

# The Grounds of Grace

William Kelly

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There are vast numbers who think that the Lord Jesus, besides bringing pardon, is simply a means to strengthen them to keep the law. But this is sad and fundamental **ignorance of Christianity**. Is a believer then at liberty to break the law? God forbid! It is one thing to be a debtor to do the whole law, and another that God can make light of any breach of the law. Is there nothing possible between these two conditions-- debt to the law and freedom to break it? Neither consists with a Christian. He who is free to do his own will is a lawless, wicked man. He who is under the law to do it, describes the proper condition of the Jew and nobody else.

**The Christian stands on entirely NEW ground.** He is saved **by grace** and is called to **walk in grace**. The character of righteousness that God looks for in him is of another sort altogether; as it is said in Philippians, "being filled with the fruits of righteousness" -- not which are by the law, but "by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:11) -- By the Lord Jesus under grace and not under law. And this is not a question solely of justification. This has to do with the responsibility of the believer to do the will of God; and the **Lord Jesus, not the law, is the measure and source of the Christian life and walk, which makes all the difference possible.**

It may be asked, Was not Christ under the law? Yes, assuredly, but He died unto it and is now above it. The Christian, the Gentile, never was under it; and **being positioned in the Lord Jesus risen**, now that he believes, he stands on heavenly ground, to which the law does not apply. For this reason **every Christian is regarded by God as alive from the dead, to bring forth fruit unto God** (Rom. 7:4). The law only deals with a man as long as he lives; never after he has died. "**But ye have died, and your life is hid with Christ in God**" (Col. 3:3). And this is not at all what is said of us after a "second blessing," "extreme unction," or any other step of true or imaginary perfection.

The Christian life begins in Christ, in Heaven! **We are identified with the Lord Jesus dead and risen, seated together at the right hand of the Father.** It is no longer the Law dealing with me to try if it can get any good out of me. **I have relinquished all by receiving the Lord Jesus**, and I take my stand **in Him dead and risen again** -- and as one alive from the dead in Him, I **yield myself unto the Father**. This is the foundation truth of Christianity -- that God has done with mere dealing with the flesh. He has another man, even a new man, **the Lord Jesus risen from the dead; and the believer has received Him, and is received in Him.**

A young Christian may be cast down after receiving the Saviour, through the sense of evil he finds in himself. He wonders how this can be. He knows how the Lord Jesus deserves to be served, and is conscious how little he serves Him as he ought; he is filled with sorrow about himself, and perhaps begins to doubt whether he be a Christian at all. He has not yet learned his lesson. He has not mastered what his baptism set forth, the value of having a Saviour who is dead and risen. He is occupied still with something of the old man; he looks at it and expects to get better, hoping that his heart will not have so many bad thoughts, etc., as he used to have; **whereas, the only strength of the believer is being occupied with the Lord Jesus, and all that is lovely before the Father.**

The saint, in proportion as he enjoys the Lord Jesus in glory, **lives above himself**. When he becomes engrossed with what takes place within him, he is cast down. How many go on months and years, expecting some good to come out! It is not that they are not born of God; **but they are so under the effect of old thoughts and notions, acquired from catechisms, religious books, sermons, disciplers,**

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**etc., that they do not enter into the full liberty wherewith the Lord Jesus makes free.**