

June 22, 2009 ©Homer Kizer

Old Wine is Better Serving Faith

What shall we say, then? That Gentiles who did not pursue righteousness have attained it, that is, a righteousness that is by faith; but that Israel who pursued a law that would lead to righteousness did not succeed in reaching that law. Why? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were based on works. They have stumbled over the stumbling stone ... (Rom 9:30–32)

2.

The first section of *Old Wine is Better* ended with the introduction that as natural Israel served the Sabbath prior to the coming of Christ, circumcised of heart Israel (Christianity) now serves faith that leads to obedience; that as the Sabbath has served the Son of Man since the coming of Christ (because the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath), faith will serve liberated Christians once the Tribulation begins. These juxtapositions hold that the tangible Sabbath (the 7th day of the week), which is a representation of entering into God's presence, forms the shadow and copy of intangible faith, necessary to enter into God's presence. The significance of these juxtapositions is that for Christians, the Sabbath is kept by faith, not because of social pressure or cultural expectations, with this faith leading to obedience and with this faith serving as a schoolmaster or guardian in a manner similar to how the law served as natural Israel's schoolmaster.

Much of what will be discussed in this section will be difficult for those new in the faith to grasp: the idea that the Sabbath can acquire properties associated with human taskmasters or human servants will stymie spiritual infants. But when grasping how Abraham served faith when he journeyed from Ur of the Chaldeans to Haran with his father, then journeyed from Haran to Canaan when the Lord said, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you" (Gen 12:1), a person can see how endtime disciples serve faith when they journey from this world (the kingdom of Babylon) into Sabbath observance and virtual separation from this world. The writer of Hebrews says, "By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going" (11:8) ... the person serves the one he or she obeys (Rom 6:16), and if a person obeys, leaving a place without knowing where he or she is going, the person serves that which causes the person to leave the place where the person was. Thus, Abraham served his faith in God when he left Haran and ventured he knew not where, and by serving his faith in God, Abraham learned obedience as natural Israel was to learn obedience by serving the law.

The corollary to Abraham learning obedience by serving faith comes when God tested Abraham: “Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you” (Gen 22:2). Now, Abraham’s faith serves him as the Sabbath today serves the Son of Man: Abraham went to the place where God told him to go, and on “the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place from afar. Then Abraham said to his young men, ‘Stay here with the donkey; I and the boy [young man] will go over there and worship and come again to you’” (vv. 4–5) ... Abraham tells his young men that he and Isaac were going to worship and would return—both he and Isaac would return. Abraham knew that Isaac would return even if he offered up Isaac as a burnt offering. Abraham’s faith is now serving him as he had formerly served his faith when he left Haran.

A person can argue that Abraham’s faith was serving him when he left Haran ... how was it serving him? What “service” was extended to Abraham [then Abram] by Abraham leaving his father’s household and venturing into the unknown? No, Abraham’s faith was not then serving Abraham, but Abraham was serving his faith by venturing into the unknown.

It can likewise be argued that Abraham was serving his faith when he offered up Isaac ... again, how was he serving his faith? Is it not the other way around: Abraham’s faith was serving him when he said that he and the lad would return, for he believed God that his offspring [seed] would be as the stars of heaven (Gen 15:6), with his belief was counted to him as righteousness, the type of righteousness that comes by obedience, by keeping the law (1 John 3:4–10). Abraham’s faith when leaving Haran had produced within him the same sort of obedience that keeping the law will produce in a disciple of Christ Jesus. And it was this obedience that was being tested when Abraham was commanded to sacrifice Isaac; thus, the faith that had produced the obedience now serves Abraham when he must do the unthinkable. This faith assures Abraham that through Isaac, his seed would be as the stars of heaven even though he sacrifices Isaac.

The above distinction is subtle but clearly evident in Scripture: the obedience Abraham learned by serving his faith in God becomes obedience supported by the same tool or servant [faith] used to produce it. And all of this is germane to a Christian’s relationship to the law, and to especially the Sabbath.

Natural Israel served the law, not the other way around. The 365 negative *mitzvos* [commands] of the 613 found in the Torah prevented certain acts or actions that really didn’t need to be addressed if the person served faith in God; e.g., “If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them” (Lev 20:13), an issue that presently has political and social overtones in Western cultures ... homosexual acts outside of Israel are excluded in this negative command for the law is not, was not given to 1st-Century Greeks, modern atheists, or to the ancient residents of Sodom. Rather, without warning Sodom or Gomorrah or the inhabitants of the valley, God overthrew these cities and peoples; but “God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow” (Gen 19:29). And Jesus said, concerning the coming of the Son of

Man, “Likewise, just as it was in the days of Lot—they were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building, but on the day when Lot went out from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them all—so will it be on the day when the Son of Man is revealed” (Luke 17:28–30). Thus, when the Son of Man is revealed, God will remember those who by faith believe Him, and will send even their spiritual nephews out from the destruction that will come suddenly.

Did God have to tell Abraham not to lie with another man? He did not, did He? Why? Was the thought something that had not entered his mind? Was it that in “looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God” (Heb 11:10) Abraham’s thoughts were not on the things of this world and their pleasures? And without thinking about the things of this world, those things that consumed the men of Sodom had no interest to Abraham.

What was told to Lot, who was a sojourner in Sodom? The men of Sodom said to Lot, “This fellow came to sojourn, and he has become the judge! Now we will deal worse with you [Lot] than with them” (Gen 19:9) ... have *Christians*, sojourners in spiritual Babylon, not made themselves judges in Babylon? Have *Christians* not learned from Scripture? Why do *Christians* involve themselves in the affairs of men (and women) doomed to destruction? Is it because these *Christians* actually have love for their neighbors, and for others who would sojourn among them?

Abraham displays this love when he reasons with the Lord, trying to save Sodom and the inhabitants of the valley by asking if the Lord will not spare the people if fifty righteous can be found (Gen 18:24–26). Abraham gets the Lord, who knows how many righteous are actually in the city and the valley, down to ten righteous—and the Lord agrees to spare the city if ten can be found. But the Lord goes no farther: it is His intension to destroy the inhabitants of the cities and the valley; He will not be talked out of destroying wickedness, just as *Christians* cannot save this world by prayer or by electing the right officials or by acts of civil disobedience. *Christians* are today as Lot was ... without realizing that they are sacrificing their own “daughters,” *Christians* seek political offices in governments subservient to the prince of this world, the old dragon, Satan the devil.

Christians need to petition God to have mercy on those who commit homosexual acts, and to leave those who commit such acts alone, looking from afar, as Abraham “looked down toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the valley” (Gen 19:28), at the destruction sure to come. They do not need to, nor should they, make themselves judges of those who are not under the law and are not able to learn obedience to God by the law. *Christians*’ petitions and pleadings should all be to God, not to other men and/or women.

Natural Israel served the law in doing certain things (248 positive *mitzvos*) and by not doing other things (the 365 negative *mitzvos*), with the purpose of the law being instruction in righteousness so that Israel could inherit eternal life. Israel was not born righteous, nor made righteous by outward circumcision. The nation was offered righteousness if, by faith, the nation did in a far land those things that were pleasing to God (*cf.* Rom 9:31–32; Deut 30:1–2, 6; Jer 9:25–26). Paul calls the Moab covenant (Deut chaps 29–32) the “righteousness based on

faith” (Rom 10:6), and he says of Israel, “For, being ignorant of the righteousness that comes from God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness” (v. 3) ... because Abraham’s focus was the city of God, he “obeyed my [the Lord’s] voice and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws” (Gen 26:5) before any of these commandments, statutes, or laws were given. Abraham submitted to God’s righteousness when he submitted to his faith in God and served his faith as if he were serving God, making his faith a representation of entering into God’s presence as the Sabbath is a representation of entering into God’s presence. Thus, in the Sabbath and in Sabbath observance by endtime disciples lays the faith of Abraham, a vein of understanding that will be explored.

3.

Following Israel’s rebellion at Sinai in the casting of the golden calf by Aaron who, in his words, threw the gold of the people “into the fire, and out came this calf” (Ex 32:24), Israel was given an additional command by the Lord: “You shall kindle no fire in all your dwelling places on the Sabbath day” (Ex 35:3) ... without a fire on the Sabbath, there would be no casting of golden calves, no creation of different gods [*elohim*] for Israel to follow; their Sabbath fire would be the glory that shone so brightly from Moses’ face that the people were afraid to come near him. Moses was the god that Israel was to worship (Ex 4:16) as a substitute or type of the Lord.

As a Roman Catholic will tell a critic that he or she doesn’t pray to statuary but uses the statuary to focus his or her prayers and thus prays ‘through’ the statuary (that appears as idols to observers), natural Israel will tell critics that Moses is not the Lord, but Israel treats Moses as if he were the nation’s lord and savior, as if the nation were praying through him, as if he were the way to salvation. (Protestants do the same with the Bible, transforming a book into an idol.) Thus, Israel has made an idol of Moses and by extension, of the law, serving the law in nodding genuflects as if the nations were many bobble heads, the springs in their necks stretched by the modern State of Israel’s acquisition of the Wailing Wall.

If a person is not to kindle a fire on the Sabbath, but to shiver on the Sabbath if a fire in the stove or fireplace burns itself out at night, or to eat semi-warm gruel rather than cook a meal that requires turning on an electric stove, the person is truly subservient to the Sabbath. The person centers his or her life around the Sabbath, thereby making the Sabbath lord over the person and a taskmaster that functions mentally as tassels on garments function to remind natural Israel to keep the commandments (Num 15:37–41) ... the command came to put tassels on garments immediately following the man gathering sticks on the Sabbath was taken in his sin and stoned to death (vv. 32–36). Tassels came as blue or violet threaded schoolmasters to remind Israel to keep the commandments, especially the Sabbath commandment so there would not be the need to stone other transgressors (a person was stoned because the person had broken the law written on two stone tablets; the broken law symbolically and literally killed the person).

The law served as the guardian and schoolmaster of Israel until Christ came (Gal 3:24) ... since Christ came, faith has been revealed and has been given to those who believe; faith now functions as the guardian of those who believe. And disciples serve faith as natural Israel served the Sabbath and by extension, all of the Torah with its 613 *mitzvos*, 365 negative and 248 positive. This, however, does not mean that disciples ignore the Sabbath, or keep another day instead of the Sabbath. It means that with faith as guardian and schoolmaster, disciples use the Sabbath as they would any other servant or tool: they do not abuse it while making it work for them.

Disciples by faith keep the precepts of the law (Rom 2:26); they serve faith by keeping the precepts of the law in this era of spiritual darkness. They are not born with faith; they do not inherit faith from their fathers; they cannot buy faith ... no, faith is not a commodity bought and sold on the futures market. Disciples develop faith by doing those things that faith requires.

What does faith require? Paul writes,

What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? But *thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.* I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. (Rom 6:15–19 emphasis added)

Sin is unbelief expressed in the transgression of the law; sin is, simply, lawlessness (1 John 3:4); therefore, when a disciple is not under the law but under grace, the disciple will not transgress the law that leads to death, not because the law is the disciple's disciplinarian, but because faith is the disciple's guardian and disciplinarian. The disciple does not need tassels that reminded spiritually lifeless natural Israelites to keep the commandments, for the commandments are being written on the disciple's heart and placed in the disciple's mind through the disciple keeping them by faith ... being born of spirit changes everything, beginning with the law and where the law is written, for it is no longer outside the person but is inside where the pricks of the spirit function for disciples as tassels function for natural Israelites.

If a Christian does what faith requires, does this Christian not serve faith as the natural Israel served the law, even to putting tassels on his garments and getting up many times during the night of the Sabbath to stoke the fire in the fireplace?

If tassels on the cloth garments covering the nakedness of natural Israelites are the shadow and type of pricks of the spirit on the garment of grace, (i.e., Christ Jesus' righteousness) that "covers" the nakedness of the inner new creature, circumcised of heart, then disciples no more wear tassels than they kill

“the daily,” or daily sacrifice, which became prayers even before Herod’s temple was razed. Likewise, disciples no more get up three or four times during the night of the Sabbath to stoke the fire in the fireplace than they wear tassels. They no longer serve the Sabbath, but are free to require that the Sabbath serves them, with the principle work of the Sabbath being to clear their business (gathering) calendars so they can spend the day studying God’s word, thinking about God, thinking about loving God with heart and mind and loving neighbor as the disciple loves him or herself. And it is hard to think about the goodness of God when water freezes on the kitchen counter because a fire went out during the night and another cannot be kindled until sundown.

A reasonable number of messianic Christians (the MIA movement) are afraid of the Sabbaths of God and continue to serve their “servants” rather than to exercise the dominion they have been given over those institutions that should be serving them. These *missing in action* Christians understand that Jesus did not come to abolish or destroy the Law [Torah, with its 613 *mitzvos*] (Matt 5:17), but like the Jews that sought to kill Paul, these *missing in action* Christians kill spiritual infants that would be of Paul if given a chance to grow in grace and knowledge. By adding to what is required of Christians, they bind newly born sons of God to cradleboards carved from bastardized Hebrew sacred names; they chrome-plate commandments that hinder natural Israel from coming to Christ until the fullness of the nations have come to God; and they gild with gold the cups from which they drink their watered down milk ... is it any wonder that they will be among the first tested by the Sabbath in the Tribulation, that they will be the easy “marks” for spiritual sons of Cain to find and slay—but if they have actually been born of spirit and if they love God more than they love their own lives, they will be resurrected to glory when Christ returns. But they will not be witnesses to the third part of humankind, born of spirit when the world is baptized in the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ]; they will not be allowed to teach others the junk that they presently believe.

Put aside, if possible, biases and prejudices against obedience to the law: if a person walks with Christ Jesus, the person will walk as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6), and Jesus walked as an observant Jew. The person will walk as an observant Jew, not because the person is an observant Jew, but because by faith the person imitates Paul as he imitates Christ (1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:6 *et al*). The person doesn’t learn to walk as Jesus walked by being under the schoolmaster of the law, but by being under faith ... by faith, the person “voluntarily” does those things that the law commands, with those things that pertained only to the flesh and not to the inner new creature that is the son of God no longer having importance to Israel. For example, how does not kindling a fire on the Sabbath pertain to the inner new creature that is not of this world, and that is neither hot nor cold nor one who eats physical food? The command doesn’t pertain, does it? The command pertains to the Israelite who was outwardly circumcised on the eighth day, just as the command to circumcise on the eighth day pertains to the natural descendants of the patriarch Abraham, who have no covering for their nakedness [they are made “naked” when circumcised] but their obedience to God. The Gentile who was not circumcised on the eighth day has no need to be outwardly circumcised, for outward circumcision will not

make the person a “Jew” or Judean (Rom 2:28–29). And it was this message that Paul was unable to successfully deliver because of the immaturity of disciples.

Understand, because there is no need to circumcise the flesh when the born-of-spirit son-of-God is the inner new creature (and is not the flesh) doesn't mean that cultural expectations pertaining to outward circumcision cannot be observed; rather, they can be observed so that no cause of offense will be given to those not yet born of spirit. It is for this reason—so that Timothy entering the temple or synagogues would not be a needless stumbling block—that Paul, immediately after the Jerusalem Conference, had Timothy circumcised (Acts 16:3). Likewise, if kindling a fire on the Sabbath will cause offense, disciples should not exercise the liberty they have to kindle a fire or to cook on the Sabbath. It is, however, this liberty that has been abused to the point where “liberty” has been transformed into bondage to sin that must be addressed ... when the law is no longer Israel's disciplinarian, the law no longer compels good behavior, and disciples come to the argument of whether grace alone is sufficient to save a person.

In His sermon on the mount, Jesus said,

Not everyone who says to me, “Lord, Lord,” will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?” And then will I declare to them, “I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.”
(Matt 7:21–23 emphasis added)

Is not the person who has done mighty works in the name of Jesus under grace? Is not the one who prophesies or preaches in the name of Jesus under grace? Yet it is only the one who does the will of the Father that will be acknowledged when judgments are revealed; so without doing the will of the Father, grace will not save anyone. It certainly will not save those who teach disciples to transgress the law (i.e., workers of lawlessness). And if by doing the will of the Father, without being under grace, the person will enter the kingdom of the heavens, what exactly does grace have to do with salvation?

Elsewhere Jesus said,

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead [the “dead” included the Pharisees then hearing Jesus' words] will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.

I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me. ... Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words? (John 5:24–30, 45–47)

The person who hears and believes Jesus' words will also believe Moses' writings, a juxtaposition that makes Moses' writings the transcribed words of God that are the physical representations of the oral (ephemeral) words of Jesus, who spoke only the words of the Father. This means that the will of the Father as expressed in His words can be found in the writings of Moses—and the person who does not do the will of the Father will not enter the kingdom of the heavens.

Is it the will of the Father that tassels hang from garments, or was the command to hang tassels on garments given because of the man taken in sin? It is the will of the Father that none of His sons are lost. If this means additional commandments are added in an attempt to use the law to compel good behavior, are not these additional commandments justified? But these commandments did not compel good behavior; they facilitated cheating instead. So in adding additional commands (animal sacrifices; tassels; kindle no fires) did *Yah* not do what the first Adam did?

It is generally not understood that the first Adam added to the single command the Lord gave him: “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die’” (Gen 2:15–17) ... nothing is said about touching the tree; yet when the serpent asks the woman if God actually said that they shall not eat of any tree, the woman says, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die’” (Gen 3:2–3).

It wasn't God who said not to touch the tree; it was Adam adding to what the Lord said in a manner similar to commands and sacrifices added to what the Lord said from atop Mount Sinai in an effort to compel good behavior. And it wasn't Moses who added these commands. It was the Lord who added commands and rules by which Israel could not have life (Ezek 20:25) as He caused Israelites to defile themselves “through their very gifts in their offering up all their firstborn” (v 26) that He might devastate the nation because of its continued lawlessness and profaning of the Sabbaths of God.

The first Adam forms the shadow and type of the last Adam (Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:45), who was the Logos [ὁ λόγος], the One who created all that has been made (John 1:1, 3), before He entered His creation as His only Son (John 3:16) to be born as the man Jesus of Nazareth (John 1:14). It was this Logos as *Yah* who added to what was spoken from atop Mount Sinai as the first Adam, in a futile attempt to keep Eve from eating forbidden fruit, added “*don't touch*” to what the Lord commanded him.

Parents understand adding *don't touch* as a proscription when attempting to command good behavior from children. If the small child can swallow a marble, it doesn't seem like enough to merely tell the child not to put the marble in his or her mouth. Intuitively, the parent says, *Don't touch the marbles*, before putting the marbles up, out of reach of the child. And in a similar manner, the Lord added commands concerning sacrifices and tassels and kindling a fire on the Sabbath before putting salvation up, out of the reach of Israel.

But as the serpent trapped Eve by the words Adam had added to what the Lord said ... can you visualize the scene: the serpent tells Eve, “You will not surely die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil” (Gen 3:4–5), and she sees that the tree has what appears to be edible fruit that would make her wise, and she sort of accidentally on purpose brushes her hand against a leaf and she doesn't die. Emboldened, she touches a branch, then picks a piece of fruit—parents have seen this behavior in their children—and still she doesn't die, probably not a concept she can envision. With a piece of fruit in her hand and obviously not being dead (she no longer believes the Lord, or her husband), she takes a bite, and she still she doesn't die. Why? Because Adam is her “covering” — sin doesn't enter the world through Eve, but through Adam (Rom 5:14).

Because Eve came from Adam and is one with Adam, his obedience covers Eve's disobedience as Christ Jesus' obedience (righteousness) covers His disciples, who are of Him as Eve was of Adam.

Adam sees his wife eating forbidden fruit and not dying (again, he probably had no understanding of the concept; certainly the Christian Church has no understanding of what the second death means), and he doubts what the Lord told him, with his unbelief manifesting itself in eating fruit when Eve gives him a piece.

But Adam had no covering for his disobedience: his only “clothing” was his obedience. Thus, when he eats, both he and his wife realize that they are naked (Gen 3:7).

Adam set Eve up to fail when he added to what the Lord told him, but he added because he was the shadow and type of the last Adam, who added to the Living Words delivered from atop Sinai, in an attempt to compel good behavior. But physically circumcised Israel was/is the shadow and type of circumcised of heart Israel, meaning that Eve's rebellion, that natural Israel's rebellion are the shadow of, and copy of the Christian Church's rebellion against God in the Tribulation, with the Church's Christmas rebellion following the second Passover liberation of Israel from indwelling sin and death being aided and abetted by *adding to Scripture*.

What have Christians added to the words of the Lord? How about Christmas, Easter, weekly services on Sunday, human beings possessing immortal souls, the cross as a symbol of Christ—most everything that *Christians* identify as *Christian* has been added to Scripture. And the question now is who did the adding to Scripture?

So a person can read a reasoned translation into English of what the Lord told the prophet Ezekiel, the following is incorporated into the text:

And I [the Lord] said to their children in the wilderness, Do not walk in the statutes of your fathers, nor keep their rules, nor defile yourselves with their idols. I am the Lord [*YHWH*] your God; walk in my statutes, and be careful to obey my rules, *and keep my Sabbaths holy that they may be a sign between me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.* But the children rebelled against me. They did not walk in my statutes and were not careful to obey my rules, by which, if a person does them, he shall live; they profaned my Sabbaths.

Then I said I would pour out my wrath upon them and spend my anger against them in the wilderness. But I withheld my hand and acted for the sake of my name, that it should not be profaned in the sight of the nations, in whose sight I had brought them out. Moreover, I swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them through the countries, because they had not obeyed my rules, but had rejected my statutes and profaned my Sabbaths, and their eyes were set on their fathers' idols. *Moreover, I gave them statutes that were not good and rules by which they could not have life, and I defiled them through their very gifts in their offering up all their firstborn, that I might devastate them. I did it that they might know that I am the Lord.*

... Therefore say to the house of Israel, Thus says the Lord God: Will you defile yourselves after the manner of your fathers and go whoring after their detestable things? When you present your gifts and offer up your children in fire, you defile yourselves with all your idols to this day. And shall I be inquired of by you, O house of Israel? As I live, declares the Lord God, I will not be inquired of by you. (20:18–26, 30–31)

After demonstrated and continued disobedience, the Lord gave the children of Israel commands by which this nation could not have life; He caused them to do what should have appalled the nation. But Israel was not horrified at the idea of burning their firstborns; nor is circumcised of heart Israel horrified when teaching newly born sons of God to practice lawlessness sure to condemn these sons of God to the lake of fire. Christian workers of iniquity are not appalled by their open sin, nor shamed when telling newly born sons of God that *Grace is sufficient for salvation*. They condemn legalism, proclaiming legalists (their definition of legalists) as being of the Antichrist. Yet they are themselves condemned in their lawlessness; for John writes, “For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome. For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” (1 John 5:3–5) ... if a person is born of God, the person cannot keep on sinning: i.e., transgressing the law (1 John 3:9). By whether a person practices righteousness (keeping the commandments) or makes a practice of sinning (e.g., keeping Sunday as the Sabbath), it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil (v. 10).

If a disciple who is under grace makes a practice of sinning, the disciple ceases to be under grace and has returned to being a servant of sin, which leads to death (again, Rom 6:16). Grace is the covering or garment of Christ Jesus' righteousness or obedience. A disciple puts on Christ daily (the reality of natural Israel's *daily* or daily sacrifice) in prayer and in the disciple's obedience by faith to the words spoken by the Lord at Sinai, with the movement of these words from hand to heart and from body to mind seen in what Jesus said in His Sermon on the Mount.

A disciple doesn't serve faith or faith in God by transgressing the commandments of God; rather, the disciple who practices lawlessness tramples on faith regardless of what words comes from the mouth of the person. And if the disciple will not now serve faith, faith will not serve the disciple in the tribulation, the subject of the next section of this paper.

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