

Appendix A

Law Commands vs Gospel Commands

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Paul provides the biblical terminology for this distinction. He calls law-keeping “works of law” (Romans 3:20, 28; Galatians 2:16) and describes the gospel response as “the obedience of faith” (Romans 1:5; 16:26). These are Paul’s own categories: works that attempt to earn salvation versus faith expressing itself through obedience to God’s commanded gospel response. This terminology comes from Jack Cottrell; see *Grace Distinctions #4: Two Kinds of Commands* at JackCottrell.com.

Law Commands reveal sin and guide holy living. Gospel Commands receive grace and enter us into Christ. This distinction resolves the objection that baptism constitutes works-righteousness—baptism is not a work that earns salvation but a Gospel Command that receives it.

Table 2. Law Commands vs Gospel Commands

	▣ Law Commands	✝ Gospel Commands
Source of Authority	God as Creator Revealing His holiness and moral expectations	God as Redeemer Revealing His grace and pathway to salvation
Paul's Category	Works of Law (Romans 3:20, 28; Galatians 2:16)	Obedience of Faith (Romans 1:5; 16:26)
Purpose	To expose sin, define righteousness, and show our need for grace	To prescribe the response by which grace is received
Biblical Examples	Do not lie, Love your neighbor, Forgive	Believe in Jesus, Repent, Confess, Be baptized
Response Type	Ongoing to obedience to law	Faith's response to the gospel
Effect of Obedience	Aligns life with God's moral will; brings blessing and order, but does not save	Receives salvation by grace through faith
Effect of Disobedience	Condemnation	Condemnation
Relation to Faith	Faith may motivate obedience, but law-keeping is not faith itself	Faith expresses itself through obedience to Gospel Commands
Relation to Grace	Law reveals the need for grace	Gospel Commands are the means by which grace is received
Post-Salvation Role	Guides Christian living	No longer the means of receiving salvation
Misuse	Trying to earn salvation through moral performance	Treating Gospel Commands as optional or symbolic
Key Analogy	Rules for living in your father's house	Instructions for being adopted into the family

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For the full argument, including Chapter 1, see the book.

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