

ROMANS SERIES THIRTEEN
POST SALVATION BLUES
Dr. Roger Barrier
Romans 7

Paul is in a tremendous struggle with his inability to be the kind of man both he and God want him to be. His best just isn't good enough. Fortunately, God has provided deliverance for both Paul and for us from our inner sin natures. Remember the Christian Declaration of Independence in Romans Six from last Sunday? We are free from our sin nature. We never have to sin again. Fortunately God has also provided deliverance from the Law as detailed in Romans Seven.

Freedom from both our sin natures and the Law was accomplished through our identification with the death and burial and resurrection of Jesus.

AS WE CONTINUE ON OUR SPIRITUAL JOURNIES WE MAKE FOUR GREAT SOUL-AFFECTING DISCOVERIES:

1. I have committed sins and offenses against a holy God.
2. While I desire to do good, I continually struggle with doing wrong.
3. Not only have I done evil things, there is a thoroughly evil sin nature within me.
4. Jesus Christ provided for my victory over sin. I never have to sin again.

THE LAW IS REALLY GOOD—BUT...IT IS REALLY KILLING ME! (Romans 7:7-13).

The Law consisted of the Mosaic Law (Genesis-Deuteronomy) and the Prophets (the rest of the Old Testament books not including poetry).

The Law in Paul's day included the Mosaic Law and the Prophets plus the Talmud and other extra-Biblical bodies of interpretations developed by the religious leaders.

Paul was well trained well in all of this—and he was having a hard time getting over it.

A contemporary analogy may well be all the religious rules and regulations people develop as the ways to please and reach God.

The Law Is Really Good...

The Law was given for our own best interests (Deuteronomy 10:12-13).

The Law was put in place to give us guidance until Jesus came and both birthed and adopted us into His family (Galatians 3:19-4:7).

The Law reveals sin (Romans 7:7).

—But...It Is Really Killing Me!

The Law arouses sin (7:8-9).

The Law cannot give life. It leads, in fact, to spiritual death (7:10-11).

The Law cannot change us nor enable us to do well (7:14-17).

Failure: when your best is not good enough!

The problem is not with the Law; the problem is with our sinful natures.

JESUS ALONE CAN RESCUE US FROM THE BONDAGE OF THE LAW (Romans 7:1-6).

Notice that in Paul illustration there is only one woman, while there are two husbands. The woman is in a difficult position, for she can only be wife of one of the two, and unfortunately she is married to the less desirable one. The man to whom she is married is a good man; but he is so exacting! Yet, all of his demands are perfectly legitimate.

Thus, she is in great distress. She is fully aware that she often makes mistakes, but she lives with a husband who makes it seem as though everything she says and does is wrong!

If only she were married to that other man all would be well. He is no less exacting than her husband, but He helps much. She would love to marry Him, but her husband is still alive. What can she do?

The first husband is the Law; the second husband is Christ; and we are the woman.

How can we marry a second husband if our first husband stubbornly refuses to die? If he will not die, we can die; and if we die the marriage relationship is dissolved.

That is exactly God's way of deliverance from the Law. The Law does not pass away, but we pass away, and by death we are freed from the Law.

Now the question arises, "How do I die?" The preciousness of Christ's work comes in here. When Christ died, we were placed in Him (1 Corinthians 1:30). We died with Him. But that is not all.

Our Lord did not remain in the grave. On the third day He rose again and since we are in Christ we are risen, too!

The sin nature has no law. The new nature needs no law.

IN CHRIST WE ARE ALIVE TO THE LAW OF LOVE.

Jesus infused new meaning into the greatest commandments when He revealed how the Law and the Prophets (rules and regulations) properly related to them.

Matthew 5:17-18: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."

John 13:34-35: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Matthew 22:37-40: Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

When we follow the right doctrines and behaviors, we will have a great relationships with God and with others. There are people who choose to live so far outside of the doctrine and behaviors that they break all of the relationships.

What we believe and how we behave are intended to lead us into a deeper relationships with God and others. If this is not occurring, we are still bound to the Law.