

Fueling Station 9:

Key to works of faith versus works of law



“But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”

Jeremiah 31:33 NKJV

*The controversy that has surrounded “law keeping” especially in contemporary western teaching is probably one of the greatest works of deception by Satan to the body of Christ!

“since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.”

Romans 3:30-31 ESV

“So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.”

Romans 7:12 ESV

*Faith is now the means by which we can uphold Gods moral standard written in His law. The “way” in which this was upheld in the old covenant was by external law keeping methods such as circumcision of the flesh, ceremonial washings, observance of days, dietary laws etc... The problem with this method is that it could not change the “heart” of the one performing them, so in essence, fell short of pleasing God who “looks at the heart”. Jesus by fulfilling the standards of the heart of the Law when He came, demonstrated what the power of the Spirit could do apart from the external methods. The way of Gods Spirit now is the only way to uphold Gods righteous moral standard because through faith in Christ, the Spirit now takes up residence in our hearts!

Faith work versus Law work:

“What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!”

Romans 6:15 ESV

*Faith work or the works of faith, is the inward power to fulfill the moral law based on the completed work of Christ. This gift of the gracious Holy Spirit is accessed through faith!! The Spirit agrees with the completed work of Jesus and strengthens us when we agree and claim that same work through faith. By renewing our minds now in the truth and being led by the Spirit of God we can please God, serve as His hands, feet, and mouth and be transformed from the inside-out to do the “good works” of righteous living prepared for us.

*Law works or works of the law, are external methods of satisfying God’s requirements to deal with our inability to fully keep His moral standards. They pointed to our need for an inner solution that could finally please God through heart transformation! What used to be circumcision of the flesh in the law of Moses, is now called circumcision of the heart in the law of Christ. The Jews can no longer pride themselves on keeping the external requirements because God Judges the heart now, which puts both Jew and Gentile in the same boat!

Greek construction agrees with this understanding:

“since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.”

Romans 3:30-31 ESV

*breakdown of this verse:

Faith:

4102 pístis (from 3982/peithô, "persuade, be persuaded") – properly, persuasion (be persuaded, come to trust); faith.

Faith (4102/pistis) is always a gift from God, and never something that can be produced by people. In short, 4102/pistis ("faith") for the believer is "God's divine persuasion" – and therefore distinct from human belief (confidence), yet involving it. The Lord continuously births faith in the yielded believer so they can know what He prefers, i.e. the persuasion of His will (1 Jn 5:4).

*Because of Christ's work and giving of the deposit of the Spirit, our flesh must now submit to the authority of God. The key to living a victorious life pleasing to God is now yielding to God's Law by this faith.

By:

1537 ek (a preposition, written eks before a vowel) – properly, "out from and to" (the outcome); out from within. 1537 /ek ("out of") is one of the most under-translated (and therefore mis-translated) Greek propositions – often being confined to the meaning "by." 1537 (ek) has a two-

layered meaning ("out from and to") which makes it out-come oriented (out of the depths of the source and extending to its impact on the object).

*This shows the “outcome” of faith if exercised by the believer is victorious. Applied faith is always victorious to take us from sin and into Gods will!

Through:

1223 diá (a preposition) – properly, across (to the other side), back-and-forth to go all the way through, "successfully across" ("thoroughly"). 1223 (diá) is also commonly used as a prefix and lend the same idea ("thoroughly," literally, "successfully" across to the other side).

*This shows that faith can guarantee success for the outcome!

Uphold:

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance
cause to stand, establish, hold up

*what does faith guarantee to uphold? Gods moral standard. The same standard that has never changed because Gods character never changes. But what has changed, is how to achieve it!

This “new” method was actually seen in the lives of the Patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob:

*note: sin by this time had not entirely corrupted the ability to live by faith and still please God. Over time though, sin becomes “utterly” sinful and the need for a rebirth of the spirit to please God was necessary!

Romans 6:14

“For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.”

Romans 7:5,6

“For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.”

The biggest difference now in this “new way” is the deposit of the Spirit of Christ to uphold God’s righteous standard. Before we had this inner power we were a slave to our flesh!

The crisis has a solution:

Romans 7:22-24

“For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?”

The law of the mind wants to please God and uphold God's moral law but the law of my flesh wants to rebel and sin against what is written. Who will deliver me Pauls cries out?

Romans 8:3

“For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.”

It is important to make a note that not all Christians who are sealed by the Spirit, “walk” by the Spirit! (See Key to sitting, walking, standing)

We cannot define love without the Law of God:

Romans 13:8-10

“Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”

*Living by the law of faith fulfills the loving requirement of the moral law of God!

Galatians 5:2-6

“Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.”

Galatians 5:13,14

“For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Galatians 6:7,8

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”

Again this is written to Christians for Christians! The new living way through the Spirit of grace to uphold God's moral standard of Love and to please Him will be held accountable by the law of reaping and sowing!

James 2:14,17,24,26

“What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?...So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead...You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone...For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”

Simply put James is talking about “faith works”! These are not the external works of the law of Moses but the inner working of faith!

James 5:19

“My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering, will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.”

One of the greatest works of faith that we can offer one another is to help one another live righteously! (See Key to Law of Christ)As we have noted in many other articles in race to the kingdom, the soul death mentioned to Christians is to have no “faith works” to show for your life at the judgement seat of Christ thus receiving no inheritance/rewards. This judgement we believe also contains the need for further refining and discipline during the tribulation period at the end of the age.

Romans 15:18

“For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed,”

At this juncture it is important to once again clarify that these verses are written to the body of Christ for the purpose of receiving the inheritance promised to those who overcome and does not in any way refer to losing your justification salvation secured by the works of Jesus on our behalf and being sent to hell.

“for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

Philippians 2:13 ESV

HELPS Word-studies: “will”

Cognate: 2309 thélō (a primitive verb, NAS dictionary) – to desire (wish, will), wanting what is best (optimal) because someone is ready and willing to act.

*God through His Spirit is working in us to desire what pleases Him. God will always accomplish His part, will we?

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling,”

Philippians 2:12 ESV

Strong's Concordance

ergon: work

Original Word: ἔργον, ου, τό

Part of Speech: Noun, Neuter

Transliteration: ergon

Phonetic Spelling: (er'-gon)

Definition: work

Usage: work, task, employment; a deed, action; that which is wrought or made, a work.

HELPS Word-studies

2041 érgon (from ergō, "to work, accomplish") – a work or worker who accomplishes something. 2041 /érgon ("work") is a deed (action) that carries out (completes) an inner desire (intension, purpose).

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

deed, doing, labor, work.

From a primary (but obsolete) ergo (to work); toil

*Notice that “obedience” is on us! The very reason for a future judgment of works!

The only hope to do the “works” of God is to “walk” by His Spirit:

Galatians 5:16

“ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”

Ephesians 5:18b

“...but be filled with the Spirit”

*It is very telling to note that both of the bold,underlined words are written as a command in the Greek imperative mood. They both are also written in the Greek present tense signifying a progressive continuous work! In short, it is a command by God that we continuously do the work of faith by being filled by the Spirit and walking in the Spirit!

You may also enjoy knowing that the command to be “filled” is in the Greek middle/passive voice which indicates a continual submission to what the Spirit is already initiating, and the command to “walk” is in Greek active voice which signifies our continual obligation to live it out willingly!

Questions for Application/Contemplation:

1. Have you ever considered that faith is a work?
2. How is faith work different than law work?
3. Read Revelation chapters 2 & 3 when Jesus is evaluating His own body of believers. These seven churches are representative of the body of Christ at large. What does the “Head” of the church choose to evaluate and how does this fit with the promise of reaping and sowing?
4. What “works” will come under Gods judgement at the Bema Seat?
5. What have we learned about Gods definition of love and our responsibility to love Him and one another? If we choose not to do “workout” our salvation, are we being unloving? Explain.

Challenge : Reconcile verses Romans 13:8-10 with Ephesians 2:8-9.

*Remember be a good Berean and be diligent in studying the scriptures to show yourself approved and encourage others to do the same!

Conclusion:

It should be very plain by now that God would never do away with His loving moral law that reflects the very confines of His holy character. The question then is not what pleases God but how does He intend for us to please Him? The way of FAITH through the finished work of Christ is the only way! Faith works through walking in the Spirit of God fulfills the righteous, loving law of God!