

# ROMANS

Romans 7:7-25

Vindication of the Law & the Real Explanation  
of the Human Predicament

# The Law is not sin

- In our study last week...
  - We had to be ***released*** from the law, had to die to that which we were bound, so that we could serve in newness of Spirit... (7:6)
- So the question becomes – “is the law sin?”
  - It bound us (7:6) and It convicted us (7:5)
  - It was a shadow (Col 2:16&17; Heb 8:4-13; Heb 10:1-10) never intended to be once for all time.
  - It was a tutor or guardian (Gal 3:21-27)

# The Law is not sin

- "Far from it!"
  - The law, as a tutor or guardian TAUGHT us about sin
  - Sin would not have been known except for the law
    - Paul gives us an example –
      - "I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said '**YOU SHALL NOT COVET**'"
      - Coveting would have existed, but would not have been RECOGNIZED as a sinful thing
  - Why do you think Paul chose coveting as an example?

# The Occasion of Sin

- Sin personified

- “Taking an opportunity”
- “produced in me concupiscence”
- “deceived me”
- “killed me”

- Sin in these passages parallels the “sinful passions” of verse 5

- Can you think of another example of sin personified?
  - Gen 3



# The Occasion of Sin

- “apart from the law sin is dead”
  - Sin lies dormant waiting for the occasion
- “I was once alive apart from the Law”
  - At what point in our lives might this be true?
- “but when the commandment came”
  - When it came to me – to my consciousness
- “sin came to life”
  - *gr – anazao* – “to live again, recover life”

# The Occasion of Sin

- “and I died”
  - Ephesians 2:1-7
- “and this commandment, which was to result in life”
  - The true purpose of law was to save lives, on condition of obedience (Lev 18:5, Rom 10:5)
- “proved to result in death for me”
  - Seduction of sin led to death for **DISOBEDIENCE**

# The Occasion of Sin

- “for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, ***deceived me***” (emphasis apl)
  - All mankind falls prey to the deception and false promises of good from sin
- “and through it, killed me”
  - There is only ONE result from sin – death. All mankind is under the same penalty, once the commandment comes to them and sin comes to life in our lives.

# Conclusion regarding the Law

- “the Law is Holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good”
  - Paul concludes, as we all would agree, that God’s Law and commandment are not sin. The Law is of God, by God and for our good.
  - Paul states this to prevent others from reaching a false conclusion about his teaching – to prevent them from confusing sin with the Law.
  - Sin abuses the Law through deception



# Goodness of the law further vindicated

- Can the commandment really be good when the life that is its goal remains unrealized and it turns out to be “unto death” after all?
  - This is an erroneous conclusion
  - We can't blame the good for the bad – we must pin the blame squarely on the culprit
- **SIN**, not the law is responsible for death
- The law shines a spotlight on sin to show what a monster it really is

# Justification of this reasoning regarding Sin and the Law

- “For we know that the Law is spiritual”
  - Believers understand that God does no evil, His creations are holy and good and that the righteous Law has the same spiritual nature as its Giver. (John 4:24; John 6:63)
  - If the law is not to blame, we must find the true culprit
- “but I am fleshly”
  - Flesh rather than spirit, vulnerable to sin (Matt 26:41)

# The REAL problem

- Notice the tense changes starting in 14b through the end of the chapter – Paul is no longer writing history, how “sin deceived and killed” but now describes his fleshly nature which remains even after conversion.
  - We continue to fall pray to sin, and it is not our mastery of sin that saves us – we will struggle with sin all our fleshly life – but the Deliverer of 7:25 has saved us from our own sin

# The Real Problem

- “Sold into bondage to sin”
  - As fully under the domination of sin as a slave is to his master
  - Sold implies that we didn’t start there – we were not born a slave, but sold into slavery.
- “For”
  - Paul explains being “sold into bondage of sin

# The Real Problem

- "I do not understand what I am doing; for I am not practicing what I want to do, but I do the very thing that I hate."
  - Paul describes a life where our passions can and do overrule our sense of knowing right from wrong.
  - We understand the law, but our fleshly bodies override our God seeking minds and cause us to sin.
  - We are slaves under the control of a cruel master, mindlessly carrying out his bidding.

# Conclusion regarding law

- “However, if I do the very thing I do not want to do, I agree with the Law, that the Law is good.”
  - Paul’s intention was to do what the law said, but he did the bidding of sin instead – the thing he hated.
  - Even though he did not do what the law said, clearly, he considered the law to be good.
  - Paul’ teaching shows the law is a good thing, and even though Paul’s life is what it is, he cannot say otherwise than that the law is good.

# Sin's control over carnal man

- "But now, no longer am I doing it, but sin that dwells in me"
  - Paul is not passing the blame. He is admitting the grip sin has on his life. He is in the grip of sin. It is of course his fault otherwise he could not be held responsible.
  - Paul is "sold into bondage to sin" – However he got into it, he's in it and he cannot himself get out.
  - Not a loss of free will, but a willing loss of control

# Sin's control over carnal man

- “For I know that good does not dwell in me, that is, in my flesh”
  - Man is both flesh and spirit. The spirit wills to do good and be good, but the flesh prevents that from happening
  - Sin has taken over the use of the body with its members



# Sin's control over carnal man

- “for the willing is present in me but the doing of good is not”
  - gr – *parakeimai* – *to lie beside, to be near, to be present, at hand, ready*
  - “in me” – Paul’s spirit
  - “doing of good is not” – sin prevents the flesh from following through on the spirit’s will to do good.
  - Again, not a loss of free will, but a willing surrender of control to sin

# Sin's control over carnal man

- “For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want”
  - Paul illustrates the frustration of sin in a Christian's life
    - Not only did he not do the good he willed to do, he did the opposite of what he really wished to do
  - He practiced evil, then looked back with regret and could say – “that is not what I want for my life”
  - Yet the sinful act kept being repeated

## Sin's control over carnal man

- "But if I do the very thing I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but sin that dwells in me"
  - The first "I" here is Paul's flesh, the second "I" is Paul's spirit, the third "I" is again Paul's flesh which is not in control but under the enslavement of sin
  - Sin that has been willingly let in, but now controls the "sinful passions" of the flesh.

# Paul's final observation

- "I find then the principle that evil is present in me"
  - Paul's experience shows him this unmistakable rule – sin is present and in control
- "the one who wants to do good"
  - Yes, even Paul, and apostle of Christ, is a slave to sin.
  - This is not a description of a man given over to sin who does not care, a worldly person, but a person who appreciates law but still finds sin in his life.

## Paul's final observation

- “For I joyfully agree with the law of God in the inner person”
  - Paul wholly accepts and confirms the law of God in his spirit – the law **IS** holy and righteous and good
- “but I see a different law in the parts of my body waging war against the law of my mind, and making me a prisoner of the law of sin, which is in my body's parts”
  - Sin, as the master, a tyrant, **CONTROLS** the slave.

# Deliverance in Christ

- “Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free of this body of death?”
  - A *desperate* cry for help from a miserable, distressed Christian attempting to live righteously
  - A person is **HOPELESS** without Christ, even a “good” person
  - If the human struggle for acceptability with God does not bring us to cry out as Paul does in 24, then we ARE hopeless and God is unreachable.

# Deliverance in Christ

- “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”
  - Deliverance has been provided
  - Paul shows us his mind is full of the truth of Christ that he will reveal to us in chapter 8 – (8:11, 23-25)
  - A final and complete deliverance “from the body of this death”

# Deliverance in Christ

- “So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin”
  - A summary of the experience described in 14-25
  - A man under law and left to himself without a deliverer – the reason why sin dominates one “in the flesh” struggling to attain righteousness on the basis of law
  - **WITHOUT GRACE**, the flesh is ruled by sin under a legal system of justification, hopeless to escape.



Next week

- Romans 8:1-11
- Deliverance from Condemnation
  - The idea that there is "No condemnation in Jesus Christ"