

The New Way of the Spirit

Romans 7:1-13 Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? ² For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. ³ Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.

⁴ Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God. ⁵ For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. ⁶ But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.

⁷ What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.” ⁸ But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. ⁹ I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. ¹⁰ The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹ For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. ¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

¹³ Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.

❖ What is Paul Doing Here?

- 1) We are no longer bound to law keeping
- 2) The Goal is Bearing Fruit for God
- 3) The Law Was a Good Tool Used Against Us
- 4) The Law Has a Good Purpose
- 5) We Now Serve God by the Spirit

❖ 1) We are no longer bound to law keeping

- We are going to understand this a lot different that many in his audience...
 - **for I am speaking to those who know the law...** he says
 - Nonetheless... The idea of law keeping for salvation continues today greatly
- **So... His Jewish Audience that he is addressing in this book will understand this one way...**
 - The principle remains the same even today...
- **What does he mean here by law keeping?**
 - First of all... There is no mention here of the law being no good...
 - **So... Know first of all that not keeping the ten commandments is not in mind here...**
 - Because... as a rule of life, the 10 commandments are good
 - As a rule of life... not for earning of salvation... and that is the rub...
 - **1 But... I believe what Paul has in mind here... Is that:**
 - The Law... being all the rules and regulations... the ceremonial laws, the sacrificial laws
 - Christ has come along and fulfilled them...
 - They were simply shadows of Jesus Christ the Son of God
 - And He fulfilled them in His life death and resurrection...
 - **2 And... The idea that a person must keep the law as a means of Righteousness**
 - So... That was the thought... keeping the law would make a person right before God...

- **What does Paul mean here by law keeping?**
 - What exactly is he saying is abolished?
 - The keeping of the rules, regulations, ceremonial, and sacrificial laws as a means of righteousness
 - He is saying... this is now been done away with...
- **How Does this apply to us in our law keeping?**
 - I add this because... really... how many of you grew up sacrificing animals?
 - How many of you know about washing because of uncleanness?
 - ◆ Our children could use a lesson in washing!
- **Again... How Does this apply to us in our law keeping?**
 - I would say much in the same way...
 - Even those born away from the Law of Moses... still have law written on their hearts
 - Romans 2:14-15 For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵ They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them
 - **We as people on this earth are notorious for thinking... wrongly about the law**
 - **First... we may think... well... I have to follow this rule and that rule...**
 - And if I do then I am going to be right with God...
 - Or... God is going to be happy with me... I will be blessed...
 - Maybe we go as far as to say... if my good outweighs the bad... then I go to heaven...
 - **Second... We may think... I need to do good things.... To keep my salvation**
 - By good things... I think what we have done is establish our own kind of law system
 - Let me do these good things so God will keep me as His...
 - And when we begin keeping them...
 - We start feeling real good about ourselves...
 - Or worse... we twist and turn the law to suit our own lifestyle
 - So... not matter what... in our mind... we are getting it done... at least... well enough
 - **So... what we have in the end is: People trying to earn their free gift by their actions...**
 - And this leads to two things: Both are really really bad...
 - 1) It leads to self-righteousness and boasting
 - 2) It leads to self-loathing and hopelessness... the person lives defeated...
- **Paul uses a marriage analogy to show us how we have been released from law keeping**
 - Or do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? ² For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. ³ Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.
 - Do we understand this? This is simple enough...
 - A woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives...
 - If He dies... she is free from being married to him...
 - And can marry someone else... without breaking the law of marriage...
 - She will not be considered an adulteress
- **So... From the moment we first heard...**
 - Don't do this... or Don't do that...
 - Or when we came up with some sort of standard for living...
 - **We created a law ourselves or given to us outwardly... it began to tell us... don't do this or that...**
 - And this is the law that governed our life
 - And for many people... they would consider themselves good before God

- If they kept up their standard... so they might also be burdened by not living up to it
- **Question: You ask... what about Atheists or those who don't care about a law standard...**
 - **Well... that is for another time... but the outcome is still the same...**

➤ **Why does He use this Analogy...?**

- To show us what has happened to us in Christ
- We have been released from any sort of “law keeping for righteousness”
- **He follows the analogy by saying this:**
 - **⁴ Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.**
- **So, if in any way, shape or form, you used doing good things as a means of being right with God...**
 - That is over once you belong to Christ...
 - This is why he says **through the body of Christ**
 - When you put your faith in Christ...
 - You were united to Him... Joined to Christ... So... His death on the cross
 - Was also your death... His taking of your sins, means your sins were taken from you
 - **And now... you belong to another... namely Jesus Christ....**
 - ◆ And... we see God restoring us back to our original purpose....
 - ◆ Which leads to our second point today...

❖ **2) The Goal is Bearing Fruit for God**

- **in order that we may bear fruit for God.**
- **I am not going to spend a lot of time here this morning...**
 - because later I will show you how this happens
 - But... I want to remind you...
- **We were made in the image of God...**
 - And the purpose of man was to display that image... **To bear fruit for God...**
- **So, in case someone comes along and says... I am free from the law... from right and wrong...**
 - I can just do what I want... no restraint...
- **No... Not the purpose... and not the power of what God has done...**
 - You belong to another... And there is a purpose...
- **Fruit Bearing is the purpose:**
- **So... you may say... well... aren't I in the same position before...**
 - Belonging to one that makes me do good things...
 - Oh but no... it is so much more different... it is totally reversed
 - Before we thought of works as a means to righteousness before God
 - **Now... we see righteousness with God comes first through faith...**
 - And fruit bearing comes as a **result** of our being right with God...
 - **And later... we will see how this happens... how we can be assured we will do good works...**
- **But, now Paul goes on to show how the law was used against us...**

❖ **3) The Law Was a Good Tool Used Against Us**

- **⁵ For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death.**
- **Notice what He is saying here.... While we were living in our flesh...**
 - So... this is us before we have received the spirit of God...
- **We had sinful passions...**
 - This is when a good passion or desire goes wrong...

- **We have good desires to:**
 - Eat, rest, play, work, earn money, sexual desires, desires to drink
 - All these are good and created in us by God for a good purpose...
- **Sinful Passions...**
 - Take good passions and turn them the wrong way...
 - They turn eating into over eating... making money into greed and power
 - Sexual desires into immorality...
- **Picture the law of God like...**
 - Fertilizer.... It is used for the good purpose of helping things grow...
 - It helps produce life by growing plants used to sustain the life of man
 - But... it can also be used to blow stuff up and kill people...
 - **A Scapel... it is used by a Doctor to do surgery and save the life of a man...**
 - But... what if someone takes the scapel and kills a person with it?
 - Is that it's purpose... the reason it was made?
 - No... the scapel was made to save life... not destroy it...
- **Sin comes along and takes the good law of God... and he uses it for wrong motives...**
 - ⁸But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. ⁹I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. ¹⁰The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.
 - **Sin... comes along and uses God's command to stir up our heart with wrong desires...**
 - It produced in him covetousness...
 - **How? Because in VERSE 7 He says it was the law that taught him "Do not Covet"**
 - ◆ To covet goes beyond just outward sinful actions...
 - ◆ Coveting is a wrong self-indulgent craving for something you aren't allowed to have
 - ◆ It replaces proper, right affections for God
 - **What happens when this law comes?**
 - It awakens sin... and produces death in the person
 - **Look at how it works...**
 - ◆ For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.
 - ◆ So... we see that sin is a real entity... at work in us to deceive us...
- **This is no Surprise... We see this in our Children all the time...**
 - There is something in the home... you do not want your child to touch or get into...
 - And... for so long, the kiddo has not noticed this thing...
 - You come along and say... "Son... do not touch this... do not get into this"
 - What is the first thing they want to do? They want to touch and get into it...
 - This should remind us of where we first began this habit...
- **How Does Sin do its Work?**
 - 2 things: 1) It seizes the opportunity 2) It deceives us...
 - ◆ For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.
 - So... You may be wondering... Can I have a real life example of how this happened...
 - And I say... why yes you may... thank you for asking...
 - **There is a story in the scripture that shows us how sin does its work...**
 - **Adam and Eve in the Garden... given the whole Garden except for one tree...**
 - God said... Do not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil...

- So... here comes the command... it is good... it is life giving and life sustaining...
- What happens next...
- Genesis 3:1-7 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’” ² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, ³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’ ” ⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die. ⁵ For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.” ⁶ So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.
 - Sin is ever so subtle... And this is how it has worked since day one...
 - ◆ This is how it worked when Peter denied Jesus and Judas betrayed Jesus...
 - ◆ And when you do what you do... **But...**

❖ 4) The Law Has a Good Purpose

- ¹² So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.
- **First thing we see here is... Paul says... God’s law is:**
 - Holy... it is set apart...
- **His Commandments are:**
 - Holy... set apart
 - Righteous... it is just and morally ethical
 - Good... meaning they have a good desirable purpose to them
- **God’s Law is a Teacher**
 - ⁷ What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”
 - So... it shows us the depth of sin... to covet... not just the outward act of doing something
 - But also the inward sinful craving to do something wrong...
 - The law shows us that our motives are also in mind here...
 - We begin to see our sin as more than just action but also craving and thinking...
- **God’s Law Uncovers Sins Reality**
 - ¹³ Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure.
 - **Sinful beyond measure...**
 - God’s word shows us the depth of sins depravity...
 - It is sinful beyond measure
 - Meaning... God’s law is meant to expose sin in it’s extreme position of wrong
 - It is so sinful... it can not even be measured...
 - **It is sinful beyond measure because:**
 - It has taken something good and righteous...
 - And used it to bring death and destruction...
 - It has used medicine intended for life
 - ◆ And it has murdered the patient...
- **So... what is the weakspot? Is it God’s law? Is it Sin?**

- It seems that Sin is overpowering God's law... but... there is a weak link here...

➤ **The flesh is the weak link...**

- **Romans 8:3** For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,
 - Notice here... the law was weakened by our flesh... our bodies... our inward sinful cravings
 - The flesh is the weak link... but... God has fixed this problem...
 - Verse 4 goes on to lead us to our next point...
- **Romans 8:4** in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
 - We now walk according the Spirit... not the flesh

➤ **So... where does this leave us...**

- Let's go back to verse 7:6.... We will see why we had to die to our union with law keeping
- And be joined to Another... namely Jesus Christ... Because something Amazing Happens
- When we are joined with Jesus... the weakness of our flesh. Is overcome...
- By the giving of the Spirit...

❖ **5) We Now Serve God by the Spirit**

- **⁶But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.**
 - Let's focus on: We serve in the new way of the Spirit...
 - There is much to add here... and I may add next week... but let's look at Ezekiel
 - ◆ And pay close attention to what God does... this is written close to 600 years before Jesus
 - ◆ And it details exactly what God was going to do THROUGH JESUS CHRIST...

➤ **Ezekiel 36:26-27 ²⁶And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.**

- **Notice: When a person is confronted with the Gospel message...**
 - And the Holy Spirit is working with the Gospel and the person's heart
 - And their eyes are opened to believe...
 - And they respond in Faith... believing the gospel message about Jesus Christ...
- **Here is What Happens:**
 - God gives them a new heart
 - He places within them a new spirit
 - He says He will place His Spirit in the person
 - And Cause the person to walk in His ways

➤ **Before our Union with Christ...**

- We had the law working outwardly on us...

➤ **After our union with Christ by Faith**

- The Spirit is working within us... God's law is written on our hearts...

➤ **This is how we are assured we will bear fruit... do good deeds....**

- God's Spirit is within the True Christian...
- Molding him like a potter molds a vessel...
- **2 Corinthians 5:17 ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**

➤ **The Spirit is at Work in the person... causing him to walk in God's ways...**

- Causing him to be careful to obey his rules
- Not for the purpose of righteousness... He is already considered righteous...
- **Rather... as a result of the new righteous nature...**

- This is why it is so foreign to Paul...
- for anyone to question if we should continue in sin if we are under grace
- Or to consider the law to be sin... Because the Trump Card is the SPIRIT...
- The Spirit empowers and enables... and He lives within the believer

❖ Invitation

➤ Have you ever had this new birth?

- This giving of the Spirit is what Jesus was trying to explain to Nicodemus in John 3
- John 3:1-8 Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. ²This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.” ³Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” ⁴Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” ⁵Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. ⁶That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ ⁸The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.”