

# GRACE GAZETTE

Volume XIII

Issue 2

*Published occasionally for Zion's mourners*

*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*

---

## IS CHRIST THE MINISTER OF SIN?

*But if, while we seek to be justified by Christ, we ourselves also are found sinners, is therefore Christ the minister of sin? God forbid.*

*Galatians 2:17*

The most common objection that many (well meaning teachers who oppose the preaching of free grace) set forth is that the preaching of salvation by grace alone, will cause men to sin without restraint. The reason that they feel this way is twofold. The main one is that they do not understand the pervasive nature of sin, man's inherent love of it and his complete inability to avoid it. The other is that they think men can be delivered from sin by the promotion of the law as either a threat or as a guideline by which to order his steps. It is this same line of thinking that causes men (in natural matters) to think that the passing of laws which outlaw guns or drugs will keep outlaws from obtaining and using them. The only ones who are hindered by such laws are those whose mind is of a nature to abide by the law.

When a man is confronted (by the SPIRIT, in the new birth) with his own innate depravity and acquainted with the spiritual nature of the law, it does not take him long to realize the sheer impossibility of his ever keeping it partially, let alone without any mixture of error. This "spiritual nature" of the law is that which is set forth by the LORD when HE said, "*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*" (Mat 5:27-28)

Then as he comes to understand the power of the law to condemn all who do not keep its every jot and tittle, he is even further terrified and brought to despair of ever standing before the LORD in anything but the perfect righteousness of JESUS CHRIST. It is an aberration, when those who confess such things should ever turn aside and embrace the very error which the Galatians seemed to entertain. Paul goes on to say that he stood in doubt of them, (i.e ; completely puzzled and doubtful of their calling, see Gal.4:20) as some of them sought to turn back to the law as a means of righteousness, even though they confessed that they believed in CHRIST.

Generally, few of these Galatians or their descendants, actually would say that they could be justified by the law, alone, yet they, in practice, deny that the righteousness of CHRIST is completely sufficient and efficient to address the issue of sin in the children of GOD. Thus they turn back to the law as a hedge against unrighteousness in the flesh and believe that the preaching of the law is a necessity, if sin is to be subdued. Religious men will always promote the "keeping of the law" because they are trying to cause natural men to abide by a spiritual law, having no understanding of the depravity of the natural man nor the lofty nature of the law.

When the LORD told Nicodemus, "*ye must be born again*" (i.e.; from above, a new birth producing a new creature); HE set forth the very ground upon which the Apostle Paul bases his whole argument upon. The Kingdom of Heaven cannot be gained in any sense or fashion by the efforts of the flesh, however noble, sincere, or timely they may be.

There can be no mixture therefore of that which is carnal with that which is spiritual, and a man cannot be justified by CHRIST if he is seeking any form of righteousness by the principle of law.

Paul is specifically addressing the penchant of the Jewish Christians at Galatia, to turn back to the rudiments of the Mosaic Law, with the circumcision of the flesh being the centerpiece. Yet this error is not confined to the Jews (whose emphasis is on circumcision) but is very prevalent among those Gentiles and Jews alike who call themselves by many names, not the least of which is "evangelical".

This error can usually be identified by a demand that men keep particular days (referred to as the Sabbath, whether Saturday or Sunday) but there are many other requirements that may be set forth under this umbrella, such as tithing, manner of dress, abstaining from the use of various substances, etc.

The notion among them is that CHRIST is sufficient for a standing of justification in the court of heaven as far as eternal salvation is concerned but that in order for them to be "sanctified" in the present time be obedient, or earn blessings, it is required of them to meet various demands which are set forth in the law of Moses or even some standards that may be defined as New Testament "requirements" which in some cases may exceed the demands of Moses' law.

Paul addresses this issue head on when he asks; *"Is therefore CHRIST the minister of sin?"* This is in response to his hypothesis that if we seek to be justified by CHRIST alone, are we then judged to be in sin because we believe that CHRIST alone is our sufficiency, in both sanctification and justification. Then the conclusion would have to be that CHRIST is actually condoning or encouraging those who do so to sin in their mortal bodies.

He was often accused of this by others. *"And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just."* (Rom 3:8) He so clearly and forcefully answers this very charge when he said, *"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"* (Rom 6:1-2)

Then he administers the "coup de grace" when he writes to these legalist deceivers, *"For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."* (Gal 2:19-21)

The very foundational principle of salvation by the free grace of GOD is that HE will perform all requirements unto our legal acceptance with GOD. HE is our LIFE, HE is our HOPE, HE is our SALVATION. *"That no flesh should glory in his presence. But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* (1Cor 1:29-31)

Those who assail the gospel of free and sovereign grace in reality assail CHRIST HIMSELF, for they say this very gospel which declares that CHRIST is ALL and in all, will encourage men to sin. Such opposition is built upon complete ignorance of what RIGHTEOUSNESS actually is and seeks to obtain glory which is in addition to that which CHRIST has supplied.

The fact is that whenever CHRIST is pleased to indwell one of HIS elect, HE makes that man a new creature. *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."* (2Cor 5:17)

Paul addresses this issue when he writes to the Corinthians, *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."*(1Co 6:9-11) GOD's people are not ruled by the principle of law but rather expediency. *"All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any."* (1Cor 6:12)

Is CHRIST the minister of sin? GOD forbid that such a question should even be asked. mam