



Fall from Grace

In order to defend a championship, stay in first place, and/or remain on top, one must continue to outperform with determination. Eventually, those who are the best of the best will fall from the high ground because it is humanly impossible to sustain high level performance forever.

The New Testament also describes a falling from the spiritual high ground. It is the greatest caution given to the believer in Christ, which the Bible calls, “**falling from grace.**”

Galatians 5:4

You people who are trying to be made righteous by the Law have been estranged from Christ. You have *fallen from grace!*

When a person believes in Christ and His finished work, God’s gift of righteousness is given as a crown. You become a champion, given the glory of the Son and indicted into the highest ground called God’s grace.

But unlike outperforming opponents or surpassing all rivals in a competition to defend a championship, when a believer in Christ begins to perform in order to stay in God’s grace, they fall from grace. I call it perseverance in the wrong direction.

Many had the notion that in order to stay in God’s grace, one must maintain physical righteousness by obeying God’s mandates and Law. They thought sin, disobedience, and ungodliness was the very thing that made you fall from high ground.

Yet the Bible is clear – high ground is grace, low ground is the law. To fall from grace is to fall to the law (perform to defend the championship of spiritual righteousness). It is only to those that try to be made righteous by the law that fall from grace.

-Can a believer fall from grace?

Only a believer in Christ can fall from grace because only believers in Christ are on high ground.

The letter to the Galatians was written to a group of believers in Christ whom began in the grace of God but then transposed the grace of God to a different way that pretends to be Good News – the Law.

-What happens when a believer falls from grace?

The believer in Christ becomes unfruitful and does not benefit from any of the blessings given

through the finished work of Christ. However, to ‘fall from grace’ does not mean that the believer in Christ loses their eternal salvation. But, it does mean that the believer in Christ is subject to the curse of the law and its bondages. It is the spiritual state where favor does not flow.

A well respected theologian says it in this manner:

- “Martin Luther described the doctrine of justification by faith as the article of faith that decides whether the church is standing or falling. By this he meant that when this doctrine is understood, believed, and preached, as it was in New-Testament times, the church stands in the grace of God and is alive; but where it is neglected, overlaid, or denied, the church falls from grace and its life drains away, leaving it in a state of darkness and death.” – **J. I. Packer**

The word *estranged* in Galatians 5:4 in the original Greek is the word *katargeo*, which means “to render idle, inactive, or inoperative; terminating all intercourse with one.” This translates the notion of not wanting to participate of something extraordinarily great.

Allow me to paint a picture for you to simplify the meaning of the word. To illustrate, it is as foolish as someone marrying their beautiful fiancé yet choosing not to participate in the honeymoon or cutting themselves off from consummating the marriage. Talk about missing out!

Galatians 5:2-3

² Listen! I, Paul, tell you this: If you are counting on circumcision to make you right with God, then Christ will be of no benefit to you. ³ I’ll say it again. If you are trying to find favor with God by being circumcised, you must obey every regulation in the whole Law of Moses.

The Holy Spirit through Paul wants to make it very clear by repeating it twice to us: If we are counting on our outperformance to make us righteous or find favor, Christ will be of no benefit to us. This means we will be subject to the Curse of the Law and its bondages.

Then, he follows it up with the spiritual checkmate: We must obey every regulation in the Law of Moses for us outperformers that despise righteousness as a gift, if we want to see the benefits of Christ in life. It’s a checkmate because it’s an impossibility.

Galatians 5:5

But we who live by the Spirit eagerly wait to receive by faith the righteousness God has promised to us.

Our only hope to live a life that bears fruit to God, live in the freedoms of Christ, and live a life with lavish favor is to receive the righteousness that Christ promised as a gift. Let’s stand firm in this high ground called the Grace of God by watchfully examining our belief system. Living under the Grace of God by intentional belief is to **live by the Spirit**. Then and only then will be you stay on high ground and be a champion forever! Amen.

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