

# Slavery versus Freedom



## Witnessing Window

This article uses excerpts from several foundational sections of God's Holy Word. They are: **Romans 3:19-28**; **Romans 7:4-11**; **Romans 8:1-4**; **Galatians 2:19-21**; **Galatians 3:23-25**; **Galatians 5:1-5,18** You may find it useful to read these references in their entirety when studying this article.

**Romans 3:19-28 (NIV)** Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. <sup>20</sup> Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

<sup>21</sup> But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. <sup>22</sup> This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, <sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, <sup>24</sup> and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. <sup>25</sup> God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— <sup>26</sup> he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.

<sup>27</sup> Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith. <sup>28</sup> For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

**Romans 3:19-28 (KJV)** Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. <sup>20</sup> 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. <sup>21</sup> But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; <sup>22</sup> Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: <sup>23</sup> For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; <sup>24</sup> Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: <sup>25</sup> Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; <sup>26</sup> To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. <sup>27</sup> Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. <sup>28</sup> Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.



<p><b>Romans 7:4-11 (NIV)</b> So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. <sup>5</sup>For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. <sup>6</sup>But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code.</p> <p><sup>7</sup>What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "Do not covet." <sup>8</sup>But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. <sup>9</sup>Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. <sup>10</sup>I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. <sup>11</sup>For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.</p>	<p><b>Romans 7:4-11 (KJV)</b> Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, <i>even</i> to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. <sup>5</sup>For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. <sup>6</sup>But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not <i>in</i> the oldness of the letter.</p> <p><sup>7</sup>What shall we say then? <i>Is</i> the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. <sup>8</sup>But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin <i>was</i> dead. <sup>9</sup>For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. <sup>10</sup>And the commandment, which <i>was ordained</i> to life, I found <i>to be</i> unto death. <sup>11</sup>For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew <i>me</i>.</p>
<p><b>Romans 8:1-4 (NIV)</b> Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, <sup>4</sup>in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.</p>	<p><b>Romans 8:1-4 (KJV)</b> <i>There is</i> therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. <sup>2</sup>For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. <sup>3</sup>For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: <sup>4</sup>That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.</p>
<p><b>Galatians 2:19-21 (NIV)</b> For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. <sup>20</sup>I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. <sup>21</sup>I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!</p>	<p><b>Galatians 2:19-21 (KJV)</b> For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. <sup>20</sup>I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. <sup>21</sup>I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness <i>come</i> by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.</p>
<p><b>Galatians 3:23-25 (NIV)</b> Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. <sup>24</sup>So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup>Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.</p>	<p><b>Galatians 3:23-25 (KJV)</b> But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. <sup>24</sup>Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster <i>to bring us</i> unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup>But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.</p>
<p><b>Galatians 5:1-5,18 (NIV)</b> 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. <sup>2</sup>Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let</p>	<p><b>Galatians 5:1-5,18 (KJV)</b> Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage. <sup>2</sup>Behold, I Paul say unto you, that if ye be</p>



yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. <sup>3</sup>Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. <sup>4</sup>You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. <sup>5</sup>But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope.  
<sup>18</sup>But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.

circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing. <sup>3</sup>For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law. <sup>4</sup>Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace. <sup>5</sup>For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.  
<sup>18</sup>But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

This Witnessing Window supplements the article **Focus on Faith**. By focusing on faith we wish to demonstrate the huge gulf that separates the faiths of a Christian and a Mormon. A dramatic illustration is the contrasting relationship each has relative to God's commandments.

## The Mormon Relationship to God's Commands

- ➡ "But because of him {Jesus}, if we will keep his terms, which are to repent and keep his commandments, we may return to live with our Heavenly Father." **Gospel Principles page 78**
- ➡ "Through obedience to the principles and ordinances of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we can also be saved from sin." **2nd Missionary Discussion**
- ➡ "The kingdom of heaven is governed by law, and when we receive any blessing, it is by obedience to the law upon which that blessing is based( see D&C 130:21; 132:5)". **Gospel Principles page 227**

In essence, Mormons say: "Jesus did his part, now it's our turn. Our eternal life is predicated on our obedience to the laws and ordinances of the LDS church." Mormons have voluntarily placed the possibility of having eternal life under this yoke of laws and ordinances. They are slaves to the law.

## The Christian Relationship to God's Commands

- ➡ "But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code." **Romans 7:6**
- ➡ "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup>because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death." **Romans 8:1-2**
- ➡ "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God." **Galatians 2:19**
- ➡ "Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed." **Galatians 3:23**
- ➡ "Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law." **Galatians 3:25**
- ➡ "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." **Galatians 5:1**
- ➡ "But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law." **Galatians 5:18**

Christians were once slaves to the law, but having been saved; are no longer slaves to the law. We are free to live by the Spirit.

When discussing this topic with Mormons it is important to be sensitive to their unique language. Rather than *slavery* we want to use *obedience*. Rather than *law*, we want to use *commands* or *commandments*.

Expect a response like "Then why did God give us commandments?" This gives us the opportunity to point out what God says concerning the purpose of the Law.



## The Purpose of the Law Is Not

The following passages show what the law can't do:

- ☛ "For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law." **Romans 3:28**
- ☛ "For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death." **Romans 7:11**
- ☛ "For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man," **Romans 8:3**
- ☛ "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!" **Galatians 3:21**

The law has no power to save man unless he keeps it perfectly. But because of his sinful nature he can not do that. Being a means of salvation, therefore, is not the purpose of the law.

## The Purpose of the Law Is

- ☛ "Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin." **Romans 3:20**
- ☛ "What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law." **Romans 7:7**
- ☛ "So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith." **Galatians 3:24**

God's commandments show man his sinfulness through his inability to keep them. In this way, they lead man to rely solely on what Christ did for him.

## Slavery to the Law Brings Eternal Death

- ☛ "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God." **Romans 3:19**
- ☛ "I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death." **Romans 7:10**
- ☛ "You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace." **Galatians 5:4**

The consequence of placing oneself under the law as a way to eternal life is certain eternal death. Unless one keeps every command perfectly, damnation is the final verdict. There is no grace for those striving to earn eternal life through obedience.

## Freedom From the Law Brings Good Fruit

- ☛ "So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God." **Romans 7:4**
- ☛ "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God." **Galatians 2:19**

Having the yoke of the law removed takes the focus off self and puts it on God. Those freed from the burden of the law are free to praise God through their actions and their mouths. They follow God's command not out of obligation or fear, but out of thankfulness. Their works will be motivated by love, not by a desire to gain something for themselves. They will justly give God ALL the honor glory and praise for their



salvation. Someone coined the phrase: "**Christianity is not a Have to religion but a Want to religion.**"

Apostle Paul states this topic's conclusion. We are not saved BY our works, rather we are saved TO DO works.

**"For it is by grace you have been saved,  
through faith—and this not from yourselves,  
it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works,  
so that no one can boast.  
<sup>10</sup> For we are God's workmanship,  
created in Christ Jesus to do good works,  
which God prepared in advance for us to do."**

**Ephesians 2:8-10**

