

There are many who ignore these truths and who undermine them with what they say in the midst of the Church. They have made themselves a conduit for the spirit of iniquity and the mystery of lawlessness. By teaching against repentance, they have also taught against the gospel. In fact, they have destroyed many beautiful scriptures concerning the gospel.

We will now revisit some texts in Romans to show where the gospel has been deleted from the understanding of Christians.

Under the Law

It is not hard to understand the phrase *under law* as meaning under judgment from the context it is used in:

KJV Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

What Paul is saying is that the justice of the law is satisfied for us by Christ. That is what grace is. Therefore, the law no longer condemns us. Thus, Paul is teaching the gospel here, but he does not want anyone to think that because the *just penalty* of the law has been satisfied for us that they should continue to break it by sinning! Nevertheless, millions of Christians think this text means they do not have to be subject to God's law. Somehow, they have the idea that grace means freedom from repentance. Somehow, they think that mercy means they can go on sinning and God will count them as righteous in his sight anyway. Somehow, they think that it is impossible to lose their salvation.

Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is that many of these have never understood the gospel in terms of a divine pardon. They

never an equitable justice that totally reversed all the damages of sin. It was a merciful penalty assigned less than the death of the sinner that allowed the repentant to have life. God's choice of the manner of atonement was meant to underscore the cost of sin, yet to allow His mercy to operate. It was never meant to, nor can it, reverse all the evils caused by our sin. For this reason, the attempt to legally balance God's books by even the righteousness of Christ is insufficient. God is not requiring an equitable form of justice in the death of Christ, because there is no equitable justice that can make sin as if it had never happened—and that is what equitable justice would require if God had insisted on it.

have thought of it as acquittal. In addition, many more have been confused by errant teachings that suggest acquittal to them. It is easy to see that "under the law" means "under judgment of the law" from this context in Romans 6:14-15, and one does not have to read the bible too regularly to know that God requires repentance.

I knew a lady many years ago who told me she wanted to walk on the dark side for a while. What she meant was that she wanted to sleep around. I had given her bad advice about the impossibility of loosing one's salvation, as I was young and deceived by the once saved always-saved doctrine. Although, I did not indulge in willful sin, I had said one could still be saved if they committed it. When she said this, it was as if someone had socked me in the gut. I felt spiritually alienated and cut off from her, as she was one of my good friends. I think that she should have had more fear of committing such sins and my opinion did not help there.

The idea that the gospel terminates any need for repentance unto righteousness, sanctification, and holiness, trips up a lot of weak believers in Christ because there are also many insincere believers in Christ who take His name, but who live in sin, and who perpetuate the false doctrinal traditions to make themselves feel comfortable, or to give them psychological relief from continuing guilt. This is taking the name of the LORD in vain (Exodus 20:7). This is the reason that the Evangelical Church is in such horrible trouble. Statistics show that Church people are indeed involved in the world's sin and are sinking fast. The reason they have continuing guilt after professing the gospel is that they are still sinning willfully against what they know in their hearts is wrong. The Holy Spirit is making them guilty because of it, in spite of their profession of the gospel, so that they might repent. Instead of repenting, they are seeking solace in false doctrines to give them Satan's psychological relief from guilt. What they need is real trust in God and in his word, and not just lip service and religious appearance.

The phrase "under the law" is even easier to understand when we consider the Greek sense of the word for "law". This word is νόμος. The first definition in Bauer's Lexicon is that "nomos" is a *norm* for something.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ This sense, and related usages in Paul dispose of numerous apparent contradictions caused by translators who lack a feel for the semantic domain of νόμος, and who are not in tune with Paul's context: apart from the *norm*, Rom. 3:21; not through the *norm*, Rom. 4:13; of the *norm*, Rom. 4:14; the *norm* worketh wrath, Rom. 4:15; a *norm* entered, Rom. 5:20; under the *norm*, Rom. 6:14-15; the *norm* hath dominion, Rom. 7:1; the *norm* of the husband, Rom. 7:2; she is free from that *norm*, Rom. 7:3; dead to the *norm*, Rom. 7:4; by the *norm*,

Take a look at the photocopies on the pages below. Read the explanation in Bauer's dictionary starting with "A special semantic problem for modern readers encountering the term *ν.* is the general tendency to confine the usage of the term "law" to codified statutes. Such limitation has led to much fruitless debate in the history of NT interpretation."

From the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*:

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| <p>1. The Meaning of <i>nómos</i>.</p> <p>a. From <i>némō</i>, "to allot." <i>nómos</i> first means "what is proper." It thus comes to apply very broadly to any norm, rule, custom, usage, or tradition. The concept is religious but embraces all aspects of life (e.g., marriage, family, schools, and meals,</p> |
| <p>The use of νόμος for the norm which is set for, or which corresponds to, a specific sphere or matter, is also found in Philo, κατὰ τοὺς μουσικῆς τελείας νόμους, Op. Mund., 70, 54; Omn. Prob. Lib., 51. κατὰ τοὺς ἐν ἀλληγορίᾳ νόμους, Abr., 68.</p> |
| <p>2. Josephus.</p> <p>a. Josephus usually has <i>nómos</i> for the religious law of Israel (although he often has <i>hoi nómoi</i>). He may also use <i>ho nómos</i> for the Pentateuch or the OT. Sometimes he employs <i>nómos</i> for the laws of other nations or for the natural order. Another use is for the norm of something, but this is rare.</p> |

From Liddell and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon*:

Rom. 7:5; delivered from the *norm*, Rom. 7:6; I find then a *norm*, Rom. 7:21; another *norm*, the *norm* of my mind, the *norm* of sin, Rom. 7:23; *norm* of sin, Rom. 7:25, 8:2; *norm* of justice, Rom. 9:31; end of the *norm* for justice, Rom. 10:4; under *custom*, 1Cor. 9:20; without *custom*, 1Cor. 9:21; as also saith the *custom*, 1Cor. 14:34; the strength of sin is the *norm*, 1Cor. 15:56; through the *norm*, dead to the *norm*, Gal. 2:19; justice come by the *norm*; be of the *norm*, Gal. 3:18; what about the *norm*, Gal. 3:19; a *norm* given, by the *norm*, Gal. 3:21; under the *norm*, Gal. 3:23; the *norm* was our schoolmaster, Gal. 3:24; under the *norm*, Gal. 4:4-5, 24, 5:18; *usage* of commandments, Eph. 2:15; justice according to the *norm*, Phil. 3:9. One of the reasons that translators have difficulty seeing this sense of νόμος is their lack of comprehension of Paul's argument and equal ignorance of δικαιοσύνη, δικαίω, πίστις, and πιστεύω. Another part of the reason is that Paul's use νόμος of is still closely tied to the Law. The translator fails to see the fine distinction between the *norm* of the Law and the exception of the Law, and conflates the two due to ignorance of the law and a priori rejection of the law.

νόμος, ὁ, (νέμω) that which is in habitual practice, use or possession, not in Hom. (cf. J.Ap.2.15), though read by Zenod. in Od. I. 3. I. usage, custom, [Μοῦσαι] μέλπονται πάντων τε νόμους καὶ ἤθεα κεδνά Hes. Th.66; ν. ἀρχαῖος ἄριστος Id. Fr.221; ἔνθα ν. (sc.

From BDAG (Bauer):

body may enact ordinances that are recognized by all concerned and in turn become legal tradition. **A special semantic problem for modern readers encountering the term ν. is the general tendency to confine the usage of the term 'law' to codified statutes. Such limitation has led to much fruitless debate in the history of NT interpretation.**—HRemus, *Sciences Religieuses/Studies in Religion* 13, '84, 5–18; ASegal, *Torah and Nomos in Recent Scholarly Discussion*, *ibid.*, 19–27.

❶ **a procedure or practice that has taken hold, a custom, rule, principle, norm** (Alcman [VII BC], fgm. 93 D² of the tune that the bird sings; Ocellus [II BC] c. 49 Harder [1926] τῆς φύσεως νόμος; Appian, *Basil.* 1 §2 πολέμου ν., *Bell. Civ.* 5, 44 §186 ἐκ τοῦδε τοῦ σοῦ νόμου=under this rule of yours that governs action; Polyaeus 5, 5, 3 ν. πόμπης; 7, 11, 6 ν.

Romans 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the norm, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the norm, but under grace? God forbid.

What is the *norm* for the one under the dominion of sin?

KJV 2 Chronicles 25:4 But he slew not their children, but *did* as *it is* written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The fathers shall not die for the children, neither shall the children die for the fathers, but every man shall die for his own sin.

When Jesus' pays the penalty for your sin, then the *norm* no longer applies. Jesus (Yeshua) is the exception to the *rule*! In fact, the whole teaching of sacrifice for atonement in the Scripture is the exception to the *norm*.

The End of the Law

Another misunderstood text is Romans 10:4. Yet, when we straighten it out, it teaches both the gospel, and promises sanctification. First, let us consider the sanctification aspect.

Romans 10:4 For Christ *is* the end of the norm for righteousness to every one that firmly trusts.

Those who are truly in Christ have repented of transgression; and they live (and think) above the world's norm of righteousness. True Christians enjoy a greater level of sanctification than the norm of righteousness for the world. Also in the first definition of νόμος is *rule, custom*. Christ is the end of *custom (tradition)* for righteousness, because in Christ we learn to discern the difference between the commandments of God and the commandments of men. Anything that is the *status quo* can be thought of as *nomos* in Greek.

Paul does not just teach greater sanctification by this passage. His primary sense is the gospel. How can we say this? Well, what is the norm for righteousness in God's courtroom? Is it not that the defendant must demonstrate their total righteousness to obtain an acquittal? That's the norm for God's righteousness where judgment is concerned. To make this plainer, let us consider the primary meaning of the Greek word δικαιοσύνη, which was translated "righteousness" in English. This word is a noun, and it means "justice" plain and simple. It comes from the same Greek stem or root as the Greek word we discussed before: δικαιώω. The very first definition of δικαιοσύνη in Bauer's Lexicon⁴⁷ is "justice". "Righteousness" is relegated to the second definition. We know that "righteousness" is "justice", but the English loses sight of this sense of the word:

⁴⁷ BDAG, third edition, 2000.