

“Ban Bossy” (2)

David Halbrook

Last week, we noted the “Ban Bossy” campaign which exists to encourage girls to lead. Hence, they say we should “ban” calling assertive girls “bossy.” At the root of this issue is this—who is “the boss” of the home, God or humans?

The work of a wife will require some leadership skills because she will be directing a host of activities (see Prov. 31; Ti. 2:5), so teaching girls some of those skills is good as long as they are taught all of God’s plan for the home.

Wives, submit to your own husbands (Eph. 5:22). Girls who are taught leadership skills while also prepared to submit to their husbands receive the best training possible. The problem is that the “Ban Bossy” campaign will not lead in promoting this practice! Their agenda is quite different.

Those who view submission as insulting or demeaning do not understand true submission. Jesus submitted to the Father (Heb. 5:8). Christians submit to the government (Rom. 13:1). Christians submit to God’s local leaders (1 Pet. 5:1-4). Even the husband’s leadership is an act of submission to God!

Parents, teach your girls that God is the boss and prepare them to submit to God in marriage.

Editor’s Note: While the “homosexual” agenda gets more of our attention, the agenda to change gender roles probably does more actual harm to Christians and our society. This week’s article in *Arkansas Weekly* is one illustration of this agenda. Parents, how are you training you children to combat this agenda?

Simple opportunities to teach the lost and assist each other.

Pray for: Janice White, The Ledgerwoods, Samuel Southall, and others with ongoing trials, our brethren who are travelling, and new Christians among us.

Openings remain on two lists on the back bulletin board. Are you doing your share of our work together? No one will have to do it all if we all do some.

We assemble each Sunday at 10AM, 10:45AM, 5PM & Wednesday at 7PM

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The Exhorter

Acts 11:23 *Exhorted them all... cleave unto the Lord*

Church of Christ--Quail Valley

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God’s Grace in Trials

John Humphries

Paul wrote in 2 Cor. 12:7-10, “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

This was a painful affliction of some kind, though we are not told just what it was. The “thorn” was in Paul’s flesh, and God permitted it, to keep Paul humble and conscious of his own weaknesses and his dependence upon the Lord. Paul, therefore, could be of greater service to the Lord with this infirmity than without it. He had prayed to God three times for healing, but the Lord’s answer was to refuse to heal Paul, and to remind him that His grace was sufficient to help him to bear up under the pain. It is far better to experience God’s grace in sickness than to enjoy good health, but be less useful in the service of the Lord. The Lord was in effect telling Paul that it was His will that Paul not be healed, because He knew what was best for Paul under the circumstances. God knew what was good for Paul; far better than Paul himself (Ps. 139:1-6; Jas. 1:2-4). In the words of James, the testing of Paul’s faith worked patience and mature strength.

Please notice how Paul reacted to this. Did he become despondent and complain to God and everyone around him? Did he begin to find fault with the Lord because He did not answer his prayer for the “thorn” to be removed? Is there any indication that Paul was angry because someone (with their head on backwards) upset him by telling him that he wasn’t healed because he did not have enough faith to be made well by

the Lord? Did Paul make others around him uncomfortable or miserable because of his ill temper or constant complaining? No, there is no indication of any of these things happening with Paul. Instead, because of his wisdom and faith, Paul humbly submitted himself to the will of God. If God had chosen to heal Paul, then glory be to the Lord; and if He chose not to heal him, glory be to God anyway! This was Paul's attitude in this painful matter. Note verse ten again, "There I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecution, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong." Paul places the entire matter into the hand of the Lord, and humbly submitted to His will, rather than continue to seek an answer that would gratify his own personal desires. This should be the pattern for each and every sincere child of God that is suffering through a painful trial or experience (Phil. 4:9-13). We need to "take our burden to the Lord and leave it there."

These changes in life that come our way, can be an occasion of blessing, in the long run, as our faith is made stronger as a result of leaning upon the Lord as we pass through the ordeal. Remember that a gem cannot be polished without friction, nor faith perfected without the abrasion of trials. The beauty of holiness never is so radiant than when displayed by a humble child of God, who bears up under severe trials and testing, ever leaning upon the mighty hand of God. This is a testimony that speaks with eloquent voice to an unbelieving world, and to a shaken brotherhood of fellow believers alike.

Let us, one and all, in simple trusting faith, lean upon God's marvelous grace in the trials and changes of life that come our way. When you feel down; look up! God is there, with us and for us.

www.taylorsvillerdchurchofchrist.com/resources/articles/2014/01/06/gods-grace-in-trials

Are We Under Law?

Brett Hogland

More and more preachers are telling us that grace and law are mutually exclusive. One preacher was quoted as saying "For me, for years, Christianity was a moral code. It is now becoming a love affair. For years there were rules and regulations, now it is a relationship." With statements like this becoming prevalent in religious circles, we are forced to ask ourselves "are we under law? Are there no rules, regulations, requirements in Christianity?" These questions are pertinent. Let us study to see how the Bible answers this question.

Isaiah prophesied that the "Law of the Lord" would go forth from Jerusalem in the last days (Is.2:2-3), obviously speaking about Pentecost (Ac.2:16,17). Jeremiah prophesied that this "law" would be a part of the New Covenant (Je.31:31-34). The Holy Spirit says that this covenant is the one put in force by Christ's death (He.8:7-13 ; 9:15-17). We now live under the New Covenant enacted at the death of Christ, thus we are under the "law" of the covenant. We are not under the Old Covenant and we are not under the law of Moses (Co.2:14), but we are not without law either! Notice that the Hebrew writer says that there would be a "change of law" (He.7:12), but he does NOT say that there would be an end of all law. The word "change" implies that there would still be law! Paul says that he was under law to Christ (1Co.9:21). The "law to Christ that Paul was under is the "Law of Faith" (Ro.3:27) which 'requires' that we have faith (He.11:6). This law is also called the "Law of the Spirit" (Ro.8:1-7) which 'requires' that we "walk according to the Spirit" (vv.1,4) and NOT according to the flesh (vv.5-6). Notice in this text that "walking according to the Spirit is equal to being subject to the "law of God" (v. 7) (cf. Ga.5:18-25). The law that we are under is also called the "law of liberty" (Js.1:25). This law is called the "law of liberty" because it is a law which liberates us or gives us freedom from sin (Jo.8:32-36), not freedom from regulation (Jo.8:31) because one must "continue" in it (Js.1:25). This "law of Christ" (Ga.6:2) is our "rule" of action (Ph.3:16). Some will argue that the Bible says that we "are not under law, but under grace" (Ro.6:14). We must understand that this text is a classic "not – but" sentence structure. The Bible also says "labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life" (Jo.6:27). This text in John obviously doesn't tell us that we are not to labor for physical food at all (2Th.3:10). Consider the fact that the words 'only' and 'especially' are understood in a 'not – but' sentence structure. The verse in John is saying "labor not (only) for the food which perishes, but (especially) for the food which endures..." Likewise, the passage in Romans is telling us that we "are not (only) under law, but (especially) under grace". We are not without law, but rather we have a wonderful law that is combined with grace therefore it is a "law of liberty" in regard to sin. A law without grace has no provision for liberty from the offense. To Him be the glory for His magnificent wisdom and mercy. A man once said, "there are laws that enslave and there are laws that set us free". The law of Christ sets us free from the law of sin and death which enslaves us (Ro.8:1-7). Those who despise the regulating, requiring but liberating law of Christ will do so to their own demise. Let us always magnify the glorious law of Christ rather than being ashamed of conforming to it.