



LAW AND *Grace*

Dr. Josef Howard, Facilitator

Question 1. What is the focus of the Grace Message?

This study is intended to help answer key questions surrounding the Grace Message. Some of these questions are complex and confusing. It is our hope that as we study, clarity will be brought to the subject, and we will depend more and more on the Grace of God.

At the end, we will answer the question, how do I know if I am living by grace or by the law?

Hope the study is helpful....let us proceed.

Question 1. What is the focus of the Grace Message?

It seeks to take people's eyes off themselves and to focus on the obedience of Christ and the work of the cross as the source of everything we need to please the Lord.

Grace is radically taught because there is no other way to be and do the things that please God than by faith in the grace of God. "The just shall live by faith."

But the law is not of faith; preach law and you will produce fear. Preach grace and you produce the faith that works by love. Mix the two, and you neutralize both, making neither of them fully effective.

Question 1. What is the focus of the Grace Message?

We are committed to holiness now and forever. We are just more convinced than ever that true holiness, the type that flows from within (and not the kind imposed from without by fear) is what God wants.

This can only happen to the degree God wants it when a person is immersed in the grace of God. Grace does not minimize sin. Its teaching should be magnifying the answer to sin.

Question 2

Matthew 6:5, “But if you do not forgive others their sins, your Father will not forgive your sins.” **Question:** If our sins need no confession because they are already forgiven, why is Jesus saying that the Father will not forgive our sin based on this condition?

There is a differences between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Some of the things Jesus said was said to the Jews and were meant for people under the old dispensation.

According to Hebrews 9:6-13, the first covenant had faults that made it necessary to replace it with a better one, established on better promises.

Question 2

Hebrews 9:13 says the **Old Covenant is obsolete**, which means there are many things that were true under that covenant that are no longer in effect because it has been replaced with something better. When Jesus ministered before His resurrection, the Old Covenant was still operational and determined the way God related to people.

But a lot of things changed once the Old Covenant became obsolete, and the New and better covenant established on grace and not law came into effect. Regarding forgiveness, it is true Jesus spoke those words. But that was before He shed His blood and obtained forgiveness for all our sins through His sacrifice.

Question 2

Now we are told in Ephesians 1:7 that "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of a His grace." Notice, **we have forgiveness**—we do not need to get it; we have it as a gift of God made possible by the blood of Jesus.

The fact that we have forgiveness through His blood is the core blessing of the New Covenant and is what makes it so much better than the Old.

Take that away and you are back under the Old Testament, where people were still trying to be forgiven.

Question 2

Ephesians 4:32. We are told to forgive one another, not so God can forgive us, but because God has forgiven us. Under the New and better covenant, God forgives us for Christ's sake— because of what Jesus did, not because of what we have done. And we are to forgive others, not so we can be forgiven, but because we are.

Do you see the difference? Does the Bible contradict itself? No, the Bible reveals different covenants that were in effect at different times which we need to recognize to correctly interpret Scripture.

Failure to rightly divide the Word and acknowledge the different audiences and covenants leads to confusion and wrong applications and interpretations.

Question 3

Read I Peter 3:7. Why would the sin of unforgiveness cause prayers to be hindered if all sins are already forgiven and need no confession?

There is no mention here of the sin of unforgiveness causing prayers to be hindered. It says that husbands should be considerate of their wives so that nothing will hinder their prayers.

This does not necessarily mean that the thing hindering their prayers is a sin that needs to be confessed in order to be forgiven.

So, what could this hindrance be? Isn't it true that when a husband and wife do not have a good relationship it affects their prayer life?

Isn't it true that when we have a bad attitude towards people, especially those very close to us, our emotions and thoughts suffer? For these reasons, a poor relationship with your spouse or a prayer partner will indeed hinder your prayers. And until you fix it, your prayer life will never reach its fullest potential.

The bottom line: A bad attitude is a poor attitude for prayer. It creates a lot of "static" that interferes with your prayer equipment, making you less able to pray effectively. The hindrance is within us, not within God.

Question 4

James 5:16, “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

Does confession of sins promote healing? Yes, confession of sins can promote healing. But notice, he said confess it to one another. He did not say confess it to God in order to be forgiven.

Apparently, he does not think the problem is with God, or that the believer needs to make sure he has confessed all his sins to God in order to receive healing.

Question 4

It is true also that there are indeed times when the effect of unforgiveness, condemnation, and guilt on a believer's mind and conscience can hinder a person's faith for healing.

To receive healing, you will need to tell somebody what you have done and have someone pronounce forgiveness for you to get it off your chest. That person can be God, or it can be another believer.

But again, it is not God withholding the healing because of unconfessed sin. It is the effect of the unconfessed sin on the person's faith and conscience that is the problem.

Question 4

Even though a believer is forgiven for Jesus' sake, he/she may be having difficulty receiving that forgiveness by simple faith and need help from brothers and sisters.

By confessing it aloud to them and have them pronounce forgiveness like Jesus did before healing the lame man, he can get the release he needs emotionally in his soul to be able to receive his healing by faith.

Question 5

HIM-U teaches that we do not need to fear God. Is it true? If so, how do you explain the following passages of scripture?

“Wherefore we receive a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Heb. 12:28).

“By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family” (Heb. 11:7).

“Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace and was strengthened. Living in the fear of the Lord and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it increased in numbers” (Acts 9:31).

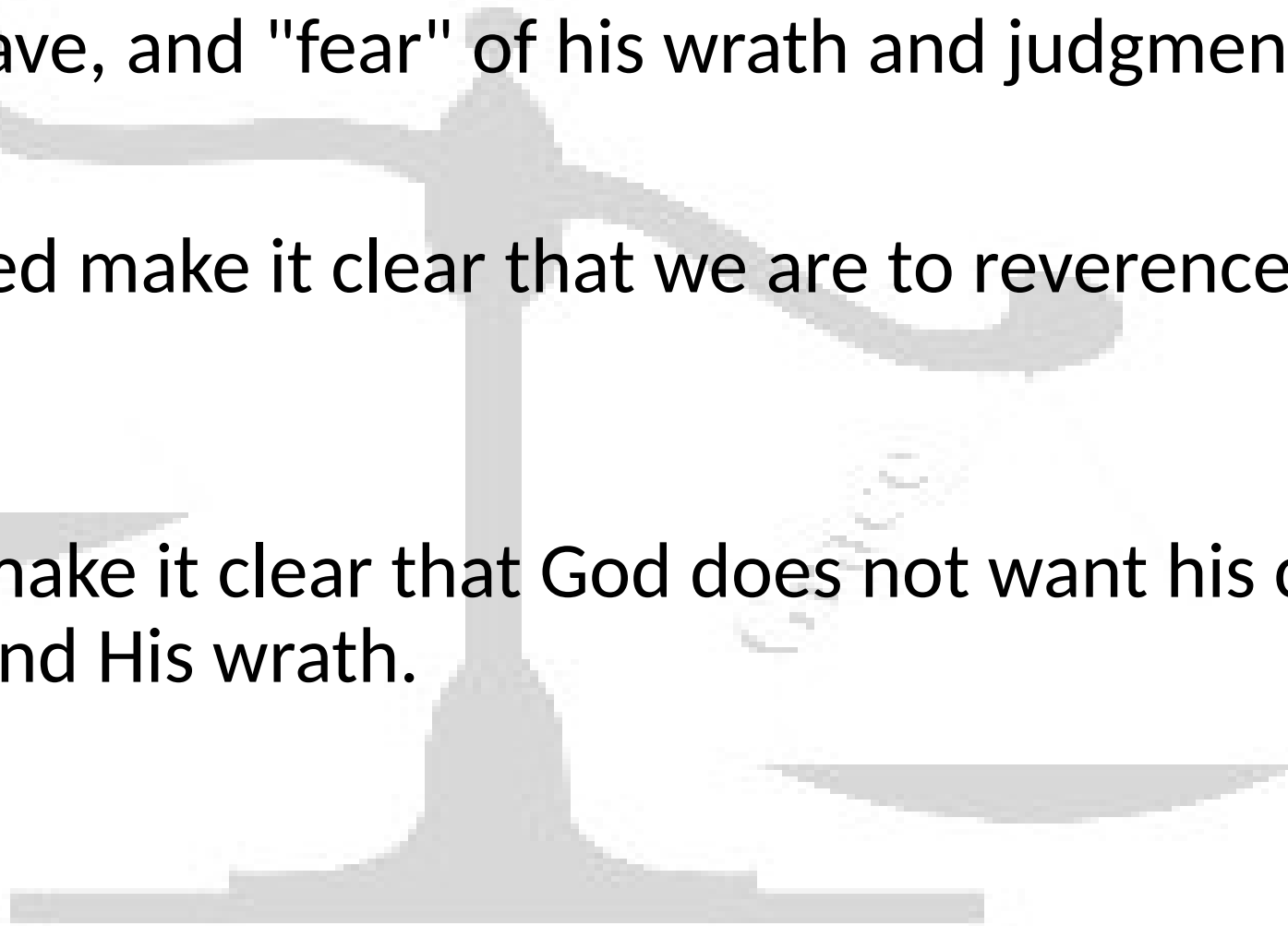
“By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil” (Proverbs 16:6).

Question 5

There is a difference between reverence for God, which all His children should have, and "fear" of his wrath and judgment.

The Scriptures cited make it clear that we are to reverence the Lord always.

Other scriptures make it clear that God does not want his children to be afraid of Him and His wrath.



Read John 5:24. Here we are told that we who hear and believe the Word (the Gospel) "have everlasting life and shall not come into condemnation but have passed from death to life." It means that believers do not have to fear the wrath and judgment of God, because his wrath against our sins has already been poured out on Jesus and all our sins. Every single one was judged on the cross 2000 years ago.

Romans 5:8-10 says, "But God commands His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

Notice, the extent to which we have been saved from God's wrath and the high level of confidence God wants every believer in Jesus to have with regard to not ever experiencing His wrath. God makes a point of saying "much more" we shall be delivered from His wrath. If God will still pour out His wrath upon us for the very sins for which Christ was judged, then Jesus shed his blood in vain.

And if He said He will never do this, then we question His integrity when we talk as though we who are in Christ could yet face His wrath.

The law and passages that reveal the wrath of God against sin are intended to show us the need for Jesus and what Jesus has delivered us from.

The more we see this, the greater will be our appreciation for our salvation, the blood of Jesus and the gift of righteousness.

Obedience that is motivated primarily by the fear of judgment does not glorify God.

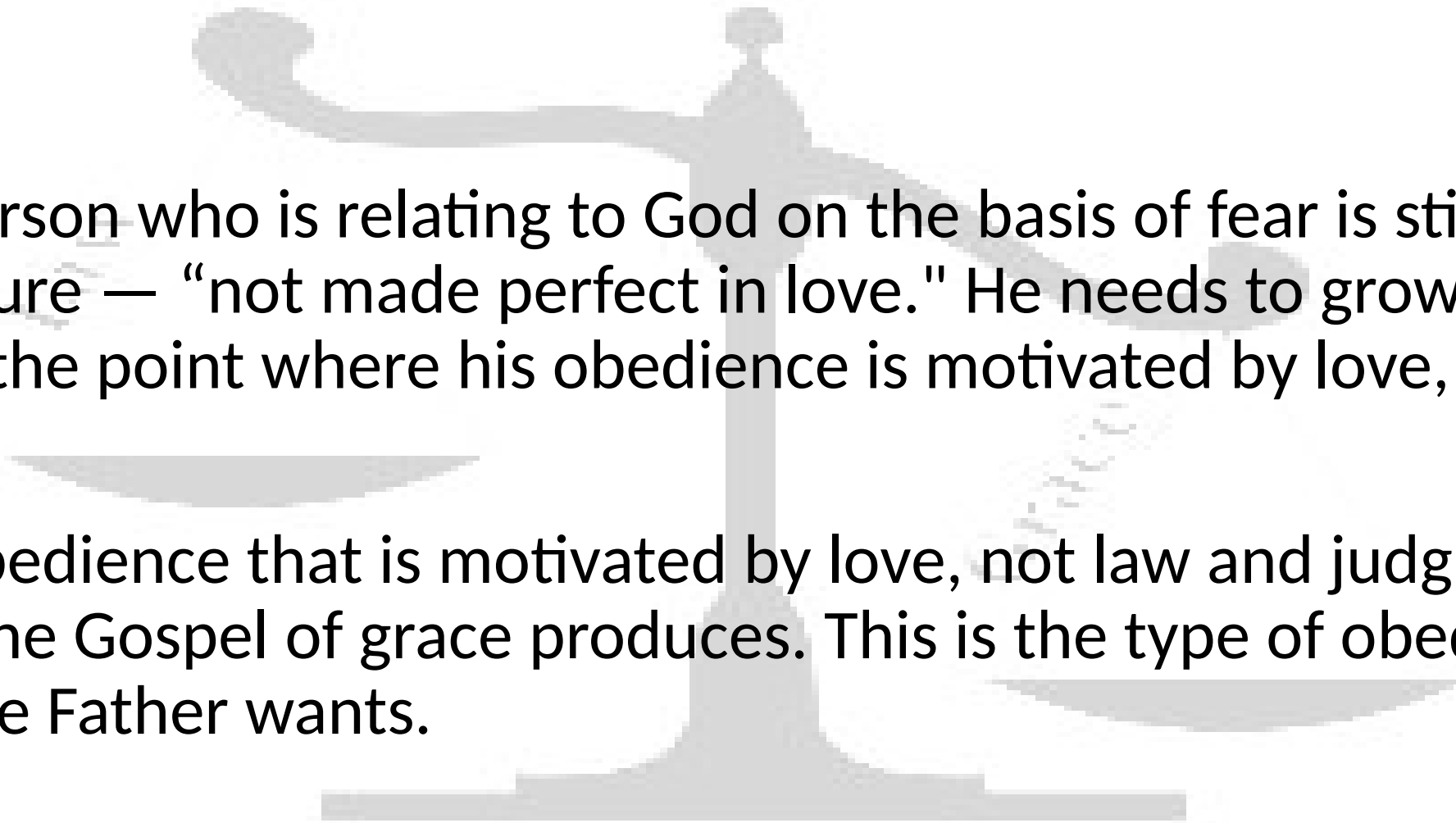
It suggests that God is not good enough for people to serve Him willingly. They have to be forced into it. That is sad, because those who serve Satan do so willingly.

Surely, God is much better than that snake.

I John 4:18 says, "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear: because fear hath torment. He that fears is not made perfect in love."

The person who is relating to God on the basis of fear is still immature — "not made perfect in love." He needs to grow up and get to the point where his obedience is motivated by love, not fear.

And obedience that is motivated by love, not law and judgment, is what the Gospel of grace produces. This is the type of obedience that the Father wants.



Question 6

Matthew 7:21-23 says, “Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in Heaven. Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!”

In light of grace, what does Jesus mean by His statement, “Only the one who does the will of my Father will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.”

Question 6

What is the will of the Father that needs to be done to enter the kingdom under the New Covenant? Is it to keep laws? Is it to do your best and try as hard as you can to be holy? Is that what Jesus had in mind?

Romans 3:19-20 says, “Now we know that what things the law says, it says to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Therefore, by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.”

Notice that God does not use the law to save anybody or give them entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. He uses it to reveal your sins and prove your guilt, not to make you righteous and take you to Heaven.

Therefore, trying your best to keep the commandments, thinking that is the will of God for you and the way to enter the kingdom of God is a sure way to end up outside the kingdom.

Just ask the Pharisees. And what about those quoted in Matthew 7:21-23? They did a lot of good works. They said they prophesied, healed, drove out demons and worked many miracles in the name of Jesus. Those are good works, not sins.

Yet, they were called evil doers. Why? They made the mistake of depending on their good works to get to Heaven. Anyone who depends on anything other than the grace of God will in the end be judged as evil doers because their good deeds will never be good enough in the court of justice.

The law demands perfection. Adam only committed one sin before he was cast out of the Garden of Eden. When perfection is the standard, good is evil.

Trying to do good works in order to qualify for grace, or for salvation, is the way of religion; it will always leave you on the outside.

In spite of their many good works of those men in Matthew, they were rejected because Jesus said to them, "I never knew you."

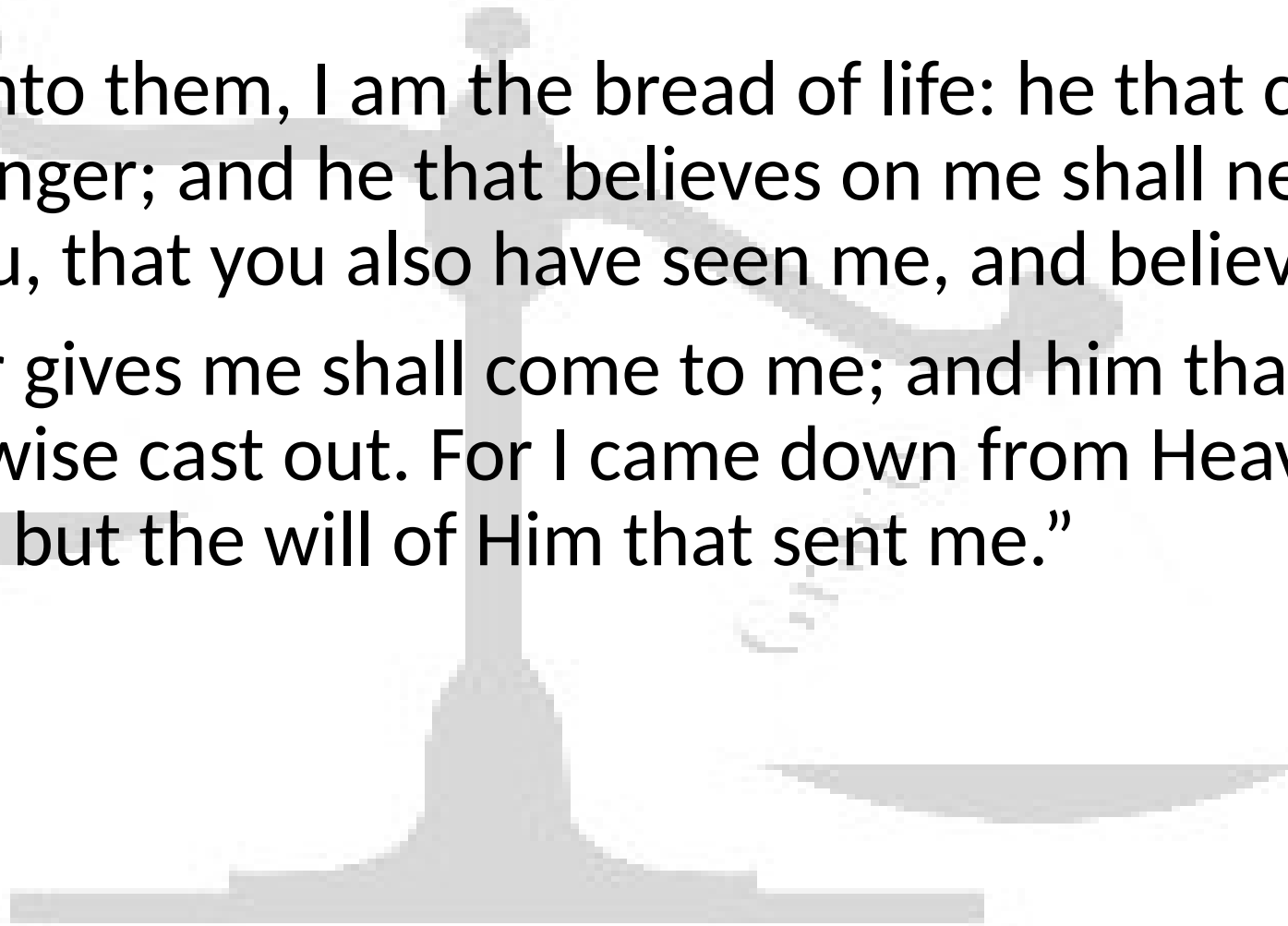
What this demonstrates is that salvation is by grace, and that entrance into the kingdom will not be based on the works you do, but on whether or not you have a personal relationship with Jesus.

No matter how much good a person does, if his faith is in his works rather than in Jesus' work, he cannot enter the Kingdom.

So then, what is the will of the Father in the New Covenant that must be done before a man can enter the kingdom?

Here it is: John 6:35-40 says

“And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that comes to me shall never hunger; and he that believes on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, that you also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father gives me shall come to me; and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from Heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me.”



“And this is the Father’s will which has sent me, that of all which He has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of Him that sent me, that everyone which sees the Son, and believes on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise Him up at the last day.”

This is the Father's will and only the one who does it—who sees the Son and believes on Him (not in their good works)--will enter the Kingdom. Only those who do God's will by believing in the Son (grace and not works) will He raise up at the last day.

Too often we confuse the will of the Father with human effort. The will of the Father is that we have faith in the Son—in the cross, the blood, the Spirit. His grace is sufficient. And that by faith, we allow the Son to manifest His life in us and bear His fruit through us.

Question 7

HIM-U teaches that “we are the righteousness of God in Christ.” We know that we have no righteousness of our own because our own righteousness is filthy rags in the sight of a holy God.

Also, Romans 8:4 states that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

Please explain. It is confusing because I think I need to work out my salvation with fear and trembling.

Salvation should not be the result of, or dependent on, any work we do or do not do. To do so is to contradict the clear teaching of the New Testament (Ephesians 2:8-10).

We are made righteous by our faith, not by our works.

We are the righteousness of God in Christ, not because of what we do, but because we have faith in what He's done. It is God's work and God's gift, which we can receive, or reject. Many reject the gift because they feel better about making an effort to achieve it.

Grace requires humility.

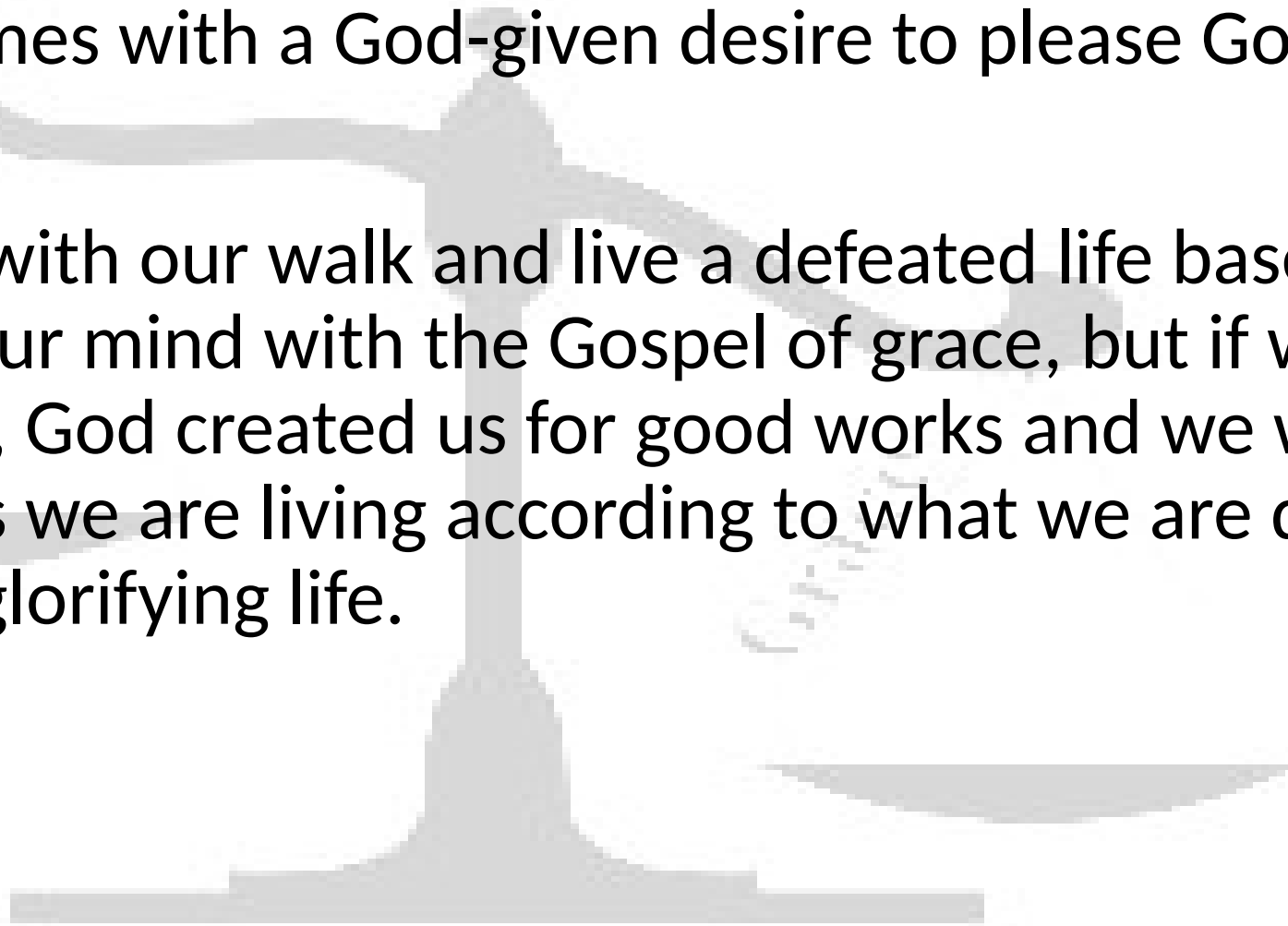
Read I Corinthians 1:26-31.

Works follow after we are made righteous. They do not cause us to be righteous. While God does not make our salvation dependent on our works, either before or after salvation.

He has created us in Christ Jesus for good works and promised to work in us both to will and do His good pleasure. So, while personal holiness is not the cause of our salvation, it will be the fruit of it.

Godly, Christ-like works do not produce or maintain our salvation, but they do reveal it. In other words, if you are truly saved by grace, your salvation comes with a God-given desire to please God.

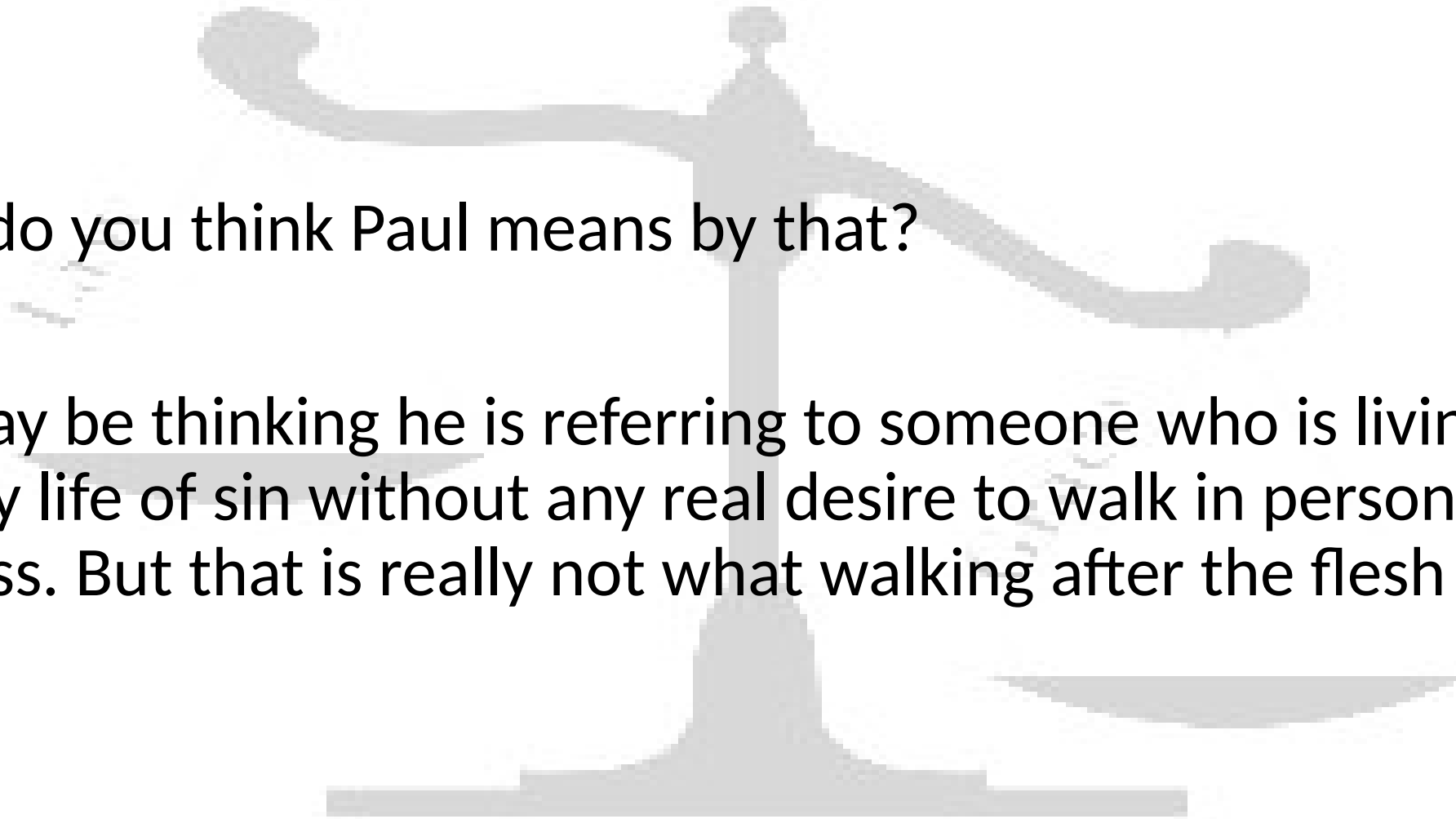
We may struggle with our walk and live a defeated life based on our failure to renew our mind with the Gospel of grace, but if we are righteous by faith, God created us for good works and we will not have peace unless we are living according to what we are designed for—a holy, God-glorifying life.



If a person can live continually in sin and have peace, such a person does not have saving faith. Finally, concerning “walking after the flesh.”

What do you think Paul means by that?

You may be thinking he is referring to someone who is living a worldly life of sin without any real desire to walk in personal holiness. But that is really not what walking after the flesh means.



Paul said in verse 4 that to walk after the flesh is to set your mind on the things of the flesh; that is to focus on the ability of the flesh. By that definition, a huge number of people trying to be holy are walking after the flesh.

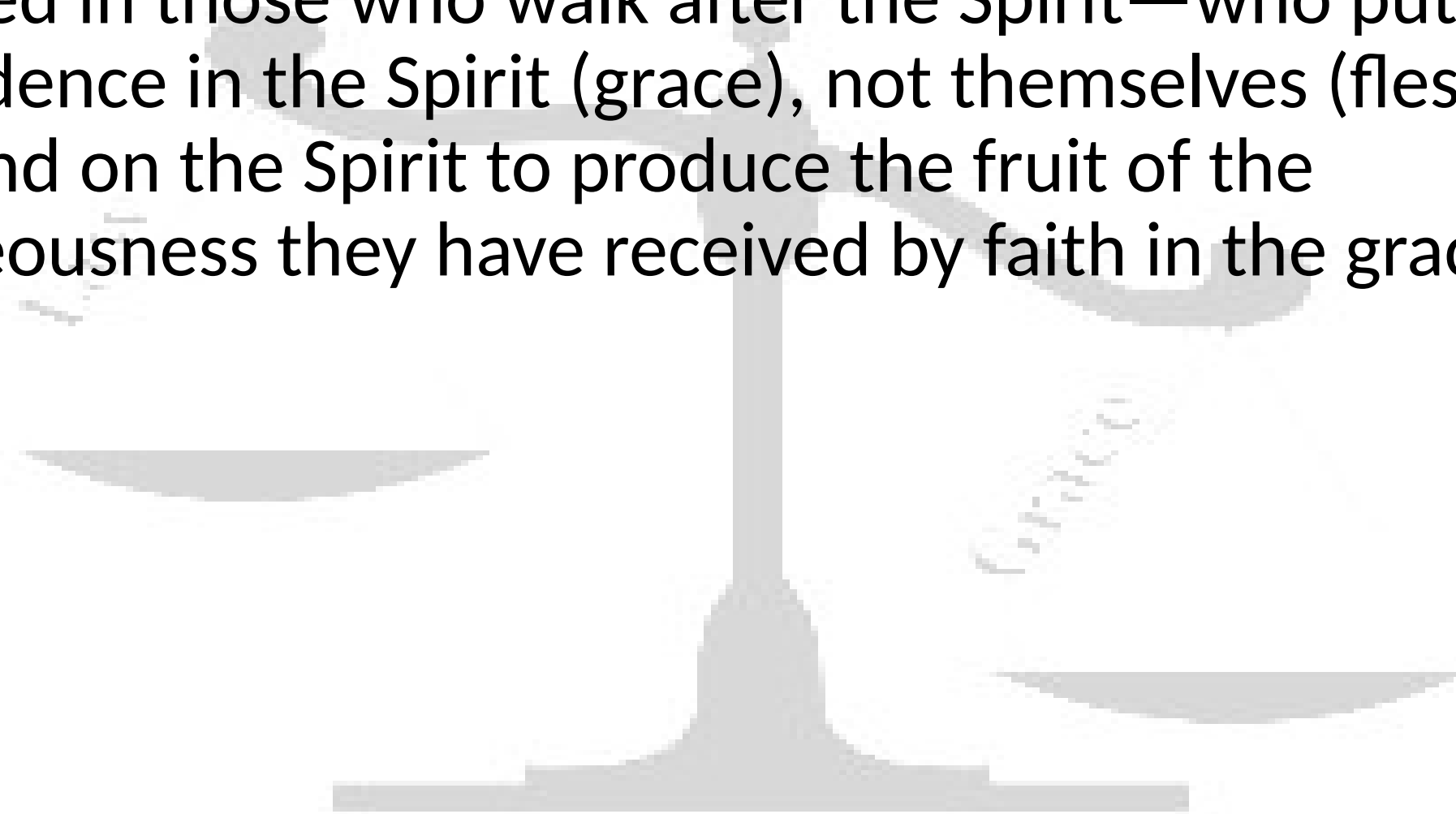
Why?

Because they are going about it as though it depends in them, instead of exercising faith in the grace of God. To walk after the flesh is to rely on it to lead you and to depend on the ability of the flesh to perform. It is to put confidence in the flesh.

A heathen can do this, and a very sincere Christian can do this as well. Instead of trusting the grace of God, he tries to live holy and overcome sin through self-effort, hard work, and fleshly discipline.

All religious people, not just blatant sinners, who are trying to achieve holiness by self-effort are in fact guilty of walking after the flesh and Paul said, such persons, will never succeed in pleasing God.

On the other hand, the righteousness of the law will be fulfilled in those who walk after the Spirit—who put confidence in the Spirit (grace), not themselves (flesh) and depend on the Spirit to produce the fruit of the righteousness they have received by faith in the grace of God.



And So What?

LAW uncovers sin

MERCY overlooks sin

GRACE overcomes sin

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

How do I know if I am living by Grace or by the Law?

Let's first examine how those (for the most part) who live by the Law behave and then we will look at those who live by Grace.

These are general statements

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the law

- ☐ Is quick to judge others' by his own rigid standards.
- ☐ Often lacks love.
- ☐ Is proud of his/her own accomplishments and brags about them.
- ☐ Depends on his/her own efforts to progress in the Christian life.
- ☐ Gives only out of a sense of obligation.

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the law.....

- ☐ Loves to set up policies and procedures for others to adhere to.
- ☐ Feels estranged from God unless they are doing something for God.
- ☐ Struggle to have assurance of their salvation.
- ☐ Is quick to condemn others for not doing things the right way.
- ☐ Likes to find glitches in others' point of view.

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the law.....

- ❑ Prides themselves on their own self-righteousness.
- ❑ Struggles with self-image as they base it on their accomplishments.
- ❑ Follows the steps of other law-abiding thinkers who love proceduralism.
- ❑ Is constantly pushing obedience to God's commandments.
- ❑ Tends to emphasize the OT in their thinking, teaching, and preaching.

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the law.....

- ☐ Looks up to strong leaders who are able to command people
- ☐ Follows the steps of law giver and implementers
- ☐ Is quick to write off those who reject the gospel
- ☐ Insists on the keeping of 100% of the rules and regulations
- ☐ Lives by rules, policies and guidelines.

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the law.....

- ❑ Is fond of using guilt and shame to control others
- ❑ Shares many characteristics with the Pharisees
- ❑ Tends to be a perfectionist and judgmental
- ❑ Sees it as a necessary club to keep people fearful of authority.

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the GRACE.....

- ☐ Looks to the Spirit and the word for guidance
- ☐ Is aware that real judgments are left up to the Lord.
- ☐ Is loving and merciful.
- ☐ Gives all credit for accomplishments to the Lord.
- ☐ Grows by the power of the Spirit working through obedience and faith

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the GRACE.....

- ☐ Gives freely realizing everything comes from God.
- ☐ Loves to trust the Holy Spirit in each believer to lead them aright.
- ☐ Is able to rest in Jesus knowing that His atoning work of redemption and power is sufficient to accomplish His work in and through and with us by His pleasures
- ☐ Is totally secure in the grace of Christ that is complete and sufficient
- ☐ Is quick to commend people for ways they are trusting God to work.

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the GRACE.....

- ☐ Likes to highlight the good sides in every person.
- ☐ Humbly remains contrite in spirit repenting after sinning against God.
- ☐ Has a good self-image knowing God's love is sufficient.
- ☐ Imitates the faith of other Godly people who walk in the Spirit.
- ☐ Advocates a balancing of trusting and obeying the Lord.

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the GRACE.....

- ☐ Emphasizes the teachings of the NT grace, love and freedom.
- ☐ Looks up to loving, wise and effective leaders who facilitate people.
- ☐ Follows the steps of Jesus Christ who balanced truth and grace.
- ☐ Is persistent in loving, persuading and witnessing to the lost.
- ☐ Advocates commitment to Christ, His church and the great commission.

Simply Put.....Galatians 5:16-23

A person living by the GRACE.....

- ☐ Lives according to the leading of the Spirit's teaching about Christ
- ☐ Is fond of using Christ as the good Shepherd as their model of motivation
- ☐ Is tolerant of others and forgiving
- ☐ Sees the law as a school master useful for bringing us to Christ.