

“Grace & Peace to You”

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

Voice of China and Asia

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ROMANS LESSON 43 PART 1: “THE STRUGGLE: *The LAW IS Good*”

ROMANS 7:10-12 *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.*

The Believer’s “**New Birth**” brought ETERNAL change within. By FAITH, we were: **Justified** (ROM 4:25; 5:1 EPH 2:8); **Reconciled** (ROM 5:10-11; 2 COR 5:18); **Forgiven** (COL 2:13-14); **Sealed With the Holy Spirit** (EPH 1:14); **Recreated in His Image** (EPH 4:24); **Baptized Into His Body** (1 COR 12:13); **and so much more.**

ALL of these are “**Spiritual Truths**” (Permanent, Positional, Eternal). They are “**Inner Realities.**”

The “**Outer Man**” however, has NOT been changed. Our “**body and its members**” are the part of **US** that is in contact with the natural / physical world. These are instruments that can be “**yielded...**” to sin through the **Old Self**, or to God through the **New Self**.

THAT is the **Struggle of Sanctification**. Paul taught about the “**Principle of Sanctification**” in **CHAPTER 6**. He will present the “**Solution to Sanctification**” in **CHAPTER 8**.

HERE in **CHAPTER 7**, he discusses the “**Struggle of Sanctification.**” And he will use **THE LAW** as the “Divine Element” by which this **Struggle** is revealed.

Look to **page “4”** of the Notes as we observe the repeated reference to the **Opponents** in this **Struggle**.

WHO IS THE “**I, Me, My, Myself**” OF **ROM 7**?

Paul confesses that **HE** struggles with indwelling temptations to sin as **a Christian who is not yet glorified.**

- In **Vss 7-13** Believers can look back at their life before Salvation - the Natural Man.
- In **Vss 14-25** Paul describes the experience of tension between:
 - The “**already**” (**God has already saved us** (Justification) **and is continuing to save us** (Sanctification))
 - And the “**not yet**” (**God has not yet finally saved us** – **ROM 8:23-25**).

Paul explains the struggle he feels as both a Christian... yet one who still deals with sin — *similar to the same struggle he describes in GALATIANS 5:16–17 and that Peter describes in 1 PETER 2:11.*

*Beloved, I urge **You** as sojourners and exiles to **abstain** from **the passions of the flesh**, which wage war against **Your** soul.*

Paul anticipates how some might misuse what he teaches about **THE LAW** in **7:1–6**. So, should we conclude that **THE LAW** is sinful? **Absolutely not!**

THE LAW is invaluable for making me aware of my sin.

BUT we cannot again place ourselves under its “Rule.” **For THE LAW does NOT have the power to save us! It NEVER could... and it CANNOT now.**

ROM 8:3-4 *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,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.*

ROMANS LESSON 43 PART 2: “THE STRUGGLE: *The LAW IS Good*”

THE LAW’S REVELATION:

ROM 7:7–25 The Apostle commences by indignantly crying out, “*God forbid,*” to the accusation that the Law could possibly be considered “sinful”... and then proceeds to show the relation of **THE LAW** to sin. He gives a picture of all men under **THE LAW** in order to show why death to **THE LAW** is a part of the **GOSPEL**.

I. THE LAW REVEALS THE FACT OF SIN (vs. 7)

ROM 7:7) *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.”*

- Paul’s sarcastically arrogant opponent returns with “*So what you’re saying is ‘THE LAW is sin’. Right?*”
- His response: “*How ridiculous! How could you get that from ANYTHING I just said?*”
People who just cannot adjust to “the free gift of grace” see the ONLY option to Legalism is License. Paul wants to emphasize the rich blessings of “justification by grace through faith.” This does not violate the Intention of the Law... It FULFILLS IT!
- Paul looks back on his own experience, in **his unregenerate state** before he became conscious of moral responsibility, and he tells us that he did not know “sin” until **THE LAW** revealed it.
- Coveting WAS wrong... BUT until **THE LAW** said, “*Thou shalt not!*” he did NOT realize the sin against God.

II. THE LAW REVEALS THE OCCASION OF SIN (vs. 8)—

ROM 7:8) *But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from THE LAW, sin lies dead.*

- NOT that **THE LAW** was sin, or brought sin, but that when **THE LAW** was revealed, it “**awakened**” the magnitude of sin that was already existing in his heart.
- **THE LAW** was not the cause, but the occasion of “Realizing” sin.
- Notice the phrase, “*apart from THE LAW,*” an expression that occurs three times in the Epistle (in **CHP. 4:15; 7:8, 9**).
- “**Apart from THE LAW**” sin could not make its presence known AS SIN, for it remained unrecognized.
 - It is knowledge of the requirements of **THE DIVINE LAW** that makes sin effective in the conscience.
 - Although, “*apart from THE LAW,*” a man may be conscious of evil acts, yet **THE LAW** is needed to **reveal that these actions are SIN before God... Violating His Holy purpose for Humanity.**

III. THE LAW REVEALS THE POWER OF SIN (vs. 9)

ROM 7:9) *I was once alive apart from THE LAW, but when THE COMMANDMENT came, sin came alive, and I died.*

- Before **THE LAW** came, he himself was “*alive*” (*he thought*) and sin was “*dormant*”, in his heart.
- But when **THE COMMANDMENT** with its “*Thou shalt not...*” came to him, sin rose to life (*its place of issuing guilt*), and he felt utterly condemned to death.
- Thus, **THE LAW** **reveals the awful force of evil within** us.
- **The Commandment** which God intended for life (**Live THIS way and you will LIVE**) is thus found by the sinful heart to be **a sentence unto death**.

The Law Brings Death: ALL the Commandments ultimately led to Death. Consider “THE 10”

➤ 1 st	No OTHER “god” in My Presence	EX 20:3	EX 22:20
➤ 2 nd	Idolatry	EX 20:4	DEUT 27:15; EX 32:1; 26-28
➤ 3 rd	Using The LORD’S Name in Vain	EX 20:7	LEV 24:15-16
➤ 4 th	Enforcing The SABBATH DAY	EX 20:8	NUM 15:32-36
➤ 5 th	Honoring Parents	EX 20:12	EX 21:15, 17 DEUT 21:18-21
➤ 6 th	Murder	EX 20:13	EX 21:12, 29
➤ 7 th	Adultery	EX 20:14	LEV 20:10
➤ 8 th	Theft	EX 20:15	EX 21:16
➤ 9 th	Bearing False Witness	EX 20:16;	DEUT 19:16, 19, 21
➤ 10 th	Covetousness	EX 20:17	Reflected in the penalty for the “object of the Covetousness”

IV. THE LAW REVEALS THE EFFECT OF SIN (vs. 10)

ROM 7:10) *The very COMMANDMENT that promised life proved to be death to me...11) and through it killed me.*

- No matter which way I relate to it (*Before I knew it OR after I heard it*) THE LAW’S sentence is the SAME: **The outcome is death!**
- THE COMMANDMENT is **“unto death”** (vs. 10)... THE COMMANDMENT **“slew me”** (vs 11).
- Whenever a COMMANDMENT is **unable to give life... it necessarily brings about death.**
- The condemnation of the sinner is necessarily death **THROUGH** his **inability to fulfil THE LAW.**

V. THE LAW REVEALS THE DECEITFULNESS OF SIN (vs. 11)

ROM 7:11) *For sin, seizing an opportunity through THE COMMANDMENT, deceived me and through it killed me.*

- Through THE COMMANDMENTS sin takes advantage of us and beguiles us.
- We know it is the demand of THE LAW, and when we endeavor to fulfil it... we FAIL
- We are soon made to realize the hopelessness of our position.
- It is THE SIN that kills us... NOT THE LAW... **THE LAW only DEMANDS that the PENALTY of SIN is DEATH**

VI. LAW REVEALS THE SINFULNESS OF SIN (vss. 12, 13)

ROM 7:12-13) *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.*

- THE LAW itself is **“holy and righteous and good.”**
Since THE LAW is God’s LAW, it must of necessity reflect the “Nature of God.”
 - **“Holy”** - Because BY NECESSITY it discloses **sin... THE LAW** of a Holy God must be consistent with his Holy Nature (ISA 6:3).
 - **“Righteous”** - Because it condemns the sinner to death... A Righteous God decrees commandments that are righteous. They are fair (JUST) and make no unreasonable demands...
 - **“Good”** - Because of its intrinsic and spiritual purpose... THE LAW is “good” because it intends the very best for people – **By HIS evaluation NOT man’s...**

In this entire discussion Paul was not depreciating THE LAW as such. His point had been that THE LAW has been used by sin as an unwilling accomplice to bring about death.

- It is IMPOSSIBLE to say that that which was good became death to Paul (vs. 13).

- **THE LAW** does not solicit sin, it only “**calls it out.**” It was NOT **THE LAW**, BUT sin that brought death.

THIS is his answer **so far** to the question, “*Is the law sin?*” He continues the subject in into the next chapter.

- **THE LAW** is neither sin ... nor does **THE LAW** work death, [**NOR can it produce Life** – CHP 8]
- It is no more the **author of Death** than it is of Sin.
- **IT IS SIN** that slays the man ... “*The strength of sin is THE LAW*” (1 COR. 15:56).

ROMAN 7:7-25 “**Law AND THE LAW**”

THE NATURAL MAN (UNBELIEVER’S LIFE BEFORE REGENERATION) - “Past Tense”

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.

THE REGENERATED MAN UNDER ASSAULT FROM THE OLD SELF - “Present Tense”

¹⁴ For we know that **THE LAW** is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. ¹⁵ For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with **THE LAW**, that it is good. ¹⁷ So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ²¹ So I find it to be **A Law** that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²² For I delight in **THE LAW** of God, in my inner being, ²³ but I see in my members another **Law** waging war against the **Law** of my mind and making me captive to the **Law** of sin that dwells in my members. ²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve **THE LAW** of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve **the Law** of sin.