

# THE BEREANS

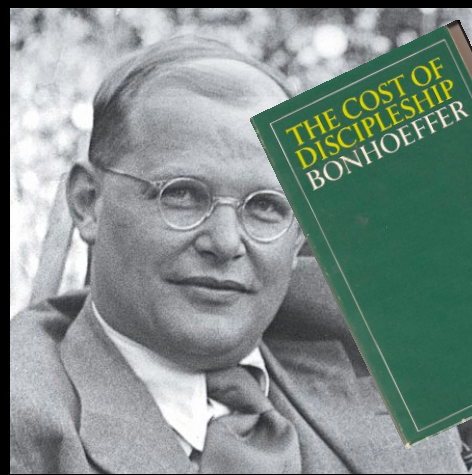
ACTS 17:11

1 Corinthians 15:19

Lesson #19

Justified by faith or works

05/12/2019



**Cheap  
grace  
is  
grace  
without  
discipleship**

**Dietrick Bonhoffer**

1

“But let justice roll  
down as waters, and  
righteousness as a  
mighty stream.”

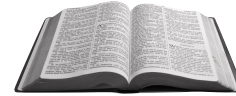
Amos 5:24

Martin Luther King Jr.



2

## How to read the Old Testament



The most critical issue  
in reading the O.T.



**Conflating the  
O.C. and N.C.  
with respect  
to the Gospel**

3

“There is perhaps no part of  
divinity attended with so much  
intricacy, and wherein orthodox  
divines do so much differ as  
stating the precise agreement  
and difference between  
the two dispensations  
of Moses and Christ.”

Jonathan Edwards  
Memoirs of p 463



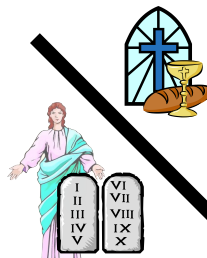
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## Dealing with the tension

between the OT (Jesus) and the NT (Paul)

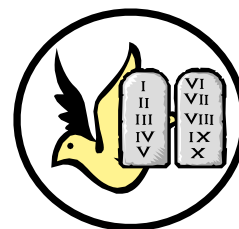
### 1# Contradiction

Christ of **faith**  
versus the Jesus  
of **history**



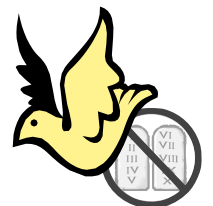
### 2# Continuity

New Covenant  
**upgrades** the  
Old Covenant.



### 3# Contrast

New Covenant  
**replaces** the  
Old Covenant



as a covenant  
of works

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**View #2** A single covenant with different expressions.

**View #3** A single promise with distinct OLD and NEW covenants.

## 2# Continuity

New Covenant **upgrades** the Old Covenant.



Christians are divided over these views.

## 3# Contrast

New Covenant **replaces** the Old Covenant



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## Conflation of O.C. and N.C.

Old Testament One Covenant New Testament

**Grace**  
(God's free gift)

**Kingdom**

**Law**  
(human moral responsibility)

Moses

Jesus

Paul

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## Contrast of O.C. and N.C.

Old Covenant

New Covenant

**Kingdom**



**Law**



**Grace**

Moses Jesus

Paul

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## Gospel

Old Covenant

New Covenant

Temporal / Material

Eternal / Spiritual

Orthopraxy

Orthodoxy

Repentance

Regeneration

National

Individual



The simplest way to understand the O.C. Gospel is to look at the Gospel that Jesus taught.

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## Jesus' teaching was under the Old Covenant.

*Galatians 4:4*

"But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, **born under the Law,**"

Bondage



Freedom

Old Testament - Gospels

**Paul's Gospel**

Old Covenant

Acts - Epistles



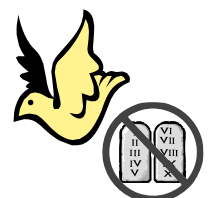
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## The Law was set aside (terminated as a covenant)

*Hebrews 7:18-19*

"For, on the one hand, there is a **setting aside of a former commandment** because of its weakness and uselessness (for the Law made nothing perfect), and on the other hand there is a bringing in of a better hope, through which we draw near to God."

The Cross, Resurrection, & Pentecost mark the change from the Old Covenant to a New Covenant.



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## Paul's Gospel was a mystery to the O.C. period.

*Ephesians 3:3-5*

"that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, . . . which **in other generations was not made known** to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;"



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## Jesus' Gospel and Paul's Gospel

*Mark 1*

"<sup>14</sup> Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, <sup>15</sup> and saying, "repent and believe in **the gospel.**"

**What were they supposed to believe?**

*1 Corinthians 15*

"<sup>1</sup> Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also you received, in which also you stand, <sup>2</sup> by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. <sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received, that Christ **died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He was **raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures,"

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## The Apostles saw Pentecost as the beginning of the N.C. community (the Body of Christ - the church).

*Acts 11:15*

"And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us **at the beginning.**"



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## Saving faith under the N.C. was the fruit of the Law's tutelage.

*Galatians 3:23-24*

"But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to **the faith which was later to be revealed.** Therefore the Law has become our **tutor** to lead us to Christ so that we might be justified by faith."



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## The N.C. gospel - **orthodoxy**

*Acts 16*

"<sup>30</sup> he (the jailer) said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" <sup>31</sup> And they said, "**Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved**, you and your household."

*Romans 10:9*

"if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and **believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved,**"

*Ephesians 2*

"<sup>8</sup> For **by grace you have been saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, **it is the gift of God**; <sup>9</sup> not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

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## The O.C. gospel - **orthopraxy**

*Matthew 19*

"<sup>16</sup> And behold, one came to Him and said, "Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" <sup>17</sup> And He said to him, ". . . **if you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.**"

*Leviticus 18:5*

"So you shall **keep My statutes and My judgments, by which a man may live if he does them**; I am the LORD."

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### *Romans 2:6-8*

**“He will render to each one according to his works:** to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, **he will give eternal life;** but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury.”

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### *Matthew 12:35-37*

“The good person out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil person out of his evil treasure brings forth evil. I tell you, **on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak, for by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.**”

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### *The Gospel according to Jesus*

- ➔ Jesus warns of failing to fulfill (even) the spirit of the Law. “whoever shall say ‘you fool’ shall be **guilty enough to go into the hell of fire.**” (Matt.5:22-23).
- ➔ **Matt.5:29-30** “And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for **it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.** And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be into hell.” (also Matt.18:8-9)
- ➔ **Matt.6:14-15** “For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But **if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions.**”
- ➔ **Matt.7:19** “Every tree that does not **bear good fruit** is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

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- ➔ **“Deny himself”** – make no provision for self. (Lk.9:23)
- ➔ **“Take up his cross”** – share the suffering of Christ.
- ➔ **“Follow Me”** – not double minded.
- ➔ **“Loses his life”** – make no provision for this temporal life.
- ➔ **“Whoever is ashamed of Me”** – bold unapologetic witness.
- ➔ **“Hate your family”** (Matt.10:37, Lk.14:26) – put Christ above one’s natural family.
- ➔ **“Forsake all”** (Lk.14:33) – hold on to nothing in this world.
- ➔ **“Give up all possessions”** Lk.14:25-27) – be like Jesus.
- ➔ **“Abide in His Word”** (Jn.8:30-31) – continued unfaithful obedience to the Scripture.
- ➔ **“Be perfectly righteous”** – exceed the discipline of the Pharisees.
- ➔ **“Him who overcomes”** (Rev.2:7) - brings moral life under successful management.

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### *Romans 2*

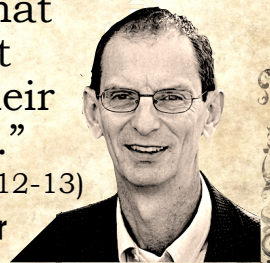
“<sup>11</sup> For there is no partiality with God. <sup>12</sup> For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law; and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law; <sup>13</sup> for not the hearers of the Law are just before God, **but the doers of the Law will be justified.** <sup>14</sup> For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, <sup>15</sup> in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, <sup>16</sup> on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.”

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There is no salvation apart from obedience or good works. Indeed, Paul emphasized that believers must accomplish their own salvation.”

(Phil.2:12-13)

**Tom Schreiner**  
(Southern Baptist  
Theological Seminary)



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“Get rid of this bunkum about the “carnal Christian.” Forget it! If you’re carnal, you’re not saved.”

Leonard Ravenhill  
(British evangelist)



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## The Jewish (O.C.) view of “justification before God”.

1. **God’s gracious election / redemption** took place through Abraham (Promise) / Moses (Exodus) where national Israel is elect and saved.
  - **Salvation is national**, not personal.
  - **Keeping the Law of Moses** identifies the elect.
2. A **Spiritual Israel (remnant)** would respond to the Mosaic covenant so as to be drawn to **faith in Jesus as the Christ**. (Jn.10:1-18)
3. **Physical Israel** would respond to the Mosaic covenant as the marker sign of the heirs of salvation promises. (Rom.9:6-8)

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## Three levels of conflation of O.C. and N.C.

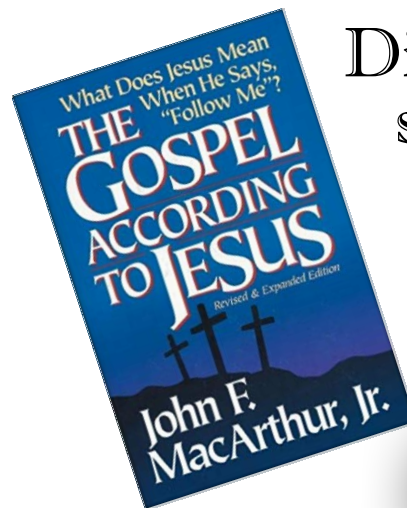
### Saving faith = keeping the Law

1. **Judaizers - Christianity is a reformed Judaism**. A person must embrace the Mosaic Law to be a disciple of Christ.

### Saving faith must lead to keeping the Law

2. **Holiness salvation** - A person must live a holy life (victory over all known sins) to be saved.
3. **Discipleship salvation** - A person’s saving faith must be notarized by obedience (living a moral life).

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## Discipleship salvation



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Evangelical Christians disagree as to what extent the 2nd point is essential to the 1st.

## Discipleship salvation

A person has to display the obedience of a disciple of Christ before their faith is genuine.

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## Discipleship salvation

- a. **Not everyone** who professes to be a Christian really is saved.
- b. We will know true Christians by their **obedience** to the moral law of God.
- c. We must come to Christ and **follow after Him** if He is to save us.
- d. Christians are **justified by faith alone** but saving faith is never alone (it fulfills the Law).
- e. The **final judgment** is on the basis of works, which are produced by the H.S. through faith.

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## Discipleship salvation **Rational**

- Jesus teaching** in the Gospels.
- Some parts of the **Apostle's teaching** in the Epistles.
- The criteria of the **final judgment**.
- The conditions of **the covenants**.

**NOTE** the conflating of the O.C. and the N.C. with respect to the Christian Gospel.

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## What constitutes saving faith?



Level #1  
Intellectual assent  
"superficial faith confession"

Level #2  
Transfer of trust  
"heartfelt confession of faith"

Level #3  
Water baptism  
"confirmation of repentance"

Level #4  
Commitment to holy living  
(a pure heart)

Level #5  
Living a life of obedience  
(a pure life)

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Discipleship salvation teaches that level #2 saves but **MUST** lead to levels #3,#4,&#5.



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(a pure life)

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Free grace teaches that level #2 saves and **SHOULD** lead to levels #3,#4,&#5 but may not at all times or perfectly.



Level #1  
Intellectual assent  
"superficial faith confession"

Level #2  
Transfer of trust  
"heartfelt confession of faith"

Level #3  
Water baptism  
"confirmation of repentance"

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Commitment to holy living  
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Living a life of obedience  
(a pure life)

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## This is the point of Romans 6

Presenting ourselves to God

Presenting our members to righteousness



Level #1  
Intellectual assent  
"superficial faith confession"

Level #2  
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"heartfelt confession of faith"

Level #3  
Water baptism  
"confirmation of repentance"

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Living a life of obedience  
(a pure life)

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Free grace teachers are sometimes falsely accused of teaching that level #1 saves.



Level #1  
Intellectual assent  
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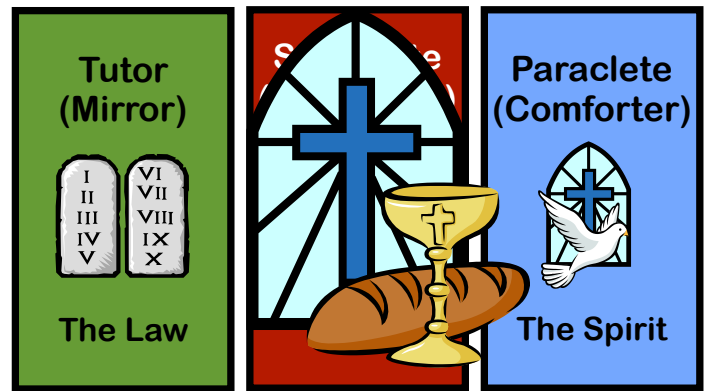
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## Two indications of an O.C. perspective in a N.C. relationship

1. **Measuring** God's promises (primarily) in terms of temporal / material blessings - health, wealth, happiness, etc.
  2. **Equating** the righteousness demanded by a perfectly holy God with the relative virtue of humans in a mortal, corruptible body.
- It insults the greatness of God's holiness.
  - It minimizes the work of Christ on the cross.
  - It distorts the ministry of the Spirit in our lives.
  - It implies that we do not need a glorified body.

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Don't confuse the ministries of the Law, the Son, and the Spirit.



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## 1 Corinthians 15

"19 If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied." . . . 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an imperishable body; . . . 49 And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. 50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable."

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## Four views

The relationship between a faith confession and faithful conduct

Jewish	Roman Catholic	Reformed Protestant	Radical Grace
Obedience is all that matters	Obedience is an expression of faith	Obedience is a marker of faith	Obedience is a fruit of faith
Obedience	Faith	Faith	Faith
=	=	/	>
Faith	Obedience	Obedience	Obedience

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## The troubling consequences of conflating the O.C. and the N.C.

- **It understates the nature of a holy God.** (suggesting that something less than perfection will be acceptable)
- **It overstates the work of the Holy Spirit.** (suggesting that believers can be made good enough in this life)
- **It marginalizes the significance of Christ's cross** making the H.S. the real Redeemer.
- **It suggests that our blessed hope of a glorified body may be superfluous.**

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## What should we consider from this lesson?

- **Sincere Christians differ** on how to read the O.C. in relation to the N.C. Gospel.
- **Mixing the covenants** may be labeled as grace but the fine print will be Law.
- **To conflate the two covenants** may be disrespectful of both.
- **If the Gospel is "good news"** it must do more than double down on God's demands on human behavior.

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