

Are We Preaching “Another” Gospel: A 31-Day Journey toward Rediscovering the Gospel of the Grace of God

by C. D. Hildebrand, 24-7-365 Version 2026

Day 28

COMMON CONCERNS

During the time David and I have been sharing the gospel of the grace of God with fellow believers, we have discovered that even when we do our best to present it clearly, there are misunderstandings and genuine concerns that arise. The true gospel of grace is so radical, so extreme, that it can easily be mistaken for something it was never intended to be; precisely, a rationalization for continued sin or a reason for unjustifiable idleness. So, allow me to reiterate before the final chapters by answering some of the questions we’ve encountered over the years.

Q: Are you saying we should tear the Bible in half and throw the Old Testament into the trash?

A: Of course not! All Scripture is given by God’s inspiration and is valuable to us today. However, it must be considered in its context and in light of the New Covenant. That is to say, all Scripture must be studied from the perspective of the cross of Christ.

John 5:39

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

Q: Shouldn’t grace be balanced with truth, law, works, and obedience?

A: No! The very nature of God’s grace is that it is unbalanced—in our favor.¹ It can’t be earned by our works. It can’t be maintained by following laws. It can’t be improved by obedience. Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. He is God’s grace demonstrated to us. How we live after we receive this grace is a fruit of what He has done.

John 1:16-17

And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.¹⁷ For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

¹ This sentence was first coined by our daughter Joella.

Q: Are you saying that we don't have to obey God?

A: I'm saying that born-again believers WANT to obey. Our first obedience is to the faith; that is, to believe in Jesus. After that, God works in us "to will and to do His good pleasure".

Q: Don't we have to cooperate with God in order to stay in His grace?

A: If cooperation is required to "stay" in His grace, then that would make His grace something that we must earn or maintain, and it would thus be merited and no longer be grace. We are righteous by grace through faith as a gift, and that righteousness before God is a settled fact due to Christ's sacrifice for us. We are new creations with new natures that *want* to please God. I don't *have* to please God. I *want* to please Him. That's the core difference between law and grace. Law requires. Grace sets free.

Q: What about willful disobedience?

A: The willful disobedience spoken of in Hebrews refers to apostasy² (Heb. 10:26-39), not as we commonly teach, that of sinning on purpose. The truth is, all the sins we commit are on purpose; otherwise, that would mean that we have no control over our actions. If willful sin, as we commonly teach it to be, brings about a state in which the person cannot be saved, then there will be no one in heaven.

Q: Are you saying that we only have to believe to be righteous before God?

A: Yes, all we have to do is believe in the resurrection and confess Jesus as the Lord to be born again and receive all that He died to give us. We do not do good works to better our right-standing before God because *righteousness is a gift*. Our faith in His grace will bring about the good works for which God has ordained us.

Ephesians 2:8-10

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Roman 5:17-21

For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift

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Others argue that willful disobedience is the sin of rejecting Jesus as a non-believer. Either way one views it, "willful disobedience" is not referring to a deliberate sin since most sin is intentional.

of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Therefore, as through one man's offense judgment came to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act the free gift came to all men, resulting in justification of life. ¹⁹ **For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.** ²⁰ Moreover the law entered that the offense might abound. **But where sin abounded, grace abounded much more,** ²¹ **so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Q: Then, what about what James said about being justified by our works?

A: If James meant that works are required for right-standing with God, then he was preaching "another" gospel and is accursed. There is plenty of evidence to show that Paul and James taught different messages, and that James was, to put it politely, keeping an eye on Paul's liberty, even asking him to deny what he was teaching to the Jews; specifically, that the Christian Jews did not need to circumcise their children to be righteous (Acts 21). To be generous and gracious, the only acceptable conclusion would be that when James wrote that "faith without works is dead," he meant that true faith will bring about good works. If there are no good works, it is likely that the individual is not truly born again (does not have faith in Jesus—his faith is dead).³ If James meant that something other than faith is needed to be righteous, he was preaching another gospel (Gal. 2:21).

Matthew 7:15-20

*"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves." ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Even so, **every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.** ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Therefore **by their fruits you will know them.***

Q: Are you saying that sin is no big deal?

A: God forbid! Sin is why Jesus died for us—to save us from our sin. God's desire for us is to be truly free from sin. However, God is no longer imputing our sin to us, and He is remembering our lawless deeds no more. God's

³ For a deeper study of this topic, see our verse by verse teaching on the book of James at <https://graceandfaithministries.org/james/>

desire is for us not to sin, but if we sin, we are forgiven. Furthermore, it isn't adherence to law that sets us free from sin. It is God's grace.

1 John 2:1

*My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may **not sin**. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*

Romans 6:14

*For sin shall **not** have dominion over you, for you are **not** under law but under **grace**.*

Q: Do you believe that a true believer in Jesus who is involved in sin is still saved?

A: Yes. Sin was forgiven at the cross and God is no longer holding our sins against us (2 Cor. 5:19). When we sin, His blood is already cleansing us (1 Jn. 1:7). The only sin for which man will be lost is that of refusing to believe in Jesus Christ (Jn. 3:18). However, if someone is truly born again, they will not want to sin, unless they have come back under law in some way, which strengthens sin (1 Cor. 15:56). This person's only hope is to come back under grace and forsake law.

Q: You say that believers are not sinners. Isn't that a form of elitism?

A: I believe Romans 6 makes it very clear that believers are dead to and free from sin. Since this is true of *all* believers and not just some special class of overcomers, it isn't elitism.

Q: What about church discipline? Are you saying we just let people "live like the devil" while touting grace?

A: No. There are situations where it is necessary to address individual destructive behavior, especially when it affects the lives of others. There are also laws in most states that make ministers mandatory reporters for suspected child abuse. It would be wrong to shelter a child abuser in the name of grace, for example, since his behavior is criminal.

However, we need to take a closer look at how Paul addressed church discipline. He did not use law, the threat of eternal damnation, or the fear of missing the rapture to correct poor behavior. He first taught the people about who they were in Jesus and what He accomplished for them (Eph. 1-3). Then he encouraged them to live correctly *because* of what they'd been given and who they were (Eph. 4-6).

Since a born-again person is no longer a sinner, but a righteous person, it is only logical that he should live in a way that reflects this righteousness. We are clearly instructed not to sin. However, there are many believers today, overtaken by sin, who are in this state because they have been fed a mixture of grace and law most of their Christian lives. This resulted in

finding themselves in the hopeless state described in Romans 7, where they can't do the good they want nor stop doing the evil they are doing. We need to help them recognize that they are to be motivated and taught by grace so that they may live in Romans 6-8, free from sin, dead to the law, and led by the Spirit.

Q: Since we are continually cleansed from all sin, are you saying there will be no consequence for that sin?

A: There are clearly consequences for sin—sometimes horrific. For example, someone who drinks excessively and then drives might not only kill himself, but also multiple others. Those engaging in sexual sins expose themselves to sexually transmitted diseases. A man who commits adultery might discover that his wife is not willing to stay married to him and lose at least partial custody of his children. Someone who continues in sin (ignoring the grace of God, who is teaching him to forsake it) can experience a dulling of his conscience and become involved in other unhealthy behaviors. These are logical consequences for sin, not judgments doled out by God.

A Christian's sins are forgiven before God (1 Jn. 1:7). He is not casting down judgments for a Christian's weaknesses; rather, all things are working in our lives all things for our good (Rom. 8:28). This is not to say He is indifferent about our sin or that He turns a blind eye; only that when we sin we have an Advocate with the Father who gave His only Son so that His blood would remove all sin from us forever (1 Jn. 2:1, Heb. 10:14). His Holy Spirit is constantly speaking to us that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16). He is convincing us that we are righteous (Jn. 16:10).

His compassionate love will be there to help the erring believer to endure the pain that his sins might have caused. He will help him make the necessary restitution. If he is incarcerated, then Jesus will still be with Him in jail, and will work the awful situation for some good—perhaps to share God's love with others or to warn others not to "go there".

God will bring healing to the undeserving one. For example, one of my dear friends who had liver disease from years of alcoholism was miraculously healed of it. Her life is now a testimony of God's power and grace. What we need to understand is that we are righteous by His grace through faith in His Son, not by never sinning. If refraining from sin is the standard for justification, we are all doomed, for even our every thought is in question; furthermore, Christ would not have needed to die for us if obedience to the law could bring righteousness.

Q: What about those who were obviously judged for sinning, such as Ananias and Sapphira?⁴

A: Receiving the truth about this account is difficult for those of us who were taught to believe that these people were Christians. We were warned that the same thing could happen to us if we weren't careful! However, a closer examination of the text surrounding Ananias and Sapphira strongly suggests that they were not believers at all. They were mere impostors and mockers going through the motions to gain acceptance among the Christian community, likely for the benefits they perceived. They were the tares among the wheat that Jesus warned would be planted among us.

Matthew 13:24-30

Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."

When we look at the account of Ananias and Sapphira, we need to begin in chapter four, where this type of giving was first described, and most closely the offering made by Barnabas. Now, we know without any doubt that Barnabas was a believer. However, notice that when the account shifts to Ananias and Sapphira, we see a contrast is being presented when Luke writes, "But a certain *man* named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. ² And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet." Nowhere does it state that they were believers, disciples, or brethren (the most common terms for Christians in the book of Acts),⁵ but only as "a man and his wife".

Now, let us apply the test of Matthew 7:15-20 as to the type of fruit

⁴ You might find our teaching on Judgment and Discipline helpful. <https://graceandfaithministries.org/judgment-discipline/>

⁵ A very interesting study in the book of Acts is to read through it looking for the different names given to Christians. Overwhelmingly, it is clear in the context who was and who was not a believer.

apparent in the lives of Ananias and Sapphira. These two had no awareness that anyone would be able to perceive that they were lying—not even that God would notice! What believer, so recently born again, would not be aware of God’s omniscience? What believer would conspire to test God as they did? This pair seriously believed that they could pull this off, not just lie to the apostles, but to God Himself! They had no consciousness that the Spirit of God even existed and had no fear of lying to Him, even when confronted. This is strong evidence that they were not even Christians, but non-believers who were trying to blend in and obtain the status they thought such a gift would bring them.

Q: What about those who were sick and dying among the Corinthians? Weren’t they judged with sickness and death for taking communion with unconfessed sin?

A: This passage has also been used to bring fear to the hearts of believers. We are often exhorted to confess any known sin and make sure no one has anything against us and that we have nothing against anyone before taking communion, and we are warned that if we don’t examine ourselves, we also might get sick or even die. Many believers today, out of fear that they might have some sin, refuse to take communion.

Yet, when Jesus first gave communion, he told His disciples to take the bread and the wine **in remembrance of Him**, for as often as we do this, we remember *His* death until He comes. He did not establish His table as a time to focus on *us* and *our* sins, but as **a time to remember that His sacrifice removed our sins**. When we come to His table, we focus on the fact that His body was beaten and bruised for our healing and that the blood of Jesus cleanses us from *all* sin. **It is a time of remembrance and thankfulness, not a time for introspection.**

When Paul told them to examine themselves, I believe he meant to make sure they were in the faith. Imagine the scene Paul describes. Some came together to share in the Lord’s table and had no reverence for God or understanding or appreciation of the beauty of the body and blood of the Lord whatsoever. They were using this gathering as a social event to eat and be drunk without even thinking to offer their plenty to the poor among them. Consider this behavior. Is this the fruit of the life of a believer? Jesus said that all men would know we are His disciples by our love for one another. These people were not showing love toward anyone but themselves. Paul admonishes them to discern the Lord’s body, which apparently these were not doing. This is why I believe that those who were sick and dying among the Corinthians were non-believers who were, in essence, mocking the blood and body of the Lord and who had no regard for the brethren whom the Lord so deeply loves.

Jesus told us that we would be able to identify these impostors by their actions. Jude also gives an excellent description of these liars.

Jude 5, 12, 19-23

*But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe (the context here is of non-believers)...¹² These are spots in your love feasts (love feasts included taking communion), while they feast with you **without fear**, serving only themselves. They are clouds without water, carried about by the winds; late autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, pulled up by the roots;¹³ raging waves of the sea, foaming up their own shame; wandering stars for whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever (clearly, this is a description of one who is devoid of the Spirit of God)...¹⁹ These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit (now he makes it clear they do not have the Spirit and are thus not believers)...²⁰ **But you** (referring to believers), **beloved**, building yourselves up on your most holy **faith**, praying in the Holy Spirit,²¹ **keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life** (believers keep themselves in God's love and expect His mercy and eternal life).²² And on some have compassion, **making a distinction** (the distinction is between believer and non-believer);²³ but others save with fear (the others are non-believers who need to be saved), pulling them out of the fire (non-believers are destined for hell fire), hating even the garment defiled by the flesh.*

Q: If God judged Ananias and Sapphira and the impostors in Corinth with sickness and death, why aren't all sinners sick and dying?

A: No one has ever asked us this question, but I believe it should be asked and answered because something that is seldom heard from the pulpit is that the sins of sinners are forgiven or that God is not holding the sins of sinners against them. Yet, we have two very amazing scriptures that we must take into consideration.

1 John 2:1-2

*My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.² And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and **not for ours only but also for the whole world.***

2 Corinthians 5:18-19

*Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,¹⁹ that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, **not imputing their trespasses to them**, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*

Sinners sin. That is a clear, undeniable reality of which God is fully aware. If God were killing off sinners for sinning, then all sinners would be dead. The truth is Jesus *died* for sinners—all sinners. All of our sins were forgiven at the cross. He is not holding our sins against us—none of us, not even sinners!

However, and this is a big “however”, apart from Christ, all men stand guilty before God who refuse to believe in the name of the Son of God.

John 3:18-19

*He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, **because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.** ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

Sinners are condemned because they refuse to believe in the name of Jesus, not because God is holding their sins against them. They refuse to believe because they love darkness instead of light. While forgiveness has been provided for them, they reject the source of that forgiveness.

Thus, faith in Jesus as the Lord God is the key to *receiving* the forgiveness that has already been provided, but if it is not received, those who reject Him will die in the very sins God is not holding against them. Jesus said, “Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for **if you do not believe** that I am *He*, you will die in your sins,” (Jn. 8:24).

As to the reconciling of sinners, as far as God is concerned, His work is done. Our message to sinners should be the good news, “God sent His Son to forgive you of your sins. He is not at war with you. He is extending to you reconciliation. Believe in Jesus and be reconciled to God.” In other words, God is reconciled to man, **but man must reconcile himself to God through faith in Christ.**

2 Corinthians 5:20-21

*Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, **be reconciled to God.** ²¹ For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

As Christ's ambassadors, our message is, “Be reconciled to God. He became a sin offering for you so that you could become His very righteousness!”

It is not true that "everyone is already saved and that they just don't know it yet." That is heresy. What is true is that God has already died for the sins of the whole world and is already not holding the sins of

sinner against them. His side of the equation was completed at the cross. However, salvation comes through confession of Jesus as the Lord God and belief in His resurrection. Period.

So, then, if this is the case, if God is not holding the sins of sinners against them, why were some judged with sickness and death? When we examine the instances of Ananias and Sapphira and those who were making a mockery of the Lord in Corinth, we see some remarkable similarities. (We should also include in this category the Sons of Sceva who attempted to cast out demons in the “name of Jesus whom Paul preaches”.) First of all, they were impostors. They pretended to be part of the body of Christ, but were not. Two, they were not just sinning the sins that all sinners sin. They were brazenly and arrogantly testing the Holy Spirit. Ananias and Sapphira conspired together to put God to the test. Those in Corinth were making a mockery of the body and blood of the Lord. The Sons of Sceva dared to use the name of Jesus to attempt to cast out demons for what could not have been anything but contemptuous motives. These stories were recorded, not to warn God’s beloved children, but to warn anyone from without to be careful about similar fakery and mockery.

Q: Are you advocating “once saved always saved”?

A: This argument has been hotly debated throughout the centuries, and ending the controversy won't happen in this book. David and I believe that all who believe are saved by grace alone through faith in Jesus alone. Those who have faith in Jesus will not perish but have everlasting life, and those who do not have faith in Jesus will perish (John 3:16-18). We do not believe sin will prevent a *believer* from going to heaven because all sin is forgiven and God is not imputing sin to us.

The crucial question really comes down to this: Can a born-again believer *forfeit* his salvation by choosing to abandon *faith* in Christ? Predictably, the grace camps are divided on this topic as were previous generations. Some believe adamantly that it is *impossible* to forfeit salvation even if one forsakes Christ, reasoning that since once we are born into the family, we remain in the family. We can't be unborn. Others believe that to forsake faith in Jesus is to commit apostasy and thus forsake salvation.

A somewhat merged belief is that someone who is born-again would never want to forsake faith in Christ, so then if someone did “forsake Christ,” it would mean that the person was never born again in the first place or that if they were born again, it is the church they are rejecting, not Jesus. Each group has its own reasons and is usually convinced thoroughly of its conclusions.

We believe that faith in Jesus is what is required for salvation. Those who believe in Him will be saved. Those who don't believe will not be saved. There will be no one in heaven who does not believe in Jesus as the Lord.

Whatever one's opinion, we may agree to disagree on this topic since it will be what it will be regardless of our opinions.

Q: Do you believe that everyone will eventually be saved (universalism)?

A: No, faith in Jesus Christ is why we do not perish and have everlasting life (Jn. 3:16-18). Those who do not believe in Jesus are condemned for not believing and will perish.

Revelation 20:15

And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Q: If we don't teach the moral law, how will God's people know right from wrong?

A: God's grace will teach them as He writes His law of love on their hearts (Tit. 2:11-15).

Q: If we live under grace, not law, why does Paul give so many instructions about how we should live? Are these not New Covenant commandments for Christian living?

A: Paul, who so elegantly taught that we are not made righteous by following the law, did not then turn and give a new set of laws.

Too often, we teach only on the chapters where Paul is giving correction. This correction, however, has a context. For example, in Ephesians, Paul writes three chapters declaring to the believers who they are in Christ and all the many things that are theirs in Christ. Then, after he has laid this foundation, he begins instructions on how these gifts affect our lives.

For example, a Sunday morning sermon might be Ephesians 4:1, which says, "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called." The sermon often continues on what it means to "walk worthy" and turns into what amounts to Christian laws, and this will be determined by what the teacher believes it means to "walk worthy".

However, Paul was not giving a set of commandments. He was saying, "In other words, because of what I have just shown you about who you are and the depths of God's love for you in Christ, walk in it!"

We, the church, usually skip the good news and jump directly into correction and instruction in righteousness. However, first we need to teach what God accomplished in Christ and of His endless love and grace toward us who believe. A Christian who knows he is loved and who allows God to love him will supernaturally want to live a holy life.

If this is so, then why does he have to say anything? Paul is completing

the circle by showing our *response* to God's love. God gives generously. We receive in awe of His grace. His grace teaches us. We learn and live accordingly. Again, let me say, we do not live righteously to become righteous. We are righteous and therefore live righteously. It is our new supernatural nature to *want* to please God. Paul encourages believers to walk worthy of what they have been given, which simply means to receive what we've been given and walk in it.

Q: If New Covenant believers taught by grace end up living in a way that looks like they are fulfilling the law, what's the difference if we teach law or grace? If the outcome is the same, what's wrong with using laws to guide people?

A: The difference is crucial because Jesus fulfilled the law through His death (Gal. 3:13). Attempting to now be justified before God by following laws is to make His death a worthless act (Gal. 2:21). In Christ, we died to the law, our old husband, in order to be married to Christ (Rom. 7:1-6). To return to law for instruction instead of receiving guidance from grace is to commit spiritual adultery. Adding law to grace is like asking your former spouse to come and live with you and your new spouse, and then trying to please them both. The one who nags the most, the law, will win out eventually, and the new spouse, grace, will be nullified. Furthermore, teaching law actually strengthens sin (1 Cor. 15:56); whereas, grace frees us from the dominion of sin (Rom. 6:14). Finally, there is Paul's warning. Adding law to grace is to preach "another" gospel.

Q: Are you saying that Christians don't have to pray and read the Bible daily?

A: Yes, that is what I am saying. There is no law saying we *have* to pray and read the Bible as a daily discipline. There is no need to make prayer and Bible reading a *requirement* because a truly born-again believer will *want* to pray and read the Bible. Both are a blessed irrevocable gift to us, not a law. Sadly, many Christians today read the Bible and pray, not because they already have a close relationship with God but to obtain one. This monastic thinking is to try to accomplish through our own religious discipline what Jesus already purchased for us with His precious blood. **We do not get close or closer to God through prayer.** The blood of Jesus has brought us perfectly close. How can we improve upon what His blood accomplished? We pray *because* we have a close and right relationship with God, not to get one.

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Rejoice always, ¹⁷ pray without ceasing, ¹⁸ in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Q: Are you saying that it is WRONG to have a daily prayer time?

A. No, of course not. There is nothing wrong with setting aside a place and time to pray, as long as your time of prayer is *because* of your right-standing with God and not *to* obtain or maintain right-standing with God. **However, we must always keep in mind that this is a *personal* goal, not a God-given mandate, and God is not displeased, disappointed, or angry with us if we don't keep the goals we set.** Also, it's important not to adopt heretical thinking, which amounts to the idea that by praying more (your own effort), you will be *closer* to God or *more holy* or *more anointed*. Let me repeat this because it is so very important to understand. Prayer doesn't make you close or holy. The blood of Jesus accomplished this.

Q: Are you saying that you don't believe in progressive sanctification?

A: We are sanctified (made holy) by the one-time sacrifice of Jesus (Heb. 10:10) at salvation, AND Paul also spoke of being "sanctified completely" after salvation (1 Thess. 5:23-24). We are commanded to "be holy for I am holy" (1 Pet. 1:13-16), and Paul makes it clear that God's will is our sanctification (1 Thess. 4:3).

What I'm opposed to is how "progressive sanctification" is routinely taught. The undeniable and glorious FACT that we *were* sanctified at salvation and therefore *are* holy right now is usually omitted or sidelined by emphasizing continued sanctification. This is the first thing I disagree with: diminishing the amazing accomplishment of Jesus on the cross.

The second objection is that of teaching that we need to *become* holy through our own religious efforts—usually by obeying laws or performing spiritual disciplines. This gives God's dearly beloved children, whom Jesus has made holy with His sacrifice, the sense that they are not holy before Him. Trying to perfect ourselves in the flesh by obeying laws or performing religious ritual is precisely what Paul calls "another" gospel in the book of Galatians (Gal. 2:21; Gal. 3:1-3). We cannot make ourselves good enough, nor could we ever do enough good to make *ourselves* holier than the blood of Jesus already did and does. What we should be teaching is the good news that we are right now holy and that this present holiness and continued growth in holiness are BOTH His doing. (Please also see Day 5.)

Hebrews 10:10 Amplified

And in accordance with this will [of God], we have been made holy (consecrated and sanctified) through the offering made once for all of the body of Jesus Christ (the Anointed One).

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and

may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.

Q: Are you saying it is wrong to tithe?

A: It is wrong to tithe if you are doing it as a law or to get blessed or avoid being cursed. However, if you “purpose in your heart” to give a certain percentage not grudgingly or of necessity, this is acceptable. If you are unable to give a certain percentage or to give anything at all, there should be no guilt associated with it. Some people have no money to give. Let them give their time. No time or money? Then be kind. Pray for someone. Give what you can give and what you want to give. The amount is not what Jesus sees. He sees your heart. Giving should bring you joy.

Mark 12:41-44

Now Jesus sat opposite the treasury and saw how the people put money into the treasury. And many who were rich put in much. ⁴² Then one poor widow came and threw in two mites, which make a quadrans. ⁴³ So He called His disciples to Himself and said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all those who have given to the treasury; ⁴⁴ for they all put in out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty put in all that she had, her whole livelihood.”

Q: Are you against the traditional organized church?

A: Receiving the message of the good news of Jesus is what is most important, and we recommend people find a place of fellowship where the true gospel is being proclaimed, no matter what the format may be. Some have “left” the organized church for something more “organic,” only to find that their new gathering is also teaching a mixture of law and grace. The most important things to find in a fellowship are that the true gospel is being taught without mixture and that everything that happens within that structure is done in love.