



Maturing The Bride

SERIES: BOOK 5

GRACE vs. WORKS

MARRYING THE TWO
TOGETHER

BY: BOB SJOGREN



UnveilinGLORY is a 501c3 nonprofit organization based out of Virginia. It is a ministry committed to helping the body of Christ discover the Glory of the Lord in new ways and to see His glory go to all the nations of the earth.

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Maturing The Bride
is a series of teachings by Bob Sjogren.

The concept is simple.
God doesn't want an immature bride for His Son,
He wants a mature bride.
A primary goal of Christianity is to mature!

This series is found in both audio, video and book form. Currently (as of May of 2024), there are seven sets of teachings.

- Book 1:** God Is Looking For A Bride For His Son
- Book 2:** One Degree Off
- Book 3:** Cat and Dog Theology
- Book 4:** Eternal Security
- Book 5:** Grace vs. Works
- Book 6:** Judgment 1 and Judgment 2 (J1 and J2)
- Book 7:** The Broken Engagement

You will be notified via email when future teachings are created (as long as we're not in your spam folder!)

If you're not on our email newsletter list, email Bob at 1JealousGod@gmail.com and ask to be put on it.

Check out the series at www.MaturingTheBride.com

Grace Vs Works

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Grace Vs Works

CHAPTER ONE

Inheritance

In my childhood, I had both Catholic friends and Protestant friends. Both tried to give me advice about getting to heaven.

My Catholic friends told me that heaven is only accessible to nice people. In other words, you have to be a good person to get there. My Protestant friends, however, would remark, "Oh no, you have to believe in Jesus totally by faith. You can't earn your way to heaven at all."

I had a small problem with both of their advice. Both had biblical evidence to support their claims. I was therefore uncertain which one was correct since they both based their positions on the scripture.

My Catholic friends would read Matthew 25:34–36:

Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come you those who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry, and you gave me food. I was thirsty, you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you welcomed me. I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came to me. (Mathew 25:34-36)

Inheriting the Kingdom (getting to heaven) was based on works.

However, my Protestant friends pointed to Ephesians 2:8–9.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not of your own doing, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

This text seems to clearly say that we are saved through faith alone and it has nothing to do with works.

I wondered who was right. Was it my Protestant or my Catholic friends?

Being much older now (and hopefully much wiser!) I realized that they were both right. *But that is not to say that it is faith plus works.* What you are about to find in this book is not a faith plus works theology. Rather, it is an understanding of the Bible that clearly portrays how faith and works are essential to the Christian life and how they are linked together.

I first began to discover this by taking a fresh look at Matthew 25:34.

Then the King will say to those on his right, "Come you those who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. (Mathew 25:34)

When the disciples heard Jesus say the words, "Inherit the kingdom," they did not have the New Testament to reference it. They couldn't google it. They couldn't go to the Blue Letter Bible and do a word search on it. All they had was the Old Testament and their memories.

In their minds, they had to be thinking, "Where in the Old Testament have we heard this word 'inherit' before?" They would have realized at that point their forefathers had been pledged the Promised Land as their inheritance.

Inheriting In The Old Testament

If you remember, the Israelites were in Egypt and were taken out of Egypt through the Ten Plagues, as described in the book of Exodus. They then passed through the Red Sea, came out on the other side, and finally came to the very beginning of what is known as the Promised Land; a land flowing with milk and honey which was to be their inheritance. We know this by looking at the Old Testament.

Let's start with the fourth chapter of Deuteronomy:

Inheritance

And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. (Deuteronomy 4:1)

That passage references the Land. Now skip on down and you will find the connection to the word ‘inheritance’:

And because he loved your fathers, and chose their offspring after them, and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence, by his great power, driving out before you nations greater and mightier than you to bring you in, to give you their land for an inheritance. (Deuteronomy 4:37-38)

Here we see that the Promised Land was their inheritance. However, there were stipulations put on it for them to get into the Promised Land. It wasn’t just given to them as a gift. Let’s see what those stipulations are:

Obedience

And now, O Israel, listen to the statutes and the rules that I am teaching you, and do them, that you may live, and go in and take possession of the land that Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you. (Deuteronomy 4:1)

God says, “You have got to not only listen to my statutes, but you have to do them. You must obey.”

Keep The Whole Commandment.

You shall therefore keep the whole commandment that I command you today, that you may be strong, and go in and take possession of the land that you are going over to possess. (Deuteronomy 11:8)

God tells the Israelites that they must keep the entire commandment if they wish to gain possession of the Promised Land.

Do All The Commandments

God seems to be very serious about wanting His people to obey Him. He now says it another way in the same chapter:

For if you will be careful to do all this commandment that I command you to do, loving the LORD your God, walking in all of his ways, and holding fast to him, then the LORD will

drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess of the nations greater and mightier than you. (Deuteronomy 11:22-23)

However, he's not done yet in communicating His heart. He adds one last thing.

Be strong and courageous—and do it all!

He continues with Joshua 1:6-7.

Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the laws that Moses my servant commanded you. (Joshua 1:6-7)

They had to be strong, and courageous to do all that the law commanded.

What God has been communicating non-verbally is this: *“You are not entitled to this land. There are stipulations put on it. You must be careful to do all the commandments; to love the Lord your God, to walk in all of his ways, and to hold to him. And you have to be strong and courageous.”*

All of this was conditional.

My Misunderstanding

When I graduated from high school, I read this passage in Joshua about “being careful to do according to all the law.” As I read it, I felt terrible.

I had just become a Christian and my faith was very young. In all honestly, I struggled with pornography. To me, I was turning to both the left and the right. It led me to ask myself the question, “Am I really a believer?”

If you have been reading these books in sequential order, you now know the difference between relationship and fellowship, but I never knew that in college. To me, you were either in or out. You were either with God, not turning at all, or you weren't a believer.

What made it worse is that I equated getting into the Promised Land with getting into heaven. So, let's ask the question. Did the Promised Land represent getting into heaven or getting

our full rewards? (How you determine the answer to that question will determine whether or not you believe faith plus works or simply faith.)

Now, if it represented heaven by itself, two things we assume would be found according to New Testament theology;

- They probably weren't forgiven yet.
- It would be by grace and not by works.

So let's look at the first one.

Were The Israelites Forgiven?

If you have not read the Old Testament frequently, you might not remember that, as the Israelites reached the border of the Promised Land, they sent in twelve spies. When the spies returned, they sent in a report.

Ten of the spies said, "No, we can't get into that land because the people are giants." However, two of the spies said, "Yes, we can, for God is on our side."

Eventually, the whole of Israel agreed with the ten spies who said that since there were giants in the area, they shouldn't enter.

The Lord, however, was not pleased with the Israelites' response. In fact, He wanted to destroy them because He was so furious.

And the Lord said to Moses, "How long will this people despise Me? And how long will they not believe in Me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them? I will strike them with the pestilence, and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." (Numbers 14:11-12)

God wanted to destroy the nation of Israel and start again through Moses, but Moses appointed himself as a defense attorney for his own people and begged God to forgive the people of Israel.

We find this in the book of Numbers:

Please pardon the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of your steadfast love just as you have forgiven this people from Egypt until now. (Numbers 14:19)

Are We Being Selfish Wanting Rewards?

course, it wouldn't be wrong. I'm her father, I made the offer, and I want her to earn those things.

Suppose my daughter did the hard work joylessly, and then said, "Dad, I just did my duty. I refuse the money, and I do not want to go out to dinner with you."

How would that make me feel? As a father, it made me feel terrible.

If we don't want to be close to God and don't want His rewards, we hurt Him deeply. Then he continues:

We flatter ourselves, and insult God when we say, "I don't care about rewards."

Review

With all this in mind, are we being selfish in wanting rewards?

I'm here to inform you that the concept of rewards was introduced in the Old Testament and is still present in the New Testament.

Rewards are a central theme of God's word. Additionally, in the whole counsel of God, rewards are part of the big picture of what God wants. They motivate people.

If you want deeper intimacy with Christ, finish strong. It is healthy to want rewards.

The pages 6-90 are not included in this sample.

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