

**CHRIST, and not the LAW,
The Rule of Life and Daily
Walk of the Christian**



By R. D.

PRINTED
IN U.S.A.

LOIZEAUX BROTHERS, BIBLE TRUTH DEPOT,
19 WEST 21st STREET
NEW YORK

Three Cents

CHRIST, AND NOT THE LAW,
THE RULE OF LIFE AND DAILY WALK FOR THE
CHRISTIAN.

CHRIST'S death upon the cross is the dividing line between Judaism and Christianity. Christ had "come unto His own" (the Jews), "but His own received Him not" (John 1: 11). Therefore the last time our Lord Jesus looked upon Jerusalem He wept over it, and declared, "Behold, your house (the temple) is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23: 37-39). The glory of Jehovah had been the defence of that "house," but now that Jesus is refused—is about to be condemned and put to death by the nation, and "cast out of the vineyard"—their temple is disowned as Jehovah's house: it is "*your* house" (left to them desolate of His presence) and the Romans now might come and not leave "one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down" (Matt. 24: 1, 2).

With this rejection of Christ, and the reaffirmation of it in the rejection of the Holy Spirit's testimony after Jesus had been glorified (Acts 7: 51-60), Judaism is rejected of God. Israel, the natural branches of the olive-tree (Rom. 11: 13-25), were broken off because of unbelief, until they return to the Lord, and others were grafted in upon the root of the olive-tree for God's testimony upon the earth.

Christianity, then, dates from and begins at Pentecost with the descent of the Holy Spirit upon those

that had received Christ (Acts 2: 1-4); and, by proclamation of the gospel, believers are continually added to the Church (Eph. 2: 11-13).

The truth of what the Church is, "according to the eternal purpose which God purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," is brought out, and will be clearly seen by study of Eph. 3: 1-11; and the "one body," formed out of Jewish and Gentile believers, is seen in 1 Cor. 12: 12. In Matt. 16, after Peter's confession that Jesus was "the Christ, the Son of the living God," our Lord told Peter that upon this Rock (not Peter, surely, but upon Christ the Son of the living God) He *would* build His Church. Now, the Church, the one body, the Bride of Christ, was set up, *not* in connection with the *law* and *Judaism*, but in *grace* (John 1: 17; Eph. 2: 4-6); and it is called "*the dispensation of grace*" (Eph. 3: 2). The *law* condemns even the best. *Grace* is God's unmerited favor to sinners; and to those accepted in grace, Christ is all-sufficient.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews we are shown how the whole system of law is superseded by and gives place to the "better things." Christ our Great High Priest is there contrasted with, and supersedes the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament (chap. 7). The Aaronic priesthood established under the legal system of Judaism was to give place to another priesthood—to a Priest appointed and confirmed by the divine oath: "The Lord sware and will not repent, Thou art a Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec"—not like the Aaronic priesthood and the legal covenant which, having fulfilled its purpose, was to

pass away. In ver. 12 of chap. 7 it is written, "For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law;" and in ver. 19, "The law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, by which we draw nigh unto God"—which Israel under the legal covenant never could really do. In chap. 10: 1, it is stated that the law was but "a shadow of good things to come," and in ver. 9, He taketh away the *first* (the legal covenant) that He may establish the *second* (that of grace). In these chapters of Hebrews, the great truth is established that the old covenant with its imposing ritual and priesthood has been done away, to give place to a new covenant and another Priest, even Jesus, who ever liveth to make intercession for us.

In considering the RULE OF LIFE AND DAILY WALK for the believer in our Lord Jesus Christ, let us receive God's word as being all-sufficient for our instruction without recourse to the traditional teachings of men. In dependence upon the Holy Spirit, let us examine the following scriptures:

John 1: 17. "The law was given by *Moses*, but grace and truth came by *Jesus Christ*." Law and grace are diverse principles; law *demand*s, grace *gives*. They can no more be mixed than oil with water.

Gal. 3: 10, 13. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in *all* things which are written in the book of the law to do them"—the law *has cursed every soul that is under it*, for none have fully kept it; but "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law,

being made a curse for us" (ver. 13). One is *law* and the other *grace*. What a contrast!

Rom. 10: 4. "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" Christ not only fully kept the law, and glorified God in all His life, but died for our sins, bore for us the law's curse, and He is our righteousness before God.

Rom. 7: 4-6: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." How clearly this scripture shows that the Christian, having died with Christ, his Substitute, is no longer under the law's dominion. The believer has "*become dead to the law*" by Christ's death, "that we should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead."

Gal. 2: 16-21. "I, through the *law*" (being condemned and put to death by it) "am dead to the law, that I might live unto God." This deliverance from the law, and joy in God's grace, gives power to please God and walk in His ways.

In Gal. 5: 1, the apostle's exhortation is: "Stand fast therefore in the *liberty* wherewith Christ hath made us *free*, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bon-

dage"—*i. e.*, the yoke of *the law*, of which the apostle Peter speaks in Acts 15: 10—"which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear."

Observe with what anxiety Paul writes to these Galatian saints who had been saved and delivered from the bondage of the law. He asks, "How turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, wherunto ye desire again to be in bondage?" and with what solicitude he says, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labor in vain;" and in chap. 5: 3, 4, he testifies to them: "Christ has become of no effect unto you who are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

These are searching truths for those who would, in this "dispensation of the grace of God," put themselves under the law for any purpose—through lack of understanding, no doubt.

Some may say, and have said: This doctrine of "grace" for the life and walk of believers is a very dangerous doctrine, for it allows them to live in sin, to please themselves, with no restraint. This very question is raised and answered in Romans 6. The answer is "God forbid: *How shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein?*" The truth is, the true believer, being born of God, now hates sin (as before he loved it,) and his earnest desire is to live and "walk in newness of life." He loves God and hates sin. "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge (that . . . He died for all,) that *they which live* should not henceforth live unto themselves, but *unto Him who*

died for them and rose again" (2 Cor. 5: 14, 15). Love to our blessed Lord is the power for the new life.

The standard for the daily walk of the believer is a high standard; it is higher than the law, it is Christ Himself. It is written in Col. 2: 6-8, "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, *so walk ye in Him.*"

Col. 3: 1: "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God."

1 John 2: 6: "He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also *so to walk* even as He walked."

1 Peter 2: 21: "For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow His steps."

John 10: 27: "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they *follow Me.*"

The believer in Christ is born again—born of God (1 Peter 1: 23; John 1: 13). He is justified by faith, and at peace with God (Rom. 5: 1). This is all of God's grace. "It is of *faith*, that it might be *by grace*" (Rom. 4: 16). Again, in Eph. 2: 8-10, "For by *grace* are ye saved through *faith*; and that not of yourselves; it is the *gift* of God: *not of works*, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Think of it, fellow-believer; what marvelous grace!

Acts 13: 39 shows what the law *could not* do for the believer: "By Him (Jesus) all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye *could not* be justified by the law of Moses." Since "no man is jus-

tified by the law in the sight of God" (Gal. 3: 11), how can the law be either the rule of life or of daily walk for him who is not under it (Gal. 5: 18), who is dead to it (Rom. 7: 4), and who is by faith united to the risen, glorified Man at God's right hand? In Gal. 2: 21, the Holy Spirit's emphatic statement is, "For if righteousness come by (or, is through) the law, then Christ is dead in vain"—has died for nought. With the word of God in his hands, how can the believer go back again to the *law*, when the law is not of faith, but is the ministration of death, written and engraved in stones? (2 Cor. 3: 6-11.)

In what we have had before us from the word of God, it is plain that the law has no claim upon the believer. He is looked upon as *freed from the law*. His standing before God in *grace* is perfect, because it is in Christ, being accepted in the beloved (Col. 2: 10; Eph. 1: 6)—not accepted in himself, or anything he has done, or for any righteousness of his own, but accepted in the full value of Christ's finished work for him, having by faith accepted it for himself, with the result of a personal salvation through the Saviour.

Gal. 5: 1 exhorts us to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Jesus Himself said, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8: 36). In 1 Peter 2: 16, the apostle emphasizes the same truth; being free, he says, see to it that you "use not your freedom as a cloak of wickedness," *R. V.*

To know the fulness of grace in Christ Jesus his

Lord was the apostle's desire, as he says in Phil. 3: 9, 10, "To be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the *law*, but that which is through the *faith of Christ*: the righteousness which is of *God by faith*. That I may *know Him*, and the power of His *resurrection*, and the *fellowship of His sufferings*, being made *conformable* unto His death."

May the God of all grace, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in mercy grant that His Son and not the *law* be the ruling, controlling principle of our daily life and walk.

R. D.

"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).

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Loizeaux Brothers, Bible Path Depot, 19 W. 21st St., New York