

Romans Chapter 7

- Paul anticipates the next logical question: What is the relationship between the Christian and the Law?
 - In this chapter we see Paul's agony over trying to personally apply the truths from chapter six in his own life.
 - Knowing the truth isn't the same as living it.
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The first verse is connected with Romans 6:14 & 15

V: 1 Paul is speaking primarily to the Jewish believers; secondly he also speaking to the Christian or Gentile believers who would willingly place themselves under the Law – after they have been justified by the blood of Christ.

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

- The connection is “*You should know that you are not under law – or are you ignorant of the fact that the law has dominion over a man only when he is alive?*”
- The Mosaic Law held power over a Jew as long as they lived.
- As believers we are dead in Christ, like as He was, then risen again by the Holy Spirit to live in Christ.

Galatians 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of / in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

V: 2-4 Paul uses marriage as an illustration, he's not so much teaching specifically on marriage, it's an illustration on how death frees a person from the bonds that existed under the law, but it does give us a couple of clues about marriage generally.

- A married woman was bound to her husband as long as he lived, or until he divorced her. In Judaism women had no right to divorce their husband.
- Paul used this analogy to say that you were once married to the Law, and there was no way out except by death. You had no where else to go, nothing else you could do, you were trapped.
- *Only death frees us from our relationship to the law.*

- If only the Law would die, we would be free from it's hold, but the Law is in excellent health!

Matthew 5:18 “For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

- Gentiles were never under the Mosaic Law. Even the early church leaders decided not to impose the Law upon the gentile believers, knowing that even they weren't able to bear it themselves. **Acts 15:13-24**
- Paul was showing them that Christians, whether Jewish or Gentile, were no longer under the law, because they died with Jesus on the cross.
- Dead to the Law through the body of Christ.

John 1:17 “For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.”

Galatians 2:20 “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of / in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.”

- Why are we freed from the Law? Why are we given this new life?

“^{4b}... *that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*”

John 15:8 “Herein is My Father is glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples.”

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

- We are under the law as long as we live, be if we died with Christ, we were crucified with Christ.
- Being dead with Christ, buried with the likeness of His death and risen in that newness of life.
- In the new life that I now have in Christ, I am no longer under the law, but under grace because of our death with Christ.
- We are freed from the law.

V: 5-6 The Law worked in our bodies to bring forth the fruit (sin) that leads to death.

This is speaking of the fruit of the flesh:

Galatians 5:19-21 “¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

- So they that do these things - will not inherit the kingdom of God, that is just a quaint KJV way of saying they will go to Hell.
- The law wasn't intended to be the standard by which we would live, it is a yard stick by which we come to understand where & who we are before a Holy and Righteous God.
- Now being delivered from the Law, which was the 1st covenant, we have a new life in the new covenant.

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.”

- The Law could never make us righteous, if it could then Jesus came and died for no reason.

Galatians 2:21 “I do not frustrate / set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain.”

- The Law was never intended to make man righteous, it was only intended to condemn us, to show us our sin, exposing our guilt.
- This also raises the issue of the letter of the Law and the Spirit of the Law:

2 Corinthians 3:6 “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”

- The newness of life and a new dispensation in dealing with us is not really a new idea:

Jeremiah 31:31 “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah.”

Ezekiel 36: 26-27 “²⁶A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give

you an heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments, and do them.”

V: 7-25 Paul is describing his own spiritual journey, and it's revelation of himself.

- Note the use of all the personal pro-nouns: I – me – myself etc.

V: 7-8 The Law isn't sin, it's a revealer of sin, it brings us to an awareness of our sin.

Galatians 3:24 “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”

- Paul didn't know what sin was until the Law revealed it – for without the Law, sin was dead.

Romans 3:20 “... for by the Law is the knowledge of sin.”

- Paul testifies that the commandment not to covet revealed that that was exactly what he was doing.

“^{8b}*all manner of concupiscence.*” “Lust, covetousness, evil desires.”

- I doubt that Paul's weren't so much the sensual sins that we associate with “lust”, but this was probably more of a lust for prominence, and position, the pride of knowledge.
- Paul used covetousness as his example instead of murder, stealing, or adultery. Using the 10th commandment, which unlike the rest - is about an inward attitude as opposed to an outward action. It's about an inward attitude that usually leads to an outward action.
- Paul may have done pretty well with the other commandments, but perhaps the Lord used his own covetousness to reveal sin in his life, something that takes place in the mind as opposed to the body.

We're still called to keep those things in check:

1 John 2:15-17 “¹⁵Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. ¹⁶For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. ¹⁷And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.”

- The more Paul studied the law, the more he realized how far he was from it.

- The Jews then and now have tried to keep the Law as their claim to righteousness. Yom Kippur – the day of atonement. It is now a day of reflection over their past actions, hoping that the good outweighs the bad.
- But for all of this there is no sacrifice to cover or put away their guilt.
- It seems that it is part of our human nature to want to do exactly those things that we are told not to do. We're told not to covet, so we covet all the more. We're told to sit down, now we really want to stand up!

V: 9 Paul had a radical salvation experience on the road to Damascus. Prior to that he thought he'd kept the law, because it was physical – not spiritual.

- Paul was left blind from his experience, then God sent Ananias to pray for him and he received back his sight. Paul began to preach boldly the Gospel of salvation through Jesus.
- After that Paul headed out to Arabia (Gal. 1:17-18) for 3 years of personal discipleship with Jesus, it was there that he learned that the Law was spiritual. That was when he went from having lived without the law to coming to grips with what it really meant, when sin revived in his life, he realized he was dead.
- Prior to being convicted by the Holy Spirit Paul was alive; that is, his sinful nature was comparatively dormant and he was blissfully ignorant of the pit of iniquity in his own heart.
- Then came that awful realization of the depth of his sin nature, which was now thoroughly inflamed. He came face to face with the absolute depravity of man.

Jeremiah 17:9 “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

- The more he tried to obey, the worse he failed. His hope of “self-righteousness,” of his own ability to be righteous before the Law died a miserable death.

Paul discovered on a very personal level what he wrote about:

Romans 3:10 “As it is written, there is none righteous, no not one.”

James 1:14-15 “¹⁴But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

V: 10-11 The commandments bring life, but first we must die.

Jesus said:

Matthew 16:25 “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it.”

- Ideally, the Law promised life to those who obey it.

Leviticus 18:5 “Ye shall therefore keep My statutes, and My judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the Lord.”

- One of the hardest things to do is to try to fulfill the requirements of the Law, or for that matter to live the Christian life apart from the Holy Spirit empowering us.
- Trying in our flesh to love our neighbors as ourselves, to serve in any capacity in the flesh, as opposed to the power of the Spirit .
 1. It’s a lot of work.
 2. It becomes very frustrating.
- We try to be more considerate, to seek to be more spiritual, to be more loving to others – all things that we learn in the New Testament.
- Eventually we run into the impossibility of our goals – because of our sin nature.
- He always takes the biggest piece of the cake, or “he got that last piece”, I can’t believe it! He did it again... that bitterness and frustration begins to grow, slowly at first, subtly – not that we want it too, it’s just our nature.
- Eventually, if unchecked, it will kill us, kill our walk, and kill our witness.
- Paul is saying that it destroyed him, and who he thought he was.
- Spiritualize: they didn’t pray; or that is so in the flesh – Pharisaical attitude...

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death...”

- A life spent in His presence pretty much excludes the judgment of others - because you see all too clearly your own sin. Like Isaiah, “**woe is unto me, a man of unclean lips...**”
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V: 12-13 The Law is good, we're the ones who are rotten to the core.

Psalm 19:7-11 “⁷The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple; ⁸the statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart; the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes; ⁹the fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever; the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether. ¹⁰More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold; sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. ¹¹Moreover by them Your servant is warned, and in keeping them there is great reward.”

- The problem isn't with God's Word, it's with us!

Isaiah 53:6 “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way...”

- All of this was that we might know what sinners we are: most of us don't need Romans Ch. 7 to figure that out!
- [The answer isn't in reformation, it's in transformation.](#)
- Jose Carrillo / turn over a new leaf.
- After many failures, I needed something much more radical.

Romans 12:2 “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind that you may know what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God.”

- Sin becomes all the more sinful or obvious when it's compared to righteousness, initially to the Law, and ultimately to Jesus, and to His Word.

V: 14 By interpreting the Law in a physical sense, the Pharisees believed that they had attained righteousness, they were righteous in their own eyes, blameless because they didn't commit physical murder or adultery. But Jesus completely re-defined all of that because when you looked at it from a spiritual perspective, they and all of us are guilty.

Romans 3:10 “There is none righteous, no, not one.”

- Once we've come to that hard reality, that we're sinners by nature, that we're carnal. We start to see the war between the carnal nature and the Spirit.

Psalm 119:130 “The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple.”

John 6:63 “It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

- Knowing that we're sinners saved by grace, we want, we desire, we crave to do the right thing.
- Paul describes this, he recognizes that the desires of his heart are right, he wants to do good, but that he / we lack the power to actually do it.
- The Law is spiritual, it deals as much with man's attitude as much as it does with actions.
- If the law were just physical, then we could strive to keep the law, a lot of work but maybe there is a chance we could do it.
- The Pharisees sought to keep the law from an outward perspective: No work on the Sabbath day – ok, but now what constitutes work or a burden?
 - How many nails could you have in your sandals before they constituted a burden – they had an actual number.
 - What about a wooden leg, or false teeth? These were all defined – all outward appearances.
- As Jesus said, they were so focused on the small things, that they forgot the weightier matters of the law:

Matthew 23:23 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithe of mint and anise, and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.”

- The Pharisees were so blinded by their mistaken “interpretation” of the Law, that they actually ended up hindering the work of God, all because Jesus did good on a Sabbath day.
 - Synagogue in Capernaum. The man with the withered hand, an immediate confrontation developed. Jesus tells the man to stand up – is it lawful on the Sabbath day to do good or to do evil? They would rather have withheld healing from the man.
 - They were ready to kill Jesus over these things.
 - They got so wound up about outward observance, that they lost sight of the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:6 “Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”

- We can do the right thing with the wrong motive or attitude, and it could be totally wrong

Matthew 15:19 “For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.”

- It wasn't just the religious leaders: The rich young ruler came to Jesus and said what must I do? Jesus said keep these points of the Law – essentially the young man says “been there, done that”.
- Jesus told him to sell his stuff, give it the poor, and to follow Him. The young man went away sorrowful – he couldn't do it – Jesus was helping the young man to see the covetousness that was in his heart.
- Outwardly he looked ok – but his heart...
- What is the point of all of this? The point is that none of us can keep the law, we're all sinners – and we need to come to Jesus and admit that simple fact.

Paul challenged the Galatians:

Galatians 3:3 “Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?”

- We need to be careful not to engage in a lifeless – spiritless religion, but to maintain our relationship – abiding in Him.

V: 15 Frustration – I can't do anything right. It's always the opposite!

- As much as I feel for Paul, I'm very encouraged – if even Paul the A-postle struggled with these things – it makes me feel better about my own walk.

Galatians 5:17 “For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.”

V: 16 Paul describes that in doing things that he knows to be wrong, he is basically taking sides with the law against himself, because the law condemns those same things.

- He gives an inward assent that the Law is good. Confirmation of sorts.

V: 17 This leads to the conclusion that the culprit is not the new man in Christ, but the sinful, corrupt nature that dwells in us.

- This is not an excuse to sin, it is simply identifying the suspect.
- The non-Christian lives after their flesh, and has no conflict with it. But the Christian's desires have changed, but he's still in his body of flesh. He wants to please God in his flesh and tries to conform it to the will of God. But he finds himself doing the things that he doesn't want to do.

Jeremiah 17:9 "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"

V: 18 The total depravity of man is and becomes so real to us as we seek to do good.

- We cannot progress in holiness until we come to the same conclusion as Paul.

Paul is describing what Jesus taught:

Matthew 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in Spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven."

- The desire to do good is there, but the power to do that same good is lacking.

Remember the words of Jesus to Peter when He found him sleeping:

Matthew 26:40-41 "⁴⁰... what, could ye not watch with Me one hour?" "⁴¹... the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

- In that battle between the Spirit and the flesh in us, we need the Holy Spirit to tip the scales!

Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Galatians 5:16 "This I say then, walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

V: 19-20 Paul repeats, for emphasis that there is a real conflict between the two natures. The nature of sin, which we all possess, and the Spirit.

Romans 6:12 "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof."

- Again identifying the suspect: the old nature.

V: 21 Paul finds this law / principal, that evil is always with him, even though he wants to do good.

1 Peter 5:8 “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”

V: 22 The new nature delights in the Law of the Lord, the new nature delights in the things of the Lord. Being in Bible study, worshipping the Lord, having fellowship, being drawn into and excited by prayer – just being the presence of the Lord.

- The inward man wants to do the will of God – just like Jesus did.

Jesus said:

John 4:34 “Jesus said to them, My meat / My food is to do the will of Him who sent me, and to finish His work.”

V: 23 Knowing what is right, wanting to do the right thing, is not the same as being able to actually do it.

- Warring in the Spirit: so many people think they can enter that arena, that battlefield not having been fed and strengthened, not prepared, no armor, no helmet, no sword – and wonder of all wonders we get creamed and can't figure out why...

Ephesians 6:10-18 “¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹²For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; ¹⁶above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”

2 Corinthians 10:4 “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.”

V: 24 Paul's struggle finally brings him to the conclusion, the understanding, the acknowledgement of his own inability – he can't do it himself.

- We can't deliver ourselves!
- Not that we don't try, over and over again.
- 10 steps for a victorious life, 12 steps to deliverance. None of it works.
- His cry wasn't "how" am I going to do this? It was "who" is going to do this?
- God allows us to struggle and toil, until we come crying to Him for help.

- That desperate plea that Jesus longs to answer in each of our lives!

Matthew 11:28-30 “²⁸Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. ³⁰For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”

V: 25 Our deliverance lies in Jesus!

Philippians 2:13 “For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure.”

- There are those times when He allows us to see and perhaps struggle with this issue or that, then we surrender it to Him, He works it out, then we praise Him.
- Then another issue comes up, we see something else we didn't see before, and another – and it's like that until we get to be with the Lord.

Romans 6:12-13 “¹²Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. ¹³Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”