**The Good News**

**Purpose**: To convict a person of their sin and help them understand the grace and righteousness that is available to them in Christ.

* What are YOU looking for? (In terms of your life and Bible studies)
* What is GOD looking for?

**Luke 18:9-14**

* In your own words, what do you understand with this short story (parable) of Jesus?
* To whom is Jesus talking? What was his main point? How does this story still apply to us today?
* Which one do you tend to be: “Those who exalt themselves” *or* “those who humble themselves”?
* In His great love, **God doesn’t look for perfection: He is simply looking for authentic humility!**

**John 1:17** This study contrasts “The Law” *versus* “grace and truth”

* The Pharisee believed he could be “saved” by practicing the Law (confident in his own righteousness)
* The tax collector sought grace from God by being honest about who he was (not in denial)

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| 1. **The Law (Old Testament)**  * The Law Condemns * We Can’t Keep the Law * All Are Lost | 1. **Grace and Truth (New Testament)**  * Grace Forgives and Frees Us * We Become His Righteousness * Without Blemish or Accusation |

**Part 1: The Law**

What was The Law through Moses? 10 commandments / First 5 books (*Torah*) / Old Testament

* The Law was given to reveal who God is.
* Jesus came to fulfill the Law. *“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.” (Matthew 5:17)*

How is this Law described in the New Testament (after Jesus)?

**2 Corinthians 3:6-9 – The Law Condemns**

Why did Paul call The Law a “ministry that brought death” and “condemns”?

* No one is able to live up to the standard of the law
* The Law was designed to show them their need for God

**James 2:10 – We Can’t Keep the Law**

If God made anything less than perfection acceptable, where do you think he should draw the line? 95%, 90%, 80%, 65%? How fair would God be to save the person who made 65% on the morality-and-works scale and condemn the person just a point behind at 64%? God can only have one performance standard – perfection!

**Romans 3:22b-23 – All Are Lost**

Can anyone achieve a right relationship with God based on their own efforts?

* Jew and Gentile are equal: We ALL have sinned and fall short! (We are lost)

**Conclusion**: It’s impossible to avoid God’s punishment that is earned by anyone who breaks his Perfect Law.

What are we to do? What is the *good news* if we have to face God’s judgement?

**Romans 5:6-10 – The Good News**

* Jesus paid the consequences for our sins by dying in our place
* We have to decide: do we accept God’s judgement on us OR do we accept Jesus’ sacrifice in our place?

**Part 2: Grace and Truth**

**John 1:17** *“grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”*

**Romans 3:20-24 – Grace Forgives and Frees Us**

What is grace? Grace is the love and mercy (*undeserved* forgiveness) given to us by God. We didn’t do anything to earn it or deserve it.

* v.20 The Law makes us conscious of our sin, brings guilt and shame, and erodes our confidence.
* v.22 Through faith in Jesus we are able to get out from under The Law and receive his righteousness as a gift. In other words, Jesus replaced our sin and shame with his righteousness.
* v.24 We are “justified” (declared *not guilty* and made *righteous* in God’s sight) by his grace which is given to us freely as a gift! **Romans 6:23**

**2 Corinthians 5:21 – We Become His Righteousness**

This is the amazing “grace” of Jesus: our sin is gone; we get Jesus’ righteousness in its place.

**Colossians 1:21-23 – Without Blemish or Accusation**

How does God view a person who has been reconciled to him through Jesus-Christ?

* We were enemies, now we are reconciled with God
* God now views us as “*holy… without blemish and free from accusation!*”

**Conclusion:** How do we respond to this amazing gift that Jesus has given us?

* Would you like to have your sins forgiven, receive God’s grace, and receive his gift of righteousness?
* This is what we are going to study next (The Perfect Plan).

**Assignment:** Start to read the Gospel of Luke (*which* *means* Good News). Some highlights from Luke:

* **Luke 7:36-50** The sinful woman and Simon the Pharisee: In which of these two characters do you see yourself the most? Do you see the difference of being under the law and under grace?
* Compare Jesus’ interactions with these two men: A young rich ruler (Luke 18:18-30) and Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) – What did these two men have in common? What was different in their thinking? What was the spiritual outcome for both of them?