

12 Foundation Stones—Class 8B

Eternal Salvation

The Greatest Love, Part 2

Section 1: Eternal Salvation by Grace

➤ **Salvation—Eternity in Heaven with the God of love**

The greatest gift of love that God has given us is Jesus! Jesus loved us enough to leave His home in Heaven to come to earth with a mission from His Heavenly Father—to live, love, and die for humankind. He left the splendors of Heaven to suffer a cruel death at the hands of cruel men. Why? That we may be saved.

God knows that none of us could be good enough to earn our way to Heaven. It's only Jesus' sacrifice in our place that makes it possible for us to obtain salvation, the blessing of spending eternity in Heaven with the loving Creator.

➤ **Receiving Jesus guarantees eternal life in Heaven**

Romans 6:23b—The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 11:26a—And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die.

John 14:3—I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

1 John 5:11b—God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

Jesus has done it for us

I remember hearing of a young man who went to a pastor in great distress about his spiritual state.

He said to the minister, "Sir, can you tell me what I must do to find peace?"

The minister replied, "Young man, you are too late."

"Oh," said the young man, "You don't mean to say I am too late to be saved?"

"Oh, no," was the reply, "but you are too late to do something. Jesus did everything that needed to be done twenty centuries ago."

We can only get saved by receiving Jesus.

➤ **We don't deserve to go to Heaven**

We are all sinners, and sin brings about spiritual death; but Jesus died in our place, taking our punishment:

Isaiah 59:2a—But your iniquities have separated you from your God.

Romans 6:23a—For the wages of sin is death.

Romans 5:8—But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

2 Corinthians 5:21—For He made Him [Jesus] who knew no sin to be sin for [instead of] us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1 John 2:1–2—My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. (2) And He Himself is the propitiation [atonement] for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

Jesus paid for our sins

Two men who had been friends in their youth met years later in the police court of a great city. One sat on the judge's bench, the other in the prisoner's dock. Evidence was heard, and the prisoner was found guilty. In consideration of their former friendship, the judge was asked to withhold sentence. "No," he said, "that cannot be. Justice must be done and the law upheld." So he gave sentence: "Fifty dollars fine, or fourteen days at hard labor."

The condemned man had nothing wherewith to pay, so prison was before him. Then the judge, having fulfilled his duty, stepped down beside the prisoner, paid his fine, put his arm about him, and said, "Now, John, you are coming home with me to dinner."

Not even God can overlook sin. He must be faithful and just. But for us the Judge was crucified! Jesus paid the price for our sins! "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sins of the World!...He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (John 1:29; Isaiah 53:12).

➤ **We can only get saved through Jesus**

Acts 4:12—Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under Heaven given among men by which we must be saved.

John 14:6—Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

John 3:16—For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

1 Timothy 2–5—For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.

John 3:36b—And he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.

John 8:24b—If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.

John 10:9—I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.

1 Corinthians 3:11—For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 John 5:12—He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.

➤ **Salvation is simple**

Jesus came to try to make salvation as easy as He possibly could! He showed the people that they didn't have to follow the religious laws and rules and regulations and the Ten Commandments and all the rest. All they had to do was simply confess that they were sinners and needed salvation and ask Jesus to give it to them.

The whole idea is so simple and so childlike that Jesus said you must become as a little child to enter His spiritual Kingdom of love, joy, and happiness here and now in this life—as well as a beautiful, wonderful, and thrilling eternity in His heavenly Kingdom in the next life. He said,

Matthew 18:3—Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

John 3:3—Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God."

➤ **Nobody can fully understand salvation**

—That's why Jesus said that you must be like a little child and just accept it by faith! The Bible says that the love and peace of God "passeth all understanding."

Ephesians 3:19—To know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Philippians 4:7—And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

It's a love that passes your understanding and lands right down in your heart! It is something you don't have to understand. In fact, you can't understand it, it's impossible to understand God's love!—All you can do is receive it!

Does a baby understand the love of its mother? Does a little child understand the love of its father?—No, he just feels it, knows it, accepts it, and receives it! Even before he understands language, before he even learns to talk, he understands love, he feels love, and he trusts his parents because they love him. He hasn't read it in the Bible, he hasn't read love letters from his mother, he simply feels it in her love and sees it in her actions.

So you don't have to understand all about God to know His wonderful love and salvation in Jesus.—All you have to do is receive it!

Letting go

A traveler upon a lonely road was set upon by bandits who robbed him of everything he had. They then led him into the depths of the forest. There, in the darkness, they tied a rope to the limb of a great tree, and bade him catch hold of the end of it. Swinging him out into the blackness of surrounding space, they told him he was hanging over the brink of a high precipice. The moment he let go he would be dashed to pieces on the rocks below. And then they left him.

He was filled with horror at the awful doom impending. He clutched despairingly to the end of the swaying rope. But each dreadful moment only made his fate more sure. His strength steadily failed. At least he could hold on no longer. The end had come. His clenched fingers relaxed their grip. He fell—six inches, to the solid earth at his feet!

It had only been a ruse of the robbers to gain time in escaping. And when he let go it was not to death, but to the safety which had been waiting him through all his time of terror.

Clutching will not save you. It is only the devil's trick to keep you from being saved. Let go! *That is* God's plan to save you. "And will I not fall to my death?" some ask. No! Underneath is *Jesus!*

➤ **Salvation cannot be earned through works; it is a gift**

We can't work for our salvation. It is by grace, a gift of God, and cannot be earned.

Ephesians 2:8-9—For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, (9) not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Titus 3:5a—Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.

Galatians 2:16—Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

2 Timothy 1:9—Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began.

Romans 3:28—Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

Romans 11:6—And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.

Jesus died because we're all sinners and it is impossible for us to be perfect, it is impossible for us to perfectly keep laws like the Laws of Moses. Only Jesus was perfect and that's why He could pay the price of our sins and God could forgive us, because He took our punishment for us. He gives us salvation as a gift, because we could never earn it, we could never be perfect. We always make mistakes and commit sins.

God has offered pardon to the guilty. It doesn't matter how bad you are, how wicked you are, or what you've done.—It doesn't matter to God! If you'll just confess your sins to Him, ask Him to forgive you and take Jesus into your heart, He'll save you.

Why following Jesus' example is not enough

At the close of a Gospel service, an intelligent-looking man came to the minister and said, "I do not see any necessity for the Blood of Christ in my salvation. I can be saved without believing in His shed Blood."

"Very well," said the minister. "How then do you propose to be saved?"

"By following His example," was the answer. "That is enough for any man."

"I suppose it is," said the minister. "And you propose to do just that in your life?"

"I do, and I am sure that is enough."

"Very well, I am sure that you want to be following right. The Word of God tells us how to do that. I read here concerning Christ, 'Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth.' I suppose that you can say that of yourself too?" (1 Peter 2:22).

The man became visibly embarrassed. "Well," he said, "I cannot say that exactly. I have sometimes sinned."

"In that case you do not need an example, but a Savior; and the only way of salvation is by His shed blood."

➤ **We can't be good enough**

Romans 3:23—For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Mark 10:26-27—And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, "Who then can be saved?"(27) But Jesus looked at them and said, "With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible."

If we were good enough to be saved, we wouldn't need Jesus. But we have all sinned, we all come short of God's standards, we all need His love and mercy to be saved, and we find that love and mercy in Jesus Christ!

We cannot save ourselves by our own works, our own goodness, our own attempts to keep His laws and to love Him, or even our own endeavors to find and follow His truth! Salvation is a gift of God performed by a miraculous transformation of our lives when we accept His truth in the love of His Son Jesus by the work of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Mercy, not justice

A mother sought from Napoleon the pardon of her son. The emperor said it was the man's second offence, and justice demanded his death.

'I don't ask for justice,' said the mother, 'I plead for mercy.'

'But,' said the emperor, 'he does not deserve mercy.'

'Sir,' cried the mother, 'it would not be mercy if he deserved it, and mercy is all I ask.'

'Well, then,' said the emperor, 'I will have mercy,' And her son was saved.

This little incident gives us a good idea of the meaning of mercy. We think of clemency as another word for mercy, but mercy is the 'gracious attitude of one who sits in the seat of authority toward one who has given offence by breaking of the law, or by some violation of those canons of conduct which constitute offence.' This is at least part of its meaning.

Grace is the unmerited favor of God toward the undeserving. Grace bestows what we do not deserve; mercy does not mete out to us what we deserve.

(Exodus 34:6–7; Micah 6:8; Hebrews 4:16)

Another illustration of mercy, not justice

An old fellow was brought to court on serious charges. As court preliminaries were getting under way, it was very evident to the young lawyer handling the case that his client was very uncomfortable and tense. Perhaps it was because of his youth, the lawyer mused. So, in an effort to comfort the man and allay his fears, the young lawyer said, "Charlie, you don't need to be afraid. I'm going to see that you get justice in this court today!"

A meditative look displaced the hitherto look of fright on the man's face. In measured words, he said, "Young man, it isn't justice that I want in this court today. It's mercy!"

➤ **Even if you could keep the Mosaic Law, it wouldn't save you**

The Mosaic Law was a legal code that God gave Moses. It was a strict code of justice and retribution:

Exodus 24:12—Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them."

Exodus 21:23–25—But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, (24) eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, (25) burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Hebrew 10:28—Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses.

■ **The Ten Commandments were not merely "helpful moral guidelines," but strict laws carrying the death penalty**

Galatians 4:21—Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

Deuteronomy 27:26—Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law.

Galatians 3:19—What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed [Jesus] should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.

Galatians 3:23—But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

What is more, the ten commandments were only the beginning; Moses' law contained hundreds of other commandments!

Punishment was very severe in those days. There were 23 crimes for which you could be put to death. God was trying to show His people that He really meant business, that He really didn't want them to misbehave. You could get stoned to death even for cursing your father or mother. You could get stoned to death for all kinds of things. That was a very terrible way to die, but the reason for it was as a deterrent of crime and disobedience and sin.

The Ten Commandments, with death penalty for breaking them.

Exodus 20:2–3—(1) You shall have no other gods before Me. [Death penalty: Exodus 22:20; Deuteronomy 13:1–18.]

Exodus 20:4–5—(2) You shall not make yourself a carved image. [Death penalty same as (1). See also Leviticus 26:1,30; Deuteronomy 4:23–26.]

Exodus 20:7—(3) You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. [Death penalty: Leviticus 24:10–16.]

Exodus 20:8–10—(4) Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. [Death penalty: Exodus 31:14–15; 35:2.]

Exodus 20:12—(5) Honor your father and your mother. [Death penalty: Exodus 21:15,17; Leviticus 20:9; Deuteronomy 21:18–21.]

Exodus 20:13—(6) You shall not murder. [Death penalty: Exodus 21:12; Leviticus 24:17,21; Numbers 35:16–31.]

Exodus 20:14—(7) You shall not commit adultery. [Death penalty: Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22.]

Exodus 20:15—(8) You shall not steal. [Punishment: Exodus 22:7; Proverbs 6:30; death penalty: Exodus 21:16.]

Exodus 20:16—(9) You shall not bear false witness. [Punishment and/or death penalty: Deuteronomy 19:16–21.]

Exodus 20:17—(10) You shall not covet ... anything that is your neighbor's.

➤ **Scrupulously keeping the Mosaic Law never saved anyone**

Romans 3:20—Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Romans 9:31—But Israel, pursuing the law of righteousness, has not attained to the law of righteousness.

Hebrews 7:19—For the law made nothing perfect; on the other hand, there is the bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God.

In the beginning, God created man to freely and willingly choose to love and obey Him as His thankful children. He really preferred the whole thing by grace and faith to begin with and there were very few rules, very few laws, everything was to be done voluntarily out of love.—That was His original plan.

But as man became more and more disobedient and wicked, God had to give him more and more laws and rules and regulations. These laws were not made for the righteous person, because the righteous person doesn't harm or do wrong to his neighbor, but they were made for the wrongdoers, the evil people, the wicked.

The Laws were given for the people who do not have love, who do evil, unloving, harmful things. The Bible says that:

1 Timothy 1:9—Knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers.

What do you have to do with a wild animal, a ravenous beast that might bite you or destroy you?—You have to either put him in a cage or kill him. Evil men are like wild animals. Look at the atrocities and cruelties that you hear of people committing nowadays.—Even wild animals don't commit some of the atrocities you hear about!

Because man didn't follow grace and faith and love, God had to crack down with the rules, the cage of the law for the transgressors. But the rules couldn't save man, they only showed him where he was wrong. (See Romans 3:20 above.)

In fact, it is impossible for anyone to be good according to the Law of Moses. The Mosaic Law makes every one of us a sinner, because not one of us can keep all the law!

The Lamb takes away sin

John the Baptist publicly identified Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29, 36). This calls to mind the Old Testament sacrificial system. In the sacrifice God accepted the blood of animals as the means of atonement for sin. It is likely that John had many themes from the Old Testament in mind when he called Jesus the Lamb of God. These themes probably included the sin offering (Leviticus 4), the trespass offering (Leviticus 5), the sacrifice on the Day of Atonement (Leviticus 16), and the Passover sacrifice (Exodus 12).

Jesus is the sacrificial Lamb Who was killed for our sake. As it says in Isaiah 53:12b, "He poured out His soul unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors, and He bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

➤ **The Old Law was merely a copy, a shadow, of the real thing**

Colossians 2:16–17—So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, (17) which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Hebrews 8:5—Who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, "See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain."

Hebrews 9:8–9—The Holy Spirit indicating this, that the way into the Holiest of All was not yet made manifest while the first tabernacle was still standing. (9) It was symbolic for the present time in which both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make him who performed the service perfect in regard to the conscience.

Hebrews 10:1—For the law, having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with these same sacrifices, which they offer continually year by year, make those who approach perfect.

1 John 2:8—Again, a new commandment I write to you, which thing is true in Him and in you, because the darkness is passing away, and the true light is already shining.

➤ **Jesus' death ended the Mosaic Law and ushered in the era of grace**

The Mosaic Law was impossible to keep

This showed man he was a sinner in need of grace. The old law was unprofitable and eventually to be replaced.

John 7:19—Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?

Acts 15:10—Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

Romans 3:19—Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every

mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Romans 8:3—For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh.

➤ **Jesus' death on the cross fulfilled and ended the law**

The old Mosaic Law is now discarded (for believers in Jesus):

John 19:30—*So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.*

Romans 10:4—*For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.*

Colossians 2:14—*Having wiped out [the slate completely clean of] the handwriting of requirements [the law] that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.*

Hebrews 8:13—*In that He says, "A new covenant," He has made the first [covenant] obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.*

Hebrews 10:9—*Then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will, O God." He takes away the first [law] that He may establish the second.*

Hebrews 8:6—*But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises.*

The law was only our teacher, our instructor or "schoolmaster" to show us that we're sinners, to bring us to God for mercy, and to show us His absolute perfection and perfect righteousness which was impossible for us to attain:

Galatians 3:24–25—*Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (25) But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.*

➤ **The saved are no longer bound by the rigid Mosaic Law**

Jesus has liberated us from the Mosaic Law, in its place, giving us His laws of loving God and loving our neighbor.

Romans 7:4—*Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.*

Romans 6:14b—*You are not under law but under grace.*

Romans 8:1–2—*There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. (2) For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.*

The Lord far prefers that we willingly and cheerfully do what He asks with the right loving motivation, because we want to do what's right and because we love Him and others, rather than just because we have to obey because it's the law or because of fear of punishment or fear of judgment, etc.

In fact, God would have preferred to have trusted His people with more freedom if they had been more humble and honest and had more love, consideration, unselfishness, thoughtfulness, and real concern for others—not wanting to hurt anybody and just wanting to help everybody. But usually He hasn't been able to because most people just aren't that unselfish or loving or thoughtful.

Freedom is God's ideal, His ultimate, His plan from the beginning! And it's almost like He's been trying to bring His people step-by-step out of bondage towards this goal through the ages.

He brought the Jews out of their slavery in Egypt, but then they were in bondage to the harsh and rigid rules of Moses—the Law.

Then along came Jesus with His grace, mercy, forgiveness, love, and truth—our salvation:

John 1:17—*For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.*

■ **The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath**

Jesus came and showed us that salvation and true righteousness are not by works, but by grace!—That "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."—There is the example of when the disciples picked corn on the Sabbath day, and another time He healed on the Sabbath (Mark 2:27).

What is the Sabbath?

The Sabbath is one day in seven set aside as a time for rest and worship. Jews observe this on the seventh day of the week, Saturday. Christians who observe the Sabbath usually do so on Sunday.

God originally set the seventh day aside for a day of rest in the story of Creation:

Genesis 2:2–3—*And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. (3) Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*

The fourth Commandment is "remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." All work except acts of mercy, necessity, and worship were forbidden on the Sabbath. However, during the period between the Old and New Testaments, Jewish religious leaders added greatly to the details of Sabbath legislation, which made the law a burden rather than a rest and delight as God had intended.

Jesus breaks the sabbath law

Mark 2:23–28—Now it happened that He went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and as they went His disciples began to pluck the heads of grain. (24) And the Pharisees said to Him, "Look, why do they do what is not lawful on the Sabbath?" (25) But He said to them, "Have you never read what David did when he was in need and hungry, he and those with him: (26) "how he went into the house of God in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and ate the showbread, which is not lawful to eat, except for the priests, and also gave some to those who were with him?" (27) And He said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." (28) "Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

Mark 3:1–5—And He entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. (2) So they watched Him closely, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse Him. (3) And He said to the man who had the withered hand, "Step forward." (4) Then He said to them, "Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do good or to do evil, to save life or to kill?" But they kept silent. (5) And when He had looked around at them with anger, being grieved by the hardness of their hearts, He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

(See also Matthew 12:1–14.)

➤ **The end of the old Law**

Matthew 5:17—Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

By fulfilling the Law, Jesus ended it; therefore we (saved Christians) are no longer required to keep the Laws of Moses of the Old Testament.

Romans 10:4—For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

The death of Jesus marked the end of the Law, the end of the Old Testament.

testament or a contract was often sealed with the testator's blood. They would sometimes prick their finger and sign their name in blood as proof that they really meant business. When Jesus shed His blood, He was in a sense signing His name to the covenant in His own blood. This was the new contract.

God's grace through Jesus' Law of Love is the end of the old law. Paul preached sermon after sermon and wrote letter after letter showing that the old Law was finished, it was done with!—The Mosaic Law is done away with for the Christian who is living under grace and under the Law of Love.

Romans 7:6—But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not in the oldness of the letter.

Galatians 3:13—Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law.

This was the most raging controversy between Jesus and the Jews. It was also the most raging controversy between Paul and the legalists, the "conscion" as they were known, the converted Jews who said, "Yes, we now believe in Jesus, but we still have to keep all the old Law, we still have to keep the Ten Commandments, the Mosaic Law, the Sabbath, etc."

There are still many Christians today who are just like those legalistic conscion members of the Early Church.—They're still partly in the dark, they don't realize that Jesus is enough, that His light is sufficient, that His love is all we need. They're still preaching the Mosaic Law with one hand while preaching Christ with the other.

But according to Jesus Himself and every book of the New Testament, Christians today are no longer under the Laws of Moses! We are under grace and under love. For us the old Law is gone forever. We now only have the Law of Jesus, God's only Law—Love!

Galatians 5:14—For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 7:12—Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

Romans 13:8—Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

If you have love, you are fulfilling the laws of God.

➤ **Only Jesus can save you**

Christ's message was clear, His death was plain, the message of God was very clear throughout the Old and New Testaments—especially the New Testament, but very clear even in the Old Testament. Abraham was the father of the faithful because he was a man of faith, demonstrating that he couldn't do it himself, he just had to have faith in God.

God's message is: "Only I can save you, you cannot save yourself!"

In contrast, the message of the "works" religions has always been: "Save yourself! You're your own god, your own savior. Why depend on another? Save yourself!" This started in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:5)—and man has been trying to save himself by his works ever since.

Sad to say, hundreds of millions of Christians around the world today, in spite of the message of Christ, in spite of the message of His sacrifice on Calvary, in spite of what Jesus did to save us, gave His life and His blood for us, are still being taught by their leaders to try to save themselves. Isn't that sad?

The two religions

While presenting the Gospel on the street of a California city, we were often interrupted as follows: "Look here! There are hundreds of religions, and the followers of each sect think theirs the only right one. How can poor men like us find out what really is the truth?"

We generally replied something like this: "Hundreds of religions, you say? That's strange.—I've heard of only two."

"Oh, but you surely know there are more than that?"

"Not at all. I find, I admit, many shades of difference in the opinions of those comprising the two great schools, but after all there are but two. The one covers all who expect salvation by doing. The other, all who have been saved by something done. So you see the whole question is very simple. Can you save yourself, or must you be saved by another? If you can be your own savior, you do not need my message. If you cannot, you'd do well to listen to it."

➤ **You cannot lose your salvation: Once saved, forever saved!**

John 6:37—All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

If you have Jesus, then you have eternal life, and you cannot lose eternal life! You can lose your physical life, but never your eternal life.

Salvation is forever! Once saved, you are always saved, because God cannot lie or go back on His Word or on Himself. God doesn't change His mind. Once you've received Jesus Christ and you've let Him into your heart and you love Him and you know Him and you believe on Him as your Savior, you are a saved child of God and you're going to live forever!

Once you are "born again" as His child, you will always be His child. You can't be unborn!

John 3:36a—He who believes in the Son has everlasting life.

You have salvation right now! Your salvation does not depend on your behavior, or on going to church, or on anything like that. It doesn't say you're going to have it, it says you have it right now!—"Has everlasting life!" If you stand in danger of losing it many times, how can you have everlasting life? It's not everlasting if it only lasts a few minutes, till your next sinful thought or next evil deed.

How can you be saved and unsaved, and then saved and unsaved, 100 times a day? Some say, "Well, I won't know if I'm going to make it to Heaven until I'm dead and He balances up and measures all my good deeds against my bad deeds. If the good ones outweigh the bad ones, well then maybe I'll make it." They never really know when or where they stand or how or if or what! It's enough to make a nervous wreck out of you! But thank God,

Hebrews 4:3—We who have believed do enter that rest.

We can have rest and peace of mind, knowing that we don't have to worry about whether we're good enough or if we've been too bad or if we're going to make it or not, every day wondering whether we're going to be saved or not. If you could save yourself, the Lord wouldn't have had to give His life for you.

True, you are more likely to receive His daily blessings upon your life if you conduct yourself in the way that He wants you to, if you do the things that please Him. But you can't keep yourself saved. Jesus did that once and forever, and His gift is eternal life.

Grace plus faith plus nothing!—That's salvation! You don't have to be good to get saved and you don't have to be good to stay saved! But this does not mean that you can just live as you please once you are saved.

➤ **What about sin?**

Just because you are saved doesn't mean that everything you do is right and good! Although your sins won't result in you losing your salvation, you may lose some of God's blessings in your life if you walk on the wrong paths.

1 Corinthians 6:19–20—Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? (20) For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Romans 6:15—What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

You have a responsibility to live according to God's Law of Love to the best of your ability. If you disobey that law, you will be sinning. If you commit sins against the Lord and others that are unconfessed, unrepented of, and not made right, you will endure the consequences for them in some way.

As a loving Father, the Lord will try to help you learn from your mistakes and discontinue from taking the wrong paths in life.

Hebrews 12:6—Whom the Lord loves He chastens, and scourges every son whom He receives.

Just remember, that even if you are disobedient and chastened of the Lord for your sins, once you are saved, you'll always be saved!

➤ **Eternally His**

John 3:36 should end all your worries: He who believes in the Son has everlasting life.

He doesn't keep popping in and out of your heart. He is there all the time. He says,

Matthew 28:20—"Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Hebrews 13:5—Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

John 10:28—And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.

Not by feelings

Dr. Thomas was a young man Mr. Poole had been talking to night after night, endeavoring to win him to Christ. Nothing he said seemed to cut through the mental fog that blocked the way to a clear understanding of salvation. Finally realizing that the young man's difficulty was his own inability to "feel" saved, Mr. Poole took a coin, handed it to Dr. Thomas, and asked him to put it in his shirt pocket.

"Do you feel you've got it?" Mr. Poole asked.

"No," replied the young doctor, "I know I have."

"So," Mr. Poole continued, "we know we have Christ when we accept Him and believe His Word, without feeling it."

Dr. Thomas testified later, "When I awoke the next morning my soul was overflowing with joy, and since then I have never doubted that it was on that Saturday night I was born again—converted to God."

➤ **Cleansing for ALL sins**

Isaiah 53:6—All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him [Jesus] the iniquity of us all.

No matter what your sins are, if you are sorry, Jesus will forgive you!

1 John 1:7—But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

All sin, A-L-L, all sin! You don't have to worry about all those different kinds of sins, because you're going to be forgiven for all your sins: Past, present and future! Because He promised, "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanses us from all sin!" Praise God!

Justification

A simple way to remember the word "justified" that always stuck with me since I was a boy was when the preacher illustrated how when we're justified by Jesus' blood, it's just-if-I'd never sinned! He cleansed us from all our sins. "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin"—past, present, future. (1John 1:7) Just-if-I'd never sinned, justified. Really it means it makes you just, righteous, saved!

➤ **Review quiz**

(Answers with supporting references are below.)

■ **Questions**

1. "Salvation" means that when we receive Jesus, we are guaranteed what?
2. How many people in the world are sinners?
3. We deserve punishment for our sins, but when Jesus died, what was He taking upon Himself?
4. What is the ONLY way we can get saved?
5. Can we get saved by our own good works?
6. If we are a pretty good person, isn't that enough to get us to Heaven?

7. How do we know that salvation is by grace?
8. What does "by grace" mean?
9. What was the Mosaic Law?
10. What was the penalty for breaking most of the Ten Commandments?
11. Were there only ten commandments?
12. Was it God's plan that the Mosaic Law was to be maintained for eternity?
13. Did anyone ever get saved by only keeping the Mosaic Law?
14. Is it possible to keep the Mosaic Law in its entirety?
15. What does this show?
16. What did Jesus' death on the cross do to the old law?
17. Do believers in Jesus need to keep every jot and tittle of the old Mosaic Law?
18. Does that mean that a believer can do anything he chooses?
19. Which is greater: Grace or Law?
20. How long does salvation last?
21. What happens when you sin? Can you lose your salvation?
22. Can you lose Jesus out of your life?
23. What sins does Jesus forgive you for when you repent? s

■ **Questions with answers:**

1. "Salvation" means that when we receive Jesus, we are guaranteed what? (*Answer: Eternal life in Heaven.*) Romans 6:23b; John 11:26; 1 John 5:11.
2. How many people in the world are sinners? (*Answer: Everyone!*) Romans 3:23.
3. We deserve punishment for our sins, but when Jesus died, what was He taking upon Himself? (*Answer: Our punishment; He died in our place.*) Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 John 1:9.
4. What is the ONLY way we can get saved? (*Answer: By receiving Jesus.*) Acts 4:12; 1 Timothy 2:5; John 3:16.
5. Can we get saved by our own good works? (*Answer: No.*) Romans 3:20a; Galatians 2:16.
6. If we are a pretty good person, isn't that enough to get us to Heaven? (*Answer: No.*) 2 Timothy 1:9.
7. How do we know that salvation is by grace? (*Answer: The Bible tells us so.*) Romans 3:28; Ephesians 2:8–9.
8. What does "by grace" mean? (*Answer: It is a gift, not something we worked for.*) Titus 3:5a.
9. What was the Mosaic Law? (*Answer: A legal code that God gave Moses on Mt. Sinai.*) Exodus 24:12.
10. What was the penalty for breaking most of the Ten Commandments? (*Answer: In most cases, death was the penalty, which shows that the Ten Commandments were not merely "helpful moral guidelines," but strict laws.*)
11. Were there only ten commandments? (*Answer: No; Moses' law contained hundreds of other commandments.*) Deuteronomy 27:26; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 9:10.
12. Was it God's plan that the Mosaic Law was to be maintained for eternity? (*Answer: No. It was a mere shadow of the real thing.*) Colossians 2:16–17; Genesis 8:5; Hebrews 10:1.
13. Did anyone ever get saved by only keeping the Mosaic Law? (*Answer: No.*) Romans 3:20, 9:31; Hebrews 7:19.
14. Is it possible to keep the Mosaic Law in its entirety? (*Answer: No.*) John 7:19; Acts 15:10; Romans 7:14–19.
15. What does this show? (*Answer: That man is a sinner in need of grace.*) Romans 3:20b, 7:7; Galatians 3:24.
16. What did Jesus' death on the cross do to the old law? (*Answer: It fulfilled and ended the law.*) Matthew 5:17; John 19:30; Romans 10:4; Colossians 2:14.
17. Do believers in Jesus need to keep every jot and tittle of the old Mosaic Law? (*Answer: No.*) Hebrews 8:6,13, 10:9.
18. Does that mean that a believer can do anything he chooses? (*Answer: No. Jesus has liberated us from the Mosaic Law but expects us to keep the two Great Commandments: love God; love others.*) Matthew 22:37–40; Romans 7:4, 10:4.
19. Which is greater: Grace or Law? (*Answer: Grace.*) Mark 2:23–28, 3:1–5; Matthew 5:17.
20. How long does salvation last? (*Answer: Forever!*) John 6:37, 3:36; Hebrews 4:3.
21. What happens when you sin? Can you lose your salvation? (*Answer: No, you will be chastened, but you cannot lose your salvation. Once saved, always saved!*) Hebrews 12:6.
22. Can you lose Jesus out of your life? (*Answer: No, He is with you always.*) Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; John 10:28.
23. What sins does Jesus forgive you for when you repent? (*Answer: Everything!! All sins!*) Isaiah 53:6; 1 John 1:7.

Section 2: Communion

➤ **What is Communion?**

1 Corinthians 11:23–26—For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread; (24) and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (25) In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me." (26) For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

What is Communion? It's a witness to others that you believe what His Word says. The bread symbolizes the body of Jesus. The wine symbolizes His blood.

The Last Supper

Luke 22:7–20—Then came the Day of Unleavened Bread, when the Passover must be killed. (8) And He sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and prepare the Passover for us, that we may eat." (9) So they said to Him, "Where do You want us to prepare?" (10) And He said to them, "Behold, when you have entered the city, a man will meet you carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house which he enters. (11) Then you shall say to the master of the house, 'The Teacher says to you, "Where is the guest room in which I may eat the Passover with My disciples?"' (12) Then he will show you a large, furnished upper room; there make ready." (13) So they went and found it just as He had said to them, and they prepared the Passover. (14) When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. (15) Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; (16) for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." (17) Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; (18) for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." (19) And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me." (20) Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you."

➤ **The meaning of the bread: 1) Jesus' body was broken for our healing and 2) one loaf symbolizes unity**

Jesus' body was broken for us for the healing of our bodies. When we partake of the bread we can claim healing.

Isaiah 53:5—But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.

The bread doesn't heal any more than the wine saves your soul, but partaking of it is a manifestation of your faith. It's a witness. The bread represents His body that was broken for us, and if we eat it by faith we can claim healing by faith.

There's nothing wrong with chewing it, swallowing it, eating it like you would food. He said, "Take, *eat*, this My body."

It's best to use one piece or loaf of bread (at Communion) as this demonstrates our unity. One piece represents His Body that was broken, and when we all eat of it, it is going to become a part of each of us. In other words, we're all becoming part of the One.

➤ **The meaning of the wine: the blood, shed for our salvation and forgiveness of sins**

After the same manner Jesus took the cup. The wine symbolizes Jesus' blood, shed for the remission of our sins, for the salvation of our souls.

Matthew 26:28—For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

1 John 1:7—But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

➤ **Showing Jesus you love Him**

Communion is a precious illustration that the Lord gives us. "As often as you do it, you do it in remembrance of Me," He said.—And what else? "You do show the Lord's death."

In other words, it's showing you love Him, you appreciate what He's done for you, you're doing it in remembrance and thanks for what He has done for your body and your spirit, and you're also witnessing to others what He has done for you at the same time. It is both a thanksgiving and a witness.

Don't ever forget the resurrection when we're speaking of the death. The death was for a resurrection, and if it hadn't been for the resurrection, all the rest of it wouldn't have been enough.

1 Corinthians 15:W14—And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.

—But thank God He is risen!

➤ **How often to hold Communion**

Jesus didn't say just how often you had to have Communion, He said as often as you would you're remembering Him and you're a witness for Him. So do it as often as you feel led.

It doesn't have to be any place special.

It doesn't have to be elaborate, it can be very simple—use whatever you have. Although it's best to use one loaf or piece of bread and wine, some people have had to use bread and water, or crackers and coffee, etc., when nothing else was available.

➤ **Sample Communion ceremony**

■ **Prayer for the bread**

① *Pray for the bread. Following is a sample prayer:*

Thank You Lord for this bread that symbolizes Your body broken for us. You said, "Take, eat, for this is My body which is broken for you, this do in remembrance of Me." We remember that Your body was broken for us and we thank You for it. Strengthen each of us here and give Your healing to those who need it. Amen.

■ **Pass the bread**

① *Each one should break off a small piece. They should retain their portion until all have been served, as that best illustrates the meaning of unity, if all eat it at the same time.*

① *Everyone should now eat his or her piece of bread*

■ **Prayer for the wine**

① *Pray for the wine. Following is a sample prayer:*

We thank You, Jesus, for this cup that symbolizes Your death on the cross. Your body was broken many times even before You got to the cross. You suffered such agony for us, and then You shed Your blood unto the death that we might live. We thank You, Lord, for shedding Your blood for our sins. Please do cleanse each of us and forgive us for all of our shortcomings, errors, and sins. As we drink this wine, we thank You by faith for the forgiveness of our sins that You have promised. Amen.

■ **Pass the cup of wine**