

NO JUSTICE IN THE LAND

by Glenn Hall

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***How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen?
Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do
you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong?
Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and
conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice
never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice
is perverted. (Habakkuk 1:2-4)***

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Preface

It was autumn of 1985. As I often do in the month of October, I was out walking in the newly fallen leaves. On that day I was at Babler State Park in western St. Louis County. I could smell the leaves' soft scent as they lay beneath my feet, beginning to meld with the earth below. The wind rustled the remaining leaves overhead and reminded me of the presence of God. I enjoyed the awesomeness of God's earth.

As I walked in the loveliness of His creation that day I considered something that a friend of mine had just told me. He said that two people who were guilty of the same crime were going to receive two vastly different court sentences. One would go to jail, the other would get probation. The one who got probation knew someone who "counted"; the other did not. I pondered the situation in my heart.

Suddenly, the wind picked up again and this time I sensed more than God's creation. I felt the Spirit of the Lord Himself. And He said to me, **"THERE'S NO JUSTICE IN THE LAND"**

Introduction

The Lord has been writing this book in my heart for many years, ever since He first whispered to me these words, *"There's no justice in the land."* Sadly, those words He spoke nearly over two decades ago ring truer today. This book was originally written in 1993, during my first term as a Missouri State Legislator from the Kansas City area. It was slightly revised in

1994 and 1995 and sat in my computer hard drive since then. For all these years Isaiah 59 has stirred my heart toward God's justice:

Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear. For your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt. Your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue mutters wicked things.

No one calls for justice; no one pleads His case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil. They hatch the eggs of vipers and spin a spider's web. Whoever eats their eggs will die, and when one is broken, an adder is hatched. Their cobwebs are useless for clothing; they cannot cover themselves with what they make. Their deeds are evil deeds, and acts of violence are in their hands. Their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts; ruin and destruction mark their ways.

*The way of peace they do not know; **there is no justice in their paths.** They have turned them into crooked roads; no one who walks in them will know peace. So **justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us.** We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. Like the blind we grope along the wall, feeling our way like men without eyes. At midday we stumble as if it were twilight; among the strong, we are like the dead. We all growl like bears; we moan mournfully like doves.*

We look for justice, but find none; for deliverance, but it is far away.** For our offenses are many in your sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, and we acknowledge our iniquities: rebellion and treachery against the LORD, turning our backs on our God, fomenting oppression and revolt, uttering lies our hearts have conceived. So **justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter. Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The LORD looked and was displeased that there was no justice

(ISAIAH 59).

"Get yourself ready! Stand up and say to them whatever I command you. Do not be terrified by them, or I will terrify you before them. Today I have made you a fortified city, an iron pillar and a bronze wall to stand against the whole land--against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and the people of the land. They will fight against you but will not overcome you, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the LORD (Jeremiah 1:17-19).

"Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols. Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the LORD (Jeremiah 2:11-12).

We live in a modern America where the only persons who can be discriminated against with impunity are Christians - especially conservative Christians who strive to live a godly and lawful life. We Christians who long for holiness and dedication to God, and who **dare** to speak or act in the public square are ridiculed and slandered without mercy. Our detractors spread lies about us, using such terms as "radical right," "nazi-like," and "hate-mongers" among other things. There was a time not so long ago when the label "Christian" was one of honor rather than disrepute. What has happened and why did it happen? The answer can be found in Scripture; it is called **"the Teaching about Righteousness."**¹

While Christians shoulder the brunt of these injustices, the rest of society suffers as well. It could be hypothesized that had the Church not shirked her duties before God, America would not be in the condition she is in today. The Church has failed to speak God's prophetic word of justice to all of society, including its institutions of law and government. In fact, these days the Church does not even understand the word "justice." Instead, she preaches pietistic escapism which renders the hands and feet of Christ useless to this generation.

The Church has lost its focus for a variety of reasons, but I believe the primary reason she has become so impotent is that some important Biblical doctrines have ceased to be taught in many denominations and independent churches. The theology of many of our churches is exceedingly weak. A prominent pastor and Bible teacher comments, "The gospel in vogue today holds forth a false hope to sinners. It promises them they can have eternal life yet continue to live in rebellion against God. Indeed, it *encourages* people to claim Jesus as Savior yet defer

¹See Hebrews 5:11-14

until later the commitment to obey Him as Lord."² Some people call this "Lordship Salvation."³ See my book [*When We Awake*](#) for a full development of this doctrine.

It is this weak, even false, gospel which has rendered the Church of Jesus Christ powerless. A church without the gospel is a mute orphan. **America is in crisis today because her churches are in crisis.** Both will continue to live (or die) this way until Christians once again hold to and live out a thoroughly Biblical theology.

This book addresses this weakness in Church doctrine by explaining the Teaching about Righteousness spoken of in Hebrews 5:13.⁴ It is a little known doctrine, but it needs to be understood. When we walk in the fullness of the Teaching about Righteousness, *"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming."* (EPHESIANS 4:14).

This book shows that the Teaching about Righteousness can be seen as instruction in Christ's two great commandments, to love God and to love men. (Matthew 22:37-40) These commands are defined by the two words "righteousness" and "justice," respectively. Most of today's Church teaching tends to concentrate on the first command, to love God, while ignoring the practical implications of the second. This has led to what I call "The grace heresy."

To a large extent the mainline, evangelical, and charismatic churches overemphasize the Biblical doctrine of "grace" or wrongly define or misapply the concept altogether. This leads to a Christian withdrawal from things "temporal" or "secular." The result is a society in chaos and

²John F. MacArthur, **The Gospel According to Jesus** (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1988), p. 15 [emphasis in original]

³When I wrote this book I did not yet understand the distinction between the salvation of the soul and the salvation of the spirit. This doctrine is fully developed in my book [*When We Awake*](#).

⁴This was discussed much more fully in part two of the original version of this book which is not included here. Please see my book [*When We Awake*](#) concerning this doctrine in detail.

despair. Some churches, particularly those considered to be mainline denominations, do not just withdraw from secular activities; they simply become secular themselves. Their theology of grace becomes so confused that even the most unrepentant and worldly is left without disciplining. The unregenerate are left to find their own salvation, for they are treated as if they are saved and have no sins from which to repent.

What we are witnessing in America is the literal fulfillment of the words of James, "*faith without deeds is dead*" (James 2:26). The Church does little except practice its "spiritual" exercises like prayer and preaching. Yes, the Church still preaches faith and grace, but where are her deeds? We remain silent on the crucial issues of the day - government, welfare, crime and education - and we rarely spend ourselves for the widows and orphans. Isaiah tells us that God rejects a "faith" without these kinds of works. James warns us that faith without deeds is useless, but we stubbornly refuse to believe them. We just go about our business preaching faith and grace and counseling the poor soul who can't seem to cope with a life based solely on these two concepts. Doesn't it ever occur to us that our people "burn out" and "backslide" because our doctrine is so irrelevant, because we never teach them they have works to do as the hands and feet of Christ? The Bible teaches men how to apply their faith by God's grace, but few teach the whole counsel of God.

Christ's Church has been called to be a prophetic people, a people who speak God's truth to all the world and all the institutions of man. For the last two centuries the Christian Church has progressively withdrawn from society, leaving a vacuum to be filled by those who know not, or even hate, our God. Consequently, every institution in the United States has become corrupted. Violence rules on the many streets of urban America. Citizens thus face a land at war with itself even though we are officially a nation at peace. Why has this breakdown in

society occurred?

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:11-14)

Christians have enjoyed God's milk in the "New World" for a long time, but the banquet called America is almost over. It is time for God's people to learn to discern between good and evil while there is still time to choose the good. It is time for His people to eat the solid food of the mature while dinner is still being served, before America faces the violence of war on her own soil.

*For certain men whose condemnation was written
about long ago have secretly slipped in among you.
They are godless men, who change the grace of our
God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus
Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.*

(Jude 1:4)

*I wrote for them the many things of my law, but they
regarded them as something alien.*

(HOSEA 8:12)

I. THE CALLING OF GOD

So justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter. Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The Lord looked and was displeased that there was no justice.

(ISALAH 59:14-15)

When I was a child I played outside all day, out of my mother's watchful eye. I played in the city park and skating rink, swam in the city pool and lake, and rode my bike two miles into downtown or over to Grandma's house. I did all these things before I was ten years old, but my Mom did not have to worry that I might be kidnapped and raped by a sexual pervert or tortured and slaughtered by a Satanic cult. Such events were practically unheard of in 1964.

That has all changed now. Parents must constantly be vigilant today, for terror lurks around every corner. Children are murdered by drive-by shootings, knifed and raped at school, and kidnapped from their bus stops.⁵ Drug pushers glancingly watch for the next young victim they can attract with their deadly wares. School "counselors" push fearful, pregnant fourteen year-olds into the abortionist's knife, and some state laws prevent the parents from even being told, much less consenting to the butchery. Small children are kept within sight these days. Parents cannot trust the next passer by.

The Lord God calls to His Church to do something, to act specifically to halt the slaughter, but is anyone listening?

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.
(MICAH 6:8)

⁵For example, in December of 1993 two girls, ages 9 and 10, in separate incidents were kidnapped and murdered in their St. Louis suburb neighborhoods. Only God knows all that their attackers did to them. They lived in middle to upper middle class areas in which crimes of this sort were unheard of until recently.

GOD'S CALL TO CHRISTIAN MATURITY

God is calling His people to come up to a new level in their walk with Him. He wants His beloved Church to begin to feed on the meat of His Word and begin to apply it to a sick, hurting world. But, "solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil" (Hebrews 5:14). He wants us to leave the Sunday morning teaching of only milk. Today the Lord calls His Bride to maturity (See Luke 8:14; 1 Corinthians 2:6ff; Ephesians 4:13-15; Philippians 3:12-15; Hebrews 5:11-14; 6:1-2; James 1:2-4). He wants His Church to season society, not preserve it in its decay (See Matthew 5:13-16).

Christians and Christian leaders so often fail in their personal walk with the Lord because they remain immature for too long. They also fail to make any tangible impact upon society for the same reason. Like a baby who is only fed milk, those who remain spiritual infants become sick and malnourished. I believe that in most churches elementary truths concerning salvation are preached to the exclusion of practical Christian living. This happens because either that is all the minister knows or he believes that is the only teaching which is important. Our leaders have preached a spiritualized gospel which has little, if any, earthly meaning beyond initial salvation, if even that. This has led to apathy and weakness in the Church and to the Church's irrelevance in our culture. God's answer to this dilemma is His teaching concerning righteousness and justice.

A PERSONAL TESTIMONY

What I have seen in my walk with the Lord is this: the Old Testament is the story book of the Christian life. It is just as anointed and inspired as the New Testament books and actually

contains more doctrine than the New concerning God's ways and how we should live. As an illustration, consider God's leading of Moses and the Hebrews from Egypt. He did this with great miracles and divine interventions. The Israelites actually saw the manifestation of His presence in the pillar of fire and the cloud. How wonderful that must have been! How exciting! How easy it would have been to follow Moses and obey God when one was constantly seeing God do miraculous wonders!

That was the way my walk began with the Lord in 1977. I had dropped out of my fourth year of college in 1976 and was just having "fun." One day in the fall of 1976 I strolled into a book store to view the philosophy section. There on the shelf was a copy of **The New English Bible**. As I looked at its title I thought to myself, "I've always heard that the truth is in this book. I'm looking for the truth, so why don't I just buy this and read it like I would any other book?" I bought that Bible!

I began to read it the same day. I would read the New Testament during the day and the Old Testament at night. I took it to work with me and read it on all my breaks. I took it home with me. I read it alone in the evenings. I read the Old Testament through Deuteronomy and all of the New Testament three times in the next few months. During this time God began to show me that I was a sinner. I still remember sitting and just crying because of my sins. Then, one night several months after I bought this Bible, I was reading the Old Testament and realized that the voice of the One speaking was the same as that which I had read in the New Testament earlier that day. You know how it is when you read a lot of books by the same author, like C. S. Lewis, for example. If you were to read a new book by him you would know who wrote it without looking. That is how it was that evening for me.

"This is impossible," I thought. I knew that the Old Testament was written hundreds of years

before the New Testament and that the various books were written by different authors, so I said to myself, "These sections of the Bible were written hundreds of years apart, but the same person wrote them. **This is impossible ... unless God wrote the Bible!**"

"That's right, Glenn!" answered the voice of the LORD. (Whether it was audible or not I still do not know.) "And I want you to teach My Word!" He continued.

BOOM! My life was changed. "If this was really written by God," I said to myself, "then I had better do what it says." Thus I began my walk with the Lord. Knowing that the Bible was actually His Word to men, I believed it and began to obey it with a clear conscience. My bad habits began to change! Since I had literally witnessed the miracles of God, both by understanding that the Bible is His written Word and by hearing His wonderful voice, I was motivated to follow Him! I believed upon Jesus Christ as my Savior and received His free gift of righteousness and the Holy Spirit. I began to follow and obey Him as my LORD. I could obey God now because the Word of the Lord had been revealed to me! (See I Samuel 3:7).

IN THE DESERT WITH GOD

For about one year following that divine revelation I had several more experiences of the supernatural presence of God. I attended church meetings where God was clearly present. I read the Bible and felt Him near. I was experiencing the God of the Universe! It was so exciting! But then my desert journey began - just as it had begun for the Hebrews. The Lord had taught me from the *Song of Solomon* shortly before this that He does sometimes withdraw His presence from the one devoted to Him. God took me to a place where I did not "feel" Him anymore; I just had to trust that He was there and that He was the One who wrote the Bible. I had to trust that the Word **had** become flesh and that I had His written word in my Bible. Even though I rarely felt the presence of the LORD in the same strong way after that first year, I never wavered in my

faith in His Son and His grace and provision for me. I read His Word daily, sitting at His feet, listening. And I grew in the knowledge and the wisdom of the LORD. I came to understand 2

TIMOTHY 3:14-17, which says,

*But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. **All Scripture is God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in **righteousness**, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped **for every good work**.* [emphasis added]

First, having already been wooed by the grace of the Holy Spirit, I understood that the historical reality of the Scriptures had led me to a real faith in a real Jesus Christ. His life, death, and resurrection were historical facts which simply could not be disputed. This book was written by those who testified to the actual events that happened. They saw Jesus live, die, and live again with their own eyes! How could I not believe if I really wanted to know what was true? Doesn't the whole world testify to His existence? Aren't our calendar years marked by His very birth? Who could deny that he really lived, died, and rose again if one would just take the time to read the historical record? I saw that I could believe in God even without feeling His presence.

I also saw that all the Bible is inspired by God and that "all Scripture is ... useful...." I learned that Paul wrote this to a church leader named Timothy before Christians even had a book called "The New Testament." Thus Paul meant that Old Testament Scripture was useful for understanding how to live a worthy and righteous life before our God. This showed me that the Old Testament is relevant. It has much to say about the Christian life. So I became open to the teachings of Moses, David, and the prophets concerning how I should live my life. I have never seen the God of the old days as a God of judgment or wrath and the God of the new as a God of

grace as if they were two, separate Gods. I understand that *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever," (HEBREWS 13:8)* and that He has always saved the faithful by grace and has always judged the unrepentant and wicked. As Hebrews says, *"For we also have had **the gospel preached to us**, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith" (HEBREWS 4:2 emphasis added).* In this verse "they" are the people of the time of Moses and Joshua which was over a thousand years before Christ. You see, even the people of Old Testament times had the good news of the gospel preached to them!

GOD'S CALL FOR JUSTICE

More than ten years ago God began to open my eyes to justice in His Word. For years from 1983 to 1985 I watched "The 700 Club" and listened attentively to Pat Robertson urge Christians to get involved in public issues. I watched his special week of programming with Francis Schaeffer as Schaeffer taught the Christian philosophy of working for justice. I read many of Schaeffer's books. The Holy Spirit began to open my eyes to new principles in His Word.

Then came that autumn day when the Lord distinctly spoke to me, **"There is no justice in the land."** I didn't really know what Father meant when He spoke those words to me. As I continued to walk with the LORD He made it clear to me that I should attend CBN's school of law. In one of my first classes there, called The Common Law, former dean Herbert Titus taught us the relevance of God's law in society and how American law was based upon English common law. This, in turn, was largely based upon Biblical law. As he interpreted Old Testament Scripture relating to law and government scales fell off my eyes! I wondered how I could have been blind to God's word of justice for so many years. So much of the Bible suddenly became

new to me again!

I personally obeyed the Lord when I picked up my family and moved across the country in pursuit of justice. Yet today, years after the LORD spoke those words to me, there is still **no justice in the land.** And time is growing short....

II. CRISIS IN KANSAS CITY

The way of peace they do not know; there is no justice in their paths. They have turned them into crooked roads; no one who walks in them will know peace. So justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows

(ISAIAH 59:8-9).

Recent events in Kansas City illustrate the crisis coming upon all of our nation. In 1993 the Kansas City City Council, including Mayor Emanuel Cleaver, (who is also a minister at a United Methodist Church and now a United States Congressman from Western Missouri), enacted a city ordinance giving special minority status under the law to homosexuals. In doing this they have enacted legislation similar to that in some other major American cities.

This law gives special legal protection to homosexuals. The ordinance bans "discrimination" based upon "sexual orientation" by sellers, renters or lenders relating to housing; and by employers, employment agencies or labor unions relating to jobs and job opportunities. In Kansas City the class known as gays and lesbians now enjoys the special protection under the law that has historically been reserved only for those discriminated against because of race, gender, or religion.

No one, including the local media, mentioned the fact that homosexual acts are still against Missouri law and such acts have been considered illegal since the inception of our nation.

Instead, local lawmakers, writers, and longtime pastors bowed to the new wave of political opinion which believes discrimination based upon any factor of one's behavior is irrelevant and essentially evil. It makes matters even worse that the mayor of the city, an ordained Methodist minister, voted with the council for the bill. This shows a serious lack of

understanding regarding the Word of God. It shows that Emanuel Cleaver is utterly incapable of discerning between good and evil, unless he is deliberately choosing evil in this case. The local daily newspaper, rather than chastising, supported the mayor and the council. "This is about civil rights, after all," the editor wrote, "not special gay rights."⁶

A least one local pastor wrote an editorial which was just as foolish. This man, who has pastored a local Kansas City church for 30 years, wrote these words:

Now some seem to find support for persecution of gays and lesbians in the Bible. My Savior is crucified again every time someone is oppressed in the very name of the One who died that we might have life in all of its fullness.

What would happen if once again we listened more closely to the Bible and its message of justice and mercy for the oppressed, and let shine the dazzling love of God revealed in Jesus Christ?⁷

This pastor confuses the concepts of justice and mercy in the plan of God. Is Jesus crucified again when the violent rapist or murderer is "oppressed" by prison incarceration or execution? Isn't the proper punishment of crimes called justice? One can have mercy and compassion for homosexuals as sinners needing the salvation of God, but justice calls for society's reproof of their conduct and prosecution for their vulgar acts. It may come as a surprise to this Baptist preacher, but **Biblical justice is not oppression.**

THE CRISIS OF ANARCHY

The brand of theology practiced by these leaders and others has led to the present crisis in this city and nation. Don't be fooled. The issue is not about civil rights for the oppressed. It is not even about the "love of God." The matter at issue is about **legally forbidding discernment of good and evil and about legally forbidding what is good.** The fact that discrimination based upon any reason is becoming anathema to our political, media, and religious leaders and

⁶THE KANSAS CITY STAR, June 5, 1993, p. C-6.

⁷Paul Smith, *I John 4: 'God is Love'*, KANSAS CITY STAR (June 30, 1993) p. C-7.

hence, to society at large, is cause for alarm. When you boil this philosophy down to its most basic level you ultimately come to the place where you can make no legitimate discriminatory decisions. You also come to the point at which you can no longer define a crime, for to do so would be to make a discriminatory judgment about a person's **choice of behavior**. The result will be anarchy, society without law, morals, or public safety, and that consequence is close at hand.

THE ILLEGALITY OF OBJECTIVE DISCRIMINATION

Because of the new "civil rights law" the restaurant that wants to appeal to families and family values will now be forced in Kansas City to hire the man who shares none of the owner's family values, but, in fact, loathes them. To "discriminate" against him by simply not hiring him will be illegal and cause for punitive fines against the owner. The aftermath will be that no one can hire, fire or do anything else based upon legitimate, objective criteria.

The new law goes much further even than that. It prohibits any citizen from "inciting" or advising someone not to hire certain classes of individuals, including homosexuals. On its face, the ordinance would even prohibit Church preaching or teaching against homosexuality, for such preaching could be construed as compelling or coercing another not to hire a sexual pervert. Someone could even argue that under the new law **this book is illegal!**

FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND CIVIL RIGHTS FOR CHRISTIANS?

The problems of this law with regard to constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and freedom of religion are obvious, but who cares? Clearly, the Kansas City City Council and Mayor Emanuel Cleaver do not since they just passed the new law abrogating those freedoms. Also, given President Clinton's record of nominations for high governmental positions, it may soon be true that the Supreme Court of the United States doesn't care much either. These days

the "politically correct" views of homosexual and abortion rights often take precedence over the Constitutional guarantees of freedom of speech and freedom of religion.

Again, the question is not really "civil rights" as the perpetrators of this madness want you to believe. The fact is that the civil rights of the majority of moral Americans are violated by this kind of statute because it abrogates their constitutional and historical freedoms of speech and religion and greatly increases their risk of disease, their cost of health insurance, and the very real risk to their and their own children's lives and morality.

The truth is that "anti-discriminatory" laws such as the new Kansas City civil rights ordinance is really a blatant prejudice against Christians who have sincerely held religious and moral beliefs. The "hidden" agenda of the Kansas City lawmakers and those they represent is to destroy all objective moral standards and Christianity itself, for true Christianity will always oppose moral relativism.

There is something each of us must understand. The basis of this nation, the underlying reason for its order and safety, is its legal system. Until very recently this legal system was explicitly Christian in its origins.⁸ That reality is quickly changing as the Supreme Court continues to issue rulings like *Rowe v. Wade* which turn Christian principles upside down. This is why it is now illegal to pray in public schools, why public schools push anti-Christian religions (philosophies) and why schools have deemed it illegal or improper to even have Christmas parties or sing Christmas carols. *When our system of law and government is finally overthrown, then the foundations of America will have been destroyed.* They are in crumbled disrepair now, but there is yet a little time to rebuild the breaches.

A PERSONAL EXAMPLE OF RELIGIOUS BIGOTRY

⁸See Harold Berman, **Law and Revolution** (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983)

I have personally been victimized by the religious bigotry of an organization which supports and promotes these anti-Christian ideas, yet touts itself as an objective judge of law schools and nominees for federal judgeships. I was a member of the charter class of Regent University College of Law and Government, a Christian law school founded by Pat Robertson. For my entire three years there as a law student, the American Bar Association (ABA)⁹ refused to grant the school provisional accreditation, although it clearly met and sometimes exceeded the ABA's own rigorous standards. Many people, myself included, believe that their reasons for denying accreditation were based upon religious/philosophical opposition to the Biblical Christianity which the law school espouses.

My fellow law students and I filed a federal lawsuit against the ABA in 1989, during my final semester there, alleging religious discrimination. The suit was dismissed, but political and media pressure forced the ABA into granting provisional accreditation two months later. Without that decision I would not now be practicing law in Missouri. I would have been a casualty of anti-Christian bigotry. Another current example of religious bigotry concerns Bob Vernon, assistant chief of the Los Angeles Police Department during the recent L.A. riots, "who was driven from office because of his faith."¹⁰ (See also the book by Pat Robertson, *The Turning Tide*, for many more examples of anti-Christian bigotry.¹¹)

AIDS, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND POLITICAL CORRECTNESS

Anti-discrimination ordinances, like the one in Kansas City, appear even more bizarre in light of the AIDS epidemic. This word, "epidemic," is used constantly in reports concerning

⁹As another example, the American Bar Association, at the time of this writing, has in force a policy supporting a woman's "right" to abortion on demand. I personally resigned from the organization shortly after the ABA adopted this position. Remember, this group is supposed to be an organization which works to better law and justice throughout all America!

¹⁰James C. Dobson, Ph.D., FOCUS ON THE FAMILY NEWSLETTER (July 1993), p. 7; See also, Robert Vernon, LA JUSTICE, (Colorado Springs: Focus on the Family Publishing, 1993).

¹¹Pat Robertson, *The Turning Tide* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1993)

AIDS. The word literally means, "an outbreak or product of sudden rapid spread, growth, or development."¹² AIDS represents the sudden outbreak of a deadly disease which is potentially destructive of this entire nation. Over 2,000 cases have been identified in the Kansas City area alone, and the nation has reported well over 250,000 cases.¹³

Rather than being taught to abstain from the destructive behavior which exposes people to AIDS, the public is instructed to "use condoms" when they have sex with their multiple partners. This is even the politically correct curriculum for our public schools. Research shows us that condoms sometimes break, that some condoms do not even inhibit the spread of the AIDS virus, and that many who indulge in sexual escapades never wear them. Besides this data, how many people do you know who have practiced "birth control," but still have had a child? What do you think will happen, then, when the sexually promiscuous practice "AIDS control?"

We also know that the largest incidence of AIDS in America is in the homosexual population.¹⁴ Heterosexual infection, children infected by their mother, and infections from tainted blood products account for only 27,419 cases of the total of 253,448 cases reported to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), while the remaining 226,029, or 89% of all AIDS infections, occur in homosexuals and intravenous drug users.¹⁵

It is tantamount to schizophrenia, therefore, to grant special legal rights to homosexuals, a group which is without doubt responsible for the greatest epidemic to sweep America in its history. (I do not argue that they alone are responsible, however, because the nation as a whole has not shown the moral will to contain the disease, and is therefore also accountable.) The CDC

¹²WEBSTER'S NEW COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY (1976), p. 383.

¹³*U.S. Report on AIDS*, ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH, June 11, 1993, p. 12A.

¹⁴Tracey Hooker and Lucinda Bryant, HIV/AIDS FACTS TO CONSIDER (Washington D.C.: National Conference of State Legislatures. April 1993), p. 2.

¹⁵*Ibid* pp. 2-3

estimates that over **one million** persons in the United States are currently infected with AIDS, with **eight** times as many men infected as women.¹⁶ Heterosexual infections are on the rise, however, as more and more men who have had homosexual sex engage in sex with females. Of course, as strictly heterosexual men engage in sex with these infected women, the plague spreads to them, and then on to their successive sexual "partners."

PUBLIC SCHOOLS, HOMOSEXUALS, AND AIDS

So, our young sons and daughters, in the public schools for which we pay so dearly, are taught that they can enjoy "safe" sex; but if they want to avoid AIDS they had just better wear a condom! Some Kansas City metropolitan schools districts, the most notable being Shawnee Mission, Kansas,¹⁷ even teach that homosexuality is simply one more alternative lifestyle and go on to promote it in a positive way. In fact, a homosexual rights group in Kansas City, Project 21, "is a national alliance that pushes for education in elementary and secondary schools on the lifestyles and contributions of gay and bisexual people."¹⁸ The major local paper is promoting their agenda.¹⁹ Do we honestly want our six or seven year old taught that homosexuality and "other" sexual orientations are all fine and acceptable behaviors? At this point whether we want it or not is not an issue. Chances are good that if our child attends a public school he or she is being brain-washed with homosexual propaganda.

Add to this the fact that our Kansas City restaurants and all other city businesses are now barred from firing or not hiring persons with AIDS or homosexuals who constantly indulge in activity that will lead to AIDS in themselves and others and we will begin to see the severity of the Kansas City crisis. No one even really knows if AIDS might be spread through more casual

¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 2.

¹⁷ Regina Akers, *Gays deserved to be in texts, activists argue*, THE KANSAS CITY STAR, July 4, 1993, p. B-3.

¹⁸ *Ibid*.

¹⁹ Lewis W. Diuguid, *Promoting the truth on sexuality*, KANSAS CITY STAR, July 1, 1993, Southland, Section, p. 1.

contact than sex and blood transfusions. For example, is it possible that AIDS could be spread by saliva or respiration, by talking or coughing? How, for example, did the young virgin named Kimberly Bergalis contract the AIDS virus from which she died? Did her AIDS infected dentist deliberately infect her or did his breathing into her throat as he worked on her teeth infect her? Some AIDS researchers claim infection can occur through "casual contact," i.e. saliva, urine, toilet seats, etc.²⁰ while others deny it.²¹ Since there is a difference of opinion with regard to the methods of transmission of this dreaded disease, on which side should we err? Clearly, legal protection for AIDS carriers, but not the healthy public, is schizophrenic insanity! This is the crisis in Kansas City.

The crisis in Kansas City faces the entire nation, however, and it is certainly not limited to the AIDS epidemic and homosexual perversion. It manifests itself in a multitude of ways throughout our country. Its fruit includes lack of accountability to and disrespect for authority, graphic portrayal of violence, actual violence, pornography, and satanic ritual sacrifices and torture.²² Congress debates and passes "the Freedom of Choice Act" which legally protects virtually all abortions at any time and prevents most or all state restrictions meant to protect the life of the mother. President Clinton purposefully appoints radical liberals, including blatant homosexuals, to important governmental offices ... our senate confirms them. Our national legislators give special anti-discriminatory protection to the class that poses the greatest threat to society, those who are most likely to transmit AIDS by their wanton conduct.²³ The crisis is at its core a crisis in both sacred and civil leadership. Church leaders fall into sin and disgrace year

²⁰Gene Antonio, AIDS: RAGE & REALITY, WHY SILENCE IS DEADLY (Dallas: Anchor Books, 1992), Chapter 4.

²¹Glenn G. Wood, M.D. & John E. Dietrich, M.D., THE AIDS EPIDEMIC, BALANCING COMPASSION & JUSTICE (Portland: Multnomah 1990), Chapter Nine.

²²*Teen tells police that boys were killed during cult ritual*, KANSAS CITY STAR, June 8, 1993, p. A-3.

²³American with Disabilities Act (ADA)

after year while our city, state, and national leaders enact laws which protect the most abominable of sins, like abortion and homosexuality.

WHEN THE FOUNDATIONS ARE BEING DESTROYED

The social and moral fabric of our society is being ripped to shreds because the nation's foundation of law and government is being destroyed. Acts which should be considered crimes and prosecuted, like abortion, sodomy, and negligent or reckless infection with AIDS are not only being tolerated by government - they are being specially protected. How long can a government that refuses to define and prosecute crimes last? When will all-out anarchy prevail? Were the riots in Los Angeles, which were justified and even glorified by some as a legitimate reaction to a "wrong race-related" trial verdict, merely a sign of things to come?

The popular rapper called Ice-T said the following on February 22, 1993, as he addressed Stanford University law students about the LA riot:

"[That was] the happiest day of my entire life. During the riot, I rolled into the neighborhood. I was chilling out, signing autographs. It was the most peaceful time I had ever been in South Central Los Angeles. Brothers were dancing. Music was playing. It was a very great thing."²⁴

In analyzing his comments, Dr. James Dobson says, "The 'very great thing' of which Ice-T spoke resulted in 53 deaths, 2,400 injuries, 1,400 stores looted and burned, more than \$1 billion in property damage, and incalculable emotional distress to the children and adults living in South Central Los Angeles."²⁵ The political word for Ice-T's "very great thing" is anarchy - the destruction of civilization.

William J. Bennett, Secretary of Education under President Ronald Reagan, released his

²⁴Richard C. Paddock, *Ice-T Tells it Like He Is to Stanford Law Students*, LOS ANGELES TIMES, February 22, 1993, §F, p. 2; quoted in FOCUS ON THE FAMILY NEWSLETTER, James C. Dobson, Ph.D. (June 1993), p. 1.

²⁵James C. Dobson, Ph.D., FOCUS ON THE FAMILY NEWSLETTER, (June 1993), p. 1.

Index of Leading Cultural Indicators in 1993.²⁶ His index analyzes various social behaviors over a thirty year period of time. His studies found some appalling statistics. For example, violent crimes increased over 600 percent from 1960 to 1990, from 288,460 to 1,911,770.²⁷ This represents an increase in violent crimes of 16.1 per 10,000 persons to 75.8 per 10,000 persons.²⁸ Violence among juveniles has grown wildly also, from 137 per 100,000 youths in 1965 to 430.6 per 100,000 in 1990.²⁹ Total abortions have increased from 586,800 in 1972 to 1,680,000 in 1990.³⁰ In 1972 12.9 percent of all pregnancies ended in abortion; in 1990 24.6 percent of pregnancies were aborted.³¹ Child abuse increased from 669,000 reported cases in 1976 to 2,537,000 cases in 1990.³² According to Mr. Bennett, his analysis shows that "in many ways the condition of America is not good. Over the last three decades we have experienced substantial social regression."³³

On the morning of August 18, 1993, I was greeted with the following news article:

Man pleads guilty to torturing woman

[A man] pleaded guilty Tuesday to being one of three men who carjacked a south Kansas City woman, tortured her for two hours, cut her throat, locked her in her car trunk and set the vehicle on fire. "Things just got out of hand," [he said].³⁴

My point is that things are definitely out of hand in Kansas City. Indeed, things are out of hand in the entire United States. Anarchy and destruction reign supreme. Our society is falling apart at the seams. Today, Christians need to ask, as did King David, "*When the foundations are*

²⁶William J. Bennett, *The Index of Leading Cultural Indicators*. (Washington, D.C.: Empower America, The Heritage Foundation, Free Congress Foundation, March 1993)

²⁷Ibid p. 2.

²⁸Ibid

²⁹Ibid p. 4.

³⁰Ibid p. 10.

³¹Ibid

³²Ibid p. 11.

³³Ibid p. i.

³⁴Joe Lambe, Man pleads guilty to torturing woman, The Kansas City Star, August 18, 1993, p. C-2

being destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psalm 11:3) The foundations of law and government are in fact being destroyed in America. But there is something that **the righteous can do** in such a time as this.

JUSTICE: A CHRISTIAN WORLDVIEW

It is perhaps needless to say, but one could write an entire large book about the breakdown of American society.³⁵ Massive problems are evident in virtually every public and private institution and endeavor: libraries, museums, art galleries, public and private schools, universities, literature, films, news media, social service organizations, prisons, and government. Fear reigns in our large cities and suburbs. Huge problems are even evident in our churches. Yet, it does no good to focus on the problems unless we are ready to find the answer. And the answer can only be found in Scripture.

Studies have shown that sixty million Americans consider themselves committed Christians,³⁶ yet our country is overrun with blatantly evil behavior. Clearly, there is a crisis in the Christian worldview. Satan's kingdom appears to have the upper hand in all of our organizations, but Satan has won his victory by default. God's servants handed Satan his victory because we failed to teach and work out a distinctively Christian philosophy of life. The Bible gives Christians the theological and philosophical basis upon which to build a strong Church and a strong civilization. It speaks of justice, God's answer to the present crisis. But God's leaders refuse to hear His word of justice because they have been seduced with a false word of "grace."

³⁵See for example Pat Robertson, *The Turning Tide* (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1993), Thomas Sowell, *Inside American Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1993), Phyllis Schlafly, *Child Abuse in the Classroom* (Alton, IL: Pere Marquette Press, 1984)

³⁶"Born Again: A Look at Christians in America," *The Barna Research Group*, Glendale, CA, 1990, p.9.

III. INTRODUCTION TO THE GRACE HERESY

Though grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil and regard not the majesty of the Lord (ISAIAH 26:10).

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age (Titus 2:11-12)

A PARABLE

I was standing in the middle of a sanctuary, worshipping God. Christian brothers and sisters stood about me, worshipping also. Then I looked and saw a man standing in the corner of the room. In the Spirit I saw that he was behind bars. As I looked I knew that the man was a murderer, and that he had murdered as recently as two weeks ago. I knew that a spirit of murder was upon the man and that he had not repented of his murders.

Then I saw in the Spirit that one of the leaders of the church arose and walked toward him with keys to open the prison bars. I knew the minister and pleaded with him not to let the man out. He looked at me with joy in his eyes and said, "This man needs our grace, and needs to be accepted! I will let him out!"

After the murderer had been set free other leaders and members of the church surrounded him with cheers and loving embraces. The man basked in the warmth of his newfound acceptance, but I knew that he had not repented of his murders. When the embraces were over I saw the man slink to the outskirts of the sanctuary, to await a stray sheep and his next slaughter.

THE MEANING OF THE PARABLE

Jude, the brother of James, sums up the grace heresy when he writes, *"For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who **change the grace of our God into a license for immorality** and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord"* (Jude 1:4, emphasis added). First, he warns that a wrongful doctrine of grace leads directly to the release of sin within the Church. Grace becomes a "license for immorality," and thus it has become so to the present generation. Second, it allows "godless men" to secretly slip in amongst the saints to work their godless, destructive deeds. It leads to corruption in the theology of the church and in the lives of the believers. Finally, Jude declares that the grace heresy leads to denial of Jesus Christ who, he says, is "our only Sovereign and Lord."

Notice that Jude does not say that these purveyors of false doctrines deny Jesus Christ "our Savior." He specifically says that they deny Jesus Christ "our only Sovereign and Lord." Jude is making a critical point here. The fruit of the grace heresy is a denial of the Lordship of Christ over the hearts and actions of individual Christians. A more literal translation of Jude 1:4 says that certain men "reject the only supreme in authority God, the Lord Jesus Christ." There is no higher authority! There are no greater commands than those given by the Word of God Himself.

The grace heresy has produced a generation of church goers who reject Christ's authority over their lives. It has erected a Church with no foundation of Biblical theology. It has opened up the body of Christ to spiritual and physical assault. Consequently, the Church is unable to protect itself, much less willing and able to speak God's word to all of society. The result is a nation and world in chaos and despair.

The grace heresy at its most basic level is a denial of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It

denies the need to obey the Word of God and the need to repent of one's sins before one can become a member of the Church. The heresy is so serious because it can convince someone that he is born again when, in fact, he is yet the grossest of unrepentant sinners still in danger of the fires of Hell! It is doubly dangerous because it can unleash a murderous and adulterous spirit into what should be the holiness of God's Church, wreaking physical and spiritual homicide therein.

The error manifests itself in many other ways as well, from the Christian pseudo-doctrine which pits grace against law, resulting in the death of law, to the teaching which dichotomizes the testaments of God into contrary opinions. It makes the God of the Old Testament into a vengeful, wrathful God of law who knows no grace while the Christ of the New Covenant is a God of grace who knows only the law of an undefined love. But the Word says, *"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever"* (HEBREWS 13:8). Also, *"I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed"* (MALACHI 3:6).

THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF GRACE

The doctrine of grace is a vital and wonderful doctrine of the Church. Many Bible teachers define the word as meaning "God's unmerited favor," and it may be that many get into trouble with the concept because they leave the definition here. When the term is applied to salvation, it means that one does not have to work for one's own salvation. Christians are taught, and rightly so, that their salvation is a free gift, by God's undeserved favor. Salvation is by grace. Paul teaches that we *"are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus"* (ROMANS 3:24). Luke says, *"We believe it is through the grace of our LORD Jesus that we are saved"* (ACTS 15:11). Yet, grace means so much more than this simple definition above might lead one to believe.

There is also the Scripture which reads, *"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say 'No' to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age"* (Titus 2:11-12). This verse shows us that the concept of grace encompasses more than God's unmerited favor upon sinners. It reveals that grace actively teaches us to live a godly life. Or, as author Jerry Bridges says, Titus teaches that "grace disciplines us."³⁷ Bill Gothard, a renowned Bible teacher, defines grace as the "desire and power to do God's will."³⁸ John MacArthur, Jr. sees it as "the free and benevolent influence of a holy God operating sovereignly in the lives of undeserving sinners."³⁹ The point these men make regarding grace is that it is not just some static concept which is good for salvation, and nothing more. They define grace in a way which tries to convey the essence of its power and force in a person's life. "Grace is not a one-time event in the Christian experience. ... The entire Christian life is driven and empowered by grace..."⁴⁰ When defined this way grace suddenly appears as the mighty power God intends it to be.

It is important for Christians to always remember they are living in and by God's grace. The Bible does not preach a works-based salvation, as if one could earn eternity with God. I am convinced that one's salvation comes entirely by the grace of God and is not at all dependent upon any pre-salvation works of man. Martin Luther's contribution to the Church is invaluable because he taught this lost Biblical truth. Neither does the Bible teach that once one becomes a Christian he is bound to obey God perfectly in his own power to retain his salvation and good-standing with the Lord. Our salvation and good works always continue to rest on God's grace. The Bible does teach, however, that Christians are to obey Christ's commands and laws. The

³⁷See Jerry Bridges, **The Discipline of Grace** (Navpress, 1994)

³⁸Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts, **Research in Principles of Life** (Institute in Basic Youth Conflicts, 1981), p. 6.

³⁹John F. MacArthur, Jr., **Faith Works**, (Dallas: Word Publishing, 1993), p. 58.

⁴⁰Ibid

problem today is that the pendulum of grace has swung too far in the direction away from works and law for far too many Christians. Just as works-based "salvation" is lopsided and in error, so too is the "grace" which produces a work-less "salvation." Too many preachers today peddle this kind of "cheap grace," something I call "the grace heresy."

CHEAP GRACE

The term "cheap grace" was apparently invented by the German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer.⁴¹ He defined the term this way:

Cheap grace means grace as a doctrine, a principle, a system. It means forgiveness of sins proclaimed as a general truth, the love of God taught as the Christian "conception" of God. An intellectual assent to the idea is held to be of itself sufficient to secure the remission of sins. The Church which holds the correct doctrine of grace has, it is supposed, *ipso facto* a part in that grace. In such a Church the world finds a cheap covering for its sins; no contrition is required, still less any real desire to be delivered from sin. Cheap grace therefore amounts to a denial of the Incarnation of the Word of God.

Cheap grace means the justification of sin without the justification of the sinner. Grace alone does everything, they say, and so everything can remain as it was before. ... Well, then, let the Christian live like the rest of the world, let him model himself on the world's standards in every sphere of life, and not presumptuously aspire to live a different life under grace from his old life under sin.⁴²

As MacArthur says,

"Cheap grace" doesn't speak of God's grace. It is a self-imparted grace, a pseudograce. This grace is "cheap" in *value*, not cost. It is bargain-basement, damaged-goods, washed-out, moth-eaten, second-hand grace. It is manmade grace reminiscent of the indulgences Rome was peddling in Martin Luther's day. Cheap? The cost is actually far more than the buyer could possibly realize, though the "grace" is utterly worthless.⁴³

Cheap grace is "utterly worthless" because such grace can never bring salvation. It is

⁴¹Ibid, p. 56.

⁴²Dietrich Bonhoeffer, **The Cost of Discipleship** (New York: Collier, 1959), PP. 45-46, cited in **Faith Works**, op. cit., p. 56.

⁴³*Faith Works*, p. 55.

twice damned because it holds the potential of hardening one's heart to the true grace of God which brings repentance unto salvation, thus preventing one from ever seeing God. Although this aspect of the grace heresy is the most horrible, because of its eternal nature, I will focus on other major problems the error produces, and, particularly, the problem of grace vs. law. It is because the Church has forsaken God's law that there is no justice in the land.

GRACE AND TRUTH

How has this "cheap grace" perverted so much of our doctrine? How did Christians begin to teach that truths like the relevance of God's law to a society are now invalid? Well, the New Testament does teach that "*the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ*" (JOHN 1:17). This leads some to believe that law and "grace and truth" are incompatible or diametrically opposed concepts. But nothing could be further from the truth! Those who teach that God's law is now irrelevant must equate the two separate concepts of grace and truth and set them against God's law. Since the New Testament shows that salvation comes by God's grace and not obedience to God's law, they assume that Christ's "truth" is different from the Mosaic law as well. What this Scripture means, however, is that *only* the law came from Moses, but *both* grace *and* truth came from Jesus Christ! Could it be that Christ's truth either is or includes God's law?

After all, who, really, was the one who gave the law to Moses? Was it not the pre-incarnate Christ who appeared to Moses and delivered His eternal laws, His **eternal truths**? The Scripture is clear that no one has seen God the Father (See John 6:46). Yet, the Scripture is equally clear that Moses saw God face to face! (See Ex. 33:11; Num. 12:8). Who, then, did Moses see? The Christ in a pre-incarnate manifestation, of course! And do you remember who it was that appeared to Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration? It was Elisha *and* Moses! (See

Matthew 17:3). Jesus had revealed many of the wonders of His truth over one thousand years before this time to His friend, Moses, on Mount Sinai (See Exodus 19-20). This truth given by Christ was subsequently written down by Moses and became known as God's law. And, when Christ came as the incarnate Jesus He revealed truth to an even greater degree than had Moses.⁴⁴ He also revealed God's grace to an extent far greater than had yet occurred in history.

The grand psalm which sings of God's glorious law says, "*I have chosen **the way of truth**; I have set my heart on **your laws***" and "*Do not snatch **the word of truth** from my mouth, for I have put my hope in **your laws***" (Psalm 119:30, 43, emphasis added). Concerning His own role in bringing truth to men, Jesus says, "*If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free*" (John 8:31-32). Thus, Jesus makes obedience to His words a prerequisite for knowing His truth and Psalms equates God's truth with God's laws! Now, isn't this different from what we have heard concerning John 1:17? Suddenly, the concept of "grace **and truth**" is not so antithetical to God's law, is it?

GRACE AND THE GOSPEL UNDER THE OLD COVENANT

Besides this, the Bible clearly teaches that the gospel, the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, was even preached in the Old Testament era: "*For we also have had the gospel preached to us, **just as they did**; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because those who heard did not combine it with faith*" (HEBREWS 4:2, emphasis added). Even in Moses' day, therefore, faith in the Savior was necessary to please God! You see, God's way of salvation has always been the same, even in Old Testament times! The main difference between the Old and New Covenants is that under the Old, the Holy Spirit did not indwell all believers. God did, however, provide grace even in Old Testament times:

⁴⁴Please see the chapter **Salvation Unto Obedience**

He mocks proud mockers but gives grace to the humble (PROVERBS 3:34).

Though grace is shown to the wicked, they do not learn righteousness; even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil and regard not the majesty of the Lord (ISAIAH 26:10).

All Scripture, therefore, teaches that salvation and a proper relationship to God are based upon faith and grace! The law never has, and never will, save anyone, but Scripture never said it would! Rather, Scripture teaches that once one is "saved" or brought into a right relationship with God **he will obey the law**. Theologians call this progressive obedience "sanctification" and often contrast it with the concept of "justification."

GRACE AND THE LAW

*I will sprinkle clean water on you,
and you will be clean;
I will cleanse you from all your impurities
and from all your idols.*

*I will give you a new heart
and put a new spirit in you;
I will remove from you your heart of stone
and give you a heart of flesh.*

*And I will put my Spirit in you
and move you to follow my decrees
and be careful to keep my laws*

(EZEKIEL 36:25-27).

This is one of the clearest prophecies in Scripture regarding the New Covenant and the giving of the Holy Spirit, and it specifically mentions God's law. Here, Ezekiel is prophesying concerning a future outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the chosen people of God. This prophesy began its fulfillment just after the ascension of Christ when God sent His Holy Spirit to all who were born again by receiving Him as Lord and Savior. It is clear from this passage in Ezekiel that God gives His Spirit to man for a specific purpose besides salvation, to move him to

follow God's decrees and to keep His laws. It is also clear that Ezekiel's prophecy has not been totally fulfilled yet because God's law has never been fully written on any man's heart besides Jesus' own.

The entire Old Testament teaches that God made His law great and glorious! He made it to be a model for all the nations to follow so that justice and peace would reign in the land!⁴⁵ Israel and, later, the Church were to exemplify God's grace on earth by modeling His law of justice and righteousness, but each has failed miserably.

Today's Christian teachers neglect the primary earthly purpose of receiving God's grace and Holy Spirit, which is to emulate Jesus and act like God would want us to act. Grace is given so that we may do the works of God. Paul says, *"By the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me"* (1 Corinthians 15:10). For too many Christians, though, salvation by grace means only that we now get to go to heaven and the main purpose of receiving the Holy Spirit deals only with life after death or titillating "spiritual" gifts. They teach that the laws of God are void and of no effect in today's world and are certainly nothing about which the Christian ought to be concerned. **Yet these laws are the very principles God has given us for living righteously and with justice in the world. Preachers, though, often teach that they are irrelevant.** Even wise and godly teachers who understand the necessity of obeying God by His grace are prone to derogate God's laws in order to exalt the idea of God's grace. Although they do not purposely preach heresy their thinking has been captured by centuries of false doctrines.

THE GRACE HERESY

⁴⁵ See Deuteronomy 4:6-8

Christian teachers have diluted the principles of grace to such an extent that people today can believe they are saved although they never repent or obey the commands of Christ. Consequently, their churches have become dens of Satan. They fail to apply the righteous standards of God's word to their own and their members' lives, thus allowing sin to run rampant in their midst, and they don't even know it. Our church leaders misinterpret the many books of Scripture and have failed to understand the Teaching about Righteousness. They blindly accept the grace heresy.

Many leaders today teach grace to such an extent that their church members become sloppy regarding sin and repentance. They fail to remember, or perhaps they never learned, that God's **grace is for striving for righteousness in the midst of our mistakes**, as well as for our initial salvation. For Paul said, *"And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work"* (2 Cor. 9:8). Likewise, Peter proclaimed, *"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms"* (1 Peter 4:10).

Unfortunately, modern Christians tend to focus on God's grace as if it means only "God's unmerited favor," or solely as it relates to salvation and sealing the believer's relationship to God. This has led to the exclusion of teachings regarding repentance, obedience, and doing practical good works. This in turn has led to various Christian myths.

The error does not stop in the Church, however. The heresy has grown to such a degree that it now extends to the entire secular world. The idea of grace and free acceptance now applies to all, including the unrepentant. This is why Christians are called "intolerant" when they speak against sin and boldly take a stand for righteousness. This is why "Christian" and non-Christian elected officials brazenly embrace criminal behavior such as adultery, pornography,

and bribery. They accept blatant sinners into positions of authority in the church and the world because they extend "grace" to a place where it does not belong.

Thus, the grace heresy pervades the Church and the world. Satan took a fundamental Christian doctrine and used it against God's people. Exposing some of the specific ways the heresy takes form will help us to understand and recognize it and walk in the way of God's truth. Let's look at these now.

IV. THE HERESY IN THE CHURCH

Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers

(1 TIMOTHY 4:16).

The grace heresy takes many forms in today's preaching and teaching. Gary DeMar expounds upon fifteen misconceptions produced, I believe, by a wrong understanding of grace in his book "You've Heard it Said."⁴⁶ He has identified several errors besides those I touch upon here. They are: "The World is Evil," "Involvement in the World is Not `Spiritual,'" "Christians Should Remain Neutral," "Jesus Was Not a Social Reformer," "Religion and Politics Do Not Mix," "God's Kingdom Has Not Come," "There is a Separation Between Church and State," "God's Kingdom is Not of This World," and "It's Never Right to Resist Authority."⁴⁷

The "Lordship/No-lordship" Controversy

The most insidious result of the grace heresy takes the form of the "No-lordship" doctrine espoused by some evangelicals.⁴⁸ This teaching is so dangerous because it could actually prevent saving faith from occurring in those who hear and hold to it. The basic tenet of the doctrine is that salvation can occur simply by believing upon Jesus as Savior. Proponents insist that repentance from sins and acceptance of Christ as Lord of one's life is not necessary for salvation. Some even insist that requiring prospective converts to do this puts an unreasonable burden on them! They go on to teach that such requirements amount to works-based salvation, not a salvation which is by God's grace.

The truth of God's Word, though, is that Jesus Christ is both Lord and Savior. As Peter

⁴⁶Gary DeMar, **You've Heard it Said** (Brentwood, Tennessee: Wolgemuth & Hyatt, Publishers, Inc., 1991)

⁴⁷Ibid

⁴⁸See **The Gospel According to Jesus**, op.cit., for an in depth analysis of this problem.

says, "I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our **Lord and Savior** through your apostles" (2 Peter 3:2) and "grow in the grace and knowledge of our **Lord and Savior Jesus Christ**. To him be glory both now and forever!" (2 Peter 3:18). Knowing Jesus as Lord requires submitting to His commands. True salvation evidences itself by obedience to these commands. The Gospel truth is that if a person shows no submission to Christ's lordship evidenced by godly behavior, then he is not born again; he does not enjoy the salvation of God.

James clearly and unmistakably dismissed any form of "No-lordship" theology when he wrote the following verses:

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder (James 2:14-19).

Belief in Christ was not enough for James. He taught that such a belief without godly deeds was no better than a demon's faith. And, we all know the eternal abode of demons, don't we?

"All we need to do is preach the gospel."

This heresy elevates the pulpit ministry and evangelism above every other valid calling of God. Pastors with this mind set may preach about salvation, but those under their ministry may never mature to do the works which God prepared in advance for them to do. This is because

they are taught that the only valid work is to preach the gospel message of salvation. Finishing college degrees and finding better jobs may even be discouraged. The greatest calling for those who teach this is the pulpit ministry. They teach that the very best you can do is to give yourself to prayer and the ministry of the Word. This doctrinal error leads Christians to withdraw from or never pursue positions of relevance in society. Such positions are deemed unimportant since they are only "secular" and not "spiritual." This error fails to acknowledge that all things are spiritual to the spiritual man or woman.⁴⁹ Since it avoids secular "works," this problem is similar to the "No-lordship" error.

One of the greatest problems with this teaching is that it deprives the world of the benefits the saints of God could bring it. God's people should be filling all types of positions of authority in our society. This heresy encourages our best and brightest young men and women to step to the back of the bus and forego positions of secular leadership.

"If we just pray more, God will do everything we need to get our country back into shape."

This concept elevates prayer to the epitome of Christian work. It teaches that the most important thing a Christian can do is pray daily and attend the church prayer meetings once or twice a week, or even daily. An out-of-balance emphasis on prayer serves to incapacitate the Body of Christ by destroying all of its workers. If all one did was pray, who would do that for which you pray? The only answer is God.

This teaching neglects the fact that Christians are the hands and feet of Christ in the world. If we only pray for God "to do something," who will actually do it? Will God? Do we actually expect God to fix every problem that we make ourselves with some miraculous, divine

⁴⁹ See 1 Corinthians 2:15

intervention? Such an idea abrogates Christian responsibility, doesn't it? Correct Biblical doctrine teaches that it is **living people** like you and me who perform **most** of the specific acts by which God answers our prayers. The above stated error, however, leads to the next problem.

"God does not bless or curse any longer in this `age of grace.`" (God is sovereign and He will take care of this mess the world is in)

Yes, God is sovereign, but He gave man a free will to decide to obey Him or not, and a body to do what one wills. Currently, the Church does not typically act in obedience to God. (Could it be the result of the "No-lordship" doctrine?) The mess we are in is the mess of our own making. God will not miraculously remove our problems while we continue to make new ones and fail to obey His word to correct the old ones. The entire Old Testament shows what will happen to the people who give "lip service" to the God of the Universe, but fail to obey Him. God will either bless or curse His people, depending upon their active obedience or disobedience to His commands.⁵⁰

Unfortunately, however, many preach that since we Christians live under God's grace we do not experience the judgment of God, i.e., we are not blessed or cursed because of our actions in this body. This kind of thinking leads to careless living. The general idea of these preachers goes like this: Since we are saved by grace and are sustained in our relationship to God by grace, the fact that we fall into sin does not affect our standing with God (so long as we repent!). So far so good. But, those who fall into the grace heresy take this next step: Since our sin does not necessarily destroy our relationship to God it is clear that we do not presently live under the curses of God. Likewise, simply because I obey God, they say, does not mean that I will be

⁵⁰ See Deuteronomy 28

specially blessed by God. They rationalize this way because they believe, rightly, that our prayers are not more readily heard because we have been especially good on a given day. Their conclusions, however, are misguided.

God has implemented laws in His creation. Paul wrote when he discussed homosexual sin, "Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion" (Romans 1:27b). We see this penalty clearly today in the form of AIDS. This penalty applies equally to the Christian and the non-Christian who performs homosexual acts. AIDS is no respecter of persons. In other words, sin still brings a curse. Likewise, fornication and adultery result in God's judgment, a judgment which can take a variety of forms, including AIDS, other sexually transmitted diseases, and a destroyed family. The mere fact that a person who indulges in such sins is a Christian, saved by God's grace, will not save that person from God's curses. In fact, if a Christian persists in his sin, Paul declares, "hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord" (1 Corinthians 5:5). Is this not coming under the temporal judgment and curse of God?

Likewise, we are blessed when we obey our Lord. If we work, we will eat, sleep in a warm home, and be clothed. Honor your parents so "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth" (Ephesian 6:3). "The mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit" (Romans 14:17). If living in peace and joy is not a blessing, what is?

"I'm not perfect, just forgiven!"

This idea states that Christians cannot be perfect, or even hope to be perfect. But, what

does the Word teach? Jesus said, *"Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect"* (MATTHEW 5:48). Jesus was not talking about "perfectionism," i.e., always having your house spotless and your car washed. He was talking about inward obedience to God and a walk of faith without known, continuing sin. I believe we are only accountable to obey what God has revealed to us, but that we are accountable to listen to Him daily by prayer and reading His Word so that He can show us that which He wants us to obey.

It is probably true that you and I are not yet perfect. I know I am not. The teaching of Scripture, though, is to press on toward perfection, and, if it so happens that we fail occasionally, *"we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One"* (1 JOHN 2:1b). John, in fact, hoped that we "will not sin" (1 JOHN 2:1a). I hope daily that I will not sin, and depend upon the Holy Spirit to lead me in a way pleasing to my Lord.

This is also why I endeavor to read some of God's Word daily. If I happen to be pressed for time and do not get a chance to open the Bible, I do not condemn myself in a "legalistic" way. It is simply my goal to hear the Lord daily, for Moses and Jesus both taught us that God gives us our daily sustenance in the form of His eternal Word:

He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD (DEUTERONOMY 8:3).

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God'" (Matthew 4:4)

To always think to oneself, "I'm not perfect, just forgiven," breeds defeat! If one constantly believes he is going to sin or fail, he will! But, if by the power of the Holy Spirit, one determines to stop sinning and failing, he will lead a valuable and productive life. He will begin

to lead a life without (known) sin and will walk toward perfection with his Lord. Nevertheless, it is true that so long as we live in these bodies of flesh, we have the potential to sin horribly. Thus, we must take precautions to not indulge in or go to places that will naturally lead us into sin.

"You don't polish brass on a sinking ship."

This is the heresy created by focusing on the "rapture" to the exclusion of obedience to Christ. This teaching says that it is futile to try to do good works of a civil or cultural nature because Jesus is coming back for us so soon that it just won't matter. Those who hold to this doctrine teach that the only valid occupation, therefore, is to win souls for Christ.

Christ taught us to "occupy until I come," rather than to spend our time focusing on "the rapture." And what was the result for those "believers" who refused to occupy the land for their Lord? *"I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? ... I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what he has will be taken away. But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them--bring them here and kill them in front of me"* (Luke 19:22, 26,27).

Given Christ's stern admonition above, regardless of when He returns, I want to be found doing the work He has given me to do. Whether or not I personally remake the world into His image is not the crucial point; obeying Him is! Of course I should evangelize. I also personally need to obey His Word in all my life in such ways as loving my wife and teaching my children, helping the poor, and teaching, speaking, and writing for others. To say that the only valid work of God is personal evangelism is a false and dangerous doctrine.

"Be happy, God loves you." "You're saved by grace and you're accepted. That's all that really matters."

God does love us. He does save us by grace. We are accepted by Him. So we should be "happy." But, that is not all that really matters. *"For," the Scriptures say, "we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (EPHESIANS 2:10).* Christians will only be fulfilled and truly happy when they get busy doing the works God prepared for them to do. **True happiness lies in the way of obedience to God by serving our fellow man.**

A time is coming when grace will be no more. When this world ends and we are with Christ in heaven, there will no longer be a need for grace. We will be immortal beings and saved for eternity. At that time other doctrines, such as obedience, will still be important! Why, then, should we teach grace to the exclusion of other essential Christian truths?

"Don't be concerned who our political leaders are. They can't save us."

Our teachers of grace too often make comments like this. Of course our President cannot save us! No one believes he can! God does, however, want honest and just rulers for the nations, not tyrants. So should we. As Solomon taught, *"When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan"* (Proverbs 29:2). I have actually heard a Christian teacher say that it would be good if our government persecuted Christians and made them hold their worship services in secret. "Then," he said, "maybe we would be stronger in our faith." God forbid that we have to suffer persecution and the violence of war just to be faithful! Political stability is a blessing from God, but the grace heresy makes it a curse.

Righteousness in our political rulers is the way of peace for our nation. Have we become so blind to God's word that we really want to endure the plagues of famine, sickness, natural disaster, and war just so we can say we have no political ruler but God? Of course we should be concerned who our President and other political leaders are. These people can bring stability and blessing to a nation rather than curse and judgment.

V. THE HERESY IN THE WORLD

Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the LORD and against His Anointed One. "Let us break their chains," they say, "and throw off their fetters."

The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the LORD scoffs at them. Then He rebukes them in His anger and terrifies them in His wrath, saying, "I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill." I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, "You are my Son ; today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter ; you will dash them to pieces like pottery."

Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for His wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him

(PSALM 2).

God ordained His Church, His "called out ones," to be a prophetic people. Christians are called to literally speak forth the words of God. *"If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God"* (1 Peter 4:11). In that sense Christians should speak truth to the world's institutions, including civil government. About the only thing the Church has consistently taught the last two hundred years, though, is God's unmerited favor, His "grace." It has failed to add accountability and obedience to God's true Word of grace. This error has led to several destructive results in society.

Even some Christians who hold political office take the grace heresy into their office. Kansas City's past Mayor and current congressman, Emanuel Cleaver, is a prime example. He actively pushed for "gay rights" as mayor, appointed special committees to study gay-related

problems, attended homosexual functions, and voted for special rights for them. Not only has he worked diligently to help a group which God says should be punished by civil law,⁵¹ he has attacked those Christians who oppose him. Here is a direct quote:

"Over the past three weeks I have listened to people who call themselves Christian," Cleaver said of fundamentalist protestors who rallied against Gay Pride Week, "and in the same sentence, they have the theologic audacity to speak of other children of God as if they were trash. The God I serve don't make no trash."⁵²

Either Mayor Cleaver serves a god other than the Christian God of the universe or he is steeped in the grace heresy. He has extended God's grace to all people, regardless of repentance and faith in Christ. The Bible teaches that all men were created by God, but only those who have the Spirit of Christ are sons of God and have the right to be called His children or to cry out, "Abba, Father." The Bible equally teaches that those who refuse to accept God's gracious offer of new life in Christ are children of the devil, not children of God.⁵³ Unlike Kansas City's mayor, Jesus did not accept all men as His spiritual brothers:

*Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and now am here. I have not come on my own; but He sent me. Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. **You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire.** He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me? He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God" (John 8:42-47, emphasis added).*

Mayor Cleaver confused his role as mayor with his role as evangelist. God did give His Son to the world so that homosexuals might believe upon Him, repent of their sins, and live a new life of holiness in God. To preach this message of acceptance through faith and repentance

⁵¹See Leviticus 18 and Romans 1

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Mayor Emanuel Cleaver, quoted in THE KANSAS CITY STAR, June 23, 1991.

⁵³See John 8:42-47

is the job of the preacher, not of the lawmaker when making his laws. Lawmakers make laws which apply to all, Christians and non-Christians alike. Mayor Cleaver should certainly preach to the lost when he is not doing his work as mayor, but to confuse the roles of lawmaker and evangelist is the fruit of the grace heresy. (See the chapter *Evangelism versus Political Action*, infra, for a full development of the difference in these two callings).

Mayor Cleaver's theology of grace has led him to a doctrine of "acceptance" for all, whether they repent or not or whether they commit crimes or not. His acceptance of all "God's children" seems suspect, however, since he castigates and apparently does not respect those Christians who do repent and hold to the high standard of God's just requirements. Following are more examples of how the heresy works itself out in everyday life.

"Everyone does what is right in his own eyes."

The lack of balance in the teaching of grace in the Church allowed the development of the doctrine of relativism in the western world. This doctrine teaches that there are no real absolutes of good and evil. This led to "values clarification" in our public schools so that absolute moral values could no longer be taught to our children. It led to abortion on demand and the freedom of "choice," i.e., choosing to do what is right in your own eyes. It led to the homosexual community "coming out of the closet" and demanding not only acceptance but also special privileges. It led to the riots in Los Angeles following the first Rodney King decision. It is leading to the destruction of society.

I believe that the American crime problem is a direct result of moral relativism. When our population is taught from the earliest ages that there are no absolute rights and wrongs what can we expect? Our kids hear that abortion is legal from the time they are four or five, but they

still must know that abortion is murder. They rationalize that murder is simply not that big of a deal in our society! And, to a large extent, they are right. Our legal system coddles murderers. In fact, our institutionalized murderers get to watch sex and murder for ten or twenty more years on their color TVs while they appeal their convictions in a never ending cycle. Some murderers are even paroled after only fifteen years.⁵⁴ God says, though, that a murderer's soul should immediately be sent to Him by the civil magistrates through capital punishment.⁵⁵

Such moral relativism was the norm in Israel in the days of the Judges. The Scripture says that, "*In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.*" (Judges 21:25, KJV) This is not God's way. Throughout His Word we find that **men are to do that which is right in God's eyes, not their own**. Consider the words of Moses:

He said, "If you listen carefully to the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in his eyes, if you pay attention to His commands and keep all His decrees, I will not bring on you any of the diseases I brought on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, who heals you."
(EXODUS 15:26)

Be careful to obey all these regulations I am giving you, so that it may always go well with you and your children after you, because you will be doing what is good and right in the eyes of the Lord your God.
(DEUTERONOMY 12:28)

"Justification by Victimhood"

Everyone is a "victim" these days. Women are victims of "sexist discrimination" and a "male-dominated" society. African-Americans are victims of white dominance and discrimination. Criminals are victims of abusive childhoods or poverty. Homosexuals are victims of "bigotry" and "homophobic" paranoia. Welfare recipients are victims of greedy business owners who won't give them a job. Often the guilty are declared innocent merely because of their status as a perceived victim. In fact, an entire book was recently written

⁵⁴ **Gunman Pleads Guilty**, Kansas City Star, October 5, 1994, P. C1

⁵⁵ See Genesis 9:5-6

regarding the victimization of America.⁵⁶ Everyone is a victim, so let's have "a little grace" for them, OK? Yes, everyone in America is a victim, and no one is accountable or responsible for his own conduct.

"No discrimination of good and bad"

These errors have led to a situation in society where it has become almost impossible to make legitimate discriminatory decisions. I cannot choose the best person for the job any more based upon skill or moral qualifications because to do so would mean that I have to "discriminate" against someone else. "Discrimination" has thus become a dirty word and the result is that **we can no longer discern between good and evil legally.**

The fear of a lawsuit based upon some law forbidding discrimination against race, gender, religion, handicap, culture, country of origin, or sexual orientation has made hiring a nightmare for some firms. About the only thing they can do to protect themselves from lawsuits is to hire by quota. They will not be able to choose the most qualified worker for the job, but at least, they hope, they can stay in business and out of court! Businesses and individuals, therefore, become legally prevented from making valid and reasonable business decisions regarding hiring, firing, and promotion.

"You can't legislate morality!"

This heresy is popular in the Church and the world. A recent federal court decision declared it unlawful for public schools to teach an abstinence based sex education curriculum.⁵⁷

⁵⁶See **A Nation of Victims**

⁵⁷ *Betty Coleman et al v. Caddo Parish School Board*, U.S. District Court, Shreveport, LA

They said to do so would be a violation of the separation between Church and state! Does this mean that anything inherently moral must now be legally forbidden? Evidently, for the Supreme Court has even ruled that the posting of the Ten Commandments in a public school is illegal.⁵⁸ Is it any wonder why we have terrible problems with gangs, murder, rape, and theft in our cities?

The truth is that all lawmaking is the legislating of morality or immorality. A law will either enforce God's commands or it will abrogate or justify abrogation of His commands. The seat belt law, for example, is a good law because it enforces the command, "Do not kill." A homosexual rights law is a bad law because it promotes sexual sin, protects the identity of those with life-threatening infectious diseases, and results in the spread of plagues. Anti-pollution laws are good laws because they prevent the unlawful taking (theft) of another's or the public's property. The truth is that **we must legislate moral laws** if we want our nation to survive! The grace heresy, though, stifles our ability to consider and enact true solutions to our many problems simply for the reason that someone considers the solution to be a moral one!

⁵⁸*Stone v. Graham*, 449 U.S. 39, 101 S.Ct. 192, 1980.

VI. GOD'S PROPHETS CONDEMN THE HERESY

THE PROPHETS' WARNINGS

*When your judgments come upon the earth,
the people of the world learn righteousness.*

*Though grace is shown to the wicked,
they do not learn righteousness;
even in a land of uprightness they go on doing evil,
and regard not the majesty of the Lord*

(ISAIAH 26:9-10).

I do not believe that everything the churches teach regarding grace is wrong. Some teaching is true and essential for walking with God. The fact that a sinner can be reconciled to God by His grace is a wonderful reality! The idea of acceptance by God, in fact, is critical for the believer to understand so that he can walk on with God with a clear conscience, without being condemned for his many current failings.

The problem, though, is that too many Christians are not taught to repent of their sins and to get over their current failings by obeying their new Lord. They are lulled into a false security of grace which constantly "forgives" them even when they do not repent of their sins or learn more about that of which they need to repent. They have become victims of the "No-lordship" doctrine which is permeating our churches. Also, they are never held accountable by church leaders regarding sin in their lives. Many churches do not even have a formal membership. How could the pastors, then, know whom they need to shepherd? O Church, hear the word of the prophets:

*When your judgments come upon the earth,
the people of the world learn righteousness.*

*Though grace is shown to the wicked,
they do not learn righteousness;
even in a land of uprightness
they go on doing evil,
and regard not the majesty of the Lord*
(ISAIAH 26:9-10).

Brothers and sisters, before we knew the Lord we were wicked. Paul wrote,

Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now He has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation-- if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant
(COLOSSIANS 1:21-23).

Grace was poured upon us and convicted us of our sins against God's holy standards, His law. Then we repented of those sins and believed in Christ Jesus for the forgiveness of them. That means that grace is shown to the wicked. The apostles teach that salvation is by grace, through the faith of the one saved, but that even that faith comes to the believer by the grace of God (See EPHESIANS 2:8). The Bible teaches that salvation is a free gift from God. It is a gift we do not deserve, an "unmerited" gift. The gift of salvation is by God's grace.

Yet the truth of Christianity, of the very Gospel, is that grace also moves the sinner to repent so that he will desire to obey God's written commands. God pours out His grace upon us so that we will turn away from our sinful way of life (repent) and turn in faith to Jesus and begin to do the righteous will of God. "*Where sin increased, grace increased all the more*" (Romans 5:20).

It is also true, however, that the newborn Christian does not and cannot perfectly obey the Lord. We know that with salvation by grace comes an "imputed" righteousness directly from

God. ROMANS 3:23 says that a *"righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe."* ROMANS 4:5 says that *"to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness."* **The question** we need to ask is whether or not the statement "they do not learn righteousness" from ISAIAH 26:10 speaks prophetically to today's Christians. In other words, is it possible for a man to know that his faith is credited as righteousness in God's bank account, but yet **still not know what righteousness is**? More bluntly, may "Christians" still be "wicked" in their actions, even though they do not have to be? Do they fail to learn righteousness? I believe the answer is a resounding, "Yes."

The Church in large measure has in fact failed to learn what righteousness is. Who, for example, knows what Paul meant when he wrote that we are to offer ourselves as slaves *"to obedience which leads to righteousness?"* (See Romans 6:16). Who knows what Paul meant when he said you *"have become slaves to righteousness?"* (See Romans 6:18).

The consequence of not knowing or understanding the Teaching about Righteousness is that even "in a land of uprightness," such as former America and ancient Israel, God's people *"go on doing evil, and regard not the majesty of the Lord"* (ISAIAH 26:10). We have not understood the teaching because we have given ourselves to preachers who teach that only belief in Jesus and his mercy for sinners (but not repentance) is necessary for salvation. We have given ourselves to pietistic spiritual exercises which focus on the grace of God, but we neglect the justice of God.

The prophets all teach that **God hates evil**, but many today teach that we Christians should be **tolerant** of the perversity around us and even in our midst. God's prophet says, *"Let those who love the Lord hate evil"* (PSALM 97:10a). He promises that if we do, He will *"guard the lives of his faithful ones and deliver them from the hand of the wicked"* (PSALM 97:10b).

The inward emotion of hating evil will work itself out in deeds of justice. Today the Lord says, *"Who will rise up for me against the wicked? Who will take a stand for me against evildoers?"* (PSALM 94:16). Today's civil rulers sit on "corrupt thrones" and "bring on misery by their decrees." *"They band together against the righteous and condemn the innocent to death"* (PSALMS 94:20-21).

The prophets speak to our generation, but will we listen? Will we escape the clutches of the grace heresy before it is too late, before God pours out His judgment in wrath? Or does Isaiah 26:9, which says, *"When your judgments come upon the earth, the people of the world learn righteousness,"* speak directly to this generation? I pray we do not have to see more of God's judgments before we "learn righteousness" and repent and obey our Lord.

APOSTOLIC INSIGHT INTO THE HERESY

What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that--and shudder

(JAMES 2:14-19).

John tells us in his first epistle that Christians do not have to sin. In fact, he wrote his letter *"so that you will not sin"* (1 JOHN 2:1). He does not condemn us if we do happen to sin, because, he says, Jesus Christ "is the atoning sacrifice for our sins." God the Father allowed the sacrifice of His son because of His grace toward men. Jesus allowed Himself to be sacrificed because of His grace and love for us. Much Church doctrine concerning this is correct. It gets

muddled, though, at John's next point:

We know that we have come to know Him if we obey His commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in Him must walk as Jesus did (1 JOHN 2:3-6).

What commands do you think John is talking about here? What "word" do you think he has in mind? The New Testament canon of Scripture was not even complete at the time John wrote this letter. I believe, therefore, that just as 2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 speaks primarily of Old Testament Scripture, so does 1 John. This means that John is talking about the specific commands of Mosaic law, including the Ten Commandments, and those commands he heard his Lord teach.

One can only obey tangible commands like those to which John was referring, but today's church leaders teach a watered-down gospel which pits grace against God's commands. God's commands are God's law, but the grace heresy has resulted in the denial of the relevance of God's law, both in the Church and in civil government. We have thus become an antinomian church and society, constantly railing and fighting against God's law.

PAUL, GRACE, AND THE LAW

I think the problem is that many pastors and seminary professors misread Paul's letters, especially those to the Romans, Galatians, and Ephesians. The Galatian letter dealt primarily with a heresy prevalent in Paul's day that taught that believers should become circumcised and obey other Old Testament law if they wanted to experience God's salvation. Circumcision was the sign of the Old Covenant (Genesis 17:11) and had been specifically repealed and replaced by the New Covenant doctrine of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Salvation itself was now clearly

shown to be the free gift of God, by grace, through faith. Justification, then, is not by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ as Savior (See Galatians 3:11).

But there is more to it. One must become conscious of one's sins, repent of them, and ask for Christ's forgiveness. Becoming conscious of sin is by the grace of God, too. Jesus told us that He would send His Holy Spirit to "*convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me....*" (John 16:8-9, emphasis added) One has no reason to believe and trust in Jesus unless he has been convicted by the Holy Spirit that he is guilty of breaking God's laws! This is also when we learn that Jesus tells us **how to live**. Thus, we turn to Jesus as our Master, our Lord!

What seems hard to many gospel teachers are verses 19 to 25 of Galatians, chapter 3. The essential misunderstanding comes from verses 24 and 25, which say, "*The law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.*" Many leaders teach that this proves that the law is anathema, dead, no more to be obeyed nor even considered by the Christian. But, Paul taught that no one is justified by observing the law, i.e., no one is declared righteous before God by observing the law. No one can perfectly obey all of God's law without His Holy Spirit. We are all sinners. So do not think that obedience to one law, like circumcision, is necessary for your salvation, he taught. Rather, consider the law as a teacher which leads you to the Master, Christ. Through the law you become conscious of sin, you understand God's requirements, and you realize you need help in order to obey Him. You need Jesus. If you repent of your sins, receive Jesus' forgiveness, become filled with the Holy Spirit and allow yourself to be led by that Spirit, you will not be subject to the law because you will naturally obey it. Then, and only then, will you be "free" of the law.

Paul's teaching does not abrogate the law! If one begins to violate God's law because he has somehow stopped being led of the Holy Spirit, then that same Spirit will convict him of being a law breaker. If the man hears, he repents and turns again to Jesus. This is the meaning of "*the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ*" (Galatians 3:24). Conviction by the law immediately causes the humble to seek Jesus and His forgiveness. If, however, I am led of the Spirit, I will not sin, and, thus, I am not under the law. I am walking freely with Christ. This is the teaching of Paul in Galatians.

Consider the following example. Suppose I become angry with someone and begin to tell lies about that person, deliberately trying to hurt him and his reputation. I have violated Christ's second command to love my neighbor as myself. More specifically, I have disobeyed Moses' commands not to lie and not to covet what my "enemy" has. The commandment "do not bear false witness" is also summarized in the New Testament as "do not slander." By violating God's law, my conscience, fired by the Holy Spirit within, has now become activated and is accusing me of sinning. The Holy Spirit Himself will try to get my attention by stirring inner anxiety and turmoil, with the intent of causing me to return to Christ and His principles. If I am humble enough I will hear Him, will repent, and will go on with God. This is the work of God's law. By convicting me of sin I am led back to Christ in repentance. The atoning blood of Jesus (Hebrews 10:29), accessed by the faith God has given me (Ephesians 2:8), then provides for the forgiveness of my sins (Hebrews 9:28). Having repented, I once again become enabled to walk in freedom with Christ.

Clearly, then, Paul does not throw out the law. If he did, how could he issue the following warning in the very same book?

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and

debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God

(GALATIANS 5:19-21).

Try to tell a blatant sinner that his "acts of the sinful nature are obvious." He will tell you, "It's no sin! Everybody does it." Why was it obvious to Paul? Because he was instructed in God's law. God's law teaches that certain acts are sinful. Church leaders need to preach God's law again so that a sinner's sin will become obvious to him. Then he will be convicted of his sins and seek Christ for his forgiveness and salvation. If God's law is irrelevant, why does anyone need forgiveness? **Without the law there is no sin and no need for repentance (Romans 7:7). If Jesus "put away" the law, then there would have been no need for His sacrifice. There would thus be no need for preaching the gospel.**

GRACE VS. LAW

Many preachers use the verse, "*we are not under law but under grace*" (ROMANS 6:15) to teach that the law is not relevant for the Christian, but that grace is virtually the only important doctrine of Christendom. This is contrary to I CORINTHIANS 9:21, where Paul says, "*I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law,*" and to ROMANS 3:31, which says, "*Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law.*" What is the meaning of ROMANS 6:15 then? Paul teaches that one is not justified or saved by obedience to the law. He teaches that our standing before God is not dependent on the Law. He knows that such obedience is impossible, for even if one perfectly obeys the law outwardly he is still condemned

as a sinner by the Tenth Commandment if he ever even desires something he should not have.

Paul's teaching about grace deals with salvation:

This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus

(ROMANS 3:22-24).

This is also the teaching of Galatians 3. Here, men have interpreted such statements as "*[the law] was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come*" and "*we are no longer under the supervision of the law*" as meaning that the law is now immaterial. Yet if that were true what could Paul possibly mean when he says "*Do we, then, nullify the law by this faith? Not at all! Rather, we uphold the law?*" If the law were irrelevant such a statement would be meaningless, but all of God's word is meaningful and written for a purpose.

Paul teaches that salvation itself is by grace; it is the unmerited gift of God to men. He also teaches that salvation by perfect obedience to God's law is impossible. A primary purpose of the law, he says, is to lead us to Christ (See GALATIANS 3:24) and to define sin (See ROMANS 7:7). He also informs us that once one is led to Christ, he repents of his sins, receives forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit, and is enabled to obey Christ (See ROMANS 8:1-17). All of this comes by the grace of God.

The prophets and apostles teach that grace is necessary for salvation and also that grace is given to us so that we will obey the commands of Christ, even the law of Christ. "*To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law*" (1 CORINTHIANS 9:21). James, the

Lord's brother, taught that faith without obedience to Christ's commands was absolutely worthless: *"In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead"* (JAMES 2:17).

It should be obvious now that Christ's first ministers did not abandon God's law when they boarded God's ship of grace. They saw grace and law as important parts of God's plan which work together. They did not see the two concepts as somehow fighting against each other. They certainly did not view grace as a champion warrior which had defeated law in the battle for eternal life. Christ's apostles were balanced men of faith who saw the importance of both grace and law. They understood the Teaching about Righteousness. It is the lack of this understanding that has led to the current crisis and that may lead to literal war on our own soil.

VII. THE VIOLENCE OF WAR

The days of punishment are coming, the days of reckoning are at hand. Let Israel know this. Because your sins are so many and your hostility so great, the prophet is considered a fool, the inspired man a maniac

(Hosea 9:7).

*Who handed Jacob over to become loot, and Israel to the plunderers? Was it not the Lord, against whom we have sinned? For they would not follow his ways; they did not obey his law. So he poured out on them his burning anger, **the violence of war**. It enveloped them in flames, yet they did not understand; it consumed them, but they did not take it to heart*

(Isaiah 42:24-25).

THE PROPHETS SPEAK

There is no justice in "the land of the free" because the Church has forsaken her calling. We have become an unfaithful people. The world around us is uninformed regarding justice because God's Church is uninformed. God's Church should be a prophetic voice speaking God's thoughts into all areas of life, but, she is without knowledge of God's Teaching about Righteousness and she is steeped in sin!

Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: "I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me. The ox knows his master, the donkey his owner's manger, but Israel [i.e., My Church] does not know, my people do not understand"

(ISAIAH 1:1-3).

Isaiah tells of a loving Father who yearns for His people; but they have rebelled against Him. They neither know God nor understand His ways. Just as God indicted Israel 2700 years ago, so He indicts spiritual Israel, the Church, today. God's Church "does not know, [His] people

do not understand." How else can one describe a Christian community of tens of millions which watched silently as its society plunged into chaos, despair, and debauchery in one generation?

Ah, sinful nation, a people loaded with guilt, a brood of evildoers, children given to corruption! They have forsaken the LORD; they have spurned the Holy One of Israel and turned their backs on him. Why should you be beaten anymore? Why do you persist in rebellion? Your whole head is injured, your whole heart afflicted. From the sole of your foot to the top of your head there is no soundness-- only wounds and welts and open sores, not cleansed or bandaged or soothed with oil
(ISAIAH 1:4-6).

Such is today's Christian Church. We are a people "loaded with guilt." We are "children given to corruption." These words clearly depict a Church that debates whether or not practicing homosexuals can be Church members in good standing and which writes papers concerning their ordination and leadership roles. How else would one characterize people who sit contentedly filling their eyes and minds with the evil images portrayed in most movies and television programs? If anyone believes the Word of God at all, he knows that such is condemned by God. Let us listen attentively to the words of the prophets. If, after hearing their words, we reject God's Word and His commands, it is evidence that we have spurned the Holy One of Israel and have turned our backs on Him. Let us not reject our God, but let us listen to His chosen vessels and repent of our wicked ways! Let us not consider the prophet a fool and the inspired man a maniac.⁵⁹

CHRIST BRINGS FORTH JUSTICE!

Behold God's yearning:

⁵⁹See Hosea 9:7 (NIV): "The days of punishment are coming, the days of reckoning are at hand. Let Israel know this. Because your sins are so many and your hostility so great, the prophet is considered a fool, the inspired man a maniac."

*Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness **he will bring forth justice**; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope. (ISAIAH 42:1-4, emphasis added)*

Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of these verses, but they also apply to individual Christians. The servant of God in whom He delights is the man or woman filled with the Holy Spirit who brings justice to the nations. It is the one who faithfully speaks the Word of the Lord and brings God's law and, thus, God's justice to the islands, the farthest reaches of mankind. The only hope for the peace of this nation or any other is for the politicians, the lawmakers, and the people to put their hope in God's law. Man's law has failed, his institutions are crumbling, and all that remains is death and anarchy if we fail to believe this and act to rebuild the ruined foundations of American justice. In saying this I do not mean to imply that works of justice are more important than evangelizing and the salvation of the lost. Rather, works of justice come after salvation and naturally flow from a mature Christian's life.

The writing is on the wall. Satanists mutilate, torture and kill our youth;⁶⁰ our public schools are battle zones⁶¹ which fail to teach our children academics, much less morals; AIDS is a rampant plague with no cure in sight⁶² and there is no political will to contain it with strict legal measures.⁶³ Besides all this, our government is trillions of dollars in debt because of using tax money for programs that the civil government has no business running as well as waste, fraud, and political pork. You and your children literally owe thousands of dollars each, and there is no

⁶⁰Teen tells police that boys were killed during cult ritual, KANSAS CITY STAR, June 8, 1993), p. A-3.

⁶¹Regina Akers, Schools no longer a haven from violence, KANSAS CITY STAR, June 8, 1993), p. A-1.

⁶²Gene Antonio, AIDS: RAGE & REALITY, WHY SILENCE IS DEADLY(Dallas: Anchor Books, 1992); Glenn G. Wood, M.D. & John E. Dietrich, M.D., THE AIDS EPIDEMIC, BALANCING COMPASSION & JUSTICE (Portland: Multnomah 1990).

⁶³The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) specifically provides extra civil rights to those infected with the HIV (AIDS) virus, thus denying health protection to the healthy of society.

limit in sight to the depths of your debt.

Yes, America is in serious trouble, but, there is hope! There is hope in the One who created all things and upholds all things by His wonderful Word. He has provided a way of righteousness which will **bring justice to the nations of the earth**. I cannot overemphasize the following: **We reject His solution to the peril of our lives and the lives of our children.**

THE PROPHET WARNS OF JUDGMENT

America's sin has almost reached its limit. The blood of over 30 million murdered babies cries out from the ground to Jehovah God. The perverted wickedness of which millions partake daily cries out for judgment! Yet the Church remains strangely silent. Her pulpits remain quiet regarding sin, afraid to define it specifically, afraid to be called "legalistic," afraid to invoke God's law and call good good and evil evil. Her people sit idly year after year watching wickedness grow daily, becoming ever more fearful for their children, but still doing nothing. The prophet cries,

Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes and clever in their own sight. Woe to those who are heroes at drinking wine and champions at mixing drinks, who acquit the guilty for a bribe, but deny justice to the innocent (ISAIAH 5:20-23).

It is not up to us individually to determine right from wrong. God has already told us those things we need to know concerning good and evil, sins and crimes. Today the Prophet cries, "**WOE**" to a sinful, arrogant Church that determines to do what is right in its own eyes. This was the sin of Israel in the time of the judges and it led to apostasy, anarchy, war, and slavery. It will do the very same thing in this generation unless we change our ways.

Neither does our Lord want us to waste our time always speculating about when the

rapture is going to happen. He does not want us to deceive people into wasting their lives and their calling in God waiting for the rapture. God says, "WOE" to those who say, "*Let God hurry, let him hasten His work so we may see it. Let it approach, let the plan of the Holy One of Israel come, so we may know it.*" (ISAIAH 5:19) He says, "WOE" to those who constantly contrive the next big event in order to keep their sheep happy and pacified. He warns in a loud voice,

*Therefore, as tongues of fire lick up straw and as dry grass sinks down in the flames, so their roots will decay and their flowers blow away like dust; **for they have rejected the law of the LORD Almighty** and spurned the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore the Lord's anger burns against His people; His hand is raised and He strikes them down. The mountains shake, and the dead bodies are like refuse in the streets. Yet for all this, His anger is not turned away, His hand is still upraised (ISAIAH 5:24-25).*

The Church must respond to the word of its prophets, to the words of its God! God is not pleased with many of His churches and church leaders these days. Many Christians today hold to a dispensationalist doctrine which teaches that we are simply in the "Laodicean" era and we ought to expect our churches to be lukewarm and unable to walk in righteousness. I say, no! We who are the Church, the Bride of Christ, are to remain alert, vigilant and filled with spiritual oil until the very return of our Master and Savior. We have no excuse if we do otherwise.

THE VIOLENCE OF WAR

God speaks a prophetic word to Christians today. We ignore Him to the peril of our children and entire nation. I am convinced that the following passage from Isaiah applies directly to the Church in this hour, just as it applied to Israel when the Babylonian armies poured God's wrath upon them:

*"Hear, you deaf; look, you blind, and see! Who is blind but my servant, and deaf like the messenger I send? Who is blind like the one committed to me, blind like the servant of the LORD? You have seen many things, but have paid no attention; your ears are open, but you hear nothing." It pleased the Lord **for the sake of His***

*righteousness to make His law great and glorious. But this is a people plundered and looted, all of them trapped in pits or hidden away in prisons. They have become plunder, with no one to rescue them; they have been made loot, with no one to say, "Send them back." Which of you will listen to this or pay close attention in time to come? Who handed Jacob over to become loot, and Israel to the plunderers? Was it not the LORD, against whom we have sinned? **For they would not follow His ways; they did not obey His law. So He poured out on them His burning anger, the violence of war.** It enveloped them in flames, yet they did not understand; it consumed them, but they did not take it to heart"* (ISAIAH 42:18-25, emphasis added).

You who have been bought and cleansed by the blood of Jesus and you who have seen many wonders and miracles - do you see God's law as "great and glorious," or have you slandered His holy Word? Have you rejected God's righteousness and righteous law for a lukewarm gospel of cheap grace? Because God's very own people have rejected His righteous standards for life, we have become plunder for the unrighteous. This is why Christians are now the tail of society, paying blood money to fund our nation's sins.

I pray that Isaiah's word above is never fulfilled in your or my lifetime. I pray my children never see the carnage of war, but I see signs of doom approaching, and if the leaders of God's house will not hear Christ's Word of law and justice, we will be condemned to destruction. Leaders need to bring Christ's discipline into their own and their people's lives. God disciplines those He loves and expects His leaders to do the same (Proverbs 3:11-12).

There is sin in the House of God! If the churches of God continue to refuse to confront and expel the wicked man from among them, the Lord declares:

Your country is desolate, your cities burned with fire; your fields are being stripped by foreigners right before you, laid waste as when overthrown by strangers. The Daughter of Zion is left like a shelter in a vineyard, like a hut in a field of melons, like a city under siege. Unless the LORD Almighty had left us some survivors, we would have become like Sodom, we would have been like Gomorrah

(ISAIAH 1:7-9).

No one knows how close America and her churches are to facing the judgment of God,

except God Himself. Men of God have been saying for years that unless America repents she faces God's literal, physical judgment.⁶⁴ The word of God proves this is true. Consider the history of natural Israel, for example. God gave Israel the land of Canaan because of Canaan's sin. In fact, there was a specific time in history when God judged the Canaanites; judgment could not come before, nor after. God promised Abraham the land before He could give it to him. He said, *"In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure"* (GENESIS 15:16).

When God did allow Israel to take the land, He told them why He was allowing it. First, He revealed to them many sins which He considered to be serious offenses, sins that He also considered civil crimes which required death or banishment by the hands of civil authority (See LEVITICUS 18:1-23). Then, He said,

"Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways, because this is how the nations that I am going to drive out before you became defiled. Even the land was defiled; so I punished it for its sin, and the land vomited out its inhabitants. But you must keep my decrees and my laws. The native-born and the aliens living among you must not do any of these detestable things, for all these things were done by the people who lived in the land before you, and the land became defiled. And if you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you"
(LEVITICUS 18:24-28).

The sad fact is that in our generation, yes, our one generation, virtually all of the sins listed by God in Leviticus 18 have become commonplace. These are the sins of abortion (sacrificing our children to the idol of personal pleasure and prosperity), adultery, homosexuality, incest, pornography and bestiality. These sins, like murder, which also the land cannot bear, are rampant in this country. They are defended by priest and politician alike. But, God has warned, and is now warning with a clear voice, that we must repent and walk in His ways before He

⁶⁴See, for example, David Wilkerson, **Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth** (Lindale, Texas: World Challenge Inc., 1985).

unleashes the judgments of war, pestilence, and plague upon us. He warns us lest the land itself vomit out its inhabitants. The question is, how do we repent? What does God want us to do?

The prophet tells us:

*Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; **listen to the law of our God**, you people of Gomorrah! "The multitude of your sacrifices-- what are they to me?" says the LORD. "I have more than enough of burnt offerings, of rams and the fat of fattened animals; I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats. When you come to appear before me, who has asked this of you, this trampling of my courts? Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations-- I cannot bear your evil assemblies. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! **Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow***

(ISAIAH 1:10-17. emphasis added).

The "incense" of today's church services and meetings are our prayers and worship or praise songs. God calls these "meaningless offerings" unless we "learn to do right." How? By "seeking **justice**." Justice is so dear to Father's heart. Here, the prophet tells us justice includes, "encouraging the oppressed, defending the cause of the fatherless, and pleading the case of the widow." Consider "defending the cause of the fatherless" for a moment. Who is more "fatherless" than the unborn who die at the abortionist's knife? When you begin to criticize those who try to "rescue" them or picket their murderers, beware! Many of these obey the Lord. What are you doing for the babies, the widows, or the oppressed?

God is "sick" of most of our worship services. He is "sick" of our tired, old, traditional liturgies and "worship" services in our Catholic, mainline, and evangelical churches. Yes, He is even "sick and tired" of our charismatic, hands raised, praise services! This may surprise you, but I am convinced in my spirit that this is true and have the witness of the Word of God and

God's Spirit. God does not want us to come to a church service once a week, act like we are holy, sing like we are holy, and then go back out into the world to do whatever we feel like doing. Instead, God wants us to walk in the way of Christ, doing justice, while we worship Him in spirit and in truth (See JOHN 4:23-24).

Do you disagree? Is this just works based salvation? Then,

*"Come now, let us reason together," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool. **If you are willing and obedient**, you will eat the best from the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." For the mouth of the LORD has spoken"*

(ISAIAH 1:18-20).

Do not let this word I speak fall to the ground! Our Father requires faith **and obedience**.

I tell you that God is sick at heart with today's American Christian Church! All of God's true teachers and prophets say the same thing. Consider the words of the Teacher:

Guard your steps when you go to the house of God. Go near to listen rather than to offer the sacrifice of fools, who do not know that they do wrong. Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few
(ECCLESIASTES 5:1-2).

Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil

(ECCLESIASTES 12:13-14).

And, the words of another prophet:

*"I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. **But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!"***

(AMOS 5:21-24, emphasis added).

No more will He hear excuses from the pastors that His people "are cranky, weak, or insecure" and cannot bear to hear the word of the Lord.⁶⁵ We must hear God's Word of obedience to His laws if our nation is to survive! Our Church members, and especially our young people, need to know what "modest" dress means and that God wants our women to dress modestly and decently. (See 1 TIMOTHY 2:9) Our members need to know that it is sin and why it is sin to watch most of today's television and commercial films. Why sin? Because many, many modern movies and television programs portray adultery, fornication, or rebellion against authority (especially rebellion against a father's authority).⁶⁶

Also, pastors must speak up for godly men and women who run for political office. They should make their pulpits available for these to preach God's word of justice. They should encourage their people to give generously to their campaigns for election. Christian statesmen should become versed in the laws of God so that they can write just laws. Our governments should prohibit what God prohibits and allow what God allows.

We must hear this word of righteousness if we and our families are to be kept safe from violence, filled with food, healthy, and warm in our cozy little homes. We must obey if justice is to rule our land ever again. Jesus Himself told us to obey Him: "*Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments*" (MATTHEW 19:17). Even as He ended His stay upon the earth He left us His great commission: "*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.*"

65A pastor I highly respected and submitted to in authority actually said this to me once when I confronted him about not speaking the full truth to God's people.

66I wrote these words in 1993. I have literally not watched television at all since that date (and well before), but I have heard reports of the disgusting nature of "brokeback" movies and perverted television since then until the present, 2006.

And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (MATTHEW 28:19-20). Christian life, therefore, is far more than just the act of sharing the gospel. It includes teaching and obedience to "everything" Jesus commanded.

Jesus weeps at our complacency in obeying Him. He mourns our wanton sins. He cries prophetically from ages long past:

*See how the faithful city [the church] has become a harlot! She once was full of **justice; righteousness** used to dwell in her-- but now murderers! Your silver has become dross, your choice wine is diluted with water. Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves; they all love bribes and chase after gifts. They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; the widow's case does not come before them. Therefore the Lord, the LORD Almighty, the Mighty One of Israel, declares: "Ah, I will get relief from my foes and avenge myself on my enemies. I will turn my hand against you; I will thoroughly purge away your dross and remove all your impurities. I will restore your judges as in days of old, your counselors as at the beginning. Afterward you will be called the **City of Righteousness**, the Faithful City." Zion [the church] will be **redeemed with justice**, her penitent ones **with righteousness**. But rebels and **sinner**s will both **be broken**, and **those who forsake the Lord will perish**. "You will be ashamed because of the sacred oaks in which you have delighted; you will be disgraced because of the gardens that you have chosen. You will be like an oak with fading leaves, like a garden without water. The mighty man will become tinder and his work a spark; both will burn together, with no one to quench the fire"*

(ISAIAH 1:21-31, emphasis added)

Christ's call in this hour is one for repentance, obedience, and restoration. Justice and righteousness is His theme. The Teaching about Righteousness is His doctrine. The Church will be redeemed with justice, the works of righteousness! Our Lord has wondrous plans in store for His bride if we will but obey Him:

*This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In the last days the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob. **He will teach us His ways, so that we may walk in His paths.**" **The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.** He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into*

pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD

(ISAIAH 2:1-5).

But, what does Jesus see in American churches today? I fear that these next words by Isaiah accurately and graphically describe our situation:

*Surely the arm of the Lord is not too short to save, nor His ear too dull to hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear. For your hands are stained with blood, your fingers with guilt. Your lips have spoken lies, and your tongue mutters wicked things. **No one calls for justice**; no one pleads his case with integrity. They rely on empty arguments and speak lies; they conceive trouble and give birth to evil*

(ISAIAH 59:1-4).

Today, "no one calls for justice!" The Church does not even know how to define it, much less ask for it! So, the Church has no constructive input to civil government or social affairs. Instead, we have presumptuous pastors who publicly denounce righteous warriors God has raised up in this hour. We have lazy leaders who criticize those who fight against abortion to "*rescue those being led away to death....*"⁶⁷ (PROVERBS 24:11). We who remain silent at the murder of the innocents have hands stained with blood. The day will come, if our nation does not repent, when the land itself will cry out for justice and judgment (See Leviticus 18:28).

This warning is too serious to ignore. We and our children will pay a terrible price if we do not soon repent. We face the literal judgment of God:

Do not pollute the land where you are. Bloodshed pollutes the land, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it

(NUMBERS 35:33).

⁶⁷In the last several years (prior to 1994) prominent pastors and Bible teachers have publicly stated their opposition to Randall Terry and Operation Rescue by denouncing their ministry. I do not argue that Christians should necessarily participate in rescues, only that one had better not criticize rescuers if he is not doing something himself to stop the slaughter of the unborn.

Today, though, America and its churches are like the nation described by Isaiah:

*Their feet rush into sin; they are swift to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are evil thoughts; ruin and destruction mark their ways. The way of peace they do not know; there is **no justice** in their paths. They have turned them into crooked roads; no one who walks in them will know peace. So **justice is far from us, and righteousness does not reach us**. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows. Like the blind we grope along the wall, feeling our way like men without eyes. At midday we stumble as if it were twilight; among the strong, we are like the dead. We all growl like bears; we moan mournfully like doves. **We look for justice, but find none**; for deliverance, but it is far away. For our offenses are many in your sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses are ever with us, and we acknowledge our iniquities: rebellion and treachery against the Lord, turning our backs on our God, fomenting oppression and revolt, uttering lies our hearts have conceived. So **justice is driven back, and righteousness stands at a distance; truth has stumbled in the streets, honesty cannot enter**. Truth is nowhere to be found, and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey. The LORD looked and was displeased that there was **no justice**. He saw that there was no one, He was appalled that there was no one to intervene; so His own arm worked salvation for him, and His own righteousness sustained him*

(ISAIAH 59:7-16, emphasis added).

Brothers and sisters, let us repent and do the works of justice that God requires **now**, before it is too late! Let us not bear the judgment which Amos and Ezekiel saw coming upon ancient Israel, and which stands so close to us even now:

*You put off the evil day and bring near a reign of terror. You lie on beds inlaid with ivory and lounge on your couches. You dine on choice lambs and fattened calves. You strum away on your harps like David and improvise on musical instruments. You drink wine by the bowlful and use the finest lotions, but you do not grieve over the ruin of Joseph. Therefore you will be among the first to go into exile; your feasting and lounging will end. The Sovereign Lord has sworn by himself--the LORD God Almighty declares: "I abhor the pride of Jacob and detest his fortresses; I will deliver up the city and everything in it." ... For the LORD has given the command, and He will smash the great house into pieces and the small house into bits. Do horses run on the rocky crags? Does one plow there with oxen? But you have turned **justice** into poison and the fruit of **righteousness** into bitterness*

(AMOS 6:3-12).

Again the word of the Lord came to me: "Son of man, say to the land, 'You are a land that has had no rain or showers in the day of wrath.' There is a conspiracy of her princes within her like a roaring lion tearing its prey; they devour people, take treasures and precious things and make many widows within her. Her priests do violence to my law and profane my holy things; they do not distinguish between the holy and the common; they teach that there is no difference between the unclean and the clean; and they shut their eyes to the keeping of my Sabbaths, so that I am profaned among them. Her officials within her are like wolves tearing their prey; they shed blood and kill people to make unjust gain. Her prophets whitewash these deeds for them by false visions and lying divinations. They say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says'--when the Lord has not spoken. The people of the land practice extortion and commit robbery; they oppress the poor and needy and mistreat the alien, denying them justice. "I looked for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found none. So I will pour out my wrath on them and consume them with my fiery anger, bringing down on their own heads all they have done, declares the Sovereign Lord"

(Ezekiel 22:23-31).

Now we know the problem. Our own sins have led to the chaos we see everywhere and to the threat of total destruction. We have not seriously applied the Word of God to our lives. Instead, we have been seduced by a false gospel of grace. The grace heresy has rendered Christians impotent. It has veiled our eyes so that we cannot see the truth. The heresy has so distorted the truth regarding God's law and His justice that many will not even consider the notion that these ideas are still relevant. The solution to the present crisis requires a revelation of God's Word and His direct intervention in us. God is still speaking His Word and He has made it available to all of us in His Bible and through His prophets.. But many "Christians" do "*not yet know the LORD: The Word of the LORD [has] not yet been revealed to [them]*" (1 Samuel 3:7). Lord, please reveal your Word to us.