



## 2021 4Q Present Truth in Deuteronomy Lesson 7 Law and Grace

by Tim Jennings (announcements last page)

### SABBATH

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What comes to mind from the lesson title – Law and Grace?

Read memory verse:

I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain” (Galatians 2:21 NKJV).

What does this mean?

Read first paragraph, “Christians of most denominations...” Which of the following statements is true:

- We have all violated God’s law and because of this we are all sinners
- We are all sinners and because of this we have all violated God’s law

Are these two statements the same?

Imposed law makes sin about the behavior—therefore they focus on the deeds and make statements as the lesson does: “And because we all have violated that law—but the Scripture has confined all under sin’ (Gal 3:22)—it’s only God’s grace that can save us.”

The lesson seems to take the position that the first statement is the correct one, we are sinners because we have violated the law.

But when did any person you have ever known chosen to become a sinner?

Doesn’t the Bible teach that “we are born in sin” (Ps 51:5)?

Doesn’t the Bible teach that we were all in Adam when Adam sinned? And Adam changed himself to be a sinner and we are all born with Adam’s attributes, propensities, or nature. In other words, we are born filled with fear and selfishness rather than perfect godly love.

The Scripture is absolutely true that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 6:23). But the *reason* all have sinned is because all are born sinners, all are born infected with a condition they did not choose and which, without remedy, results in symptoms we call sins. The sins are not the primary problem, the sins are they symptoms, the unavoidable result of the primary problem if that problem isn’t treated or remedied.



Our ongoing sins, though they are not the cause but the symptoms, do add to the damage and if persisted in will destroy us, burn out the faculties that are sensitive to the Spirit of truth and love. If that happens we have moved ourselves beyond healing and there is nothing more God can do for us.

So what is the law spoken of in Galatians? This was the question that divided the SDA church leadership at the 1888 GC. The primary division at that conference was over this question—was the law that Paul was referring to, that was added to lead us to Christ, the ceremonial law of the sacrificial services, or the moral law of Ten Commandments.

Jones and Waggoner took the position it was the moral law and conference president, GI Butler, who wasn't there in person but sent letters, took the position that it was the ceremonial law. They both wrote documents laying out their positions. Butler's *The Law in Galatians*, and Waggoner's *The Gospel in Galatians*.

What would you say if I suggested that the leadership's attitude in choosing imposed law and rejecting design law at that meeting resulted in the loss of the outpouring of the latter rain and contributed to the delay in the second coming of Christ? Do you think that would be an overstatement?

Consider what EGW wrote after that event:

“The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Galatians 3:24). In this scripture, the **Holy Spirit through the apostle is speaking especially of the moral law.** [What law was added? The Ten Commandments—not the design law principles upon which life is built, but the written out code designed to meet human beings in their sin condition. It was necessary to put the law in this form, to add this form for our need. Why?] **The law reveals sin to us, and causes us to feel our need of Christ** and to flee unto Him for pardon and peace by exercising repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. 1SM 234.5 [To diagnose us, convict us and lead us to Christ for healing.]

**An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth,** lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren [E.J.] Waggoner and [A.T.] Jones. [Do we still see this today? People who have accepted the lie that God's law functions like human law and insist on the imposed law view of things and are unwilling to accept advancing light? And they do this by adherence to law, which gives them the conviction of being faithful, true, law keepers, just like the Pharisees in Christ's day. But what is the result in this clinging to the wine of Babylon, the idea that God's law is imposed added rules?] By exciting that opposition **Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit** that God longed to impart to them. **The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost.** [The latter rain was resisted, by what strategy did Satan succeed? By getting the brethren to cling to imposed law. Note what she says next, what could have been had they embraced the advancing truth.] **The light that is to lighten the**



**whole earth with its glory was resisted**, and by **the action of our own brethren** has been in a great degree kept away from the world. 1SM 234.6 [The light that is to lighten the whole world they resisted. This is the message of the 3 angels—but hasn't the SDA church made it its mission to take the 3 angels' messages to the world? Have we? Have we taken the eternal gospel to the world when we present it through imposed law? Our church has been gifted with the message for this time in history, the truth about God's character of love and His design law for life—but that message and the power to take it to the world to a great deal has been obstructed through the persistent clinging to the imposed law lie with its penal substitutionary views that make God out to be the source of pain, suffering and death.]

The law of ten commandments is not to be looked upon as much from the prohibitory side, as from the mercy side. **Its prohibitions are the sure guarantee of happiness in obedience.** [How can this be? How can I have freedom and happiness if I am prohibited and restricted? Isn't real freedom in doing as I want with no law to restrict me? This is Satan's lie from the beginning, that God's law is restrictive. It is viewed this way when we accept the lie that it is imposed. But as soon as we return to worship God as Creator and realize His laws are design laws, then we are freed from the enslavement of sin and set free in Christ. When a parent prohibits their child from smoking, that prohibition is a sure guarantee of healthiness and happiness if obeyed, but if the child smokes they will experience disease which destroys health and happiness.] **As received in Christ, it works in us the purity of character that will bring joy to us through eternal ages.** [The law works in us the purity of Character if received in Christ—in other words, not our work, but the living law of love received in a trust relationship with Christ purges fear, we trust Him to watch out for us, we don't need to act in self-interest, our lives are His.] To the obedient it is a wall of protection. We behold in it the goodness of God, who by revealing to men the **immutable principles of righteousness, seeks to shield them from the evils that result from transgression.** 1SM 235.1 [The principles of health, life, happiness which are the outworking of God's character of love, built into reality as God's operational laws upon which life exists and functions. Now, to leave no doubt as to EGW's position and that we are speaking of design law, notice what she writes next.]

**We are not to regard God as waiting to punish the sinner for his sin. The sinner brings the punishment upon himself. His own actions start a train of circumstances that bring the sure result. Every act of transgression reacts upon the sinner, works in him a change of character, and makes it more easy for him to transgress again. By choosing to sin, men separate themselves from God, cut themselves off from the channel of blessing, and the sure result is ruin and death.** 1SM 235.2 [This is design law, and the penal legal adherents reject it and thus the church continues to wander in the wilderness.]

**The law is an expression of God's idea. When we receive it in Christ, it becomes our idea. It lifts us above the power of natural desires and tendencies, above temptations that lead to sin.** "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Psalm 119:165)—cause them to stumble. 1SM 235.3



This conflict in 1888 reveals another example of one of Satan's strategies, that is to pit to either false or incomplete ideas or views against each other and get people to choose one side or the other. In this case it was pitting the ceremonial law versus the moral law and dividing the church to fight against each other and that obstructed the Spirit of Truth from being poured into their hearts

EGW wrote later:

“I am asked concerning the law in Galatians. What law is the schoolmaster to bring us to Christ? I answer: **Both the ceremonial and the moral code of ten commandments**” 1SM 233.

## SUNDAY

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Read first paragraph, “God is a God of love...” This is well said, and in fact, love cannot exist without freedom. Understanding this alone rules out all imposed law as a basis for God's government. Compelling power is found only under Satan's government. So this alone should lead people to reject the penal views of God's law.

Read the second paragraph, “And central to the idea of moral freedom...” What is suggested? Are they suggesting that moral law is not design law, is not of the same type of law as the laws of nature?

I would suggest that the moral law is exactly the type of law that governs the rest of nature, but of a higher quality that only higher functioning intelligent beings can process, understand, and live in harmony with.

For instance the law of respiration is one of God's design laws for His Creation—but the rocks don't breathe, the stars don't take in oxygen and expel carbon dioxide. Thus, we would not say, that the law of respiration is a different type or quality of law than gravity because only living organisms operate upon it—gravity and respiration are both design laws. Likewise the moral law and the laws of nature are both design laws.

Consider this quote, do you agree or disagree?

Every organ has its function, and our Creator has pledged Himself to keep our organs in a healthful condition **if we will obey the laws implanted in our nature. The laws governing the physical nature are as truly divine in their origin and character as the laws of the ten commandments.** Man is fearfully and wonderfully made; for Jehovah has inscribed **His law by His own mighty hand on every part of the physical structure.** Many are sick who might be well if they would but cooperate with God, surrendering soul, body, and spirit to His control. For **in order to have health, we must keep ourselves in harmony with God's law.** To have clean hands and a pure heart is to have peace and contentment of mind, and this is conducive to health. - 16MR 60.2 1892



Is this speaking only of the physical laws, or does the moral law affect our health?

Why is it that those who honor their parents live long on the earth? What happens when we don't love, but instead we resent, hate, and are controlled by fear and selfishness? We activate the fear circuits, which activate inflammatory cascades and we damage our bodies and die younger. But those who love have lower stress on the body, and live longer. It is reality, love is the basis of life.

For those who have parents that were abusive or untrustworthy, honoring them doesn't mean exposing yourself to abuse and ungodly treatment. It means living God's law in how you treat them. Thus, if they are ungodly, abusive, cruel, unkind, and unwilling to repent and grow, what is the way we honor them? By honoring their choice to be that way, recognizing the truth for what it is, and setting healthy boundaries so we don't get exploited and injured over and over again. We forgive them in our hearts so that we don't become filled with anger, bitterness, resentment etc., but we don't trust them until they prove they are trustworthy.

Consider this quote:

**Men and women cannot violate natural law by indulging depraved appetite and lustful passions, and not violate the law of God.** Therefore He has permitted the light of health reform to shine upon us, that we may see **our sin in violating the laws which He has established in our being.** [What kind of law are the laws of health? And these laws are to teach us about what sin is. Sin is transgression of the law? What law, the moral law, and this law has been established in our beings, what does this mean? We were created in Adam as living temples in which God's design law of love was to operate and direct all functions. Sin breaks that design and displaces love with fear and selfishness. The plan of salvation is Jesus coming as the second Adam, taking up humanity infected with this perversion of love that tempts with fear to be selfish and purge the infection and restore God's law of love into the species. Jesus accomplished this for us. All who are won to trust in Jesus receive a new heart and right spirit, and have love poured in that casts out all fear and are empowered to live out God's law of love in their lives today.] **All our enjoyment or suffering may be traced to obedience or transgression of natural law.** [this would include the moral law, which is also design law.] Our gracious heavenly Father sees the deplorable condition of men who, some knowingly but many ignorantly, are **living in violation of the laws that He has established.** And in love and pity to the race, He causes the light to shine upon health reform. **He publishes His law and the penalty** that will follow the transgression of it, that all may learn and be careful to live in **harmony with natural law.** [Where did He publish it? In Scripture, but also in nature Romans 1:20. And what is the penalty and from where does it come? Gal 6:8] He proclaims His law so distinctly and makes it so prominent that it is like a city set on a hill. All accountable beings can understand it if they will. Idiots will not be responsible. **To make plain natural law, and urge the obedience of it, is the work that accompanies the third angel's message to prepare a people for the coming of the Lord.** 3T 161.2 [What is the message of the three angels? That God's law is not imposed, that Babylon the system of imposed law is fallen. That God is Creator and we are to worship Him, which means returning to design law



understanding of who God is, His character of love, the sin problem, the solution for it, and then give glory to Him by revealing this truth at this time in history.]

The same power that upholds nature, is working also in man. **The same great laws that guide alike the star and the atom control human life. The laws that govern the heart's action, regulating the flow of the current of life to the body, are the laws of the mighty Intelligence that has the jurisdiction of the soul. From Him all life proceeds.** Only in harmony with Him can be found its true sphere of action. For all the objects of His creation the condition is the same--**a life sustained by receiving the life of God, a life exercised in harmony with the Creator's will.** To transgress His law, physical, mental, or moral, is to place one's self out of harmony with the universe, to introduce discord, anarchy, ruin. {Ed 99.2}

## MONDAY

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Why does God tell them again and again and again that their success is dependent upon their obedience to His law?

Read the second paragraph, “Even the most cursory...” A design law understanding makes this so simple—of course it is an absolute reality that obedience to the laws that life is built upon is a requirement for success.

But what of this idea of a covenant obligation?

Is marriage a covenant? And do marriages succeed as God designed for them, when the covenant is approached through obligation? What makes the covenant work? It is love, and so too our success with God is a covenant, an agreement, a trust relationship that we enter with Him:

- We agree with God that we are sinners, sick with a condition that we didn't choose and for which we cannot fix or heal.
- We agree that God is not under some external obligation to fix our sin problem, but because He so loved us He chose to take upon Himself the burden, pain, and suffering sin causes and overcome it for us to provide us the remedy.
- And we agree, if we trust Him, He will restore in us His design law of love.
- Our responsibility is to follow where He leads and choose to apply to our lives what He has revealed for us to do. And we do this freely, not because He will punish us if we don't, but because we happily trust Him and are eager to do it because we love Him, but also understand it is for our good or the good of others that God loves.
- Thus obedience in the Greek is: **5218 ὑπακοή** [*hupakoe* /hoop·ak·o·ay/] n f. From 5219; TDNT 1:224; TDNTA 34; GK 5633.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.



The first part is hypo, as in hypoglycemia, or hypotension and means under, or low, or lowly, and the second half is akoe from which we get acoustic and means to listen, to hear. It means a humble willingness to listen, to learn, to be lead out of lies, misunderstanding, old habits, preconceived ideas, false beliefs and into better and more accurate understanding of reality, not just in comprehension but in practice. We listen, comprehend, trust, and apply to our lives what we understand.

So an obedient person is a lover of truth, one who eagerly listens for the voice of God and has the desire to hear, to understand, and to fulfill God's instructions and therefore chooses to do so to the best of their ability. It is not about perfect performance, it is about heart attitude.

What about the idea that grace is "God giving us what we don't deserve"?

This way of expressing the concept is too easily misunderstood or conveys wrong ideas.

If this is the definition of grace—being given something one doesn't deserve—does that mean when Satan murdered Jesus, because Jesus didn't deserve such abusive treatment, that Satan was giving Jesus grace?

What the lesson has inadvertently done is make grace the process of being undeserved rather than what grace actually is. They are right that grace is not earned by us, but that is the process, the manifestation of God's character of love. Consider grace as a noun and the action the gifting us the noun without merit is a verb. Grace is what we are gifted, providing it as a gift is the method, means, process—but grace is more than this free giving.

Merit is when you work hard you reap the rewards of your work.

- So if you get paid by your employer you have earned or merited your pay.
- If you get stronger muscles by exercising regularly you have earned or merited the growth in muscles.
- If you become a better musician because you practice four hours each day, you have earned or merited your proficiency.

Unmerited favor is when you receive something you didn't earn or didn't merit or don't have a right to claim as being owed to you. Grace in that sense is not ours to claim by right, but grace is not the process of being unmerited—grace is what is unmerited.

If someone gave you a glass of water when you were dying of thirst—you didn't buy it, earn it, work for it, it was a gift. One could say the water was unmerited, it was given to you freely but water is water, the method of its gifting is separate from the substance of what it is.

If the idea is that God's grace is not ours by our individual rights, or something we have earned like a salary is correct. But it is not correct to say, as the lesson says, grace is giving us what we don't deserve.

"And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men" (Lk 2:52 NIV84).



“Favor” in this text is the Greek word for “grace.” Was the favor or grace Jesus received undeserved? Or did Jesus deserve it and yet still needed it and need to grow in it?

So what is God’s grace?

Consider these texts:

- “For the LORD God is a sun and shield; **The LORD will give grace and glory**” (Ps 84:11 NKJV).
  - Who is the Sun of Righteousness that rises with healing in His wings?
  - Who is our shield from sin and shame?
  - Who did God give to us because He so loved the world?
  - So what does it mean the “Lord will **give** grace and glory”? Does it mean the Lord will send Jesus, the full disclosure, revelation, dispersal, outpouring, fulfillment, of God’s grace and glory?
- “In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his **Son**, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. **The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word**” (Heb 1:1–3 NIV84).
  - Is Jesus God’s glory revealed and poured out upon us?
  - Is Jesus God’s grace given to us?
- “But each of us was **given grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift**” (Eph 4:7 NRSV).
  - What does this mean?
  - Grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift?
- “The **Word became flesh** and made his dwelling among us. We have **seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only**, who came from the Father, **full of grace and truth**” (Jn 1:14 NIV84).
  - Is Jesus living grace and living truth and living glory?
  - What is this glory and truth and grace—how do you understand it?
- “From the **fullness of his grace** we have all received one blessing after another. For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth came through Jesus Christ**” (Jn 1:16–17 NIV84).
  - Who is the source of this grace?
  - Is the truth separate from Jesus or is Jesus the source of truth and the manifestation of truth?
  - Is the grace separate from Jesus or is Jesus the source of grace and the manifestation of grace?
  - Is this grace a legal payment to God, or is this grace God pouring out Himself in Jesus to do something literal, real, powerful in the species human?





- “just as Christ was raised from the dead **through the glory of the Father**, we too may live a new life” (Ro 6:4 NIV84).
  - What is God’s glory?
  - God’s character—but where do we find the manifestation of God’s character? Jesus is the living reality of it, but what is a transcript of it? The law—what kind of law?
  - The law of love, God’s character expressed in the living protocols of life—the principle of giving, God’s glory diffusing out from Himself to all the universe to create and sustain all things.
  - Jesus was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father when Jesus perfectly restored God’s law, God’s character of love into the humanity He assumed.
- “May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from **his glorious power**” (Col 1:11 NRSV).
  - What is the power that makes us strong?
  - It is the truth, love, grace and glory of God that we receive from Jesus living in us when we trust God.
- “The heavens declare the **glory of God** (Ps 19:1 NIV84).
  - How do the heavens declare God’s glory?
  - What is God’s glory?
  - His character of love, His design law of love, which is a constant outworking of Himself in sustaining all things.
- “How great is your **goodness**, which you **have stored up for those who fear you**, which you bestow in the sight of men on those who take refuge in you” (Ps 31:19 NIV84).
  - God’s goodness—His character of love, His grace, His truth, is stored up for those who fear Him—Does this remind you of any text for our time?
  - Fear God and give glory to Him for the hour if His judgment has come!
  - We are to be in awe of God, revere Him, it is the goodness of God that leads us to repentance (Romans 2:4). And seeing His goodness, His glory and grace revealed in Jesus, we revere Him and for those who revere Him He has stored up His goodness to pour out in us. Thus, we give Him glory because we receive His grace—we receive Jesus and it is no longer I that live but Christ lives in me.
- Jesus prayed:
  - “Father, **glorify me** in your presence with the **glory** I had with you before the world began... **I have given them the glory that you gave me**, that they may be one as we are one: I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (Jn 17:5, 22–23 NIV84).
  - What does it mean to glorify God? To have fear and selfishness purged and God’s law of love restored within such that we love God and others more than self. To be at-one with God again!



- “For the LORD God is a sun and shield; **The LORD will give grace and glory**” (Ps 84:11 NKJV).
  - Who is the Sun of Righteousness that rises with healing in His wings?
  - Who is our shield from sin and shame?
  - Who did God give because He so loved the world?
  - So what does it mean the “Lord will give grace and glory”? Does it mean the Lord will send Jesus, the full disclosure, revelation, dispersal, outpouring, fulfillment, of God’s grace and glory?
- For it is by **grace you have been saved, through faith**—and this not from yourselves, **it is the gift of God—not by works**, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Eph 2:8–10 NIV84).
  - The grace is a gift—like water in a desert is a gift—the gifting is gracious but the grace is more than the act, it is the substance of God’s character, love, methods, power, glory—fully manifested in Jesus. We receive God—Him, His presence into our hearts when we trust Him, through faith. And He, Jesus living in us, is the living grace of God that heals and transforms us.

## TUESDAY

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Read the last paragraph, “The law often has been...” What kind of evil does the law protect us from?

- Does the law protect people from physical illness—consider Job, the man born blind, or all of nature (Romans 8)?
- Does the law protect people from being murdered—consider Uriah?
- Does the law protect people from natural disasters?
- Does the law protect people from rejection—consider Jesus?

What does the law protect us from? From having our characters, minds, hearts corrupted with sin, fear and selfishness.

Other people can do us harm, can perpetrate evil upon us and we can suffer from sickness, and natural disasters, evil in this world can harm us physically, emotionally, and tempt us spiritually—we are not protected against the temptations and hurts, we are protected against being corrupted in heart, mind and character if we cling to Jesus and stay faithful to His law of truth, love and liberty.

Jesus said,

“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you” (Mt 5:11–12 NIV84).



“In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world” (Jn 16:33 NIV84).

**God’s law doesn’t protect us from being attacked by the evil forces in this world, it protects us from being corrupted by evil.**

## **WEDNESDAY**

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The lesson focuses our attention on the Sabbath and it given again in Deuteronomy and this time emphasizing instead of creation, that God delivered them from slavery.

What is the significance of this change?

What is the significance of the Sabbath in relationship to God’s moral law?

How is the Sabbath relevant to us today?

What is the difference in understanding the Sabbath through imposed versus design law lenses?

## **THURSDAY**

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“Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness” (Romans 4:3 KJV).

What does this mean?

Through imposed law lens?

Through design law?

The sinful heart is distrustful of God and enmity to God and God’s law, it is antagonistic to God’s methods and character. Abraham trusted God, in other words, his heart was changed from distrust to trust and God counted Abraham for what he was in reality, a changed man, a man who now trusted God.

And in trust, Abraham’s heart and mind were surrendered into the hands of the Creator and God had liberty to work in Abraham to will and to do, and what does God do in people who trust Him? He heals, transforms and recreates into real righteousness.

So God, who spoke into existence, spoke or declared, when Abraham trusted, that Abraham is righteous and Abraham was transformed through faith by God’s grace into righteousness—as all who trust like Abraham will be.



## **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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**Come and Reason Property update:** The renovation project is out to get contractor bids.

## **NEW TRACTS:**

We have five new sharing tracts:

- Babylon the Mother of Harlots: Come Out of Her
- Loneliness Its Cause and Cure
- The Injustice of Human Justice
- How to Disagree and Remain Friends
- Knowing God's Will