

Lesson 15 – Romans 7:7-25

In verses 1-6 we find a foundational Christian doctrine taught: with the coming of Jesus Christ we die to the Law, and being released by death to the obligations of the Law, we are now married to Christ, serving Him by the power of the Holy Spirit. However, that is a super challenge. To flesh out this doctrine more thoroughly, Paul gets quite personal with the discussion.

Paul's interaction with the Law – 7-12

“Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin.” Specifically, Paul acknowledges, “For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, ‘You shall not covet.’” As a matter of fact, Paul even admits that, “sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness.” He is not saying that the Law generated sin, but actually highlighted the sin in Paul’s life that he didn’t even know was there.

He recalls, “I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.” Now most Jews would wonder at that statement. Their basic theology was that life came in keeping the law, not before exposure to the same, but with realization of the law, comes a realization of death. “The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me.”

Well then, one could conclude that the easy fix is to do away with the law. It is obviously flawed and problematic. To this Paul says, “So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.”

Question: How has studying God’s Word made you more aware of sin in your own life?

Paul's interaction with the old nature – 13-25

Because Paul has made the conclusive statement that the law is good, we can clarify that it has a moral value, and therefore is spiritual in nature. He says, “For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin.” This is the problem. Paul acknowledges that the flesh clashes with the spirit. In the rest of the chapter he bemoans the reality of the sin craving flesh. It tends to run his life. He wants to do right. He wants to be obedient. His mind (as the prominent feature of his spiritual man) knows the right, but his flesh (as the prominent feature of his sinful man) frequently succumbs to the temptation to sin.

Finally, in frustration Paul exclaims, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?” Immediately answering his question he rejoicing says, “Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” The salvation we have is completed when our flesh is no longer influenced by sins appeal. Our resurrection body will be free from sins affects, influence, and temptation. But until we leave this body behind in death, we like Paul would conclude, “So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.”

Question: Do you feel schizophrenic? You want to do right. You want to do wrong. You fight with yourself. How does this war wage in your own life?