

UNDER THE LAW

Lesson Seven; Romans 6:14-23

A Puzzling Statement

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace. (Rom 6:14 ESV)

For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace. (Rom 6:14 NIV)

Sin is no longer your master, for you no longer live under the requirements of the law. Instead, you live under the freedom of God's grace. (Rom 6:14 NLT)

Under the Law: Christian Interpretations

- Under Judaism
- Under the Old Testament
- Bondage to literally obey the commandments of God.
- Legalism

Under the Law: Our Interpretation

- Jewish or a Proselyte (Galatians 4:4)
- Obligation to the Torah as a Jew (Galatians 5:3)

Under the Law in Paul's Epistles

- Galatians 3:23

³ Now before faith came, we were ~~held captive~~ *[supervised]* under the law, ~~imprisoned~~ *[protected]* until the coming faith would be revealed. (Gal 3:23)

- Galatians 4:4-5
- Galatians 4:21 (5:3)
- Galatians 5:18

For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, *[even though]* you are not under the law,

¹⁹ ~~Now~~ but the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality (Gal 5:17-19)

- 1 Corinthians 9:20-21
To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law *[as proselytes]* I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law *[as a proselyte]*) that I might win those under the law. To those *[God-fearing Gentiles]* outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law

of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. (1Co 9:20-21)

- Philippians 3:6
- Romans 2:12
For all *[those pagan Gentiles]* who have sinned without the law *[which means without being Jewish]* will also perish without the law *[as a punishment for violation of the universal standards that apply to all human beings]*, and all who have sinned under the law *[as Jews]* will be judged by the law *[for violating the commandments and the covenant]*. For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified. (Romans 2:12-13)

- Romans 3:19
¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says *[in the passages I have just quoted]* it speaks to those who are under the law *[to those who are in the Torah, i.e. to the Jewish people]*, so that every mouth may be stopped *[and not just the Gentiles]*, and the whole world *[including the Jewish people]* may be held accountable to God.
²⁰ For by works of the law *[meaning, Jewish status achieved by conversion]* no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes *[specific]* knowledge of sin *[and therefore greater accountability]*. (Rom 3:19-20)

For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. (Rom 3:28)

False Rumors and Misinterpretations

Romans 3:8

Acts 21:19-24

By teaching that Gentiles need not come "under the law" and be Jewish to attain salvation, Paul had created the false impression that he taught Jews not to keep the Torah's distinctively Jewish commandments. Likewise, others believed he taught freedom from the commandments of the Torah.

And why not do evil that good may come?--as some people slanderously charge us with saying. (Rom 3:8)

What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? (Rom 6:1-2)

Dead to Sin

¹⁰ For the death that *[Messiah]* died, He died to *[the influence of]* sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

¹¹ Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its lusts,

¹³ and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin *as* instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those *[resurrected]* alive from the dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.

The Subordinate Conjunction

¹⁴ For sin shall not be master over you *[just because]* you *[God-fearing Gentiles]* are not under law *[as Jews]* but under grace *[obtained by the Messiah]*.

¹⁵ What then? Shall we *[Gentiles]* sin because we are not under law but under grace? May it never be!

Slaves to Righteousness

[I will now explain why it is necessary for God-fearing Gentiles to keep the commandments of the Torah that pertain to you even though you are not Jewish.]

¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness *[and eternal life]*?

¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you *[Gentiles]* who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching *[the instructions before immersion about which commandments are incumbent upon you as Gentiles]* to which you were committed,

¹⁸ and, having been set free from *[the control of]* sin, have become slaves of righteousness.

¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations *[i.e. "the weakness of your flesh"]*. For just as you once presented your *[bodily]* members as slaves to *[sexual]* impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness *[through obedience to the commandments]* leading to sanctification.

²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness *[i.e., you were not controlled by righteousness]*.

²¹ But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

²² But now that you *[God-fearing Gentiles]* have been set free from *[the control of]* sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, *[that is,]* eternal life *[in the resurrection of the dead]*.

²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Argument in Romans 6

Why shouldn't Gentiles continue in sin that grace may abound?

Dead to Sin (Romans 6:2-14)

Baptized into Messiah's death

Raised up in his resurrection

Slave to Righteousness (Romans 6:15-23)

Used to be a slave to sin

Now a slave to righteousness