

Who is Under Grace? (Part 2)

1. The Basic Assumption for All Obedience

Ephesians 2:8-10 - *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith-- and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

2. Case in Point: Baptism

- ◆ Baptism can be considered the New Covenant equivalent of circumcision, and —if we're not cautious—may be misunderstood and misused in the same ways.

Romans 2:25-29

Circumcision has value if you observe the law, but if you break the law, you have become as though you had not been circumcised. If those who are not circumcised keep the law's requirements, will they not be regarded as though they were circumcised? The one who is not circumcised physically and yet obeys the law will condemn you who, even though you have the written code and circumcision, are a lawbreaker. A man is not a Jew if he is only one outwardly, nor is circumcision merely outward and physical. No, a man is a Jew if he is one inwardly; and circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a man's praise is not from men, but from God.

Colossians 2:11-14 - *In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead. When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.*

- ◆ Here's the trap:

1 Corinthians 7:19 - *Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts.*

Galatians 5:6 - *For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love.*

Galatians 6:15 - *Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is a new creation.*

Galatians 5:2 - *Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all.*

Galatians 6:12 - *Those who want to make a good impression outwardly are trying to compel you to be circumcised. The only reason they do this is to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ.*

Philippians 3:2,3 - *Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh. For it is we who are the circumcision, we who worship by the Spirit of God, who glory in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh.*

- ◆ The true power of baptism:

1 Peter 3:21 - *and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also-- not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. **It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,***

Colossians 2:12 - *having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him **through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead***

- ◆ Illustration: The wedding ring