

**"The Doctrine of Sanctification"**

**Romans 5:12-8:13**

**Part 14**

**Introduction:** Last week in our study of Romans we started into Romans 7. Now this chapter is connected to something which Paul taught in Romans 6.

**Romans 6:14**

*<sup>14</sup> For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.*

Paul explained the first part of this verse in Romans 6:15-23. In those verses he taught his readers that we who are believers are free from sin because we have been poured into a new mold. He explained that before we were saved we could in no way produce any works of righteousness.

The second half of Romans 6:14 Paul explained in Romans 7. Last week I told you that when Romans was written there was a great deal of Jewish influence in the church. Paul wrote Romans while in Corinth and we know from our studies that the Jews made their way into the church at Corinth in an attempt to bring the church back under the Law. The Jews held tightly to the Law and so when they would have read the words of Paul in Romans 6:14 they would have been greatly offended. So, Paul is on a mission in Romans 7 to help his readers to see how true believers are free from any kind of "law righteousness". We must understand that in the early church under the Jewish influence there was the tendency to go back to the Law after someone was saved thinking that they could please God by being under the Law and keeping the Law. That is exactly what we saw when we studied the book of Hebrews. The Hebrews were feeling the pressure of persecution from the Jews but many still were leaning toward going back to Judaism.

There is also a tendency today within the church to live under a law. Not necessarily the Mosaic Law but maybe a "denomination law" or a "law of tradition" or just some set of rules which the leaders of a church have put together. When a church allows that to happen it develops a local body of self-righteous people who look down upon others who do not keep the rules or laws which they keep.

There are two verses that all believers need to understand.

**Colossians 2:10**

*<sup>10</sup> And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:*

**Ephesians 1:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

<sup>7</sup> In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

From these verses we can see two vital points:

1. We are COMPLETE in Christ.
2. We are ACCEPTED in Christ.

There is therefore nothing we can do to make ourselves more acceptable or to make ourselves more complete. For a believer to place themselves under a law to add to their completeness or their acceptability is an offence to our Lord. It is robbing Him of the glory that is due Him. It is saying that He has not done enough and that His work needs to be added to.

So, in Romans 7 Paul is explaining how the believer is now free from the Law.

### I. The Obvious

#### Notice Romans 7:1

Here in this verse Paul speaks of something which every person is aware of. The law in general only has dominion over a man as long as he is alive. There are laws in our nation that say we must pay taxes, but these laws only apply while we are alive. When we die we are free from all the laws of this nation.

### II. The Illustration/Analogy

#### Notice Romans 7:2-3

Paul now uses an analogy that everyone would understand and that is marriage. The law of marriage says that a woman is joined to her husband for life and it is only death that will dissolve a marriage. If she marries another man while he is alive she is guilty of adultery but when he dies she is free. When her husband dies she returns back to how she was before she was married and now she is free to marry another man. The point here is that it is death that freed her from the law of marriage.

### III. The Application

#### Notice Romans 7:4

To grasp onto what Paul is saying here we must understand that the Law calls for the death of every person because everyone is guilty of breaking the Law.

**Ezekiel 18:4, 20**

<sup>4</sup> *Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*

<sup>20</sup> *The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.*

**Jeremiah 31:30a**

<sup>30</sup> *But every one shall die for his own iniquity:*

**Romans 6:23**

<sup>23</sup> *For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

The Law is a mass murderer for it slays all who come under its dominion. Here in Romans 7:4 Paul explains that we died in Christ and for that reason all believers are dead to the Law. The Law was satisfied when we died in Christ. It called for our death and we died. So, for that reason we are freed from the Law and now, just like the woman whose husband has died we can be married to another. That is, we are married to Jesus Christ.

Christ, not the law, now is to have dominion over us. Allow me to word it another way, the believer's rule of life is Christ and not the law. It is not a matter of **striving** and **trying**, but of **trusting** and **relying**. Believers are called and empowered to live a holy life, not out of fear of punishment, but out of love of God and a desire to be pleasing to Him as our Father.

**Notice Romans 7:4 again.**

This is all so that we can now bear fruit for God. This is not a suggestion, but this is a Truth statement. In other words, if a person is truly saved then they will produce spiritual fruit. This is something that will come natural to the believer because this what God transformed us for.

**Ephesians 2:10**

<sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

In Romans 7:4 Paul has the very idea that Jesus spoke of.

**John 15:1-5**

*I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.*

<sup>2</sup> *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*

<sup>3</sup> *Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*

<sup>4</sup> *Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*

<sup>5</sup> *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.*

When we trusted in Jesus Christ we were changed.

### **2 Corinthians 5:17**

<sup>17</sup> *Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*

There were two major changes in our lives and they are where we see the fruit.

#### **1. Our attitude is changed.**

Because our attitude is changed we therefore see fruits from this change.

### **Galatians 5:22-23**

<sup>22</sup> *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

<sup>23</sup> *Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

#### **2. Our actions are changed.**

The change within our hearts produces a change in the way we live our lives. The sinful practices that were once the natural way of life have been broken. The sinful habits are no longer repeated as they were before. Now there are righteous acts that are seen in our lives.

## **IV. The Past**

### **Notice Romans 7:5**

There is much for us to consider here in this verse. Let us start with the opening statement in this verse.

***"For when we were in the flesh"***

It is so important for us to understand what Paul means here. An understanding of this statement will really help us when we study the next chapter. This statement points to what we were when we were unsaved. The Bible tells us that in Adam we were "IN THE FLESH". Let me show you something in Romans 8.

**Romans 8:1, 5, 8-9**

*There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*

<sup>5</sup> For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.

<sup>8</sup> So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

<sup>9</sup> But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Here in these verses we can see that to be "in the flesh" refers to an unsaved person. Those who have within them the Holy Spirit are not in the flesh but in the Spirit and so when Paul refers to those who are "in the flesh" he is referring to our past or to those who are not saved. Notice the words of Barnhouse:

*"Here, 'in the flesh' does not refer to the body. These three simple words describe the deadly state of people who have not been born again... It is a moral state, the condition of the unsaved before God. The state of the redeemed is described in chapter 8:*

*"You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you".*

*Being in the flesh, then, is the opposite of being in the Spirit. We all begin in the flesh, but some of us are now in the Spirit, even though the flesh is still in us. Because we have been freed from the flesh by the death of our Lord Jesus Christ and our union with Him in His resurrection, we are liberated from the passions of that flesh and may henceforth be dominated by the new life of our risen Lord."*

**Notice Romans 7:5 again.**

How can Paul say that we "WERE IN THE FLESH" (past tense) when we are still clothed in these bodies of flesh? He can say this because our leash was crucified with Christ and so now we are free from the tyranny of the flesh. We still have a sin nature, but we are no longer enslaved by the flesh as we once were. We still give into the flesh, but we are no longer IN THE FLESH. We are now IN THE SPIRIT. Our position when we were unsaved was that we were IN THE FLESH but now that we are saved we are IN CHRIST and we

are IN THE SPIRIT. We are IN THE SPIRIT in the sense that the Spirit now has dominion over us.

In this verse Paul also tells us that when we were IN THE FLESH the motions of sins which were by the law worked in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. The word "motions" means "evil". What Paul is saying here is that before a person is saved sin is stirred up within them by the law. The word "law" is not just the Mosaic Law but any law which was enforced upon us. When sinful man is brought under law sin gets stirred up within him.

The idea is that when sinful man is told not to do something there rises up within him a greater desire to rebel. All you need to do is to tell a little child not to touch something and the moment you say that there is a greater desire within them to break the law you have just imposed upon them. Let me show you two illustrations:

**Illustration** - Take a dish of Baking Soda (let it represent our Sin nature). It appears quiet until another substance is added. Add Vinegar (let it represent the Law). What's the result? The Baking Soda is no longer quiet but begins to smoke and froth. The fault is not in the vinegar, but in the nature of the Baking Soda which will not remain inactive when "provoked" by Vinegar. The Law is not at fault, but the fault lies in our evil, wicked Sin nature!

**ILLUSTRATION FROM PILGRIM'S PROGRESS** - In his Pilgrim's Progress, John Bunyan describes Interpreter's house, which Pilgrim entered during the course of his journey to the Celestial City. The parlor of the house was completely covered with dust, and when a man took a broom and started to sweep, he and the others in the room began to choke from the great clouds of dust that were stirred up. The more vigorously he swept, the more suffocating the dust became. Then Interpreter ordered a maid to sprinkle the room with water, with which the dust was quickly washed away. Interpreter explained to Pilgrim that the parlor represented the heart of an unsaved man, that the dust was original sin, the man with the broom was the law, and the maid with the water was the gospel. His point was that all the law can do with sin is to stir it up. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can wash it away.

**Notice Romans 7:5 again.**

The only fruit we could produce when we were unsaved was fruit unto death. Notice the words of Ironside on the end of this verse:

*"The law was the husband, the active agent through whom we hoped to bring forth fruit to God. But instead of that, we brought forth fruit to death. All our labor and suffering in the hope of producing righteousness ended in disappointment - the child was stillborn."*

## V. The Present

## Notice Romans 7:6

Here is a wonderful verse! We are now dead to the law, that which stirs up sin in the sinner, and we are now free. Under law we were bound as the woman is bound to her husband. But now by the death of Jesus Christ we are free. Not free to go out and sin and live a reckless life but we are free for the first time to live in the Spirit and bring forth fruit that glorifies God. We are free to serve God instead of sin. We need to pay very close attention to the word "SERVE". We are saved to SERVE. Now that we are no longer enslaved to sin and the flesh we are now free to SERVE in the spirit. Let us not miss the word "spirit" in this verse and let us notice that it is a lower case "s" which means it is referring to our spirit.

The word "NEWNESS" here is also very important. Let me show you what it means:

*"in the new state of life in which the Holy Spirit places us so as to produce a new condition or state of moral life." This word also refers to "that which never existed before".*

Now let us keep in mind that to serve the Lord in our new spirit is not possible without the power of His Spirit. The two cannot be separated.

So, instead of trying to somehow bring something good from the flesh (there is no good thing in the flesh) we are now free to serve God with a new spirit in the power of the Holy Spirit. We have been changed from the inside out. God has placed within each of us the heart of Jesus Christ.

**Conclusion:**

I will end with the words of an unknown writer:

*"To reiterate, as unbelievers we were hindered by the Law. It's as if the Law seized us and retained us under its power as our 'master'. When we died with Christ, we died to the binding power of the law. Paul has just warned us that the **law arouses sin**, so if you place yourself back up under the Law, the sinful passions will be aroused. Be careful of saying things like '**I won't do**\_\_\_\_\_.'" You have just placed yourself back under the Law and the **flesh** with its sinful passions will be aroused."*

We serve God from the heart and not in the flesh.