



March 28, 2025

### **What must we do to be saved?**

Warm hellos once again friends, brethren, fellow laborers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast of lower Alabama. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

From time to time we receive questions, comments, and assertions from the readers and listeners of Church of God Ministries who take exception to our teachings.

Many in the “Christian community” believe that all we have to DO is believe on the name of Jesus and/or call upon the name of the Lord, and that “no man is justified by the law” as one reader wrote.

The inference is that obedience to God's laws and commandments is never necessary to receive salvation.

The problem with this thinking and conclusion is that a person who looks upon what the Scriptures say accepts only part of the story. They can be confused about receiving justification compared with practicing righteousness.

During these upcoming Days of Unleavened Bread we'll carefully examine our lives and will find that it takes a lot of work to put off the old man. Some however would say this is simply not needed.

So, how are we justified, and how do we receive forgiveness of sin?

It's true that no amount of law keeping can either justify us or forgive the penalty from past sins. Only the shed blood and death of the Lamb of God can truly forgive sin and expunge it from the record. (Hebrews 8:12; 1 John 1:7, 9)

The apostle Paul states, "*Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.*" (Romans 3:28) Gods' grace and unmerited pardon are extended to those who repent and exercise faith in God's instructions and in the sacrifice of Christ. "*Because by grace you have salvation through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is given by God*" (Ephesians 2:8 BBE) Gods' righteousness is imputed to those who satisfy the conditions. (Romans 3:21-22) Once we have sinned, that penalty of eternal death (Romans 6:23) can only be paid by the shed blood and death our Savior who was eternal God, became a man, and gave up His life for three days and three nights.

However, the apostle Paul makes plain that having God's grace does not mean we are free to sin and break God's laws. "*What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!*" (Romans 6:15)

One might ask then, what is sin and what is righteousness?

Are believers free to disregard and break God's commandments because of God's grace? The apostle John stated, "*Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.*" (1 John 3:4 AV)

The apostle Paul explains the role of the law of God. "*What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."*" (Romans 7:7)

What are we to make of the apostle Paul's statement, "*for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified.*" (Romans 2:13)

Unfortunately many people carelessly equate "grace" with freedom from any obligation to obey God's laws. By way of analogy, compare that with what a "pardon" means in criminal law, and you'll recognize the fallacy of their reasoning. When a person receives a pardon, it means the authorities suspended the penalty for breaking the law - not the law itself. A pardoned individual isn't free to break the law again!

The same is true regarding God's spiritual law. Breaking it is sin (1 John 3:4). God's grace is the extension of a pardon, the suspension of the death penalty. It's only common sense, (as well as the teaching of the Bible), that God expects the pardoned individual to be law-abiding from that point on, submitting to His spiritual law.

Be assured, there is freedom in grace. It includes freedom from the death penalty, as well as the freedom to live life the way God wants us to live. But it does not include the freedom to break the law of God. I plan to continue this important analysis next time...

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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