

Finding the Balance Between Law and Grace

When we embrace the cross, we do so because of the conviction of our sin and the revelation that the cross is the only remedy. Only through the atonement of the cross can we be reconciled to God.

Those who say that Christianity is an arrogant religion because it claims that Jesus is the only way to be reconciled to God are, in fact, the arrogant ones. What could be greater pride than to have the Son of God come and make atonement for us, suffering as He did for our sin, and then say that we do not need His provision and that we can be reconciled to God on our own? Pride led to the first fall of Satan, and it is pride that keeps us under the power of the Fall. By humbling ourselves and acknowledging our need for the cross, we begin to be delivered from the power of sin.

Though we can be born again in an instant and truly become new creatures in Christ, changing our nature from sinful to restored is a process. There is a saying that you can get the gophers out quickly, but filling in gopher holes takes much longer. We can be saved from sin quickly, but the habit patterns of the old nature may take a while to change. This is part of working out our salvation. It is like Israel being delivered from Egypt in a night, but it took many years to get Egypt out of the people.

For this reason, we lay a foundation of repentance as we are told in Hebrews 6:1. Now a foundation is what all that follows is built upon. The foundation is what you walk on every day, and likewise we must keep a humble, repentant heart to walk with Christ. This does not mean that we constantly live with guilt or even sin consciousness, but rather we are always open to conviction about any wayward behavior or sin that would

emerge in our lives.

Once we repent of a sin, we must then trust the power of the cross to be sufficient to pay the price for it. This means that we do not continue beating ourselves up for it. This is an affront to the cross. When we do this, we are implying that the cross is not enough, and we must pay something for this sin as well. The true embracing of the cross also delivers us from a guilty conscience.

Ultimate deliverance from sin requires that we are ultimately delivered from being sin focused. Instead we become focused on the glory of the Lord. Looking at our evil nature is not the path to being delivered from it. We must always be sensitive to the conviction of the Holy Spirit. However, if we are going to be delivered from sin, we must not keep looking at the sin, but rather at Christ.

This being said, there will always be some who will take things to extremes. As Peter wrote concerning the teachings of Paul in 2 Peter 3:16: "His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction" (NIV).

Some people teach that once we are in Christ, we no longer need to repent. Others even teach that since Christ came, God no longer judges—a teaching that refutes a large part of the New Testament and even Christ's own prophecies about the end of this age. Every teaching will be taken to extremes by some, but the path of life is usually found between them.

Rick Joyner is the founder and executive director of MorningStar Ministries and Heritage International Ministries and is the senior pastor of MorningStar Fellowship Church. He is the author of more than 40 books, including *The Final Quest*, *A Prophetic History*, and *Church History*. He is also the president of *The OAK Initiative*, an interdenominational

movement that is mobilizing thousands of Christians to be engaged in the great issues of our times, being the salt and light that they are called to be. Rick and his wife, Julie, have five children: Anna, Aaryn, Amber, Ben and Sam.