

**THE
SCHOOLMASTER**

A Study of
Law and Grace

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by

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DEDICATION

“To my childhood sweetheart, who became my wife and mother to our children . . . and who by the grace of God has somehow survived my most legalistic years.”

“WHEREFORE THE LAW WAS OUR SCHOOLMASTER
TO BRING US UNTO CHRIST,
THAT WE MIGHT BE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH”

Galatians 3:24

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INTRODUCTION

Jules Verne has been called the father of science fiction. In September of 1865 he published *De la Terre a la Lune* (From the Earth to the Moon). In this account he pictured travel in space some 14 years before George B. Sheldon applied for a patent on the "horseless carriage," 38 years before Orville and Wilbur Wright achieved their maiden flight at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, and over 100 years before Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon and announced, "That's one small step for a man, one giant leap for mankind."

Verne's uncanny insight is made even more incredible when you consider that a Frenchman like himself would have his spaceship launched from Florida. Furthermore, his craft was essentially the same size and weight as those used on the Apollo moon expedition. Finally, he would have it splash down in his novel only 2-1/2 miles from the place in the Pacific where the Apollo moon craft would splash down in reality 104 years later.

The predictive insight of Jules Verne, however, pales into insignificance by contrast with the space age concepts of the sacred Scriptures.

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Before man had even learned to build a simple archway of stone, God was attempting to invigorate his mind with the glories of celestial cities. These bold concepts were so much beyond the grasp of man at the time that God began a process of gradual revelation that would span the centuries from Adam to Christ.

At sundry times and in divers manner He would reveal Himself unto the fathers by the prophets. These revelations were so intriguing that even the angels desired to understand their meaning, but they were not able. The prophets themselves searched and inquired diligently regarding the significance of their own prophetic revelations. The message, however, was so much beyond them that they had to content themselves with only the realization that the import of their inspired words would be for a future generation.

When the fulness of time finally arrived and the message of the ages was at last fully revealed to mankind, it was so utterly beyond the grasp of the finite mind that little children would be able to accept it while the intellectual establishment would not.

A United States inventor by the name of Nikola Tesla said in November of 1928,

No rocket will reach the moon save by a miraculous discovery of an explosive far more energetic than any known. And even if the requisite fuel were produced, it would still have to be shown that the rocket machine would operate at 459 degrees below zero—the temperature of interplanetary space.

Little children, however, do not worry themselves with such intricate matters and scientific details. Consequently, they would be much easier to convince about the realities of space travel than the scientist.

In similar fashion, the glories of celestial cities are all but invisible to the hardened intellect of those whom the world deems wise and prudent. It is so much beyond the reach of earthly wisdom that we have to be born again in order to see it. We have to be converted and become like little children. We have to leave the cold and sterile stock-pile of knowledge which we have accumulated over a few short centuries of time and leap by faith into a new dimension where we can call things which are not as though they were.

The Scriptures teach that, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1).

To those who are bound to earth this is a pipe dream of ridiculous proportion. "Invisible substance" seems like "nonsense" instead of

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reality. They who are of this world would summon the believer back to what they would refer to in their ignorance as "hard facts." In so doing they would by-pass the very principle through which God spoke the universe into existence, by which the miracles of history became reality, and through which it is possible for sinful and imperfect man to achieve a right relationship with a sinless and perfect God.

One major obstacle to man's justification by faith is his propensity toward self-justification.

As long as we have a fig leaf behind which to hide we will clutch at it in desperation before we will fall down in nakedness, utter defeat, and fling ourselves on the mercy of God. What we have already done, unfortunately, means more to us than what God has promised to do.

Such a background sets the stage for what may very well be the most spectacular experiment of all time. Since we harbor delusions of our own grandeur and even fatal misconceptions of our own capabilities, God gave to us a period of Law. This law was designed by God to be a schoolmaster to drive us to the principle of justification by faith. It was intended to pry us away from the failure and frustration of earth and lead us to the joys and victories of heaven.

For one thousand five hundred years He permitted us to taste the dregs brewed up in the bitter caldron of our own imperfection. The covenant of law was and is a covenant of death.

The law brought death to 3,000 Israelites on the day it was delivered to them by Moses. Subsequently it brought death to the Levites who had strapped on their swords to slay those sinners who broke the law and ultimately, it even brought death to Moses, who gave the law, for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

The law brought death to the whole generation, but the experiment had only just begun.

Down through the long centuries came the thousands and the millions who would step into the arena of this world in the dispensation of law to match their strength and skill with the great gladiator of sin. Each would fall in the pitiful and pathetic residue of his own gore.

It was not a pleasant experiment. It was not intended to be a pleasant experiment. It was designed to make men desperate. It was designed to rub our noses in fifteen centuries of futility.

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It was a "schoolmaster," a pedagogue, not a teacher but a slave. This was to be a hard handed slave who would make us so miserable that we would come to Jesus. That was the purpose of the law. It was to lay so many painful stripes upon us that we would be driven in desperation to Jesus and the transcendent principles of His heavenly kingdom.

To this end we invite your attention to a study of the Law. If we do it properly it will bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. It will translate us from the dimension of time to that of eternity. It will elevate us to sit with Christ in heavenly places. It will enable us to reign with Him in a Kingdom where moth and rust do not corrupt and where thieves do not break through and steal.

In the words of Jesus, "I thank thee Father, Lord of heaven and earth that Thou has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. 11:25).