

AMENDMENT

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Here will be links to lyrics and lyrical commentaries to every song as soon as they are released.

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible describes God's love and grace towards mankind. It

also describes the old covenant law and what is right. Sometimes it seems to men like grace and law contradict each other, but Christ said that He did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it (Matthew 5:17). The law is still in effect: Jesus took our place and fulfilled it on our behalf so we can be deemed free and innocent by the standards of the law. Furthermore, Psalms 119:160 (AMP) says that the sum of God's Word is truth. Among Christians there is a division between those who emphasize grace and those who emphasize living perfectly according to the law. Those who focus on grace easily become very liberal and those who try to live perfectly according to the law easily become legalistic.

Several of us in Shadows of Paragon have a more legalistic background. Some years ago, we began to study the balance between God's grace and the law of the old covenant. We saw Bible verses that we had read before – but never fully reflected on or understood. Our view of the law and grace began to change profoundly.

In Romans 6:17–18, Paul writes about turning our hearts to the gospel and as a result becoming free from sin and belonging to righteousness. It's not about fulfilling the law and doing everything right, but to have one's heart changed and longing for what is good and pure. We can choose to have a heart that loves God and our neighbor. Choose to look at people and at life through the loving eyes of God! Jesus never looked at people through the eyes of the law but through love and grace. Yet, He is the only one who has ever fully complied with the law. Therefore, He is the only one who can set us free from it.

You do not have to be righteous and loving for God to meet you and want to be with you; however, if you love God and become a born again believer, you will receive His righteousness and if you associate with Him you will also become loving. Transformed in His likeness we became children of God (2 Corinthians 3:18, Gal 4: 4–7 Romans 3: 19–25, Romans 6: 14–15).

With Love,

Zharlie, Fredrik and Linus

01 AMENDMENT OF THE HEART

LYRICS

my life was filled with guilt and shame
my sin a blocking wall
unworthiness was haunting me
was I the least of all?

condemned by my own conscience
a heavy load I bore
Your holiness kept me from You
I couldn't reach the score

I thought I should know better
I shouldn't choose sin
those choices never should have been

despising myself
expecting discontent from You
expecting disappointment

my strength alone could never conquer my sin
I never grasped the meaning of love
I believed Your grace covered my sin
but wouldn't my sin limit your love for me?
I believed your grace covered my sin

and every time I failed I thought
Your power would now leave me
or at least be limited within me
I didn't understand my sin
never changed Your love for me

You believed in me

I feared the thought
if sin is no concern
would I embrace it over righteousness?

afraid I would
choose darkness over light
as if I needed an outer motive

now I know the cost of sin:
its residue alone
its consequence for me
enough to leave that zone
now I know the love You give
is everything I need
its consequence enough
enough for me indeed

Your perfect love – my mind renewed
no need for guilt and shame
grace is greater than my failures
the change of heart has affected me

instead of crawling far below
unveiled the truth I see
You walk right beside me

a love with no strings attached
to actions or performance
You call me Your child
once and for all
You took all my failures
all my shame and guilt
You believe in me

my strength alone could never conquer my sin
I never grasped the meaning of love
I believed Your grace covered my sin

but would not my sin limit Your plans for me

I feared the thought:
if sin is no concern
would I embrace it over righteousness?

the amendment of the heart has granted me
a life of fulfillment and gratitude
in the victory of Christ

I am set free from the curse of the law
I am free to know the true identity of God

the Father
the Love
the Truth
my Life

LYRICAL COMMENTARIES

This is the only song on the album whose lyrics are not based solely on a Bible study but are based more on personal experience. The text is about changing from a legalistic, self-righteous mindset into the mindset of being a child of God. The Bible is full of truths and attitudes. The more committed you are to follow the law, the more condemned you will feel when you fail. We must come to the end of ourselves in order for life with God to begin for real. It is not through our power and our talents it will happen (Romans 4:14, 5:8–11). God loves us. He will use us despite of our shortcomings. No one has ever been qualified enough through their own works.

By studying the Bible, I began to realize that sin did not matter for God to want to have a relationship with me; on the other hand, sin can cause me to no longer want a relationship with Him or cloud that relationship. Sin also often has serious consequences in our lives and in the lives of people around us; therefore, we have every reason to live by a high moral standard. The purpose of that is neither to get God to

love us more, nor to struggle in effort to keep our everlasting life (John 3:16, Romans 6:22, John 5:24). This makes all the difference in the result.

This revelation was difficult for me to handle since I struggled for many years in the efforts to “live righteously”. I thought my sin changed God’s behavior towards me. If sin does not matter much between me and God after salvation, will I not choose the pleasures of sin? It never turned out to be like that; it’s like the base of the question is wrong. The revelation of God’s love towards me changed my heart to longing for what is good and made me less worried about my failures. Instead I quickly get back on track (1 Peter 2:9). Guilt and shame disappeared almost completely when I went into the mindset of grace and being a child of God.

My love for God and the joy of everyday life grew. As a consequence, the strength of sin through the commandment weakened in my life. I find myself living holier now by no longer desiring sin to the same extent. When I was striving to not sin, the desire for sin was stronger. A trait of our human nature is that we are often tempted more by what is forbidden (1 Cor 15:56). Instead of condemnation as a result of sin, I am now thankful to God for giving me His righteousness through faith, not by works (Philippians 3:9).

/Fredrik

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02 THE SHADOW

LYRICS

for by the works of the law
shall no flesh be justified
(Galatians 2:16)

history repeats itself

it has been done to death
thinking one could live a life
deserving righteousness

the purpose of the law
was not to save us
just to convey to us
the essence of His character

setting a standard
we'd never reach
we were doomed to fail

some millenniums ago
according to the law
sacrificing spotless lambs
for the sake of vindication
this was an indication
a shadow from a future act

Christ is the end of the law
the start of a new era
the cause of the shadow
the completion of the plan

Christ is the fulfillment of the law
the beginning of an era
the proof of the shadow
the completion of the rescue plan
you may say
you're not a sinner
try to do right by your fellow man
but in contrast to
the stunning glow
of purity as white as snow ...

... we are all sinners
you won't find a righteous man
whether searching high or low

so take comfort you're not alone
all have sinned and come short
of the glory of God

you cannot accomplish righteousness
just receive it as a gift
only faith in Christ can save you
not a graveyard shift

cursed are the ones who fail
to obey the law in every detail (Galatians 3:10)
Christ redeemed us from that self-defeating cursed life
by absorbing it completely into Himself (Galatians 3:13)

sin is not counted where there is no law (Romans 5:13)
so if you're with Christ you can't sin (1 John 3:9, 1 John
5:18)

so if you're with Christ, you are under grace (Romans 6:14)

you were in a court of law
guilty as the devil's claw
waited for the verdict
Christ stepped in
He took your fall
served your sentence
returned your call

LYRICAL COMMENTARIES

We are saved by grace through faith. The law shows God's standard of righteousness: what is right and wrong. It is therefore not only correct that the Bible acknowledges the law but also necessary to describe a holy and just God. However, putting your energy into fulfilling the law by your own "good" deeds does not fit into the gospel of the New Testament. The good news is instead that Christ paid the price for our transgressions and that through Him we receive the kingdom and the blessings of God.

The title “The Shadow” refers to Colossians 2:17, where Paul describes the commandments of the law as something passing, a shadow of something greater that had come – the light of Christ. The Shadow is not about undermining the essence of the law but highlights Bible verses that show the danger of a legalistic mindset and how impossible it is to comply with the law. Consider the sharp rebuke Jesus gives the scribes and pharisees because they put the burdens of the law on the people.

As Christians, we should instead let the law of love constantly be present in our minds (Romans 13:8–10). In the new covenant, the primary purpose of the law is to show God’s standard of holiness and thereby demonstrate the need for Christ in our lives. Fellowship with Him is the root of a holy life in peace. Fellowship with the law saves no one and brings only condemnation and fear through the inevitable failures of the flesh. Romans 10:4: “For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.”

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03 YOUR NEW IDENTITY

LYRICS

when you enter the Covenant
you may not feel a thing
there may not be fireworks
don’t expect to hear the angels sing

but nothing will ever be the same
your emotions set aside
your status and identity
are formed by your allied

your criminal record is wiped clean
as the withered grass now is green
a new name and royal estate

the entrance is a golden gate

you give your heart your mind and passion
you get an entirely new fashion

adopted to being a rightful child
before your birth the forms were filed
now you are legit heir
no need to beg for grants elsewhere

everything you need
your Father will provide
His promises He'll always keep
it has been tried – it has been applied

like the prodigal son you are free
to ruin your life
to lose your way
the Father will always be waiting
your room will be intact
regardless of your misdemeanors
His love – an unbreakable contract
the son of a ruler (2 Chronicles 20:6)
the son of a king (Psalms 47:7)
the son of a warrior (Exodus 15:3)
who would want to fight you? (Romans 8:31)
what could you possibly fear? (Isaiah 41:10-11)

you are glorified by God
you are justified by God (Romans 8:30)

raise your head and count the stars
as many as their count
are the moments of bliss
He has relished on your account

you are free from sin
you are free from shame
and from all potential accusations

you are free from ailment
you are free from fear
you are free from guilt
and from eternal condemnation

so be head – not tail
so be strong – not frail
rise above your foes
don't stoop to their level

rise above – rise in love
rise in the wisdom of your new identity
rise above – rise in love
let your identity be in Jesus Christ

LYRICAL COMMENTARIES

When we receive Christ, everything becomes new (2 Corinthians 5:17). The change always takes place in our spirit but is not necessarily manifested in our body or in our soul. Some people can literally feel a change but far from everyone does. Even those who can feel God's presence clearly sooner or later need to base their faith on what God's Word says more than on their feelings and experiences. Our feelings are merely an unreliable mirror of what is spiritual, while God's Word shows us who we are in the new covenant. We need to realize that what God says about us is more true than what we can perceive with our own five senses.

If His Word and our experiences don't match, we need to choose to believe the promises of God over our own feelings and circumstances. This is immensely important because the promises of God are activated through faith.

The legalistic Christian usually primarily identifies with their fallen nature and struggles to overcome their flesh. However, God's will is that we, as Christians, should identify with who we are and what we have in Christ instead. This is an important part of the transformation of the mind mentioned in

Romans 12:2. "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). The truth that God sees in us is now in our spirit. We should choose to look at ourselves through the eyes of God, so that we can worship in spirit and in truth – accepting the perspective of being in right standing with God through Christ, no longer trying to get there through works (2 Corinthians 5:17–19, 21).

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04 MINDBLOWING

LYRICS

like the highest tower
You rise above all others
in character, importance, excellence
like the highest tower
You rise above all others
from past to future tense
like the highest tower
You rise above all others
indivisible by nature
unbreakable like the sky

always at the right place at the right time
no place no instance
no wall no fence
can limit Your omnipresent existence

infinite in power
You rule with love and grace
mercy is a gift to us
our transgressions You erase

You know all I am
still You want me
when I'm gone
You plan a feast for my return

my well-being
Your primary concern

the sole being
with the whole picture
who knows what's true
who knows what's right
who separated day from night
You have no beginning
Eternal Friend
no boundaries to be caught within
and no, You have no end
You are the Father
You are the Son
You are the Helper
for everyone

indivisible by nature
unbreakable like the sky
mind-blowing to us
the fact that You can never die

infinite in power
You rule with love and grace
mercy is a gift to us
our transgressions You erase

You know all I am
still You want me
when I'm gone
You plan a feast for my return
my well-being
Your primary concern

You are the source of love
love cannot be content alone
You are a self-reliant person
still You have a need

for Your love to be returned
so that love can be complete

LYRICAL COMMENTARIES

Psalms 8:4 says, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" In fact, God in all His splendor, greatness and omnipotence is completely independent, but God's greatest quality is that He is love. Because He is love, He wants to be loved in return. He longs for our response to His love. Sometimes we forget how much it blesses God that we love Him in return and that we respond to His goodness. Some believe that what they accomplish blesses God, but what He desires most is our love and our hearts.

He is the perfect paragon of a loving Father. He upholds everything through His Word (Hebrews 1:3) and in Him everything is that was, that are and that is to come (Hebrews 2:10). His greatness and splendor extend vastly beyond any human comprehension – still He wanted and chose to create mankind to fellowship with Him and His creation. In the moment of creation, He saw every person that would ever exist (Revelation 17:8). His great love and desire to fellowship with us transcends time and space over and over again through history (2 Peter 3:8).

As Jesus hung on the cross, He knew it was a necessary sacrifice for you and me to be able to receive everlasting life and fellowship with Him (Hebrews 12:2). He saw the result of His actions and what it would mean for us. In the midst of horrible, unjust pain and suffering, He could therefore experience the innermost joy that you might be His one day. A similar joy that comes by looking at ones most beloved bride – rescued and arising from ashes, holy and justified – "just as if I'd never sinned". The fact that He can never die also correlates with the truth that God is love, so God's love for us can never die. He does not shift in temper or attitude – He loves us (James 1:17, Romans 11:29).

05 THE OATHKEEPER

LYRICS

a true relationship is based on trust
but how do we know when to entrust?
what determines if our word is an empty lie
is there another way to know
besides the test of time?

might there be something in our nature –
something within our DNA
cultures all throughout the world
have practiced and still do today

the goal – to make life better
improve prosperity
two twisted wires – stronger than one
if we work together – we will overcome

everlasting Covenant
a pact sealed in blood
assuring the promise is authentic
blood representing life
lives mixed together
and swearing by the highest oath
not to be a breaker

to love you like I love myself
through drought and through floods
will change the way that I behave
through truce and through wars

a practice of mutual concession
a promise from both sides
all I own – now your possession
anything you ask – I'll do

I'll stake my life for your protection
I'll help you to get through

“if you join Me and be My ally
if you love Me and respect
I will give you part of My kingdom
My fortress will protect
your enemies – My enemies
your war is My war
this is our oath
if they rise up against you
they will face us both”

everlasting Covenant
a pact sealed in blood
assuring the promise is authentic
blood representing life
lives mixed together
and swearing by the highest oath
not to be a breaker

to love you like I love myself
through drought and through floods
will change the way that I behave
through truce and through wars

I didn't have that much to offer
the favor was all on my side
with God on the other side of the table
it was easy to decide

not much for me to lose and
so very much to gain
the benefits progressed
as He continued to explain

“if you join Me and be my ally
if you love Me and respect
I will give you part of my kingdom

My fortress will protect”

nothing for me to lose and
so very much to gain
with God Almighty by my side
my life won't be in vain

nothing for me to lose and
so very much to gain
with God Almighty by my side
my life won't be the same

LYRICAL COMMENTARIES

Western culture has not practiced blood ties in modern times. The knowledge about blood unions in general is thus very limited. The new covenant is established with the precious blood of Christ (Hebrews 9:15–18). The purpose of “The Oathkeeper” is to show what a blood covenant means and also what it means to be in covenant with God.

The understanding of the promises of God becomes stronger with the realization that we are in a blood covenant with Him. In this way, Jesus both fulfilled the law (Mark 5:17) to remove its' curses and opened the heavenly floodgates. He released the blessings of God into our lives, promised to those who kept the law. Jesus kept the law in our place and paid our debt for us. Through the covenant in His blood, we are made partakers of the victory over death – we void the curse and receive all the blessings of God (Hebrews 9:12). We can, through this covenant, therefore boldly come unto the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16), knowing that the Lord will receive us. Trusting He will stand with us and that He indeed is for us – not against us. Hebrews 13:5b says: (...) “for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

Read about the blessings that come through keeping the law, which all in Christ do, in Deuteronomy 28:3–13. In Matthew 24:35 Jesus says: “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My

Words shall not pass away.” His Words and promises are eternal. He is the true Oath keeper.

ADDITIONAL PHRASE COMMENTARY

“...if you love Me and respect” the word “respect” in this occurrence is directed to the heart’s turning to the Lord and giving Him the honor of being right about us needing Jesus for salvation. In the moment that we believe it in our hearts and confess it with our mouths, we are saved (Romans 10:9). We have the promise of protection; He is our fortress (Psalms 91:2, 2 Samuel 22:2). He will not leave us nor forsake us. If we choose to leave God, He will still love us the same. He will uphold His part of the covenant, but we won’t use our faith to enable His promises for us.

06 BEHIND THE TORN VEIL – COMING SOON