle Paul is teaching in the text before us when he points out that our main concern with our conduct is not whether something is “lawful” or not but is it “useful” to the glory of the LORD. There is no law which holds sway over regenerate men, but the law of love, which is written not in tables of stone but on the fleshy tables of their hearts with the blood of CHRIST. A man’s wickedness may be subdued for a season by the fear of the law’s terror, but only a work of grace wrought by the SPIRIT of GOD can bring a man to a place of desiring to be conformed to CHRIST.

The law says “an eye for an eye,” expediency says “love your enemies and pray for them who mistreat you.” The law says “tithe”, expediency says “give”. The law says you are allowed to do this or that, expediency says “make sure your action brings glory to CHRIST and good to your fellow man.” The law says, “you can eat anything”, expediency says, “don’t eat anything that will cause your brother to stumble.” *“For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.”(Gal 5:13-14)*

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