

Frequently we hear our denominational friends say that we are no longer under law, but grace. In their minds that means that we can choose our own way of doing things, more or less, and still be acceptable to God. Is that what it means to be under God's grace? **Absolutely not!**

1 Corinthians 9

In 1 Corinthians 9, the apostle Paul states that he has voluntarily become a *"servant"* to all in order to save more souls (v. 20). In doing this, he says that in the presence of the Jews he became *"as a Jew"* and *"as under the law"* (v. 20). This statement shows us that the **law** being considered in this text is the Law of Moses. Though it had been done away with at the cross of Christ, Paul still was at liberty to practice some of those things found in the Law in order to convert Jewish people. He could offer sacrifice, observe dietary restrictions, etc. -- just as a Jew -- while realizing that it no longer had religious validity before God.

Paul goes on to say that while he was in the presence of the Gentiles he could act *"as those without law"* (v. 21) in order to convert more Gentiles. In other words, he could do as the Gentiles do and not worry about the various restrictions under the Law of Moses that separated Jew from Gentile. But then he makes an interesting statement which we find in parentheses: *"not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ"* (v. 21). Paul knew that he was **always** under law to Christ and that he must act accordingly whether among Jews or Gentiles!

Law Under Christ?

So is there **law** under Christ as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:21? The answer is yes, and that law is the gospel of Jesus Christ, found in our New Testaments (Matthew-Revelation). Notice other New Testament Scriptures which affirm the same thing:

1. **Hebrews 7:12** - *"For the priesthood being changed, of necessity there is also a change of the law."* Notice that the writer does not say that *"law"* was done away with entirely, but that the *"law"* was changed. Jesus Christ is our new High Priest. His priestly order was Melchizedek, not Aaron, as the Law of Moses required. Therefore, if Christ is a High Priest after a different order, then there must be a change in the law.
2. **Hebrews 9:15** - *"And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance."* Jesus Christ is also the Mediator of the *"new covenant,"* and that new covenant is the New Testament (Heb. 8:8-12). The Old Testament was the first covenant which was done away with. The New Testament is the second, better covenant which lasts forever.
3. **Matthew 17:5** - *"While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!'"* On the mount of Transfiguration, Peter saw Jesus appear in the presence of Moses and Elijah. Being afraid and uncertain of what to do, he suggested it would be good to build three tabernacles -- one for each of these great religious figures. However, God's voice spoke from heaven and said *"This is My beloved Son,... Hear Him!"* The time of Moses and the prophets was passing away. We are to hear Jesus Christ as the perfect Lawgiver today (Heb. 1:1-3).

What About Grace?

Romans 6:14 says that we are not under *"law"* but *"grace."* But a careful study of the chapter, and of the book of Romans itself will show you that Paul is contrasting two different systems: (1) the Mosaic system which required perfect obedience {Law}; and (2) the Gospel of Christ, which was a system that provided forgiveness of sins and thus could deal with imperfect man {Grace}. Grace does not exclude law as so many have suggested. In fact, God's grace is found **IN** the *"perfect law of liberty"* (James 1:25)!