



I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. (Galatians 2:21)

Mixing Law & Grace

Grace plus Law is not a stronger Gospel—it is another gospel.

Adding the Law to Grace does not produce holiness;

it makes Christ of no effect.

Restoring Oneness Apostolic Truth

In the Last Days

Comprehensive Study Guide Series

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Introduction: Mixing Law and Grace: A Perverted Gospel

Many Oneness Apostolics proclaim salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ while simultaneously teaching that Christians must obey selected commandments from the Law of Moses. Most commonly, believers are told that they must pay tithes. Some are also teaching that Christians must keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the Ten Commandments, and the so-called “moral law.”

The exact opposite is true. If you are taking or paying tithes, keeping the Sabbath, or trying to obey the Old Covenant Law, your salvation is in jeopardy. Yet, many people often lift Old Covenant Scripture out of context and teach it as common household doctrine without regard for their covenantal context. They then treat those passages as though they pass seamlessly into the New Covenant and impose them upon the Church as continuing Christian requirements.

This practice has become so common within the Oneness Apostolic Church that Old Covenant passages are often used loosely, carelessly, and almost routinely, with little regard for the seriousness of mixing covenants or for the spiritual danger it creates for both those who teach it and those who follow it.

One example of how common and careless this practice has become is that a simple question about whether a Christian may wear a beard can promptly produce the answer, **“Yes, as long as he does not round the corners.”** Yet the error begins even before the command about rounding the beard is applied. The very question of whether a Christian may wear a beard has already been treated as a matter requiring Old Covenant regulation. By the time Leviticus is cited, the subject of beards has already been officially placed beneath the authority of the Mosaic Law. The response then deepens the error by carrying that subject further—selecting a *specific command* related to beards and imposing it as a continuing Christian requirement—without first considering whether either the regulation of beards or the command itself has any relevance, authority, or application within the Apostolic Church.

This is not a minor doctrinal disagreement. The New Testament repeatedly warns that placing Christians under the Law corrupts the Gospel, returns believers to bondage, makes Christ of no effect, and causes those seeking justification through the Law to fall from Grace.

Mixing Law and Grace is a perverted gospel.

1. Christians Are Not Under the Law

The Apostle Paul stated plainly:

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.”

—Romans 6:14

Paul did not say that Christians are under part of the Law. He did not say that believers remain under whichever Mosaic commandments modern religious leaders choose to preserve. He declared that Christians are **not under the Law, but under Grace**.

The Law was given to Israel through Moses. It governed Israel’s sacrifices, priesthood, circumcision, food, ceremonial cleansing, holy days, Sabbaths, tithes, offerings, civil judgments, and covenantal life.

Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law and established the New Covenant through His death, burial, and resurrection. Christians do not serve God under the covenant administered through Moses. We serve God under the New Covenant established by Jesus Christ.

Paul wrote:

“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.”

—Romans 7:6

Christians have been **delivered from the Law**. Returning to Mosaic commandments is not spiritual progress, greater holiness, or deeper obedience. It is a return to something from which Christ delivered us.

2. The Law Is One Covenant

Those who command tithing, Sabbath observance, or Mosaic Law and its many commandments often attempt to divide the Law into separate categories. They claim that ceremonial laws were abolished while moral laws remain. They then decide which commandments belong in each category and which ones Christians must continue to observe.

However, the Law was one covenantal system.

James wrote:

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”

—James 2:10

A person cannot place himself under one commandment of the Law while refusing the authority of the rest. If the Law remains in force as the Christian covenant, the entire Law must be kept.

Paul made this clear when discussing circumcision:

“For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law.”

—Galatians 5:3

Circumcision was not the only issue. The issue was that accepting one requirement of the Mosaic covenant placed a person under obligation to keep the whole covenant.

The same principle applies to tithing and Sabbath observance. A person cannot place himself under the tithe or the Sabbath and then claim that the rest of the Mosaic covenant does not apply.

Those who demand tithes cannot consistently reject the Levitical priesthood, agricultural tithes, festival tithes, poor tithes, and the other regulations governing the biblical system of tithing.

Those who command Sabbath observance cannot consistently reject the restrictions, penalties, sacrifices, and other ordinances associated with the Sabbath under the Law.

They are selecting isolated commandments from a covenant that God did not give them authority to divide.

3. Tithing Belongs to the Law

Tithing under the Law was not a command for every Israelite to give ten percent of every paycheck to a local pastor.

Biblical tithes were connected to the land of Israel, agricultural increase, crops, herds, Levites, priests, national festivals, strangers, widows, orphans, and the poor.

The Levites received tithes because they had no territorial inheritance among the tribes of Israel. The priests did not receive the entire tithe directly from the people. The Levites gave the priests a tithe of the tithe they had received, or 1%, not 10%.

The biblical tithing system belonged to the Mosaic covenant.

The apostles never once taught, took, or paid tithes. There is not a single commandment, instruction, or example anywhere in the New Testament Church establishing tithing as a Christian practice. No apostle instructed believers to give ten percent of their wages to a pastor, and no New Testament church is ever shown collecting or distributing tithes.

That is why tithe-takers cannot establish their doctrine from the teachings or practices of the apostles. They must leave the New Testament Church and return to the Law—most commonly to Malachi 3—to justify taking tithes. In doing so, they have mixed Law and Grace and committed a serious offense against the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Malachi was not written to the New Testament Church. It addressed Israel under the Mosaic covenant and concerned the tithes that belonged to the Levitical system. Christian pastors cannot claim the financial privileges of the Levites while rejecting the covenant, priesthood, inheritance system, agricultural structure, and regulations that governed those tithes.

Those who obey the teaching of tithe-takers are following the same dangerous path as the foolish Galatians. The Galatians were deceived into accepting a commandment of the Law as an obligation upon believers in Christ. Likewise, Christians who accept tithing are being deceived into placing themselves under a commandment of the Law and are thereby placing their salvation in jeopardy.

The New Testament doctrine of giving is entirely different. Christian giving is willing, purposeful, generous, and according to a person's ability.

Paul wrote:

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

—2 Corinthians 9:7

The words “**not...of necessity**” directly contradict compulsory tithing.

Christians should give generously. They should support legitimate ministry, help the poor, care for widows, assist fellow believers, and contribute to the work of God. However, Christian giving must never be transformed into a compulsory religious tax borrowed from the Law of Moses.

Removing compulsory tithing from church practice should not diminish support for the work of God; rather, believers who give freely, without pressure or duress, are more likely to give sincerely from the heart and feel at peace about their giving. Their generosity can then follow genuine need—not only supporting a pastor who is faithfully laboring in the Gospel, but also helping the poor, widows, fellow believers, missions, and other worthy works.

When pastors command Christians to pay tithes, they are not merely encouraging generosity. They are imposing a Mosaic commandment upon the Church. Pastors who take tithes and believers who pay them are participating in Old Covenant Law—one that has been reinvented into man-made rules for the sole purpose of financial gain.

Taking or paying tithes places Christians in direct conflict with the New Covenant doctrine of giving and returns them to a commandment from which Christ delivered the Church.

4. The Sabbath Belongs to the Law

The seventh-day Sabbath was given as a covenant sign between God and Israel.

“Wherefore the children of Israel shall keep the sabbath, to observe the sabbath throughout their generations, for a perpetual covenant.

It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever.”

—Exodus 31:16–17

The Sabbath was part of the covenant God made with Israel at Mount Sinai. It was a sign between God and the children of Israel.

The Sabbath was not imposed upon the Gentile nations, and it was not imposed upon the New Testament Church.

When the apostles met in Acts 15 to determine whether Gentile believers must keep the Law of Moses, they did not command them to observe the Sabbath. They did not command them to pay tithes. They did not command circumcision, dietary laws, feast days, or the Mosaic covenant.

Peter warned the Church against placing the yoke of the Law upon believers:

“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?”

—Acts 15:10

Paul also warned Christians not to allow anyone to judge them concerning Sabbath observance:

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

—Colossians 2:16–17

The Sabbath was a shadow. Christ is the substance.

Keeping the Sabbath is keeping the Law. People are not religiously setting apart Saturday because they have nothing better to do. They are doing it because they believe the Sabbath commandment still applies.

That belief places them under the Law.

Christians do not find their righteousness or acceptance before God in the observance of a day. Our rest is found in Jesus Christ and in His completed work of redemption.

5. Scripture Does Not Establish a Separate “Moral Law”

Some Oneness Pentecostals teach that Christians remain under what they call the “moral law.” This is often understood to include the Ten Commandments, but it may also include selected commandments drawn from Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Malachi, and other Old Testament passages that are carried forward and treated as continuing Christian requirements.

Certain Old Testament requirements are treated as permanently applicable because they reflect the order of creation and the unchanging nature of God, while others are classified as ceremonial or civil and declared no longer binding. The problem is that Scripture never establishes that these three classifications to be blended, handpicked, or ignored according to preference. Nor does it authorize religious teachers to impose preferential commands upon the New Testament Church while disregarding other biblical principles—such as the scriptural distinction between male and female roles—when those principles conflict with their favored doctrines or practices.

Those enduring principles do not remain true because Christians are still under the Mosaic Law; they remain true because they reflect God’s unchanging order and are reaffirmed under the New Covenant. For example, the distinction between male and female and their respective roles did not begin with Moses and did not end with the Mosaic covenant. It is rooted in creation itself and is expressly carried forward in the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles. The principle therefore remains, not because a command from the Law has been transferred into the Church, but because the New Covenant independently confirms the same eternal truth. For example, Paul grounded his command concerning women teaching and exercising authority in the Church in the order of creation, yet many churches and organizations (including the UPC and others) disregard that established foundation in order to conform to mainstream church practices and prevailing societal norms.

Tithing does not fit this model. It was not rooted in the creation order, nor was it independently reaffirmed by Jesus Christ or the apostles as a continuing requirement for the Church. The biblical tithe belonged to Israel’s land, agricultural increase, Levitical priesthood, national worship, festivals, and care for the poor under the Mosaic covenant. Because the New Testament never carries that system forward as Christian law, tithing cannot be defended as an eternal moral principle merely because it appears in the Old Testament. Generosity is an enduring New Covenant principle; compulsory tithing is not.

This distinction between enduring principles and temporary covenantal requirements does not validate the traditional division of the Law into separate moral, ceremonial, and civil systems. It simply recognizes that some truths revealed within the Law reflect God's unchanging nature or creation order and are independently reaffirmed under the New Covenant, while other commands belonged specifically to Israel's covenantal life. In either case, the Mosaic commandments themselves remained part of one covenant.

The Law was one covenant given to Israel. Its commandments were distributed throughout the books of Moses and governed every aspect of Israel's covenant life, including worship, priesthood, sacrifices, food, clothing, agriculture, marriage, civil judgment, holy days, Sabbath observance, circumcision, tithing, and personal conduct. Some commands clearly revealed enduring principles of righteousness, while others served ceremonial, national, or symbolic purposes. Nevertheless, they all belonged to the same Mosaic covenant. Calling selected commandments "moral law" does not remove them from that covenant or establish that Christians remain legally bound to them.

The purpose of the Law was to reveal sin, expose humanity's need for redemption, and lead people to Christ. Paul wrote:

"Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster."

—Galatians 3:24–25

The schoolmaster taught mankind what holiness, righteousness, justice, and sin looked like, but once it brought us to Christ, we were no longer placed beneath its commandments as our covenant. We do not return to the schoolmaster after coming to the One toward whom the schoolmaster pointed. The Law revealed God's righteous principles and showed what He loves and hates, but those principles are now understood and obeyed through Christ, the Holy Ghost, and the teachings of the apostles—not by placing Christians back under the commandments of Moses.

This does not mean that murder, adultery, idolatry, theft, or dishonesty have become acceptable. These things remain sinful because they violate the nature of God and are expressly condemned under the New Covenant. Christians abstain from them because Jesus Christ and His apostles command holiness, love, righteousness, and obedience—not because the Church remains under the covenant made at Mount Sinai. The New Testament sufficiently establishes the holiness and righteousness required of Christians, but it never places the Church under handpicked commandments taken from the Old Covenant and reclassified as continuing Christian law whenever they support a preferred doctrine or practice.

Christ has also brought His people into liberty. We have been set free from the yoke of the Law, not so that we may live carelessly, but so that we may serve God willingly from the heart. New Covenant liberty is freedom to please God through love, faith, holiness, and the leading of the Holy Ghost. It is not a return to a rigid system of external rules by which righteousness is measured and enforced. Paul wrote, “Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (Galatians 5:1). The New Covenant produces obedience from within; it does not place believers back beneath the old covenant code.

Therefore, appealing to a supposed continuing “moral law” does not provide biblical authority for placing the Church under the Ten Commandments as a covenant. The Law served its appointed purpose by directing humanity to Christ; Christ is the fulfillment and authority of the New Covenant. The Law displayed God’s righteous principles; the New Covenant writes those principles upon the heart by the Holy Ghost. Christians are not lawless, but neither are they under Moses. We are free in Christ—free to obey God, free to walk in holiness, and free to please Him in newness of Spirit rather than in the oldness of the letter.

6. Jewish Ceremonies and Dietary Laws Belong to the Old Covenant

Some Christians attempt to carry Jewish ceremonies, feast days, dietary restrictions, and other customs from the Mosaic covenant into the New Testament Church. These practices may be presented as deeper holiness, greater biblical faithfulness, or a return to the “Hebrew roots” of Christianity. However, the apostles never placed Gentile believers under Israel’s ceremonial calendar, food laws, or covenantal customs. When the Church addressed this very question in Acts 15, the apostles refused to place the yoke of the Law of Moses upon the Gentiles.

Peter said:

“Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?”

—Acts 15:10

The council did not command Gentile believers to keep the Sabbath, observe Jewish feast days, follow Israel’s dietary code, become circumcised, or adopt the ceremonial practices of the Mosaic covenant. The apostles understood that salvation and Christian obedience were not obtained by bringing Gentiles into Israel’s former covenantal system. The New Testament Church was not created as an extension of ceremonial Judaism. It was established under a New Covenant through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Paul directly warned Christians against allowing others to judge them concerning food, drink, holy days, new moons, or Sabbath days:

“Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:

Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

—Colossians 2:16–17

These ceremonies were shadows pointing forward to Christ. Once the substance had come, the Church was not commanded to return to the shadows. The Passover pointed to Christ our Passover. The priesthood pointed to Christ our High Priest. The sacrifices pointed to His final sacrifice. The feast days, ceremonial cleansings, dietary distinctions, and sacred calendar all belonged to the covenantal structure that prepared Israel for the coming of the Messiah. To impose those shadows upon Christians after Christ has come is to move backward from fulfillment to symbolism.

The same principle applies to dietary laws. Under Moses, Israel was commanded to distinguish between clean and unclean animals. Those restrictions served Israel’s covenantal separation and ceremonial order, but they were not imposed upon the New Testament Church.

Paul wrote:

“I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself.”

—Romans 14:14

He also wrote:

“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”

—Romans 14:17

Christian holiness is not measured by avoiding pork, shellfish, or other foods forbidden to Israel. The Kingdom of God is not established through dietary observance. It is manifested through righteousness, peace, joy, and the indwelling Holy Ghost. A Christian may choose not to eat certain foods for health, conscience, or personal preference, but that choice must never be transformed into a covenantal obligation or standard of salvation.

Paul also warned against those who would command abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving:

“Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”

—1 Timothy 4:3–5

The issue is not whether someone may voluntarily observe a feast, avoid a certain food, or study Jewish customs. The issue arises when those practices are carried into the New Covenant and imposed upon the Church as continuing Christian requirements. Personal preference becomes false doctrine when it is taught as divine obligation. A shadow becomes bondage when it is placed back upon believers as though Christ had not fulfilled what it represented.

Christians are not called to become Jews ceremonially. We are called to become new creatures in Jesus Christ. Our holiness does not come from Israel’s food laws, sacred calendar, ceremonial washings, or national customs. It comes through the Gospel, the blood of Jesus Christ, the indwelling Holy Ghost, and obedience to the teachings of Christ and His apostles.

Jewish ceremonies and dietary laws belonged to the Old Covenant. They may teach us, illustrate Christ, and reveal God’s unfolding plan, but they do not govern the New Testament Church. To impose them upon Christians is another form of mixing Law and Grace—carrying shadows into the covenant of fulfillment and placing believers beneath obligations from which Christ has set them free.

7. Attempting to Keep the Law Jeopardizes Salvation

Paul did not regard the addition of the Law as a harmless doctrinal difference. He called it another gospel and a perversion of the Gospel of Christ:

“I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.”

—Galatians 1:6–7

The Galatians were not being persuaded to reject Jesus entirely. They were being persuaded to add requirements from the Law to faith in Jesus.

That addition was enough to produce a perverted gospel.

Paul then pronounced the strongest possible judgment upon anyone who preached such a message:

“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”

—Galatians 1:8–9

Paul repeated the warning twice:

Let him be accursed.

He did not exempt pastors, bishops, elders, organizations, historic movements, respected teachers, or angels from heaven. Anyone who preaches another gospel is accursed.

When ministers tell Christians that they must obey Mosaic commandments that the apostles never imposed upon the Church, they are adding the Law to the Gospel of Grace. Whether the added requirement is circumcision, tithing, Sabbath observance, dietary restrictions, feast days, Jewish ceremonies, or another commandment of the Mosaic covenant, the principle remains the same.

Grace plus Law is not Grace.

“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.”

—Romans 11:6

The Gospel cannot be partly Christ and partly Moses. It cannot be partly Grace and partly Law. Adding the Law does not strengthen the Gospel. It perverts it.

The consequences of returning to the Law are not merely theological or academic. They directly affect a person's salvation.

Paul wrote:

"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."

—Galatians 5:4

Paul was writing to people who had already believed the Gospel. Nevertheless, he warned that seeking justification through the Law would cut them off from the saving sufficiency of Christ and remove them from the Grace in which they had stood.

Scripture does not describe this as a minor weakening of Christian liberty. It describes a complete departure from reliance upon Christ and a fall from the Grace that saves.

This is why taking or paying tithes, keeping the Sabbath, observing Jewish ceremonies or dietary restrictions as Christian obligations, or placing oneself under other Mosaic requirements jeopardizes salvation. These are not New Covenant commandments. They are commandments of the Law.

A person cannot knowingly place himself under the Law without facing the consequences Paul described.

The Law cannot save.

"For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

—Galatians 2:21

To seek righteousness through the Law is to deny the complete sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice.

The Law reveals sin, but it cannot remove sin. It condemns the transgressor, but it cannot give life. It exposes humanity's need for Christ, but it was never intended to operate beside Christ as another source of righteousness.

The Law fulfilled its preparatory purpose by exposing sin and directing humanity to Christ. It was never intended to remain beside Christ as an additional source of righteousness or covenantal authority. Returning to it for justification is therefore not spiritual advancement, greater holiness, or deeper obedience. It is a retreat from the faith to which the Law itself pointed.

The issue is not whether someone may voluntarily study Jewish customs, observe a feast, or avoid a certain food as a matter of personal choice. The error begins when those practices are carried into the New Covenant and imposed upon the Church as continuing Christian requirements. Personal preference becomes false doctrine when it is taught as divine obligation.

Christians are not called to become Jews ceremonially. Our holiness does not come from Israel's dietary laws, sacred calendar, ceremonial washings, national customs, or other shadows of the Old Covenant. It comes through the Gospel, the blood of Jesus Christ, the indwelling Holy Ghost, and obedience to the teachings of Christ and His apostles.

Old Covenant practices may instruct us, illustrate Christ, and reveal God's unfolding plan, but they do not govern the New Testament Church. To impose them upon Christians is another form of mixing Law and Grace—carrying shadows into the covenant of fulfillment and placing believers beneath obligations from which Christ has set them free.

8. Returning to the Law Is Returning to Bondage

Paul described the Law as a yoke of bondage from which Christians must remain free:

“Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.”

—Galatians 5:1

Christians were not freed from the Law so that religious leaders could place selected portions of it back upon them.

Paul asked the Galatians:

“But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?”

—Galatians 4:9

He continued:

“Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.

I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.”

—Galatians 4:10–11

Paul was afraid for believers who were returning to the observance of religious days and seasons associated with the Law.

Paul’s concern was not merely that the Galatians had adopted religious observances. They were returning to the covenantal system from which Christ had set them free. Sabbath observance and mandatory tithing are therefore not harmless preferences when practiced as obligations of the Mosaic Law; they reintroduce the yoke that the Gospel removed.

9. Grace Does Not Produce Lawlessness

Rejecting the Mosaic covenant does not mean rejecting holiness, righteousness, or obedience. Christians remain under the authority of Jesus Christ and the doctrine of His apostles. We are commanded to repent, obey the Gospel, walk in holiness, love one another, and flee sin. Grace does not give Christians permission to live lawlessly:

“What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.”
—Romans 6:15

However, Christian obedience flows from the New Covenant and the indwelling Spirit. It does not come from placing believers back under the covenant made at Mount Sinai.

The New Covenant has commandments, but it is not the Mosaic covenant.

It has holiness, but not Levitical regulation.

It has giving, but not compulsory tithing.

It has spiritual rest, but not Sabbath observance.

It has obedience, but not justification through the works of the Law.

Christians do not need Moses added to Jesus in order to live holy lives. We need the Holy Ghost, the Word of God, and obedience to the Gospel and doctrine of Jesus Christ.

10. Oneness Apostolics Must Choose

Oneness Apostolics must be especially careful not to preach salvation in the name of Jesus while simultaneously placing believers under the Law of Moses.

It is inconsistent to proclaim that salvation is found entirely in Jesus Christ and then teach that Christians must also keep Mosaic commandments.

Mandatory tithing and Sabbath-keeping are not harmless additions to Apostolic doctrine. They are commandments of the Law.

The New Testament does not permit the Church to combine them with the Gospel.

Paul's warnings converge upon one unavoidable conclusion: ministers who impose Mosaic obligations corrupt the Gospel, while believers who accept those obligations place themselves beneath the authority and consequences of the whole covenant. There is no safe arrangement in which Christ supplies salvation while Moses supplies the conditions for retaining it.

The believer must choose between standing wholly in Jesus Christ or placing himself beneath the Mosaic covenant. We cannot claim justification by Grace while practicing and imposing selected commandments from the Law.

The Law was given by Moses.

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

Christ fulfilled the Law. He established a better covenant upon better promises. Through Him, believers have been delivered from the oldness of the letter so that they may serve in newness of the Spirit.

Returning to the Law does not produce greater holiness. It places people beneath a covenant that cannot justify them, cannot give them life, and cannot save them.

An Important Clarification: When the Apostles Cite the Law

Because the New Testament repeatedly teaches that believers are no longer under the Mosaic Law as a covenant, some may ask why Jesus and the Apostles occasionally quote from the Law when teaching New Testament believers. This is an important question because these passages are sometimes used to argue that Christians remain under selected portions of the Law. That is not what the Apostles were doing. **Quoting the Law is not the same as placing the Church under the Law.** The Law remains inspired Scripture and contains principles concerning God's holiness, morality, justice, creation order, generosity, and human conduct. The Apostles could therefore draw upon those principles without reinstating the Mosaic covenant as the governing law of the Church.

Paul gives us the governing principle in Galatians:

“Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”

— Galatians 3:24–25

The Law served a divine purpose. It revealed sin, taught holiness, established patterns, restrained wickedness, and ultimately pointed mankind toward Jesus Christ. But once Christ came, believers were no longer placed under that covenantal schoolmaster. We do not return to Moses as our governing authority after being brought to Christ. At the same time, coming to Christ does not require us to forget everything the schoolmaster taught. **We can leave the covenant behind without abandoning the truths and principles it revealed.**

Peter provides an especially clear example. He writes:

“Be ye holy; for I am holy.”

— 1 Peter 1:16

Peter is drawing directly from the holiness language of Leviticus (Leviticus 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7). Yet Peter is not turning Leviticus back into New Testament law. He is invoking an enduring principle: **God is holy, therefore His people must be holy.** That truth existed before Moses, was revealed within the Law, and continues under Christ.

This distinction becomes obvious when we look at the surrounding material in Leviticus. Those chapters forbid sexual relations between close relatives (Leviticus 18:6–18), adultery (Leviticus 18:20), sexual relations with animals as defilement (Leviticus 18:23), and pagan cutting or engraving of the flesh (Leviticus 19:28). These commands reflected enduring principles concerning sexual purity, the sanctity of the body, separation from pagan corruption, and reverence for God. Grace does not suddenly make incest, adultery, bestiality, or pagan

desecration righteous merely because Christians are no longer under Moses. Their wrongness rests upon the holiness and created order of God, not upon our continuing subjection to the Mosaic covenant.

This is also why the common expression **“we are still under the moral law”** can be misleading. Scripture does not teach that the Mosaic covenant was divided into three independently binding legal systems called the moral law, ceremonial law, and civil law, with the so-called moral portion continuing to govern Christians as Mosaic law. The believer is no longer under the Law. Period. The authority of an enduring moral truth under the New Covenant does not come from our continuing obligation to Moses; it comes from God Himself and from its affirmation through Christ and Apostolic doctrine. Peter was therefore not creating a New Testament version of Levitical law when he said, “Be ye holy.” He was drawing from Scripture to invoke the eternal principle of God's holiness.

Paul uses the Law in precisely this manner. In **1 Corinthians 9:8–10**, he quotes Deuteronomy 25:4:

“Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.”

Paul was obviously not placing Gentile churches under Israel's agricultural regulations. He explicitly draws a principle from the command and applies it to those who labor in the Gospel: those who labor should be permitted to benefit from their labor. He uses the same passage again in **1 Timothy 5:18** when discussing the support of elders. The Mosaic regulation is not reinstated; the principle contained within it is applied under the New Covenant.

Paul likewise appeals to commandments against adultery, murder, stealing, coveting, and other wrongdoing in **Romans 13:8–10**, but his conclusion is not that Christians have returned to Sinai. His conclusion is:

“Love is the fulfilling of the law.”

The believer now serves God through the law of Christ, walking in love by the Holy Ghost. The moral truth contained in the old command remains true, but the Christian's relationship to God is no longer governed by the Mosaic covenant.

The same distinction appears in Paul's teaching concerning women in the Church. In **1 Corinthians 14:34**, Paul says, **“as also saith the law.”** Elsewhere he grounds the same order directly in the creation of Adam and Eve (1 Corinthians 11:8–9; 1 Timothy 2:11–14). Paul is not attempting to place Christian women under the entire Mosaic system. He is appealing to a principle concerning God's created order that existed before Sinai and was also reflected within the Scriptures of the Law.

Jesus likewise quoted Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18 when identifying the two greatest commandments: love God with all the heart and love one's neighbor as oneself. The Apostles repeat the command to love one's neighbor as well. None of this reinstates the Mosaic covenant. It demonstrates that God's revelation under Moses contained truths that transcend that covenant because they express the nature and will of God Himself.

We must therefore maintain the Apostolic distinction carefully: **the Law may be cited without the Church being placed under the Law.** The Apostles used the Old Testament as inspired Scripture. They drew from its examples, principles, warnings, types, and revelations of God's character. What they did not do was selectively revive Mosaic requirements and impose them upon the Church as covenant obligations.

This is particularly important when discussing the Sabbath, circumcision, dietary regulations, feast days, sacrifices, the Levitical priesthood, and similar requirements. The Apostles never reasoned, "This command appears in the Law, therefore Christians remain obligated to perform it." In fact, the New Testament repeatedly teaches the opposite. The Mosaic system had accomplished its purpose and believers were now under Christ.

The proper New Testament approach is therefore neither to discard the Law nor to return under it. We read it as inspired Scripture, learn from it, recognize Christ within it, heed its warnings, and receive the enduring principles it reveals. But our covenant authority is Jesus Christ and the doctrine delivered through His Apostles. The Law was the schoolmaster that brought us to Christ; having arrived at Christ, we do not return to the schoolmaster for covenant government.

This Does Not Reinstates Tithing

Nothing in this Apostolic use of the Law provides support for mandatory New Testament tithing. The enduring principle is **generous, willing, sacrificial giving**, not the restoration of Israel's tithe. Tithing was specifically connected to the Mosaic covenant, the land of Israel, the Levitical priesthood, the sacrificial system, temple worship, festivals, and provision for the needy. Likewise, Abraham's one-time gift from the spoils of battle and Jacob's conditional vow are not examples of mandatory New Testament tithing. **The principle carried forward is giving; the covenantal system of tithing was not.** To appeal selectively to Moses, Abraham, or Jacob in order to impose a compulsory ten-percent requirement upon the Church is not the way the Apostles used the Old Testament—it is precisely the kind of mixing of Law and Grace that the New Testament warns us against.

Conclusion

Mixing Law and Grace is a perverted gospel.

The apostles never commanded Christians to pay tithes. They never authorized pastors to collect the Mosaic tithe. They never commanded the Church to observe the seventh-day Sabbath.

These practices belong to the Law.

Paul warned that those who preach another gospel are accursed. He warned that accepting one requirement of the Law makes a person a debtor to keep the whole Law. He warned that those seeking justification through the Law have made Christ of no effect and have fallen from Grace.

These warnings must not be softened or ignored.

If you are taking or paying tithes, or keeping the Sabbath, your salvation is in jeopardy.

Leave the Law where Christ left it. Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. Do not become entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

Our righteousness, liberty, hope, and salvation are found entirely in Jesus Christ.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN LAW IS MIXED WITH GRACE?

A visual summary of the error

1 THE PROCESS



1

Old Covenant passages are lifted out of covenantal context.
Examples: Tithing • Sabbath • "Moral law" • Beard regulations



2

They are carried seamlessly into the New Covenant.



3

They are imposed upon the Church as continuing Christian requirements.



4

Believers are placed back under commandments from the Law of Moses.

2 THE RESULT



Another gospel

Gal. 1:6–9



Debtor to do the whole law

Gal. 5:3 • Jas. 2:10



Yoke of bondage

Gal. 5:1 • Acts 15:10



Christ of no effect

Gal. 5:4



Fallen from grace

Gal. 5:4



Salvation in jeopardy

3 NEW COVENANT TRUTH



Ye are not under the law, but under grace.

Rom. 6:14



The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ.

Gal. 3:24–25



Christian giving is willing, not of necessity.

2 Cor. 9:7



Our rest is in Jesus Christ, not in Sabbath observance.

Col. 2:16–17



Holiness flows from Christ, the Holy Ghost, and apostolic doctrine.

LEAVE THE LAW WHERE CHRIST LEFT IT

Mixing Law and Grace is a perverted gospel.