

## ***God's Word is Truth...***

These thoughts are dedicated to every Gentile who thinks that since Christ died on the Cross, we now fall “under grace” and no longer have to pay any heed to Mosaic Law. It’s time we understand this issue rightly, so we’ll have eternal life in the end and not burn in the Lake of Fire. I hope and pray that the Lord will work through what I’ve written to help Gentile Christians gain knowledge of His Word, become obedient to it, and begin to honor the Biblical feast days He has prescribed, so that as we follow these steps, we will “provoke the Jewish people to jealousy,” and they, too, will come to accept Jesus as their Messiah and Lord.

### ***Christmas is Not the Truth for Gentiles!***

Knowing the truth is important because truth is factual. Without the truth, you can be led wrongly, even on a detour route—and one not like a normal detour, which ends after a few changes in direction. This detour has no timeline and you could take years to get back on the straight and right path. My hopes are that your eyes will be opened, so that you will be guided back in the right direction. If I remained silent, that would be a sin. Matthew 7:13-14 states: *“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.”*

I’m defending the truth from the deception that the enemy has created to entertain passive participation in disobedience to God’s Word. I will come strictly from the Bible, so you can read it for yourself. Then the path you choose well informed about God’s grace may change, and next year you’ll be fully obedient to the Word. *“For the Word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12).*

Let me state clearly: I am a Gentile Christian, but I honor the feast days and the “no-workdays” the Bible commands. On September 26, 2013, the eighth day of **Sukkot**, or what is commonly known as the Feast of Tabernacles, I sat outdoors in the temporary dwelling I had built that’s known as a *sukkah*. During the Israelites’ Exodus from Egypt, they lived in tents. In John 7:37-38, Jesus announces on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles that He is the Living Water.

So on this special day, I rejoiced with the Lord outdoors nearly all morning, feeling so serene and amazed to be with nature, engaged in something as awesome and non-materialistic as spending quality time with Christ. I heard crickets’ chirping, vehicles rushing by, birds singing and the wooden door on the patio slamming shut as the wind pushed it open and closed it abruptly. I heard the rustling of the blowing wind. I heard children’s voices as they played outside, and the sounds of leaves and branches falling as they hit the ground or fell on the

sukkah's rooftop. Now and then a fly whisked by my space. I looked up to the sky and knew God had created it and everything in it, and thanked Him for being my Provider and my Shelter.

### ***Why Do I Still Embrace Old Testament Practices Like Sukkot?***

Why should Sukkot still be designated as a special time? It's true that you don't have to wait for Sukkot to think about or praise God; you can do so all throughout your days, hours or seconds on this earth. You can think about God and Jesus anywhere and at any time. You only need to act; Jesus is at your beck and call—but you must want to spend time with Him and be in His presence. You may ask: "Why should I celebrate Sukkot, when it's an Old Testament practice? Jesus came, so I now fall under grace. Sukkot and other Old Testament rituals are done away with since Jesus was nailed to the cross."

But is that true? Am I supposed to stop doing what the Old Testament says because Jesus' grace affords me license to mess up and then ask for forgiveness in faith? What is grace? Grace is God's undeserved, unmerited favor or mercy. It is a gift of salvation to sinners. But grace never affords us a license to sin. As Jude 1:4 says:

*"For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord."*

To put it simply, the Holy Bible says to celebrate Sukkot. Does God's Word count? You say you celebrate Easter in Spring, Thanksgiving in November, or Christmas in December? Why do you celebrate these holidays? Aren't these just set times kept year after year that *man*, not God, has deemed for your days of rejoicing?

### ***The Reason to Celebrate Sukkot?***

We find it in Leviticus 23:33-44:

*"The Lord said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites: 'On the fifteenth day of the seventh month the Lord's Festival of Tabernacles begins, and it lasts for seven days. The first day is a sacred assembly; do no regular work. For seven days present food offerings to the Lord, and on the eighth day hold a sacred assembly and present a food offering to the Lord. It is the closing special assembly; do no regular work."*

*""(These are the Lord's appointed festivals, which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies for bringing food offerings to the Lord—the burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings required for each day. <sup>38</sup> These offerings are in addition to those for the Lord's Sabbaths and in addition to your gifts and whatever you have vowed and all the freewill offerings you give to the Lord.)*

*“So beginning with the fifteenth day of the seventh month, after you have gathered the crops of the land, celebrate the festival to the Lord for seven days; the first day is a day of sabbath rest, and the eighth day also is a day of sabbath rest. On the first day you are to take branches from luxuriant trees—from palms, willows and other leafy trees—and rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. Celebrate this as a festival to the Lord for seven days each year. **This is to be a lasting ordinance for the generations to come; celebrate it in the seventh month.** Live in temporary shelters for seven days: All native-born Israelites are to live in such shelters <sup>so</sup> your descendants will know that I had the Israelites live in temporary shelters when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.” (emphasis added)*

So Moses himself announced to the Israelites this appointed festival of the Lord.

In the sukkah (festival tent) later that afternoon, as I sat thinking about God and His goodness I thought about all the people who were missing out on celebrating this wedding feast. I heard a TV ministry say that since we live by grace we don't need to follow the old laws. I cringe at words like these being spoken today because I feel they are sugar-coating the truth. Jesus said in Matthew 5:17, *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but **to fulfill them.**” (emphasis added)*

Jesus continues in verse 18: *“...[Until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. He even states further in verse 19: “Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called **great in the kingdom of heaven.**” (emphasis added)*

Breaking this Scripture passage down some, what does “fulfill” mean? Fulfill means to carry out orders or meet requirements. In other words, to fulfill is to do what is necessary to carry out a request or command. Now let's re-read verse 17 using the true meaning: *“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but **to carry out orders.**” (emphasis added)*

Contemplating these words, I thought, *Wow, God, that's an eye-opener! Why in the world do people think they can do away with the laws if Jesus didn't think He could? More people around the world should be in their sukkahs on this day. Yet on my street, I was the only person with a sukkah. I thought, God, am I wrong to follow Your Word, or should I rely on my faith in your grace to forgive me for not following the orders You told me to follow? God let me know the truth, so I can tell others!*

### ***Have I Read Scripture Rightly?***

Then God took me to Galatians 5:4: *“You who are trying to be justified by the Law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.”* I said, “Wow! God, after reading

that verse, I understand why the truth isn't being taught." You see, if you read only that verse, you'd think, "If I follow the Law, I'm far away from *Christ* and *grace*. Therefore, I don't have to follow the Law." That was a revelation I didn't want to be the truth, because it seemed to confirm everything that ministries in error were teaching. I said, "God, this can't be the truth." And I asked God to show me the truth.

He pointed me to John 7:19-25:

*"Has not Moses given you the Law? Yet not one of you keeps the Law. Why are you trying to kill me?"*

*"You are demon-possessed," the crowd answered. "Who is trying to kill you?"*

*"Jesus said to them, 'I did one miracle, and you are all amazed. Yet, because Moses gave you circumcision (though actually it **did not come from Moses, but from the patriarchs**)..."*

Who were the patriarchs? They were the "founding fathers of faith," Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses came later with the Ten Commandments and the rest of Mosaic Law.

I then started to read Galatians 4:21-28, as a prelude to this subject matter that precedes Galatians 5:

*"Tell me, you who want to be under the Law, are you not aware of what the Law says? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the slave woman and the other by the free woman. **His son by the slave woman was born according to the flesh, but his son by the free woman was born as the result of a divine promise.** (emphasis added)*

*"These things are being taken figuratively: The women represent two covenants. One covenant is from Mount Sinai and bears children who are to be slaves: This is Hagar. Now Hagar stands for Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present city of Jerusalem, because she is in slavery with her children. But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written:*

*'Be glad, barren woman,  
you who never bore a child;  
shout for joy and cry aloud,  
you who were never in labor;  
because more are the children of the desolate woman  
than of her who has a husband.'*

*"Now you, brothers and sisters, like Isaac, are children of promise."*

Wow, As Christians we're not children of Hagar, but are children from the free woman Sarah. The word "flesh" appears again in this passage. It is wrong to be "in the flesh." But when you get circumcised mentally, that's good.

I then read Galatians 5:1-3:

*“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.*

*“Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law.”*

What I was reading was about being *circumcised*. What does it mean to be circumcised? The dictionary says, "It is to remove all or part of the foreskin from the penis of a boy or man, as part of a religious ritual." Leviticus 9:3 prescribes this typically to be done on the eighth day after a male infant's birth. Galatians is referring to being mentally circumcised, in the heart, versus a physical cutting of the skin.

Now, how is this important to the truth I was reading pursuing? I went to Genesis 17:1-14:

*“When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, ‘I am God Almighty; walk before me faithfully and be blameless. Then I will make my covenant between me and you and will greatly increase your numbers.’*

*“Abram fell facedown, and God said to him, ‘As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. No longer will you be called Abram; your name will be Abraham, for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you very fruitful; I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you. I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you now reside as a foreigner, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.’*

*“Then God said to Abraham, ‘As for you, you must keep my covenant, you and your descendants after you for the generations to come. This is my covenant with you and your descendants after you, the covenant you are to keep: Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. **For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.**” (emphasis added)*

God even confirmed this covenant with Moses when He was about to kill Moses, because Moses hadn't honor performing circumcision on his eight-day-old son, as is found in Exodus 4:24 -26: *“At a lodging place on the way [to Egypt, from which Moses was to lead God's people to the Promised Land], the Lord met Moses and was about to kill him.”* Moses being for the moment unable, his wife, Zipporah, took a flint knife and cut off their son's foreskin.

So the covenant equals the Law to which the Apostle Paul was referring. The Law equals flesh. So if you haven't been circumcised, you have unnecessary flesh. How can you walk with Christ if you are in the flesh? Your heart needs to be free from all flesh. To be circumcised means you are physically getting rid of the flesh, but your heart must have love.

I read Galatians 5: 4-14:

*"You who are trying to be justified by the **Law** have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from **grace**. For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through **love**." (emphasis added)*

Now read the above verses exchanging the word "circumcision" for "flesh and uncircumcision."

*"You who are trying to be justified by the **Law** have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from **grace**. For through the Spirit we eagerly await by faith the righteousness for which we hope. For in Christ Jesus neither **flesh** nor **unflesh** has any value. The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through **love**. You were running a good race. Who cut in on you to keep you from obeying the truth? That kind of persuasion does not come from the one who calls you. 'A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough.' I am confident in the Lord that you will take no other view. The one who is throwing you into confusion, whoever that may be, will have to pay the penalty. Brothers and sisters, if I am still preaching circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been abolished. As for those agitators, I wish they would go the whole way and emasculate themselves!*

*"You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire Law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other." (emphasis added)*

## **What is God's Covenant with Us?**

I feel this is where the confusion comes in. What is the Law these verses are referring too? Is it found in Leviticus 19? Leviticus 19 as stated below states some of God's laws of obedience and love—is this Law the one the Apostle Paul refers to in Galatians?

Here are some laws found in Leviticus 19:

*"The Lord said to Moses, 'Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: "Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy.*

*"Each of you must respect your mother and father, and you must observe my Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God.*

*""Do not turn to idols or make metal gods for yourselves. I am the Lord your God.*

*""When you sacrifice a fellowship offering to the Lord, sacrifice it in such a way that it will be*

*accepted on your behalf. It shall be eaten on the day you sacrifice it or on the next day; anything left over until the third day must be burned up. If any of it is eaten on the third day, it is impure and will not be accepted. Whoever eats it will be held responsible because they have desecrated what is holy to the Lord; they must be cut off from their people.*

*““When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest. Do not go over your vineyard a second time or pick up the grapes that have fallen. Leave them for the poor and the foreigner. I am the Lord your God.*

*““Do not steal.*

*““Do not lie.*

*““Do not deceive one another.*

*““Do not swear falsely by my name and so profane the name of your God. I am the Lord.*

*““Do not defraud or rob your neighbor.*

*““Do not hold back the wages of a hired worker overnight.*

*““Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block in front of the blind, but fear your God. I am the Lord.*

*““Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.*

*““Do not go about spreading slander among your people.*

*““Do not do anything that endangers your neighbor’s life. I am the Lord.*

*““Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in their guilt.*

*““Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord.””*

Verses 19-36 announce God’s decrees. He urges in verse 37 that we follow them because, *“I am the Lord.”*

### ***What Will You Do Now?***

You’ve just discovered the truth about grace and God’s covenant. Are you willing now to move in the right direction? If you go to the right you are going with the sheep and if you go to the left you will be going to the point of no return, hell. Will you rebel against the truth and go opposite to what God’s Word says? Do you feel God’s Word telling you that we don’t have to physically remove the flesh from our bodies anymore, but instead our hearts should not be “in the flesh”?

If you were thirsting in a hot, dry, desert and saw a well filled with water, what would

you do? Would you walk to it and drink, or would you walk away from it and die of thirst? Either way, what you choose is your choice. Yes, it can be hard to choose the truth found in the Bible rather than follow business as usual every year, celebrating the man-made holidays verses the Biblical feasts. But it's time to repent and turn back to God.

Though the Bible was written thousands of years ago, it is a written covenant from God that you can't break. If you don't follow God's Word, are you sinning? If you haven't read the Word, you haven't sinned, because you're not yet aware of what sin is, or what God isn't pleased with. But once your eyes are opened, as were Adam's and Eve's, you'll know good from evil or right from wrong. If you then don't follow what's written in God's Word, you will be in sin.

Therefore, without the Law, sin comes alive. Sin is disobedience to the will of God. Righteousness is something you do or carry out in accord with His will and His Word. If you're in sin, you'll be following satan's purpose to deceive or defile you. This deception will cause you to be destroyed and live your eternal home in a fiery hot place. We must strive to hold onto the Lord's Word no matter what—no matter how hard it gets! While we are in human form, we must walk as He walked. Your hands must be clean and your heart pure. So humble yourself and be obedient as you crucify your flesh every day.

Paul's Letter to the Galatians defends his interpretation of the Gospel. This message is about Gentiles and whether they should believe in circumcision for salvation or believe in Jesus Christ. It all boils down to one thing: *the flesh*. Being "in the flesh" equals sin. We should live by grace, but to do that we must follow the mental law of circumcision, to remove the flesh from our hearts and not physically cut off the foreskin. To love and obey God's commandments requires us to get rid of unnecessary "flesh" within our hearts and minds. This means we must not physically abide by the law of circumcision, but rather spiritually and mentally abide in Christ.

You must develop an intimate relationship with God. But to do so require you to be obedient to God, spend time with Him, and learn about Him from reading His Word. You must live a blameless life. Galatians 6:15 sums it all up: "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; what counts is the New Creation."

Have you changed? Are you walking in love?