

Heaven Declares Christians' Greatest Problem, Part 1

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Our relationship with God is not built on religious works or trying to earn His favor. We cannot come to know God or receive from Him by performing religious deeds or by trying to be “good enough.”

- Galatians 5:4 -- Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.
 - Salvation and relationship with God come through grace, not through the law.

We do not live righteously in order to earn something from God. Instead, we choose to live rightly because we no longer want the wages of sin that come from Satan. Our obedience is not an attempt to earn God's love—it is the response of a heart that has already received His grace.

Validation of title:

- In the fall of 1984, we were renting a storefront building that could seat about 75 people. On average, about 25 attended on Sunday mornings for the church service. Donna and I were taking a huge step of faith to build a church building on five acres of ground that would seat 1,000 in the auditorium. We were about one month behind on our rent at our current location and had borrowed a large amount of money to build this new building. The monthly payments for the new building would be almost four times the amount as the storefront rental. I rented a bulldozer and started excavating the ground to build. Then a rainy season set in. The news said it is the worst rainy season they've ever known, and it was expected to last for 2-3 months. (I go into more detail in my book “Heaven Declares Christians' Greatest Problem.”)

On November 24, 1984, a Saturday evening, when I went to bed, God took me to Heaven in the Spirit. While there, I talked with an angel, and I told him I have been praying against this rain so we can build this building. The angel told me not to be concerned about the rain. He said the reason I was in Heaven was because God wants me to understand that the Christians' greatest problem is trying to get to know God and trying to get God to do something on legalistic terms. I was told this message needed to be told to the world. I said OK, but when is it going to stop raining? He said, “Do not be concerned about the rain. You need to know that Christians' greatest problem is trying to get to know God or trying to get God to do something on legalistic terms.” This same conversation was repeated three times until the angel knew I had finally received the mandate. At that point, the angel said, “The rain will stop tomorrow, and will not rain again until the building is built.” The next morning, on Sunday, I preached and told the people what had happened. As soon as the service ended, the rain stopped and it did not resume until the building was completed.

Purpose of Grace:

- Is Grace is a license to sin? Only a fool would take God's Grace as a license to be unholy to which brings nothing good, when they can use the same license to love life and have nothing but good days. Yes, God's Grace could be considered a license to sin, to live unholy. God will still love us, but we will reap the wages of sin, satan will make sure of it.
 - Romans 6:23 -- For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- We can also use God's Grace to become holy, pure, and perfect, and live the life God intends for us.
 - Matthew 5:48 -- Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

What is legalism?

- **Legalism** (Dictionary) means strict adherence to the law. Gaining something by doing good works.
 - Types of legalism in the Old Testament:
 - Sin offering according to the sin:
 - Leviticus 4:3 -- If the priest that is anointed do sin according to the sin of the people; then let him bring for his sin, which he hath sinned, a young bullock without blemish unto the LORD for a sin offering.
 - Leviticus 1:14 -- And if the burnt sacrifice for his offering to the LORD be of fowls, then he shall bring his offering of turtledoves, or of young pigeons.
 - Fasting to Earn:
 - Isaiah 58:6 -- ...is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens...
 - Shaved head for purification:
 - Numbers 6:18 -- And the Nazarite shall shave the head of his separation at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put it in the fire which is under the sacrifice of the peace offerings.

