

REFLECTIONS

February 19, 2006

**For the law was given through
Moses; grace and truth came
through Jesus Christ.**

John 1:17

It's Called Grace

Forty days and forty nights. That's how long it took God to give Moses the Law. Reading the details can put us to sleep. Even as we read it we wonder how anyone could abide by it all. God also knew that we could not live by it. He knew that the Law requires more than we can be. The remedy when we failed the Law came from blood sacrifices that cleansed our lives to be worthy to enter God's presence.

For thousands of years we lived under the Law in our futile attempt to abide by it. After all it makes sense to us that we have to earn God's affection, perform some act that allows us to gain entry into his presence after committing some sin that caused us to be expelled from it. That's the logic we seem to practice in life. We believe we must earn our way by walking a righteous path with no tolerance for missteps.

While I believe that God established the Law as a way to gain entry into heaven, He also knew all along that we are not strong enough to make it that way. He had another plan, a plan with the cleansing blood of a sacrificial Lamb. It's called grace.

I can remember the birth of my sons. As I held each of them for the first time and looked down on their innocent faces, a love came that they did not earn, a love that can never die. My sons are not perfect, and on occasion they have even disappointed me, but no act they ever commit will cause me to lose my love for them. They were born *from* love, and they were born *into* love—a love that is unconditional.

Now I am glad when they do good things. I am warmed by the love and care they give their children; I am honored by the integrity in their lives; I am touched by their ever growing love for the Lord. But none of those things have earned my love; and if they stopped doing them, my disappointment will never erase it. It's called grace.

That is the way my dad loved me, and that is how God loves us all, only more. He has set forth many things for us to do, ways for us to live, sacrifices to make, acts of love toward him, and ways He would wish us to live. He asks us to pray, to worship, to tithe, to be baptized, to wash, to forgive, to love others. He is glad when we do; but He loves us even when we don't. It's called grace.

We were all born *from* love, and we are born *into* love. Nothing more will earn it; and no act will lose it. He has cleansed us with the blood of the Lamb. It's called grace.

We must only receive it.

"You are the light of the world,"

Richard +

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