

This book is a linear description of my lifelong journey of trying to understand life. You could call it my vision quest or my search for the Holy Grail. But like Dorothy wanting to go home, I have found it is only a matter of waking up.

It is Finished. Now What?

By Robert May

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It is Finished

Now What?



Just some thoughts before I go.

Robert May

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Law vs Grace: The Exit

The coming months were filled with controversy. They were also filled with wonder. Everyone at the church had been taught from the beginning that “You are either under the law or under grace. There was no in between. If you were under the law, you had to do the whole law. If you had broken one law you were guilty of the entire of the law. If you were under grace you were no longer under the law. But how could you know whether or not you were under grace? I once asked John this question and he said, “As long as you are trying, you are under grace.” I gave that some thought and asked myself, *Trying what? To keep the law?* This is circular logic. It leads right back to the law. I think Paul called this returning to the beggarly elements...or a dog returning to its vomit. No one had ever kept the law. But we were expected to try and keep the law in order to be under grace? Catch-22. Also, Paul had said that if you add one law to grace it is no more grace. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

But within our small group we began to see passages that had previously seemed to speak of law now speak of grace. For one thing the law that came by Moses was not given to gentiles. Another was in 1 Jn. 3:9 where it says, “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remained in him. And he cannot sin because he is born of God.” We were taught that this was pointing to the importance of celibacy. But didn’t Paul say that the promises were to Abraham and

his seed? And that was one seed, not many, and that that seed was Christ. So, if Christ be in you cannot sin. How can celibacy make it impossible for someone to sin? Out of the 613 laws, I would think at least 610 have nothing to do with sexual thoughts or activities. Paul went on to say, "...If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

Gal 3:17 And this I say, *that* the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect.

So, the promise to Abraham took precedence over the law because it had been established before the law. Everywhere we looked we were seeing grace where once we only saw more work to do in order to climb a ladder to achieve a free gift. We were beginning to see it differently. If it is by works it is no longer of grace. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. We tried to share what we were learning but the hardliners were having none of it. The more we shared what we were finding concerning grace in the Bible the angrier many became. At one point, John asked me to do a sermon on How We Are Saved by Grace. The very next Sunday another church member did a sermon on How We Are Saved by the Law. Not very subtle. Coincidentally, the cassette tape of my sermon was accidentally erased.

It felt to us that we were actually living out the events in the Bible. "All the world is a stage and we are but players..." Shakespeare had said. One of the church members said to me one evening, "If you have the Holy Spirit let's see some miracles..." It sounded to me as if he was quoting Satan. "If

you be the Son of God turn these stones into bread...” The same pattern that was shown in the book of Galatians was playing out before our eyes. People we had known for years were acting out the parts of people in the Bible. Trying to bring us back under the law. Disciples from Jerusalem were trying to put followers of the way back under the law. Paul was not having any of it. He asked the Galatians who had bewitched them.

Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?

Gal 3:2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

And what was his advice to those people?

Gal 5:1 Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.

It seemed to be that a battle of law versus grace had been going on for centuries and we found ourselves right in the midst of it. It was like it had nothing to do with us at all. And our adversaries were acting completely irrationally. The goal that the entire church had strived to understand, being under grace, was right there in front of us...available to *all of us*. Not merely the ones who had been baptized. We would quote passages that were obviously saying we were no longer under the law...

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

They would say that we had gone off the deep end or that we were possessed or that we were obviously going to hell because we had sinned after being baptized.

During this period of time our group would have Bible study meetings at each other's homes or sit around campfires discussing what we were finding in the Bible. We began to notice that not only was the Bible opening up to us but little coincidences seemed to be happening that confirmed the things we were looking into. Little signs. But there were big signs also. In one instance Jerold was on his way over to our house. He stopped on the way and went into a convenience store. While he was standing in line he happened to glance over toward the front windows and in the reflection on the glass he saw Jesus standing in the same line he was standing in. White robe, beard and all. He looked at the lady who was in front of him in line and then looked back at the reflection in the glass. She was standing in front of Jesus. Then he turned to look at the man standing in line behind him, then again looked back at the reflection in the window. He saw Jesus standing in front of the man who was standing behind him. Jesus was standing in the line where Jerold should have been standing. He was obviously shaken when he got to our house and told us what had happened.

Act 2:17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:

Act 2:18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy:

Act 2:19 And I will shew wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

This seemed to fit all that was happening to us at that period of time. The coincidences, signs, and wonders were happening at such a rate that it was beyond coincidental. We began to jokingly refer to the combination of Bible passages opening up to us and the many coincidences as “The Flood.” This was not a reference to the flood of Noah, but there had been a very heavy rain and flood in our area at that time. But also, because we were finding it almost too much to absorb or take in. We, of course, did not share these experiences with other church members. Just amongst ourselves. There were scoffers at Pentecost. In these people’s eyes we were already possessed. We did not want to be labeled as drunkards too.

Mark was wavering, thinking that we still needed the law. But Paul had said in his letters that if you add one law to grace it is no more grace...and if you be circumcised you are a debtor to do the whole law. It was a puzzle. It had always been quoted to us that the law would lead you to Christ. So, Jerold and I went over to Mark’s house and as we were having a discussion. Jerold asked Mark, “What did the Philippian jailor do to be saved?” The answer was that all he did was believe. He had done nothing. Only believed. Mark told me just the other day that that question had changed everything for him. There is a domino effect that turns everything around in a long chain of changing the way you see things. One domino falling leads to the next and so on. The law does lead you to Christ but not in the way we had imagined it would.

On another occasion Jerold and I were at Bernie's farmhouse in his basement talking. We were discussing the coincidences we had noticed, which we equated with the signs and wonders at Pentecost. Bernie was skeptical. He said, "I don't know about all that but I know one thing, I have to start reading the Bible more." In that very instant, lightning struck just outside of the basement window not ten feet away from where we were standing, and at the same instant the motor on Bernie's furnace blew up in a shower of sparks three feet from where we were standing.

We felt that we were being led out of the church that we had considered home for many years. There seemed to be no way around it. It was as if we were speaking a different language than our longtime friends were. It was as if we were experiencing Babylon or Babel where God had confused mankind's speech so that they could not understand one another. But at the same time, it seemed that the Spirit was leading us to share what we had learned about grace. John kept asking us to do classes or sermons and then people would get angry and say that we were trying to take over the church. Then John would ask us to do a sermon or class and the church members would get angry again. This happened over and over again.

The way I was seeing it was that I was getting confirmation from three different sources. The words in the scriptures and Paul's writings. Which was being opened to me by the Spirit. The coincidences, signs, etc. And the irrationality of the very people telling us that we were wrong. This brought to mind something that I had read in 1 John 5:8: "And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one."

So, the Spirit was opening the meaning of the scriptures (The water of his word). And the blood of the new and everlasting covenant was shed across the whole earth. This blood was crying out better things than that of Abel's blood. These are the three witnesses that we were experiencing. Spirit, water and blood. It also seemed to fit what Jesus had said: "If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out." Jesus' blood was shed on this earth so the coincidences and the dead words in scripture were coming to life for us. The Spirit vs. the Letter of the law.

As we shared the grace message, as we understood it at the time, our adversaries were going to great lengths to refute what we were saying. After one church meeting while having a conversation with a member, he told me that we have to keep the entire law to be saved. I asked him if he even knew all of the 613 laws in the Old Testament. He said, "No." So I asked him what hope he had of ever keeping them if he didn't even know what those laws were. He said, "None." I said nothing. How do you even respond to that mentality?

So, "The law shall lead you to Christ" took on a new meaning for us. We began to see that the way the law leads you to Christ is to bring you to the understanding that it was never meant to be kept. It was meant to be attempted and failed at. We at the church had done exactly what the children of Israel did in the book of Deuteronomy 6:25: "And it shall be our righteousness, *if* we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us." So, they thought, as we previously had, that the law could be and had to be kept and that this keeping of the law would produce righteousness. But Paul said that the purpose of the law was to bring every man guilty before God.

Deuteronomy 6:25 And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.”

We had made the same mistake as those children of Israel. We thought that we could keep the laws that could not, and were never meant to be, kept. Paul said the reason for the law was to bring every man guilty before God. And not only that, but the law also had a built-in expiration date. That was when Jesus died on the cross.

Romans 10:4: For *Christ is the end of the law* for righteousness to everyone that believeth.

Ephesians 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

2 Corinthians 5:17: Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

So, couldn't it be that one of the old things becoming new that he was referring to was the old covenant passing away to make room for the new and everlasting covenant? He did say “all things,” didn't he?

Romans 10:4-6 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above) ...

The law mentality thinks that they can climb to heaven one step at a time, one accomplishment after another. One law kept after another. We had been attempting to climb Jacob's ladder. But no one ever climbed that ladder. Not even Jacob. It was a gift that was set up on the earth and reached all the way to heaven. This is a *Type* of Christ on the cross.

It is interesting to me the things that are hidden in scripture. One day while fooling around with a calculator I was looking at the story of Jacob's ladder.

Gen 28:12 And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

I added up the sum of the Hebrew letters of that verse and found that the phrase "behold a ladder set up" added up to 888. Both the Hebrew and Greek use the same symbols for their letters and numbers. Using Gematria the theory is that like numbers equal like meanings. 888 is the sum of the name Jesus in Greek. Jesus is that ladder that reaches from heaven to earth.

* BEHOLD A LADDER SET UP = P88
 SEE JOHN 1:51
 כראשית יצא כח

רצא

10And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran. 11And he lighted upon the place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took one of the stones of the place, and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. 12And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven; and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. 13And, behold, the LORD stood beside him, and said: I am the LORD, the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. 14And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south. And in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. 15And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee whithersoever thou goest, and will bring thee back into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. 16And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said: 'Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew it not.' 17And he was afraid, and said: 'How full of awe is this place! this is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.' 18And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. 19And he called the name of that place 'Beth-el, but the name of the city was Luz at the first. 20And Jacob said: 'If God will

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When Jesus meets Nathaniel in the New Testament, he promises him this same experience that Jacob had.

Joh 1:50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

Joh 1:51 And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

So, the scriptures are pointing forward to Jesus and he is pointing back to the same story that is pointing to him. By the way, Nathaniel means “gift of God.”

So, what was the bottom line of this vision that Jacob had and was promised to Nathaniel?

Gen 28:15 And, behold, I *am* with thee, and will keep thee in all *places* whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done *that* which I have spoken to thee of.

Gen 28:16 And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely the LORD is in this place; and I knew *it* not. This story is a prophetic allegory of what would come to pass at the cross (from Jacob and Nathaniel’s point of view) but what has already come to pass from our point of view. When Jesus was set up on that cross it was the end of the “law for righteousness” and he moved into mankind. “...Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not.”

But back to the church and its controversies. As the weeks turned into months, it became quite apparent that there were two camps occupying the same space, speaking two different languages. We could see from their perspective because we had been there. They could not see from ours because they could not or would not hear us. We had been baptized in the

fall of 1990 and left around Passover in 1991. An exit that took 6 months.

It was becoming more apparent to us that something was going on behind the scenes. John would have us do a presentation or class on grace and he would appear to be very happy about it, and the very next day he appeared to be angry. Someone in the background was telling tales or gossiping.

We had settled into a rhythm of sorts with our Bible studies. We would meet at one of our houses on Thursdays. Then after a while John would call one of us on a Thursday evening and need something that could not wait. It would interrupt our weekly meetings. This began to become a recurring event. Always on Thursday evenings. Then one Thursday evening John showed up at one of our study groups. He seemed angry. I was sharing some new insights on what I called “parallels” in the life of Joseph in the Old Testament and Jesus in the New Testament. John interrupted me and the meeting and said there are no parallels. I said yes, there are, and that I could probably point out a hundred of them. John said there were no parallels. I pointed out that John had taught that to me in the first place. What in the hell was going on? I felt like I had just walked into Bizzarro World. The meeting turned into an argument and broke up shortly afterward.

The very next Thursday John asked our group over to his house for a meeting. On the way to his house one of our group was standing in line at a convenience store and happened to look down at a stack of newspapers on the rack. The headline read “Time to Leave.” I didn’t need that headline to make my decision, but it seemed like a confirmation to me at the time. When we got to John’s place he asked if there was any way that we could work things out.

I said that I was already gone. He said that was a bad attitude. It was not an attitude; it was a decision that I had already made before I arrived. We told him of the persecution we seemed to be experiencing and he said that he was unaware that it had been happening. We also told him that there was no way to communicate with people who would not hear. It was clear to me what was happening...

Heb 13:13 Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.

Heb 13:14 For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.

It just seems to happen this way. When the grace message comes into a church, the church splits. Some are just not ready to hear it even though that was their goal to begin with.

John Scudder passed away a few years after I left the church. I often think about him. I owe him more than I can say. Here is a man who had sacrificed precious family time and home life to pastor a very small church of about a hundred people. He taught me how to think. To separate the salt from the pepper, as he was fond of saying. He taught the importance of the scripture. "To the law and the prophets; If they speak not according to these there is no truth in them."

He also taught me one of the greatest truths of all. That the scriptures were written in allegory and that to understand them you have to read them as the author wrote them. As the author intended them to be read. Jesus taught the disciples what allegory was when he explained to them the parable of the Seed and the Sower. Then he asked them how they could understand all parables if they could not understand this parable. He was giving them what he called "The Mysteries."

John found himself caught between a rock and a hard place near the end of our being a part of the church. Under the law versus under grace. Oil and water. If you think you are under the law you cannot accept grace. If you know you are under grace you cannot go back to being under the law.

I often wonder if John knew what would eventually happen way back when we, as a group decided we would try to follow the law to lead us to Christ. Did John know that that decision would eventually lead to the church splitting in half? It was the same situation as when the children of Israel said to Moses, ...

Deu 6:25 And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he hath commanded us.

Shortly after leaving John's church some of us began to attend a "full gospel" church not too far from our home. I can honestly say I learned nothing there. Gone were the days when we would meet after church in a restaurant or at someone's home and talk for hours about the Bible. Any after-church dinners or such were not to discuss the Bible but were merely social affairs.

My friend Brad once pointed out to me that he had paid attention over the period of seven Sunday sermons and didn't hear Jesus' name spoken even once. But we attended for about three years. During that time period we heard of Andrew Wommack and that he was a grace preacher. We went to one or two of his meetings and Brad asked him, "Who do you listen to?" Brad had a way of cutting through the crap. Andrew's answer was Rick Joiner and Michael Williams.

Not too long after that, Dawn found out that Michael Williams was going to be speaking at a small church or community center in Indiana. So, we drove out to see him. He had said something about when the Bible opens up to us it is Jesus teaching us. After his talk I said to him, “So then I don’t need you.” His answer was, “No, you don’t.” We liked what he had to say and asked how much it would cost to have him come out and speak to a small group in our area. He said, nothing, just take up a free will offering afterwards. So, we invited him out. Twice. The first time was at Mark’s home and the second time was held in a conference room at a local hotel. This was around 1994 or ’95. Mike spoke a lot about the law being “Do good get good, do bad get beat.” I liked that. But what really got our attention was his take on: “Study to show thyself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed. Rightly dividing the word of truth.” We had heard that verse quoted to us so many times over the years but always in a sense that God would not approve of us if we did not study. Mike turned that verse on its head.

Paul was not saying that you would not be approved by God if you did not study. He was telling us what to look for as we studied the scriptures... ***That we are already approved of God.*** It’s in there; we just have to look for it. We are workmen who need not be ashamed. ***THAT*** is rightly dividing the word of truth. We ordered tapes from Mike Williams’ ministries and very much liked what we heard.

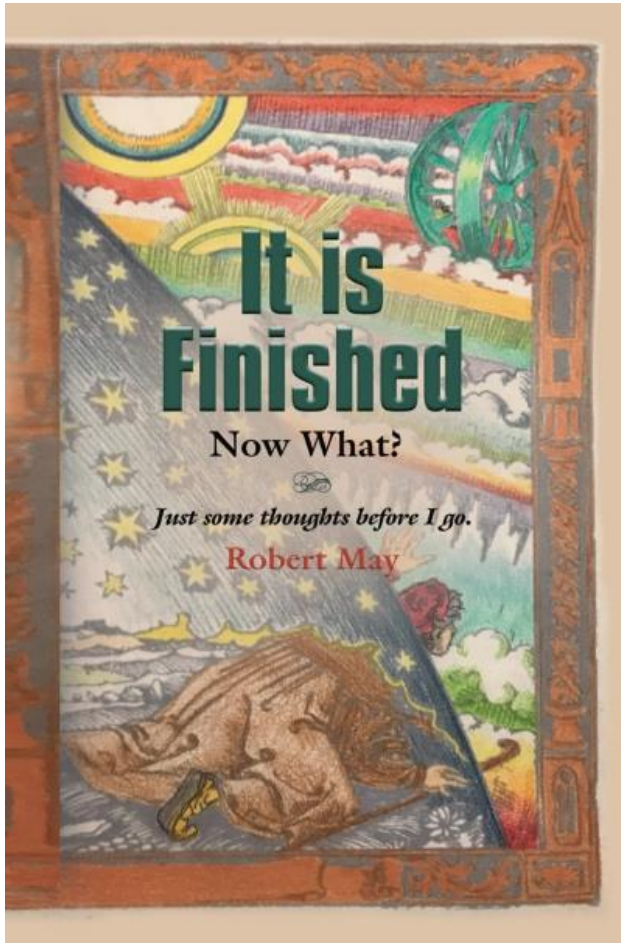
I lost track of Mike Williams’ ministries after that for quite a few years. Our little group spread out across the States, and I kept in occasional contact with some. Mark had mentioned to me that he had heard that Mike Williams was now preaching that everyone was saved. That didn’t make sense to me but I kept it in the back of my mind.

One day years later I thought to myself, “I wonder what Mike Williams is teaching these days.” So, I looked him up on the internet. I began to listen to his weekly podcasts during which he, Jeff Robertson and Don Bartlett would read through the Bible verses in context, stopping to look into the Greek definitions of words. It reminded me of our conversations after classes or church while attending John Scudder’s church. I had really missed those conversations with Brad and Mark and Jerold. The only difference was that listening to the podcasts I could not put my two cents in occasionally. But it was changing my mind about a lot of things.

If grace is a free gift, then how could one person be a recipient of grace and another cannot? An awareness of grace inevitably leads to the conclusion that all are under grace. My mind was entering into a new phase of changed perspective. A new “description” of the world.

The remainder of this book consists of ideas that I have posted on Mike’s Facebook page, Friends of Mike Williams and the Gospel Revolution. These ideas and some links to my songs appear roughly in order as they came to me. Some ideas may appear to be repetitious because some new element is being added as it occurs to me. Forgive me for that. Also, I don’t throw out the baby with the bath water so you may find things here that relate back to what I have learned over the course of years since...well, my entire life.

Mat 13:52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old.



This book is a linear description of my lifelong journey of trying to understand life. You could call it my vision quest or my search for the Holy Grail. But like Dorothy wanting to go home, I have found it is only a matter of waking up.

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