

Lesson 13 | Wednesday, February 28, 2024

MIND YOUR KING, lessons from Doy Moyer's Book, Mind Your King.

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From the beginning, promises about what would be the good news of God through Christ was exactly that – **something God would provide**. From the seed of woman (Genesis 3:15, Romans 20) to the seed of Abraham (Genesis 12:3, Romans 3:25-26), Jesus is the grace that appeared to bring salvation to all men (Titus 2:15). And when other prophets foretold the coming of the age of the Messiah's blessings, they emphasized too, as we have noted, that at the end of the promise of that message, the people will respond and say, "Our God Reigns" (c.f. Isa 52:7; quoted in Romans 10:15). God's reign is present in grace. We are saved by grace – but we are not unobligated to obey. We are saved by grace through faith – without question (Ephesians 2:8-10). And in Scripture, Faith is working with his works was the way James expressed it (2:21-22); Faith working through love was the way Paul expressed it (Galatians 5:6); And in our class this quarter, we express the same idea that we must mind our King Jesus.

We are under grace (Romans 6:15) and not under Law. When we use that word in American culture, "Under the law" does not mean, "in pursuance of it," or "in conformity with it," but an act assumed to be done under it. The word under has a great variety of meanings. "Under the law" means "subject to the law." We are under the laws of the United States, that is, we are subject to those laws. We live under a certain jurisdiction, that is, we are subject to it. [Mills v. Stoddard, 49 U.S. 345, 366 (U.S. 1850)].

What is the Law that Paul often refers to? First, it can refer to the entire volume of Hebrew Scriptures (Romans 3:19 includes the psalms and prophets inside the law). Second, the law can specifically mean the Law of God given through Moses (Luke 24:44). Third, Paul used the word law to imply a harsh reading of God's commands as used to obtain salvation. Because there is no Greek word for "legalism", some see in this usage an idea of legalism. Often, Paul does not even use "the" when he uses the word so it is more the conception of making the Law the basis of righteousness – or "law-keeping."

The phrase "under the law" in our English Bibles occurs 11 times (NASB).

- In 1 Cor. 9:21, Paul speaks of being "under the law of Christ" so that in itself demonstrates the thesis of the quarter that grace and faith do not mitigate obedience and subjection to higher rule of the King. If we are to say "Our God reigns" if we are not letting Him reign in what we do, how is that trusting the King?
- The other ten occurrences are:
 - Rom 2:12, "For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law; and all who have sinned **under the Law** will be judged by the Law,"
 - Rom 3:19, "Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are **under the Law**, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God"
 - 1Cor. 9:20, "And to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to **those who are under the Law**, as under the Law, (literally 'under law' for all 4 occurrences)
 - Gal. 3:23, "But before faith came, we were kept in custody **under the law**, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed,"
 - Gal. 4:4, "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, **born under the Law**,"
 - Gal. 4:5, "in order that He might redeem those who were **under the Law**, that we might receive the adoption as sons," (ὕπὸ νόμου, hupo nomon, literally 'under law').
 - Gal. 5:18, "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not **under the Law**," (ὕπὸ νόμου, hupo nomon, literally 'under law').

To be under the Law means that a person **is under the power and authority of the Law** to judge and condemn a person who breaks that Law.

But in the gospel of grace, it is a covenant, a different covenant (Hebrews 8:12ff) where God is merciful to iniquities by providing the sacrifice for sin Himself (c.f. Romans 3:21ff). This is why Paul says that he “established the Law through faith” (Romans 3:31). Faith trusts what God has done to secure redemption for the believer – not that God has secured nothing for the believer to do. By confessing that we are saved by grace through faith, we establish that God is STILL King and we yield to His provision.

- He is the gracious King who lavished grace on us in the Beloved (Ephesians 1:7-8).
- He is the greater King who has blessed his lesser subject (Hebrews 7:7).
- He is the One who has made us complete – graciously (Colossians 2:10-15).

While grace should preempt in our thinking any idea that God is some tyrant who is ready to reign down in judgment at any moment, grace still teaches us what we are to deny (Titus 2:12), how we are love (Galatians 5:6) and Who it is who has really saved us from ourselves (1Corinthians 1:30-31).

His Power is connected to grace. Anyone can say they forgive, or say they can heal, “but so you can know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins...” Jesus worked miracle after miracle (Mark 2:1-12). A reliance on grace is a reliance on His power. And if we rely on that power, we will yield to that power. If we strive to rely on our own self-appointed means and methods of rules and regulations, we are relying on our power – not His. And as a result, we are not relying on grace.

His Power is connected to love. If “love does not seek its own” (1Corinthians 13:5), what should it seek? If we love God we will keep His commandments (John 14:15). Even the greatest commandment IS to love God with all of our heart (Deuteronomy 6:4). And the Apostle John wrote, “This is how we know that we love God’s children: when we love God and obey his commands. For this is what love for God is: to keep his commands. And his commands are not a burden, because everyone who has been born of God conquers the world. This is the victory that has conquered the world: our faith” (1John 5:2-5).

Grace and our fellowship together. As a summary of our last quarter, “Conviction with Mercy” class, we reach the similar conclusion here. “Christian” fellowship (as we call it, though the Bible never puts those words together) is in the Bible, a joint participation in activities related to being Christians. It is something we did not do before we were Christians; it is something we do BECAUSE we are Christians. It is a communion, and an association of mutual faith and action in and for Jesus Christ.

A local church has fellowship together in this grace they share: They share in the teaching of the gospel (Philippians 1:5; 4:16; Galatians 6:6) and they share in the assistance for needy saints (2Corinthians 8:3-4; Romans 15:26-27). We provide for and in our worship together (1Corinthians 10:16-17; Acts 2:42). But our fellowship with God began as an individual (1Corinthians 1:9) and we will as an individual be judged (2Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:12).

A local church then must, in its own autonomy, follow the King. Only we have a say with whom we have fellowship (Acts 9:26-28). If congregations are independent, the “brotherhood” or “fellowship” is not the standard – and should have no sway over what the Bible teaches. Our earthly tie together is an important component on how God sees us – but it is not the standard of judgment. “God commands this union; the ties of this association are grand and its obligations are real; but it remains the means of serving the Master, and must never become our Master” (Robert Turner, *Two Fellowships*).

When we disagree, we follow mercy with conviction (c.f. Ephesians 4:1-6; Jude 22-23). If the item in question involves the whole group (in sin), then it must be addressed. If not, Romans 14 was written to guide us through that. It is participation that must be curtailed to keep the fellowship united.

Apostasy and division will come (c.f. 1Timothy 4:1-5; 2Timothy 4:1-5). Ultimately, it comes from disrespecting God’s authority. It is lawlessness (c.f. 2Thessalonians 2:7-8; Jude 4). As soon as we “in our fellowship together” begin to reject the Lord’s will who reigns, apostasy and division will follow. Hopefully, these lessons are helpful to prevent that from happening where you are.