

# GROW 201 – What We Teach

## Lesson 6

# RG<sup>2</sup> and the LAW

### KEY PASSAGE(S):

“For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom. 10:4).

### THE BIG PICTURE - THE *Story*

The GOSPEL, who JESUS is and what JESUS did, has a direct impact on how one is to view the LAW.

One of the tensions we have in considering this idea is what Law Paul references. There are three options.

1. There is THE LAW.
2. There is the law written in our hearts.
3. There are the laws establish by governments.

We are focused primarily on THE LAW.

This LAW has certain qualities.

- 613 Commands [The “10” represent]
- We speak of the Law as having three categories.
- Often, it divides into three categories: CIVIL, CEREMONIAL, and MORAL. Yet, no Jew would speak of it in this manner. They have no choice but to be codependent on one another; it is one! We do so in order to understand its magnitude. Thus, James can say, “He who keeps the entire Law yet breaks one has broken the whole” (James 2:10 [the boast of the rich young ruler, “I have kept the Law; Paul does the same “blameless”]).

### FIRST THINGS FIRST

Why is this area vital in our understanding of our relationship with God? Let us consider three. First, we can make it the means in our fellowship with God. Second, we can make it a litmus test in our fellowship with others. Finally, we can make secondary matters primary.

### BASIC IDEAS:

1. The LAW can never provide. It can only point.
2. The LAW points to Christ.
3. The Christian is no longer under the mastery or authority of the Law, but under the mastery or authority of GRACE.
4. In Adam, all are under the LAW. Thus, people are LAW BREAKERS.
5. In Christ, all are under GRACE. Thus, Christians are COMMANDMENT KEEPERS.

# GROW 201 – What We Teach

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Common misconceptions concerning the Law are two-fold. We either consider the LAW as bad. Or we look at the LAW as a burden. Neither are true.

We will look at the Law as it occurs in Paul's Letter to the Romans. In Romans the issue centered on the believers relationship to the Law. The question was, "Should we or should we not keep the Law?" There were two "OPINIONS" at that time. They centered on the eating of meats and the marking of days. Paul does not tell them to throw the Law out. Neither does He tell them to keep the Law. In fact, Paul still kept the LAW even after accepting Jesus as the promised Messiah (Acts 18:12, 13; 20:16; 21:17-28). He simply says, "You are not obligated to keep it. But do not think that if you do, the Law is the basis of your relationship with God." He is telling them "keeping the Law does not matter in determining if one is or is not accepted by God."

## INITIAL TRUTHS TO REMEMBER

It is clear in the Book of Acts that Paul continued keeping the Law as a way of life, but now he saw how the entire Law pointed to Christ and he believed Jesus was the fulfillment of the Law. It is clear the early church struggled with Law compliance for those who would believe (i.e. Acts 15).

"The centrality of this topic in Romans is evident from word statistics. From 195 instances of **nomos** in the New Testament, no less than 74 are found in Romans. This frequency is matched only by the shorter Letter to the Galatians, with 32 instances."<sup>1</sup>

Let us note for a moment the placement of occurrences in the Book of Romans.

| <u>Chapter</u> | <u>Occurrences</u> |
|----------------|--------------------|
| 2              | 11x                |
| 3              | 6x                 |
| 4              | 4x                 |
| 5              | 2x                 |
| 6              | 2x                 |
| 7              | 16x                |
| 8              | 4x                 |
| 9              | 2x                 |
| 10             | 2x                 |
| 13             | 2x                 |

It becomes apparent the word itself falls primarily in chapters 2 and 7.

## AN OVERVIEW OF THE LESSON

It is important to remember how the entire Old Testament is a shadow or type pointing to the substance or anti-type who is Jesus.

# GROW 201 – What We Teach

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1. Jesus fulfills the LAW (Romans 3:27-31).
2. The Law protects the SEED, but the Law is not the SEED (Rom. 4:1ff).
3. Although we are no longer obligated to keep the LAW, this does not make the believer lawless (Rom. 6:15-23).
4. In Christ, the believer has died to the power/authority of the LAW (Rom. 7:1-6).
5. In Christ, the believer is no longer under the LAW and thus faces NO CONDEMNATION (Rom. 8:1-4).

If one were to place their hand print on a surface, the print of the palm is the TYPE. The hand that produced the print is the ANTI-TYPE. Christ is the REALITY that produces the shadow, the various types, the copies. The **Shadow** can only point, it cannot provide. **Everything** in the Old Testament is shadow pointing to Christ. “Christ is the goal the Law points to and when the goal is reached, the Law ends.”

- <sup>27</sup> “Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures. . . <sup>44</sup> Now He said to them, ‘These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ <sup>45</sup> Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures” (Luke 24:27, 44, 45).
- “Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph’” (John 1:45).
- “You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me” (John 5:39).

## TODAY’S LESSON

### I. Jesus fulfills the LAW (Romans 3:27-31).

The LAW played a distinct role in the purpose of God. It had a beginning and an ending (Rom. 7:1-6; Gal. 4:1-7).

Jesus pointed to the LAW. God’s “substance” means of justifying sinners is in the person and work of Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:21-31). The Law was not opposed to justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone (Rom. 3:31; Gal. 3:21, 23, 24). Does justification by faith nullify the Law? **NO!** On the contrary, **IT ESTABLISHES THE LAW!**

We are people of the promise – the Law points to that promise (Gen. 3:15) and keeps that promise alive.

- “Do we then nullify the Law through faith? May it never be! On the contrary, **we establish the Law**” (Rom. 3:31).
- “**For Christ is the end of the law** for righteousness to everyone who believes” (Rom. 10:4).

# GROW 201 – What We Teach

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- <sup>8</sup>“Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for **he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.**  
<sup>10</sup>Love does no wrong to a neighbor; **therefore love is the fulfillment of the law**” (Rom. 13:8, 10).
- **“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill”** (Matt. 5:17).

## II. The Law protected the SEED, but the Law is not the SEED (Rom. 4:1ff).

The Law fulfilled its role as a revealer of Christ’s sufficiency / God’s Provision and a revealer of Humanity’s inability / Humanity’s Problem. The Law led to Promise, but the Law was not the Promise.

Part of the dilemma was man’s attempt to make the Law do something it was never intended to do. Anyone attempting to keep the Law by an act of works would fail. The Law could only be kept by faith (Rom. 9:31, 32). Believe the promise.

The Law also shows us hope and redemption through the sacrificial system. The Law had at its center an atoning sacrifice to propitiate God’s wrath against the sinner. The believer delighted in the Law [i.e. sacrificial system] for it was God’s means of being right with Him.

## III. Although we are no longer obligated to keep the LAW, this does not make the believer lawless (Rom. 6:15-23).

Notice Paul’s reasoning in Romans 6:15-23.

The Question (v. 15a): “Are we Lawless?”  
The Answer (v. 15b): “May it Never Be!”  
The Principle (vv. 16-18): “We are Slaves”  
The Contrast (vv. 19-23): “Death or Life”

Shall we sin because we are not under Law but under grace? Paul does not negate the idea that we are no longer under the Law. We are not. What Paul does is explain what living under grace looks like. The idea of being lawless **means without a master**. It does not mean **WITHOUT LAW**.

Verse one asks, “Should we sin that grace might abound?” Here the question is, “Can we sin since graces abounds?” Paul’s response to each is emphatic. Freedom **from** sin is **not** a freedom **to** sin.

### FREE FROM SIN

- “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 John 2:1).

# GROW 201 – What We Teach

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- “and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

Freedom from **sin’s tyranny and slavery** is not so much absence, but **ADVOCACY**. I still sin, but **JESUS** is my **ADVOCATE**. The struggle you and I have with our old nature is not won through force of will. The battle is won by remembering who did what.

**The question is not whether one will have a master, but which master one will serve.** Serving sin, Paul shows, leads to death; serving God leads to life.

## **IV. In Christ, the believer has died to the power/authority of the LAW (Rom. 7:1-6).**

Death breaks the power of the “MARRIAGE” covenant. The paragraph does not say the Law died, but you died in Christ. The Law is still operative, but not for you. Notice the language of our text: Jurisdiction (v. 1), Bound by (v. 2a [“knit together”]), Released from (v. 2b [3:3, 31; 4:14; 6:6; 7:2, 6]), Joined to (v. 3 [“married”]), and Free from (v. 3b [“unrestrained”]).

**The illustration** of marriage, death, and remarriage **is not the issue**. Paul’s intent is not to give a word about marriage. What Paul says is true, but it is not all that Paul says concerning marriage. He states a principle that everyone recognizes. When your spouse dies, the covenant between the two of you has been broken and you are now at liberty to marry someone else. What He began in 5:12, He continues throughout. You are no longer under the headship of Adam, sin, bondage, and death. You are now under the headship of Christ, righteousness, freedom, and life. For us to think we can be under grace and under Law at the same time is **adulterous** [improper / illicit / unlawful]. We cannot have two masters **AND** we are not moving between the two.

Our death, burial, and resurrection in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Rom. 6:1-14) severs our relationship to the Mastery of the Law. Because of this we are no longer under the Law, but under grace. Based on what has been said, in Christ your “marriage” to the Law has been broken and you are now free to be married to Him.

## **V. In Christ, the believer is no longer under the LAW and thus faces NO CONDEMNATION (Rom. 8:1-4).**

There is no condemnation for the justified because the law has been fully met. There is a new law in operation. It is the law of the Holy Spirit of life in Christ Jesus (v. 2). The law was weak to justify and to sanctify. Yet the inability of the law did not lie in it, but in us. This new law changes our relationship to sin.

God had to do what He did. Had not God taken the initiative, we would be lost forever. The Law could not free us from sin and death. Because of this, the Father sent His Son to condemn

# GROW 201 – What We Teach

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sin in the flesh. The weakness of the Law did not lie in the Law but in our flesh. This thought has already been noted in Lesson 8. Because of our sin God did for us what we could never do for ourselves. Let us never forget this singular idea. In the absence of a reigning grace, we could never have merited what was needed.

## CONCLUSION:

THE Law enables you to see yourself for what you are, a law breaker under the judgment of God needing a Savior. The Christian is not under the Law. Therefore, they will not be held accountable before the judge. Jesus will do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. He keeps the Law for us thus making us commandment keepers.

The Law was a wonderful pledge (promise in action) from God to bring forth His Son (the Seed Promise). The pledge is now fulfilled in Christ and the Old Testament Law is continuously fulfilled in Christ. The New Testament commands become the outworking of the Old Testament Law fulfilled through us, bringing us joy and assurance that the kingdom has begun and will continue.

| BASIC APPLICATION  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. What did you find helpful from today's lesson?                | 7. Is the NT believer under the OT LAW? Please explain your answer.   |
| 2. What did you find confusing from today's lesson?              | 8. If the NT believer is not under the OT LAW, are they without LAW [i.e. lawless]? Please explain your answer. |
| 3. How does this lesson help you in thinking through the gospel? | 9. Why has the authority of the OT LAW come to an end?  |
| 4. How does this lesson help you in how you view yourself?       |   |
| 5. What was your "aha" moment?                                   |   |
| 6. How might this text challenge you in your daily activity?     |   |

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<sup>1</sup> *The Theology of Paul's Letter to the Romans*, Klaus Haacker, 68.