

"The Doctrine of Sanctification"

Romans 5:12-8:13

Part 15

Introduction: Last week in our study of Romans we were looking at Romans 7:1-6 and it is in these verses that Paul is explaining to his readers how believers are dead to the law because we have died in Jesus Christ. Paul had used the analogy of how a woman is bound to her husband by the law of marriage as long as her husband is alive. But when he dies she is then free to be married to another man for it is death that dissolves the marriage. Paul then uses that analogy to show how when a person is saved they are crucified with Jesus Christ therefore they are dead to the law and are now joined in marriage to Jesus Christ and it is from this new relationship that we are to produce fruit unto God. Paul went on to explain that before salvation the law stirs sin up in the life of the unbeliever. He then concluded his thought in verse 6 by saying that the believer has been delivered from the law.

Now, before we continue in Romans 7 there is something which we must understand about the Law and that is how the Jews viewed the Law. Let us keep in mind when Romans was written there was a great deal of Jewish influence in the church. Paul also had a great burden for his fellow Jews. After the statements which Paul has made in Romans 6 and here in Romans 7:1-6 the Jew would have responded by saying, "So, Paul, you are just taking all of God's Law and you are casting it away?" You see the Jews believed that salvation and sanctification came by the Law. They held tightly to the Law thinking it was a way to please God. They did all they could to place others under the Law and what that did was it placed a heavy burden upon the people and it was a burden which they could in no way carry.

Acts 15:1, 6-10

And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.

⁶ *And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.*

⁷ *And when there had been much disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men and brethren, ye know how that a good while ago God made choice among us, that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe.*

⁸ *And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us;*

⁹ *And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.*

¹⁰ *Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?*

The Law was a yoke which no one could bear.

Now, because they were not able to keep the Law the Jew modified the Law to fit their sinful lives. The Law was given to reveal the true condition of man's heart, but the Jews made it external. Jesus pointed this out when He preached the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 5:21-22a, 27-28

²¹ *Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:*

²² *But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment:*

²⁷ *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:*

²⁸ *But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.*

The Jews twisted and distorted the Law because they could not keep the Law and because of what is recorded in Deuteronomy 27 and 28.

Deuteronomy 27:26

²⁶ *Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them.*

Deuteronomy 28:15-20

¹⁵ *But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes which I command thee this day; that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee:*

¹⁶ **Cursed** shalt thou be in the city, and cursed shalt thou be in the field.

¹⁷ **Cursed** shall be thy basket and thy store.

¹⁸ **Cursed** shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy land, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep.

¹⁹ **Cursed** shalt thou be when thou comest in, and cursed shalt thou be when thou goest out.

²⁰ The LORD shall send upon thee cursing, vexation, and rebuke, in all that thou settest thine hand unto for to do, until thou be destroyed, and until thou perish quickly; because of the wickedness of thy doings, whereby thou hast forsaken me.

There is much more recorded in the Old Testament but from these verses we can see why the Jews were so zealous to keep the Law. Let me show you a verse from Galatians.

Galatians 3:10

¹⁰ **For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse:** for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.

Whoever is under the Law is cursed because there is none who can keep the Law.

Now let me get you back to the thought in Romans 7. The Jews would have taken Paul's statements and accused him of throwing the Law out. To them his words would have made it sound as though the Law was of no benefit. They may have accused him of saying the Law was evil. This was God's law and they were prepared to stand for the Law. Paul is now going to address their misunderstandings starting in Romans 7:7.

The Convicting Power of the Law

Romans 7:7-13

Notice Romans 7:7a

Paul starts this section with a question which the critics would have asked. If the Law cannot save and if the Law cannot sanctify and if the Law only stirs up sin in a person's life, then is the Law evil and is it sin? The answer is, "NO". The problem is not with the Law, but the problem is sin within the heart of man. The Law has been given to serve God's purpose.

Notice Romans 7:7

We need to notice here that Paul uses his own personal testimony. We see that in the use of the word, "I". He will point to his own life to explain how God used the Law in his life to bring him to Jesus Christ.

He tells his readers here that he had not known sin if it had not been for the Law. He then gets even more detailed and he tells us that he had not known lust if the Law had not said, "Thou shall not covet".

Paul is not saying that he was unaware of sin without the Law but what he is saying is that he did not understand the seriousness of sin until he was brought face to face with the Law. He did not know the depth of sin until he was confronted with the Law. The Law is not sin, but the Law reveals sin. Let me give you an example:

If we were to drive on 99 and there was no speed limit, then we could go as fast as we desired but the moment there is a speed limit and we speed then we become guilty. Without a speed limit there is no guilt and no knowledge of sin but the moment the Law is known and posted, and we are over the limit then we become guilty. This is exactly what Paul is saying here. He was going on with his life thinking that he was the perfect citizen and then came the Law and it revealed the sin that was in his heart. Now when Paul talks about the Law here he is referring to God's moral Law. When confronted with God's moral Law he came under great conviction.

Now I want to take a moment and show you some verses from Paul's life that will help us to see how the Law was working before he was saved.

Acts 9:3-5

³ *And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven:*

⁴ *And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?*

⁵ *And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

The word "pricks" here shines some light upon what was happening in Paul's life. The word "pricks" means "stings". The pricks or the stings were most likely the convictions which Paul is referencing in Romans 7. Most likely Paul was confronted with the Law by the Christians he was persecuting as he heard them preach.

Let me show you the words of Stephen's sermon in Acts 7.

Acts 7:51-54

⁵¹ *Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye.*

⁵² Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers:

⁵³ Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it.

⁵⁴ When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

Stephen boldly confronted the Jews with the fact that they had not kept the Law and this message cut them to the heart. They were so angry that they stoned him to death. Now let me remind you who was standing there listening.

Acts 8:1-3

And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles.

² *And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him.*

³ *As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison.*

Paul heard the entire message. He too was under conviction.

Paul was a very RELIGIOUS man before he was saved. He thought he knew the Law, but he too had fallen under the distorted teaching of the Pharisees for he was one.

Philippians 3:4-6

⁴ *Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:*

⁵ *Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;*

⁶ *Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*

Paul was religious but not saved. It was not until the true interpretation of the Law entered into his heart and he came under conviction and then met Jesus Christ on the Damascus Road that he was saved.

Application:

There is something here that all of us need to be reminded about. Until a person is convicted of their sin they cannot get saved. They must come to the place when they see their true sinfulness before salvation can take place. No person can be saved if they are not convicted of their sin and broken over their sin. Too many churches today refuse to preach on the subject of sin and the Doctrine of Condemnation. They invite people to make a decision if they want to go to heaven and these people have never come under the conviction of their sin. So, what happens is that there are many people sitting in churches today who think they are saved when they are not. They do not realize what they are to be saved from. Let me show you a conversation between Jesus and a rich ruler.

Luke 18:18-23

¹⁸ *And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*

¹⁹ *And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God.*

²⁰ **Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother.**

²¹ *And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.*

²² *Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.*

²³ *And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.*

Jesus confronted this man with the Law because he did not see the depth and the seriousness of his sin. Even after being confronted with the Law he refused to acknowledge his sin and so Jesus allowed this man to walk away. He could not be saved until he understood the depth and the seriousness of his sin and acknowledged his need of forgiveness.

When we speak to unsaved people we **MUST** show them how sinful they truly are by using the Word of God and let us not miss from Romans that it is the Law that has been given for that very purpose.

Galatians 3:19, 24-25

¹⁹ *Wherefore then serveth the law? **It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made;** and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.*

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

²⁵ But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.

Conclusion:

Next week we shall pick this up with verse 8 but as we close let me give you some points to consider.

1. The Law cannot save us.
2. The Law cannot sanctify us.
3. The Law cannot condemn us.
4. The Law cannot deliver us from sin.
5. But the Law CAN convict us.