

01 – NOT UNDER THE LAW

Romans 6:14 – “For sin shall not have dominion over you: for **you are not under the law**, but under grace.”

- ✓ I want to start this series with a question. (Maybe you’ve thought about it; maybe you haven’t.) **What does it mean to “not be under the Law”?** (We all know Paul *said* it. But what does it *mean*?)
- ✓ Does it Mean: “Nothing in the Old Testament *applies* to me – not even the 10 Commandments?” (I’ve known people who believed that! But is it true?)
- ✓ Just take a moment and think about it! What does it mean to “not be under the Law”? (We’re going to answer that. But before we do, let’s make sure we understand what the Law was, and why it existed in the first place.)

What Was the Law?

- ✓ First, let me tell you what it wasn’t:
 - 1.) The Law Was Not a Means of Salvation
- ✓ Every year in Bible school, I asked the students: **“How were people saved in the Old Testament?”** No matter which year I asked that, invariably the students came up with the same answer. They’d either say, “People were saved by keeping the Law”, or “by offering the sacrifices”. Both answers are wrong.
- ✓ **No one was saved in the OT by keeping the Law!** Paul makes that *really* clear.

Rom. 3:20 – “By the deeds of the law **no flesh** shall be justified in Your sight.”

- ✓ That’s pretty clear, isn’t it? (So, we can eliminate the first answer.) Well then, how about the second answer? Were people saved by offering the sacrifices? No.

Heb. 10:4 – “... it is **impossible** for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin.”

- ✓ So, the Law didn’t save, and the *sacrifices* didn’t save. So, how were people saved in the Old Testament? **They were saved by faith, just like we are!**

Rom. 4:3 (CSB) – “Abraham believed God, and **it was credited to him for righteousness.**”

Barclay – “... **faith put him into right relationship with God.**”

- ✓ In the OT, people were saved by faith, like we are! (The only difference is: In the OT, they looked **ahead in faith** to the Messiah who would come. In the NT, we look **back in faith** to the Messiah who came.)
- ✓ Well, if OT people weren’t *saved* by keeping the Law, then ...

What Purpose Did the Law Serve?

1.) The Law Was Given to Show Man His Need of a Savior

- ✓ Essentially, the Law pointed out man’s sin. (We read the *first* part of Romans 3:20. Now, let’s read the rest of it.)

Romans 3:20 (KJV, INT) – “By the deeds of the law no flesh shall be justified in Your sight.” (Then what good was it?) **“God gave (the Law) to show people that they are sinners ...”**

- ✓ That’s what it was for! God gave the Law as an **“unattainable standard of right”**. (The key word there is “unattainable”.) No

matter *how* hard people tried to keep the Law, they found out that they couldn't. (Eventually, they'd throw their hands up and say, "I can't do this! I can't save myself! I need a Savior." That was the point!)

- ✓ That's the first reason God gave the Law – to show people their need of a Savior. But there was *another* reason that God gave the Law.

2.) God Gave the Law to Help People Curb Sin

Gal. 3:19 (Voice) – "Why, then, was the Law given? It was given to help us **rein in our sins** until (Jesus) should come ..."

- ✓ Understand This: People in the Old Testament weren't born again. (Yes, they had a Covenant with God, and yes, their sins were forgiven. But they weren't *changed* on the inside, like we are.) God had to do something to help those people curb sin in their lives, so He gave them the Law.

An Illustration

- ✓ The OT Law was like a diaper. (I know that sounds strange. But think about it.) When your kids are little, they can't make it to the bathroom. They don't even try. They just relieve themselves wherever they are. (In the mall, at the supper table, in church ...)
- ✓ That's why diapers exist. You put **external controls** on your kids (diapers), because their **internal controls** haven't been developed yet. You do that for the first couple of years of their life. But eventually, the day comes when they're "potty trained", and the diapers can come off.
- ✓ When you take the diapers off your kids, you're not saying, "Now it's okay to 'relieve yourself' on the floor". You're saying, "Your internal controls have developed *enough*, that now you can make it to the bathroom!"

- ✓ What a great picture of the Law! God put **external controls** (the Law) on a people who had no **internal controls**. But, after Jesus came, and people were born again, they *did* have internal controls. Then the Law could come off.



- ✓ In removing the Law, God wasn't saying, "Sin doesn't matter any more. Live any way you want to!" He was saying, "You don't need the Law to curb sin anymore. Just walk after the love I put in your heart, and you'll be fine."

That's How It *Works* in the New Testament

- ✓ Once the love of God had been shed abroad in our hearts (Ro. 5:5), God could replace the 613 OT commands with just one – "Walk in love". (That *one command* will control sin in our lives, if we'll obey it.)

Rom. 13:9-10 – "**When you love others, you fulfill what the law has been after all along. The Law's code: Don't sleep with another person's spouse, don't take someone's life, don't take what isn't yours ... and any other 'don't' you can think of – it's summed up in this one statement: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** Love does no harm to others, so **love fulfills everything the law requires.**"

- ✓ That makes sense! If I love you, I'm not going to kill you. If I love you, I'm not going to steal from you; I'm not going to sleep with your wife; I'm not going to lie to you. (If I'll just walk in love, I'll automatically *obey* every other law!) Talk about simplifying things!

When the Law Came Off, God's *Standard* Didn't Change

- ✓ What changed is how we reach that standard. Instead of God saying, "I don't want you killing anyone, **so here's a law**" ... now He says, "I don't want you killing anyone, so **walk by that love nature** I gave you." (Different method; same result.)

We're Under Grace, But Grace Still Teaches Us to Live Right

Titus 2:11-12 – “For the **GRACE** of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, **Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.**”

- ✓ Grace teaches us to live right! But it doesn't stop with the command, like the Law did. Grace *changes* us! It gives us a *new nature* and a *power* we never had before. In short, Grace changes us on the *inside*.
- ✓ That's why being under grace frees us from sin's dominion. Grace changes our “want to”! When our “want to” changes, sin loses its “pull”. (Or at least that “pull” becomes a whole lot less!) And that's what our text said.

Romans 6:14 – “For sin shall not have dominion over you.”

- ✓ Why? Because you're under grace, and grace changes you.

Another Related Question

- ✓ Let's go back to our opening thought. As a New Testament believer, how do I relate to the Old Testament? Does some of it apply to me? All of it? None of it? Do I just ignore what I see written there?
- ✓ What about the specific laws I see in the OT? In the Age of Grace, can I eat bacon? Can I get a tattoo? Do I have to tithe? (Those are big questions. And people really *do* wonder about them.)
- ✓ That's what we're going to look at next week. How do we decide what applies to us and what doesn't? I'm going to give you six questions to ask yourself that will help you decide.