



2 Cor. 3:18

# Open Face

*One interest will prevail, one subject will swallow up all others. Christ our Righteousness*

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## The Problem with Feast-Keeping

David Clayton



**T**he observance of the Feast days is becoming more and more widespread among believers who have embraced the truth about God. Some observe these feast days because they feel that they provide special times when they can fellowship with other believers and with God. It is true that some do not believe that the observance of feast days is required by God, but they find it helpful for themselves personally, so they practice it. But others believe that the observance of these days is as important a matter as is the observance of the Ten Commandments. They see it as necessary that all believers observe these feasts.

Several of my friends are feast-keepers and they seem, for the most part to be very sincere in what they are doing. There are a few whose behaviour I find strange, yes, but most of them seem to be genuine in their desire to serve God faithfully. I am reluctant to stir things up and to say things which may cause hard feelings and alienation. However, I feel that if I am faithful to my calling as a minister of the gospel,

it is my duty to warn my brethren when I see them in danger. If I love them and truly care for their souls, how can I remain silent when I see that they are in peril? So I have decided to write on this issue of the feast-days again, still hoping that some will hear and will understand and take heed.

I have no problem with those believers who wish to observe the feasts as a matter of personal preference. If a man believes that by climbing to the top of Mount Sinai it will draw him personally closer to God, that is his business, but if he says that we all need to do it, then it becomes an issue.

In this edition of *Open Face* we will examine some of the foundational principles which are related to this issue of observance of the feast days. This is by no means an attempt to do a thorough examination of the issue, but rather, it is intended to look at some of the principles of the gospel. When we understand these principles, then the question of feast-keeping falls into its proper place. I urge all honest and open-minded readers to examine what is said carefully. I believe these issues are very important. First of all, we will examine the question of what relationship a Christian should have with the law.

### THE CHRISTIAN AND THE LAW

Is it necessary for Christians to observe the works of the law? The apostle Paul gives us a clear answer in his letter to the Galatians:

*For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor*

*uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love. (Gal 5:6)*

In other words, there is no benefit in being circumcised and there is no benefit in not being circumcised, the issue is of no consequence. Neither condition has anything to do with salvation. What matters is *faith* which *works* by *love*. This is Christianity, this and nothing else. The circumcised person has nothing over the uncircumcised and the uncircumcised has nothing over the circumcised as far as Christ is concerned. Let us bear this principle in mind as we consider that circumcision is one of the works required by the law..

But then, if this is true, what is the meaning of Paul's statement in the following passage?

*Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. (3) For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. (4) Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. (Gal 5:2-4)*

Here Paul says that there definitely is something wrong with circumcision, while in the previous verse he said that

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*Open Face* is dedicated to the promotion of the truths committed to the Advent movement, as believed and taught by the early Adventist pioneers. In particular to the restoration of those truths which have been cast down to the ground and trampled underfoot by the papacy, and adopted by her daughters.

Our purpose is to motivate our readers to commit themselves wholly to the task of personal preparation for the coming of the Lord, and to the taking of the final warning message to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

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it didn't really matter. Is he confused? Notice what the issue is, it is Christ versus the law. When a Christian chose to be circumcised, it was an indication that he was seeking to be accepted by God on the basis of obedience to the law. Since he was expecting to be accepted because of keeping the law, then logically, such a person was under obligation to observe, or to do the entire law, all of it. He was obligated to observe all 613 commandments specified in the law. It is interesting to note that several of those who believe in feast-keeping have gone all the way and concluded that it is necessary to keep ALL of the law, every single one of the 613 commandments!

But let us not miss the point: When a person comes to the conclusion that he is required to do any part of the law then Christ profits him NOTHING! Why is this so? It is so because this person has not accepted that Christ is enough. He has not accepted the fact that God has provided all he needs already, in Christ. The very fact that a person feels that something is required

in addition to Christ is an indication that such a person has not accepted Christ as being sufficient for all he needs. Since this person believes that his relationship with God depends on law-keeping, then this person is obligated to obey ALL of the law, every single command, because this is what the law demands of us. Perfect obedience to all of the law is the only way that we can obtain favour through the law. This is what the apostle teaches (see Gal. 3:10-12)

But Paul's statement here seems to be a contradiction of the statement which we read before. First Paul says it doesn't matter whether or not one is circumcised, and then now, he says if a person is circumcised, Christ will profit him nothing! How can this seeming contradiction be explained?

Let us ask ourselves the question, what are the reasons which would cause a person to be circumcised? Well, if a person were a Jew, he would have been circumcised on the 8<sup>th</sup> day after he was born. This was a part of the law given to Moses at Mount Sinai and it was a rigidly fixed part of the Jewish religion. But it was more than simply a part of their religion, over the centuries it had also become an integral part of their lifestyle and culture.

But Paul's letter was written to the brethren at Galatia. These were Christian believers who had never been Jews, they were Gentiles by race. There was no cultural reason for them to be involved with circumcision, it was not a part of their past lifestyle. Now we see that it was possible for Christian Jews to be circumcised, yet it would not have been a problem because they might do it simply because it was a part of their cultural and national practice and not because they thought it was still required by God. But for the Gentiles, this was a different matter. The only reason why Gentile Christians would desire circumcision is if they believed it was required in order that they should be saved.

Notice this important issue. Circumcision in itself is nothing. Jewish Chris-

tians did it and it was no big thing. Why would it be an issue if Gentile Christians did it? Was there a difference between Jewish brethren and Gentile brethren? Not at all, but here is the critical point. It is not what we do which is so important, it is what we *believe* which is important. At one point Paul himself took Timothy and circumcised him (Acts 16:1-3)! But why did he do it? Did he believe it was necessary for salvation? Absolutely not. The Scripture says that Paul circumcised Timothy because he wanted to remove prejudice from the minds of the Jews because he was taking Timothy with him to work with these Jews and because Timothy was a half-Jew. It was not because Paul believed that it was necessary, or a requirement for salvation.

Our faith is the important thing. We are saved through faith, so if our faith is wrong, then we are lost! *This is the issue*. If my faith tells me that Christ is not enough to save me, but I need to add the works of the law, then I am lost! This is the point Paul is making. My faith has not taken hold of the salvation which is in Christ, this is why I am still seeking to add to what Christ did. This attempt to add the works of the law is the proof that I have not accepted what is in Christ and therefore I am lost.

The works of the law are nothing in themselves. They are just acts of human behaviour. But when a person *believes* that he must do them as a part of the process of salvation, then such actions become an issue. They are then destructive to faith and therefore destructive to salvation.

Now, all of a sudden these Gentile, Galatian Christians were wanting to be circumcised; what was their reason for this? The reason was that there was a group of Jewish believers who were convinced that faith in Christ was not enough for salvation. These people were persuaded that anybody who became a Christian also needed to practice the works of the law in order to be saved. They went to some of the places where Paul had preached the

gospel and tried to persuade those who were converted that they needed to keep the law in addition to believing in Christ. One of the places where they ended up was Galatia. We don't need to speculate about this, the Bible makes it very clear. This issue became so disturbing that on one occasion there had to be a special conference called in Jerusalem to discuss the matter.

*And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. (2) When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. (Acts 15:1-2)*

*But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. (Acts 15:5)*

The apostles and elders came together and there was a long discussion about the issue. Finally, the council came to the following decision:

*Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: (25) It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, (26) Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. (27) We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. (28) For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; (29) That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood,*

*and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. Fare ye well. (Acts 15:24-29)*

*As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication. (Acts 21:25)*

Here we see the issue clearly and unmistakably laid out. These Jewish believers (who incidentally were mostly Pharisees), demanded that the Gentile believers should keep the law including circumcision. These misguided brethren did not understand Christianity. As far as they were concerned, Christianity was an addition to their religion, it was something to be added to the Torah (the law). Therefore they felt that anybody who became a Christian must also accept Judaism as well and be joined to their system. But this was not the truth. Christianity was not an addition to the law, it was not an addition to the religion of the Jews. While the entire system of the law pointed to the coming of Christ and represented Christ, Christ was the end, or the goal of the law (Rom. 10:4). When Jesus died and was resurrected, the law (the entire Torah) had fulfilled its purpose and was no longer necessary in God's plan. Now, it was not something to be added to this new religion called Christianity, it was to be **replaced** by Christianity.

*Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. (Gal 3:19)*

*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (25) But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (Gal 3:24-25)*

The system of the law was to last only until the Seed (Christ) should come. It was a schoolmaster, a teacher to guide and instruct God's people until Christ arrived, but after He arrived and their faith became a reality, the law was no longer necessary. God's people were no longer governed by the schoolmaster, but by Christ Himself through His spirit.

In considering this issue of whether or not the observance of the feast days is still required by God, this is the first thing to understand. Christians no longer should be observing or keeping the works of the law. The system of the law has been abolished by Christ and in observing the works of the law, Christians demonstrate that they do not truly have faith in Christ's salvation.

Of course, the immediate question which comes to mind is, "what about the Ten Commandments?" Were they not a part of the law as well? Are we saying that they also have been abolished? This question is addressed in the next article, "The Law of The Spirit."



# The Law of The Spirit

As Brother Howard and I have gone from place to place presenting the gospel over the past seven and a half years, we have frequently found that our understanding of Righteousness by Faith is in conflict with the understanding of many among Historic and Independent Adventists and even among those who believe the truth about God. There seems to be a perception that what we are teaching here at Restoration Ministries constitutes an attack against “the law,” and that it will eventually lead to a rejection of the commandments.

It is true that we are presenting a different perspective on what the law is and what it means to keep the law, but do we really make void the law by focusing on faith? No, as Paul said, “nay, we establish the law.” (Rom. 3:31) Much of the opposition is based on misconceptions, or a lack of willingness to study the issues with an open mind, or a blind loyalty to people or personalities. Not many today possess the spirit of the noble Bereans.

Interestingly, a great deal of the concern comes from those who believe in the keeping of the feast days. This was an eye-opener for me when I began to realize it. There is something about our perspective of the gospel which is antagonistic to feast-keeping and this realization has caused me to recognize more fully the underlying issues which really are at the foundation of feast-keeping

What does it really mean to “keep the law,” or to fulfill the righteousness of the law. The apostle Paul focuses on this in Romans chapters seven and eight. Let us see if we can understand what he is saying:

## THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (Rom 8:2)*

This verse contains the key to understanding the true nature of righteous-

ness and how it works in the believer. In order to understand what it means, we first of all have to understand that Paul speaks about three different laws in the book of Romans.

1. First of all, there is the **law** of the Ten Commandments.
2. Secondly there is the **law** of sin and death.
3. Thirdly, there is the **law** of the spirit of life.

Paul speaks of the law of the ten commandments in the following verses:

*What shall we say then? is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. (Rom 7:7)*

*Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. (Rom 7:12)*

*For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. (Rom 7:14)*

*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: (Rom 7:22)*

These verses are all speaking of the Ten Commandments and they show us several things.

1. That the Ten commandments are holy, just and good,
2. That the Ten Commandments reveal that we are sinners,
3. The Ten Commandment law is spiritual, but we are naturally carnal and slaves to sin.
4. Paul was in a state where he delighted in the Ten Commandments.

All of this shows that the commandments are very good, but the following verse reveals that there is a problem:

*I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. (22) For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: (23) But I see another law in my*

*members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. (Rom 7:21-23)*

Paul now speaks of another law. This law is not a legal law, it is not a law written out in words or demanded by some governing authority. How does this law work? It works like this: When Paul wants to do good, he is compelled to do wrong. This law is stronger than the desire to obey God’s commandments and it makes him a slave to sin. He refers to this law as, “the law of sin which is in my members (my body).”

We can recognize that these are two different kinds of law. One is a **judicial** law and the other is a law of **nature**. A judicial, or a legal law is a rule, or a set of rules which are made by a governing authority. The Ten Commandments are legal laws. They instruct people to do something and then the person who hears must respond. He must decide either to obey or to disobey. It is up to the individual to decide whether or not he will obey. Whenever we deal with a legal law, there are always penalties. If a person obeys, he is rewarded, if he disobeys, there are penalties. It is the ruling authority who decides on the penalties and rewards.

A natural law, on the other hand, is something built into nature. When we think of natural laws we think of laws such as the law of gravity, the laws of motion, the law of consequence. This is not the same kind of law as a legal law and it does not operate in the same way. In a natural law, there are not stated commands saying, “thou shalt do this, or that,” laid down by a governing authority, neither are there rewards and penalties. A natural law is a principle built in naturally which always produces the same result. It is called a law because it always produces the same result. If we think of the law of

gravity for example, it is called a law, because every time something is thrown into the air, it always comes back down. This happens every time without fail. So it is referred to as a law.

When Paul says, "I find then a law that when I would do good, evil is present with me," he is referring to a natural law. He is not saying that somebody gave him a rule that he must always do evil. He is saying that there was a principle built into his being which worked like this: Whenever he wanted to do good, it made him do evil, and whenever he tried to avoid evil, he found himself doing it. This principle could not be resisted and so Paul referred to it as a law: Something that always worked the same way, all the time.

So the first law, the Ten Commandments, are **legal law**. The second law, is the law of sin, and it is a **natural law**.

Which of these two is the stronger law? Here is what Paul says:

*For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: (Rom 8:3)*

Paul says that the law (the Commandments) was **WEAK**, because of the flesh. In what way was the law "weak?" It was weak in that it could not produce righteousness. It could not defeat sin, and the reason was because it was dealing with sinful flesh (the carnal mind). There is a law in the carnal mind (sinful flesh), called "the law of sin," and when it comes to dealing with sinful flesh, this law of sin is stronger than the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments demand good behaviour, but the law of sin compels the individual to do evil. He cannot resist this law and he is a slave to this master called "sin." Therefore, the Ten Commandments cannot solve the problem of sin. The natural law is ALWAYS stronger than legal law. Legal law may demand and threaten, but natural law

comes from the inside and it fulfills its requirements naturally. It is in harmony with the instincts and the way of nature, so it is **automatically** fulfilled. It is always obeyed.

So there must be something more than legal law if the problem of sin is to be solved. Thank God, He has provided such a solution. The apostle explains the law which God uses to solve the problem. He says:

*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. (Rom 8:2)*

This is the wonderful truth of the gospel. God, in Christ Jesus has given us another **natural law** to cancel the power of the first natural law of sin. This third law is called "the law of the spirit of life." What kind of law is this? Is it legal law, or is it natural law? We saw already that legal law cannot defeat natural law, so the commandments could not defeat this law of sin. Therefore if God is to establish another law to defeat the natural law of sin, then He has to use another natural law. The legal law failed, it could not do what it demanded, because the flesh cancelled its authority. It was "weak through the flesh."

But God sent His Son into sinful flesh and defeated the law of sin in flesh. How did He do this? He did it by introducing another law into that same flesh. This law was "the law of the spirit of life." Through the spirit God implanted another principle in sinful human flesh which naturally loves to do good. A principle which delights to do God's will.

**The law of sin** worked in this way: My carnal nature loved evil so when I wanted to do good, I always did evil.

**The law of the spirit** works in this way: My new nature loves good, so when evil presents itself, I always do what is good.

Let us notice that this third law, "the law of the spirit of life" is a natural law, just like the law of sin. There is no natural law in existence which **de-**

**pend**s on instructions in order for it to work. Natural laws have a built in power and all the instructions in the universe cannot overthrow natural laws. For example, the greatest authority in the world can stand on the shores of the sea and command the waves to stop rolling, but they will simply ignore him and continue to do what is ordained by nature. We may think, well, it is too difficult a task to command the waves to stop, so let the same authority throw a feather up into the air and command it not to fall to the ground and see if he is more successful. We can see, it is not possible to overthrow natural law by using legal law. This is why all the rules in the world cannot stop sinners from committing sin, because the law of sin is a natural law in the sinner and he needs something more than legal law to overcome it.

**So the spirit of life does not depend on legal law, or written rules to perform its work of righteousness.** The law of the spirit of life works, it produces true righteousness because Jesus implants the very mind of God, the very righteous life of God into the nature of the believing Christian. He does this by giving His own spirit, his own life, His own divine nature with its tendencies to always do what is good. This implanted life produces the fruits of God's own life, not because of legal law, but because this is the **instinctive** behaviour which is naturally a part of the nature of Christ.

This is the key point of the great truth of Christ our Righteousness. Those who are law-oriented say, "we cannot be righteous unless we observe the law." They accept that we need Christ to be righteous, they even say we need Christ's strength, but they cannot leave out the legal law. They say, we must relate to the law to know right and wrong and then we must respond to the law and seek Christ's help in keeping it.

But the truth is this: God has given us the very life of His Son!! Oh glory be to God for such a salvation! He has

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# Two Dispensations

The Old and the New Covenants, represent God's way of relating to His people in two different ages. Though this seems to be a very obvious fact, there are those who reject this truth. Those who reject it teach that the two covenants are not related to two periods of time, but only to two different experiences in the lives of individual people. They teach that before a person has faith in Christ he is under the Old Covenant, but when he has faith in Christ he is under the New Covenant. It is true that the Bible does apply the two covenants in this way, as relating to individual experience. The apostle Paul applies it this way in Romans 7. However, this is not the primary meaning of the two covenants, but is a secondary application.

The Bible shows us that there were different dispensations in God's dealings with His people. There is nothing wrong or unscriptural about this. We are not saying that there are dispensations in God's *method of saving men*. This would be false. However, the idea that God has dealt with man in different ways in leading and governing and teaching them, cannot be denied by even the most superficial reader of the Bible.

In this article we examine the teachings of the apostle Paul in Galatians chapters 3 and 4 where he clearly teaches that there were two dispensations in God's dealing with His people. If this truth were understood it would immediately remove all the misconceptions which make some Christians feel that they still need to keep the feasts.

## THE PROMISE VS THE LAW

*"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." (Gal. 3:8)*

The Scripture foresaw. Foreseeing has to do with viewing something which is to occur in the future. It has to do with

something to happen at a certain point in time. So whoever these "heathen" were, they were not yet justified by faith, but they would be at some future time and this was foreseen by the Scripture. God's plan was to accomplish this in Abraham's seed (Christ). Notice, this was a future event.

*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. (Gal 3:16)*

When this prophecy was made, it was a promise - not yet a reality. It was something future, to be accomplished at a certain time. We see clearly that so far, the Bible is emphasizing God's plans moving along a timeline - progressing towards a certain point in **TIME**. Now Paul makes an interesting point which we should note carefully.

*Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. (Gal 3:15)*

Notice his point; when once a covenant has been confirmed, it cannot be disannulled (cancelled) and it cannot be modified. Nothing can be added to it afterwards. This is important to remember in light of what Paul says next.

*And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. (Gal 3:17)*

When did the law come into the picture? Four hundred and thirty (430) years **after** the promise was made to Abraham, the law was given to Moses and the Israelites at Mount Sinai.

So notice, again, we are dealing with events along a time-line. First of all, the promise was given to Abraham, then it was confirmed and then the law

was given four hundred and thirty years afterwards.

When the law was given, it could not cancel the promise and it could not add anything to it. Paul says the law could not "disannul," the promise, meaning that God did not introduce the law as a change to His original plan. The promise or the covenant was to bless the world **in the Seed** and nothing could change or modify that plan. So the law was not given to bless the world, but for another purpose. The blessing of the world is in the Seed and **only in the Seed**.

Notice also that two things are being contrasted in this chapter: It is Christ, versus the law, or, the Seed versus the law. Does God bless the world **ONLY** in Jesus Christ the Seed of Abraham, or does He bless the world in the Seed, as well as in the law? It is **ONLY** in the Seed. Why is Paul emphasizing this? It is because the Galatians were becoming caught up in the law, believing that they needed to go back to the system of the law, even though they already had Christ. Paul was showing them the purpose of the law and the purpose of Christ so they would not be confused about what they really needed.

*For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise. (Gal 3:18)*

The promised inheritance was not to become a reality through the law. It was to become a reality, to be received through the Seed.

*Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. (Gal 3:19)*

So the question naturally arises, if the law does not provide the blessing, if the inheritance is not through the law

and the law makes no contribution to the promise, then why did God give the law? If the law can neither produce the inheritance nor contribute to it, then why Did God bother to give it?

The answer is, it was added (to God's timeline, to God's plan for His people) because sin was increasing while God's people waited for the Seed. The carnal nature and the depraved circumstances which they had experienced in Egypt made God's professing people incapable of governing themselves. They needed strict control and a firm hand to direct them. The law provided this, but notice, it was added, **ONLY** until the promised Seed should come.

When the Seed (Christ) came, then God's perfect way of governing people would be established. This way is the indwelling spirit, Christ in you, the life of God in the believer. This is perfect government, but until the holy spirit was given by Christ, they needed to be governed in some way to restrain the power of sin, and this is why the law was added to the plan. It was introduced by God to be a stop-gap, something to last until the Seed arrived, but only until the Seed arrived and fulfilled God's purpose.

But the question arises, does this mean that there is a conflict between the promise (in the seed) and the law (added at Mount Sinai)? Since the promise of blessing is in the Seed alone, and the law did not add to that Seed nor take its place, is there a conflict

between both things?

*Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. (Gal 3:21)*

No, there is no conflict. The law had its purpose and the Seed had His purpose. But the law was not intended to give life, it was not intended to do what only the Seed can do. This must be understood. It had another purpose. Life could be obtained only in the Seed. The issue was that men should obtain life. This was possible only in the Seed, never in the law..

The goal of the promise was Jesus Christ (the Seed) in whom life is obtained. This gift comes to those who believe - not those who keep the law.

*But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. (Gal 3:23)*

Before the goal of faith became a reality (before Christ arrived) we were kept under the law. That is, we (God's people) were governed and controlled by the system of the law, The object of our faith (Jesus Christ, the Seed) was not yet realized. It had not yet become a reality.

If we have been following Paul's argument up to this point, there is no question that we are dealing with a timeline. The meaning of the verse

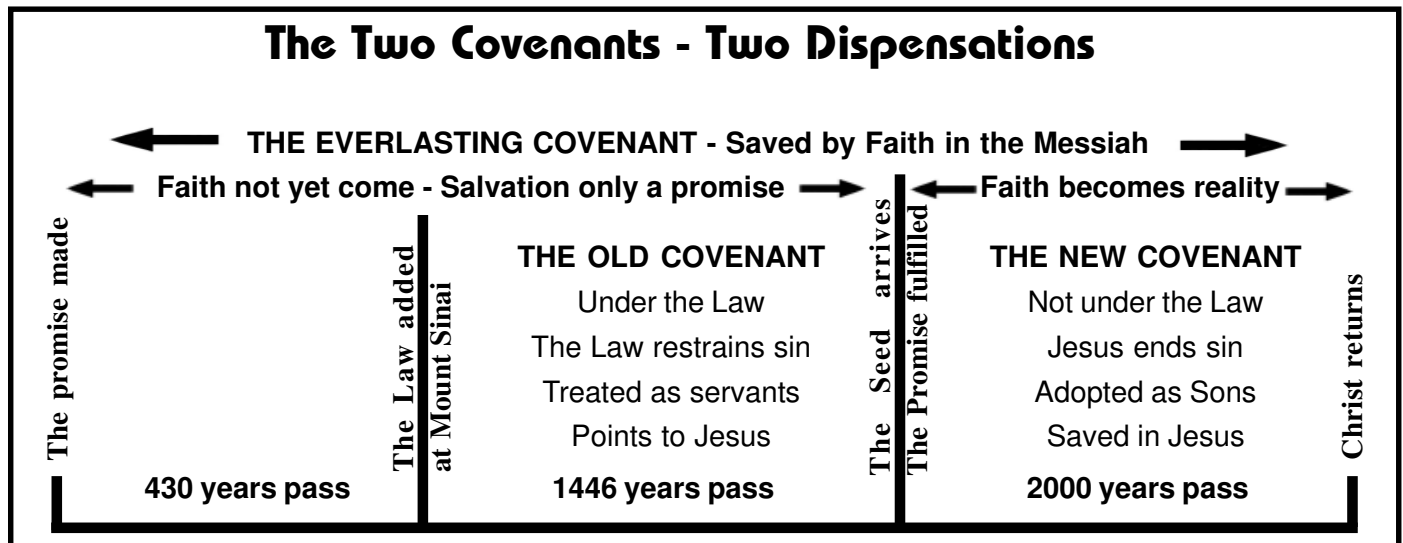
becomes very clear. Before Christ came, we were under the law, that is, governed by the law, and in this state, we did not have access to the reality which should be revealed afterwards (that is, afterwards when Christ came to this earth)

*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (Gal 3:24)*

The purpose of the law is revealed. That is, the law that was added, the law that was given till the Seed should come (verse 19). It was a schoolmaster, a shepherd, a governor, to keep us safe, disciplined, educated, expectant, focused on the promise, until the object of our faith became a reality. Until Christ arrived and we received Him. That is, until AD 31 when Christ gave His life for His people on Calvary and to His church at Pentecost. This is why the law was given or added. It was a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, the seed. After the Seed comes, we no longer need the schoolmaster.

*But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (Gal 3:25)*

The coming of faith is the same as the coming of the Seed. The arrival of Christ. It is the fulfillment of our faith. It does not signify the coming of faith to the individual, it signifies the arrival of the OBJECT of the faith of God's people, that is, the Seed.



*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Gal 3:29)*

So we see that the promise made to Abraham that God would bless all nations in his Seed is fulfilled in Christ. By receiving Christ we have all (Gentiles and Jews) become inheritors of the promise made to Abraham. We have received the blessing in Christ, not in the law. We are heirs of the promise.

*Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; (2) But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. (Gal 4:1-2)*

Even though we are heirs of the promise in Christ, Paul goes on to explain that even heirs, as long as they are children, are no different than servants. They are under the rule and authority of other persons, even though they will one day rule over all. Their state of infancy makes it necessary for them to be under this government, this strict control. However, this control is to last only for a certain time.

*Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: (Gal 4:3)*

Paul explains the meaning of his illustration. He is speaking about us, the people of God. He is continuing his argument from chapter 3, here in chapter 4. We, children of God who are heirs of the promise, were put under governors and tutors until a certain time. Here we see again that Paul is speaking of the experience of God's people along a time-line. At one point in time, we were (spiritual) children and at that time we were in bondage.

In what sense were we, "in bondage?" This simply means that we were under the control of governors and tutors who controlled our lives. They told us what to do and we had no choice, we were obligated to obey. The "governors and tutors" in this sense, was the law. This is how servants or slaves are

treated. Why were we, God's people treated this way? Because we were "children," spiritual children.

We were under the "elements of the world" because the law had only to do with this world. Every aspect of its government had only to do with temporal life and practice.

*But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (Gal 4:4)*

We are talking about time - the fullness of the time. What time? The time "appointed of the father." The time appointed for the coming of the seed. The time specified for the end of the law's operation when "the seed should come."

At this time, God sent His Son. This son was made "under the law." He came under the jurisdiction of the tutors and governors, under the elements of the world. He was obligated to do the rituals of the law because the law was to last, "till the seed should come." There was a point in time when it should no longer be God's way of governing His people. When this point is understood by God's people there will no longer be the confusion which exists today with many trying to create a hybrid religion, mingling the law with Christ, insisting that we still need to observe the feast days specified in the law.

The law was to rule, till the seed should accomplish His work, because the law was not fulfilled until Jesus had died and fully met its requirements. But when Christ died, it marked the end of the system of the law forever. It had done its work and its time was past.

*To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal 4:5)*

His mission was to redeem those under the law. God's people had been placed under the law, that is, under the government or administration of the law, when the law was added 430 years after the promise. They had been placed under the tutorship and gover-

norship of the law so it could be a schoolmaster, a teacher, a shepherd to bring them to Christ. To keep and preserve them until the coming of the seed.

During this time, they were treated like servants (or slaves) in the sense that they had no control over their own behaviour. The law was a strict dictator, a governor who was very severe.

But now Jesus came to set them free from that kind of government. Now He opened the way for them to enter into the lifestyle of sons, rather than that of servants. The son possesses the life of the father, the servant only possesses his rules and instructions.

*And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. (Gal 4:6)*

We are sons because the spirit of God in our hearts is the very life of God. Therefore we have an impulse within us to feel that God is our Father (not simply our Governor or law-giver). We cry "Abba" because it is in our hearts.

*Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. (Gal 4:7)*

When were we servants? Not when we were gentiles or heathen. At that time we worked for the devil, not for God. We (God's people) were servants when we were under the law. When we served God by rules and regulations and forms and ceremonies.

But we inherit God, by way of Christ. This is how we become sons of God. We receive the blessing of Abraham, we are heirs of the promise. Not a promise to inherit physical property, but the promise to receive God Himself, in Jesus Christ!

Men may be confused, mostly because they put too much confidence in other men, but thank God, truth never changes and is always available to those who read with an open mind.

So God's relationship with His people no longer is directed through the law.



That dispensation is over. The teaching tool has done its work and now we deal with the reality, Christ Himself. The works of the law such as circumcision, the observance of feast days, the rituals, regulations, ceremonies and forms of the schoolmaster are gone. All that remains is the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the holy spirit (Rom. 5:5). The law has fulfilled its purpose and brought us to Christ where we obtained righteousness. We are now complete in Him (Col. 2:9) and no longer need the law. We have a different governor, even the spirit of the living God. We have the mind of Christ.

Brethren, when we return to the weak and incapable works of the law in seeking for God's approval, we are in essence, rejecting the gift of Christ. We are in essence saying that God's gift is not enough. We are returning to a way which never brought righteousness.

*(Heb 7:19) For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God.*

The apostle Paul recognized the danger in turning to these weak and incapable forms which never produced life and his distress was revealed in his words to these Galatian brethren:

*Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. (11) I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain. (Gal 4:10-11)*

Yes, it was that serious. It is a matter of salvation. Those who feel an obligation to observe the works of the law, including the feast days, reveal that they have not understood, nor accepted Christ's salvation. They are seeking to add to what He already did and as such, their salvation is in jeopardy.

It is time to move from the bondage of servanthood and into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.



## The Law of The Spirit

*Continued from Page 5*

made us a part of Himself and in this way, by the power of His spirit He has implanted His very own nature into us. So we are righteous ***without the law*** (Rom. 3:21), that is without the legal law, or the Ten Commandments.

The law of the spirit of life, the natural law of righteousness fills our lives with good works, with the love and selflessness of Christ ***without the legal law***. This is a righteousness which is not AGAINST the legal law of the Ten Commandments because the commandments are good. But it does not depend on the Commandments either to be fulfilled or to be defined. The ten commandments still serve as a measurement as to whether or not a person has the spirit of God in him. It still serves as a schoolmaster to bring sinners to Christ, but it is not necessary as a governor in the life of the Christian. Christians are governed by a law which is far more effective than ten rules, a law which is far superior to anything which could ever be written on stone; they are governed by the living spirit of God Himself. This is the truth expressed in the following verses:

*And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. (Isa 30:21)*

*(1 Cor 2:15-16) But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. (16) For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.*

*(1 John 2:27) But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.*

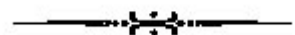
These are amazing verses. Too amazing for most to believe. Read them

carefully and consider what they are saying. The Christian has the privilege of personal, intimate guidance by Christ Himself. He not only has the very mind of Christ, but He is guided by His spirit. This is a far more effective way of producing righteousness than the way of the commandments, where a person had to respond to instructions from the outside. In this system of Christ, a man does what is right from his own desire, from the inside, from his own nature (Christ living within).

This is the true message of Righteousness by Faith. It recognizes that the righteous life is wholly a gift of God. It is given to those who will believe in Jesus Christ and yield themselves totally to Him.

Those who are law oriented cannot accept that righteousness can be given so completely and effectively purely as a gift. They feel that we have a part to play in that we must address the law and respond to it in order to be righteous. This is why they insist that we must be governed by the law. But salvation is the FREE GIFT of God in Christ. It is God's gift, one hundred percent. All we can do is believe, or trust in Christ. All the rest is a gift. If this were not so, then man would have something to contribute, it would not be wholly the work of Christ, it would not be all of grace.

May our Father in heaven help us to understand.



### **JUSTICE OR CONSEQUENCE?**

The fundamental nature of the universe is not legal, it is natural. God does not do good because it is legally right, He does it because it is His nature. Justice is simply an expression which is used to describe the fundamental nature of the universe, the way it works as designed by God in keeping with His nature.

For example, Adam sinned and

# The Benefits of Baking Soda

Lenworth Frankson



## A BRIEF HISTORY

Baking soda in its natural form is known as *nahcolite*, which is part of the natural mineral *natron*.

Natron has been used since ancient times and history tells us that it was harvested directly as a salt mixture from dry lake beds in ancient Egypt and has been used for thousands of years as a cleaning product for both the home and body. Blended with oil, it was an early form of soap. It also softens water while removing oil and grease. Undiluted, natron was a cleanser for the teeth and an early mouthwash. The mineral was mixed into early antiseptics for wounds and minor cuts. Natron can be used to dry and preserve fish and meat and it was an ancient household insecticide, and was used for making leather and as bleach for clothing.

This mineral was used in Egyptian mummification because it absorbs water and behaves as a drying agent. It was added to castor oil to make a smokeless fuel, which allowed the Egyptians to paint elaborate artworks inside ancient tombs without staining them with soot. They used natron as soap for cleansing purposes too and later reports throughout history suggest that some civilizations used forms of baking soda when making bread and other foods that required rising.

It wasn't until 1846 that Dr. Austin

Church and John Dwight began to manufacture and sell the compound we know as baking soda today. By the 1860s, baking soda was featured in cookbooks, and in the 1930s it was widely advertised as a “*proven medicinal agent*.” By 1972, the idea of putting a box of baking soda in your fridge to keep food fresh caught on and is still widely used.

Baking soda was popularized by Arm & Hammer more than 150 years ago. Many people are aware of its versatile qualities for cooking and household use, but less people realize that it also has medicinal properties.

## MEDICINAL USES

There are some amazing remedies you can put together if you have baking soda handy. Some people drink baking soda as a laxative and as an acid-neutralizer. Others drink it to alleviate symptoms of heart burn and indigestion neutralizing the acidity associated with these conditions. It is important to note that baking soda should never be used for any medical application without consulting with a licensed physician first. Baking soda should not be used for children under the age of 6 without consulting a pediatrician and the usage of baking soda might be dangerous for those with allergies or health conditions that make them sensitive to sodium intake. Again, because it is a chemical, drinking baking soda for health conditions without medical consultation is not advisable.

## REMEDIES

**Ulcer Pain:** Baking soda will immediately neutralize stomach acid. Dosing is typically 1-2 teaspoons in a full glass of water.

**Splinter removal:** Add a tablespoon of baking soda to a small glass of water then soak the affected area twice a day. Many splinters will come out on their own after a couple of days using

this treatment.

**Sunburn remedy:** Add ½ cup of baking soda to lukewarm bathwater, then soak in the tub for natural relief. When you get out, let your skin air dry, rather than toweling off the excess baking soda, for extra relief. You can also add a mixture of baking soda and water to a cool compress and apply it to the sunburn directly.

**Deodorant:** If you want to avoid the aluminum found in many deodorants and antiperspirants, try a pinch of baking soda mixed with water instead. This simple paste makes an effective and simple natural deodorant.

**Plaque-busting tooth and gum paste:** For an incredibly effective tooth and gum paste, use a mixture of six parts of baking soda to one part of sea salt. Place them in a blender and mix for 30 seconds, then place in a container to use. Wet the tip of your index finger and place a small amount of the salt and soda mixture on your gums. Starting with the upper outside gums and then the inside of the upper, followed by the lower outside of the gums then the lower inside, rub the mixture onto your teeth and gums. Spit out the excess. Wait 15 minutes then rinse your mouth thoroughly. This mixture is incredibly effective at killing bacteria.

**Insect bites:** Apply a paste made of baking soda and water to insect bites to help relieve itching. You can also try rubbing the dry powder onto your skin. This is also effective for itchy rashes and poison ivy.

**Teeth whitener:** For a natural way to whiten your teeth, crush one ripe strawberry and mix it with 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda. Spread the mixture onto your teeth and leave on for five minutes. Then brush your teeth and rinse. This method should be used no more than once a week, as excessive use could potentially damage your tooth enamel.

**Exfoliator:** A paste made from three parts of baking soda combined with 1 part water can be used as an exfoliator for your face and body. It's natural, inexpensive and gentle enough to use every day.

**Detox bath:** Baking soda and apple cider make a wonderful spa-like bath for soaking away aches and pains and detoxing. It also cleans the tub and the drain, as a bonus!

**Eliminate Stinky Breath:** Baking soda works wonders eliminating bad odors, including bad breath. Simply mix 1 tablespoon of baking soda with 1 cup of hydrogen peroxide, to gargle.

**Treat Bladder Infections:** Bacteria love slightly acidic environments, which is why so many people get bladder infections. The environment in the bladder is a perfect breeding ground for bacteria. You can effectively treat bladder infections by mixing baking soda and water, and drinking it daily until the infection is gone.

**Deodorize Stinky Feet:** Soaking stinky feet in a bowl of baking soda and water will neutralize bacterial acid, and eliminate the stink. Add three tablespoons of baking soda to a tub of warm water for an invigorating foot soak.

**Protect Your Tooth Enamel:** Some foods, like lemon juice, eat away at your tooth enamel. To protect your enamel, mix baking soda with water and gargle several times a day. Alternatively, brushing your teeth with baking soda toothpaste will protect your enamel as well.

**Ease a Sore Throat:** Gargling with a mixture of baking soda and water can help ease your sore throat because the remedy eliminates pain-causing acids. Gargle every four hours for best results.

## CLEANING

**Surface Soft Scrub:** For the safe and effective cleaning of bathroom tubs, tile and sinks, even fiberglass and glossy tiles, sprinkle baking soda lightly on a clean damp sponge and scrub as usual. Rinse thoroughly and wipe dry. For

extra cleaning power, make a paste with baking soda, coarse salt and liquid dish soap—let it sit then scour off.

**Hand-wash, Dishes and Pots & Pans:** Add 2 heaping tablespoons baking soda (along with your regular dish detergent) to the dish water to help cut grease and foods left on dishes, pots and pans. For cooked-on foods, let them soak in the baking soda and detergent with water first, then use dry baking soda on a clean damp sponge or cloth as a scratch less scouring powder.

**Refresh Sponges:** Soak stale-smelling sponges in a strong baking soda solution to get rid of the smell and staleness (4 tablespoons of baking soda dissolved in 1 quart of warm water). For more thorough disinfecting, use the microwave.

**Clean the Microwave:** Apply baking soda on a clean damp sponge and gently clean the inside and outside of the microwave. It will never leave a harsh chemical smell. Rinse well with water.

**Polish Silver Flatware:** Use a baking soda paste made with 3 parts baking soda to 1 part water. Rub onto the silver with a clean cloth or sponge. Rinse thoroughly and dry for shining sterling and silver-plate serving pieces.

**Clean Coffee and Tea Pots:** Remove coffee and tea stains and eliminate bitter off-tastes by washing mugs and coffee makers in a solution of 1/4 cup baking soda in 1 quart of warm water. For stubborn stains, try soaking overnight in the baking soda solution and detergent or scrubbing with baking soda on a clean damp sponge.

**Clean the Oven:** Sprinkle baking soda onto the bottom of the oven. Spray with water to dampen the baking soda. Let it sit overnight. In the morning, scrub, scoop the baking soda and grime out with a sponge, or vacuum, and rinse.

**Clean Floors:** Remove dirt and grime (without unwanted scratch marks) from no wax and tile floors using 1/2 cup baking soda in a bucket of warm water—mop and rinse clean for a spar-

ling floor. For scuff marks, use baking soda on a clean damp sponge, then rinse. Read *Natural Floor Cleaning* for more tips on avoiding toxic floor cleaners.

**Clean Furniture:** You can make a homemade lemon furniture polish, or you can clean and remove marks (even crayon) from walls and painted furniture by applying baking soda to a damp sponge and rubbing lightly. Wipe off with a clean, dry cloth.

**Bath and Kitchen:** Baking soda is great for scrubbing your bath and kitchen. Just sprinkle the baking soda on the surfaces and scrub. You may add a few drops of your favorite essential oil to this. Lavender and tea tree oil have potent anti-bacterial qualities also.

**Clean Shower Curtains:** Clean and deodorize your vinyl shower curtain by sprinkling baking soda directly on a clean damp sponge or brush. Scrub the shower curtain and rinse clean. Hang it up to dry.

**Boost Your Liquid Laundry Detergent:** Give your laundry a boost by adding 1/2 cup of baking soda to your laundry to make liquid detergent work harder. A better balance of pH in the wash gets clothes cleaner, fresher and brighter.

**Gently Clean Baby Clothes:** Baby skin requires the most gentle of cleansers, which are increasingly available, but odor and stain fighters are often harsh. For tough stains add 1/2 cup of baking soda to your liquid laundry detergent, or a 1/2 cup in the rinse cycle for deodorization.

**Clean Cloth Diapers:** Dissolve 1/2 cup of baking soda in 2 quarts of water and soak diapers thoroughly.

**Remove Oil and Grease Stains:** Use baking soda to clean up light-duty oil and grease spills on your garage floor or in your driveway. Sprinkle baking soda on the spot and scrub with a wet brush.

**Clean Batteries:** Baking soda can be used to neutralize battery acid corro-

sion on cars, mowers, etc, because it is a mild alkali. Be sure to disconnect the battery terminals before cleaning. Make a paste of 3 parts baking soda to 1 part water; apply with a damp cloth to scrub corrosion from the battery terminal. After cleaning and reconnecting the terminals, wipe them with petroleum jelly to prevent future corrosion. Be careful when working around a battery—they contain a strong acid.

**Clean Cars:** Use baking soda to clean your car lights, chrome, windows, tires, vinyl seats and floor mats without worrying about unwanted scratch marks. Use a baking soda solution of 1/4 cup baking soda in 1 quart of warm water. Apply with a sponge or soft cloth to remove road grime, tree sap, bugs and tar. For stubborn stains, use baking soda sprinkled on a damp sponge or soft brush.

With a wide range of uses, and several health and medical benefits, hygienic, and cleaning uses, baking soda is an inexpensive and useful compound to have in the house. However, like any other compound that can have health implications, the usage of baking soda for health benefits or medical treatments should be discussed with a physician beforehand. It is safe to use it for the previously mentioned hygienic purposes as long as it is not ingested in large quantities. Baking soda was one of the few products many years ago on the market for cleaning your teeth or settling an upset stomach. Today we have discovered many more choices and it still does the trick for these and dozens of other health and beauty tasks. Try it, its natural!



## **JUSTICE OR CONSEQUENCE**

*from page 9*

death came upon all: Was this a sentence of justice, or was it a sentence of consequence? The view that everything is a result of God's justice leads to the concept of original sin. A false concept of the atonement springs from this understanding.

However, when we see that it is natural law – action and consequence which results in the sentence of death passing upon all, then we can understand that the plan of salvation is aimed at reversing consequences – that the atonement is not essentially a legal transaction, but a plan to undo consequences. The plan of salvation takes on a different complexion.

### ***Open Face***

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