

Romans 7.1-13

“Law-Fulfilling Free People”

Old American Cowboy movies > GOOD and EVIL VERY CLEAR
 Good Cowboys wear White Hats and Bad Cowboys were Black Hats
 (Someone noticed I am wearing a Black Hat – Good > CHEAP PRICE - \$10)

What are the APPROPRIATE HATS in Romans?

Paul > obviously BRILLIANT Apostle to the Gentiles > WHITE HAT
 Self Righteous Moralists > Do what command others not to do > BLACK HAT
 Pagan Gentiles > Exchanged God’s truth for lies – Idols and Immorality > BLACK
 Church at Rome > New Believers in Christ – Justified by Faith > WHITE HATS
 Law of God > written record which convicts and condemns > ?????

Some say BLACK HAT – not surprising > every ref. so far in book is NEGATIVE

3.20 “no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.”

4.13 “It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise”

4.15 “law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression”

5.13 “before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law”

5.20 “The law was added so that the trespass might increase.”

Aha! Some of you are SECRETLY ANTINOMIANS > Oppose the Law of God!

HOW DARE WE GIVE THE LAW OF GOD A BLACK HAT!!

BIBLE extols the Law of God –

Psalm 19.7,10 “The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul. The statutes of the LORD are trustworthy, making wise the simple...The ordinances of the LORD are sure and altogether righteous. They are more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.”

Godly Jews DERIVED ENORMOUS PLEASURE FROM THE LAW

Psalm 1.2 “his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.”

Psalm 119 – “Your statutes are my delight; they are my counselors...for I delight in your commands because I love them...I lift up my hands to your commands, which I love, and I meditate on your decrees” (vs. 24,47,48,92,93)

THUS FAR in ROMANS – only Part of Complete Picture of Xtian View of Law

If I SAID - “You are not a man!” – WHAT!! Want to Fight??! – expect the worst
NOT A MAN – you’re a monkey, a whimp, a fool, a pig, an idiot
BUT WE MAY PLAN TO SAY > You’re not a man - - you’re an ANGEL

I may say > I haven’t had a bath in a month / YOU SAY – I can tell!
BUT I MAY HAVE PLANNED TO SAY > But I take a SHOWER EVERY DAY

ROMANS 7 – Paul gives “the rest of the story” about the LAW OF GOD
LAW mentioned in EVERY VERSE in our vss. / 35 X’s in the Entire Section

CONCERN OF LAW LOVING JEW when he hears Paul extol God’s Free Grace
HE FEARS 2 WRONG EXTREMES > LEGALIST and the LIBERTINE
LEGALIST > sees Law as Redemptive / LIBERTINE > Law is Repressive

LIBERTINE > loose living > WANTS NO LAW > free to live as we please
Concern ANSWERED in 6.15 “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!”

BUT LIKE PENDELUM WHICH SWUNG TOO FAR – Jewish OVERreaction
Oppos Extreme to LIBERTINE is LEGALISM > ch. 7 Paul ANSWERS Legalists

LEGALISM > I can be holy, pleasing to God, by obeying His Laws

- Seeking to be JUSTIFIED and SANCTIFIED by Keeping the Law
- Measuring our Spirituality by a list of “do’s and don’ts”
- Sees SINS (individual acts) instead of SIN (Root of the Problem)
- JUDGES by the Outward, not by the INWARD
- Leads to DECEPTION (live a lie) or DESPONDENCY (hopeless inability)
- Many Legalists VERY HARD on OTHERS > critical, unloving, unforgiving

LAW CANNOT RESTRAIN SIN – any more than Fast Car restrains a Bad Driver

PAUL’S CORRECTION > Stott – “Law fulfilling free people” / BALANCED

- REJOICE that Christ has paid penalty of the broken Law’s Demands
- DELIGHT that Spirit of Christ lives in them to Strive toward Holy Living

1. Release from the Law 2. Reason for the Law
 1. Release from the Law

Speaks to Jewish Christian brothers v. 1 “brothers...you know the law”

Appeals to them to know – v. 1 “do you not know” ECHOES ch. 6
 BEGINNING OF CHRISTIAN SANCTIFICATION – RIGHT DOCTRINE

PRINCIPLE – Bond in a legal relationship is terminated by DEATH
 v. 1 “the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives” HEIRS
 CLEAR – DEAD PEOPLE CANNOT OBEY LAWS > but they can pay taxes

ILLUSTRATION - vs. 2,3 “For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.”
 CLEAR > BUT NOT VERY POPULAR IN TODAY’S PERMISSIVE SOCIETY

APPLICATION - v. 4 “So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another”

APPEARS – Paul has mixed his metaphors –
 Vs. 2 & 3 > the husband dies // vs. 4 > the woman = “believing brother” dies

C.H. DODD – No friend of Evangelical Theology > “The illustration is...confused from the outset...Paul...lacks the gift for sustained illustration of ideas through concrete ideas...It is probably a defect of imagination”

Apostle Peter wrote: “our dear brother Paul(‘s)... letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort” 2 Peter 3.15,16
 Wm. Barclay “Seldom did Paul write so difficult and complicated a passage”

IT MAY BE POSSIBLE that PAUL KNOWS WHAT HE IS DOING HERE!
 PERHAPS THE HUSBAND AND THE WOMAN BOTH DIE!!
 Vs. 2 & 3 – Husband = LAW, esp. Law of Moses / consistent w/ Romans

HOW DID LAW OF MOSES DIE? Moses die? “Moses was 120 years old when he died, yet his eyes were not weak nor his strength gone.” – Deuteronomy 34.7

MOSES DIED > For same reason every believer dies
BECAUSE HE FINISHED EARTHLY TASK - took people to Promised Land

David Livingstone -“I am immortal until the will of God for me is accomplished”

MOSES could not take them INTO PROMISED LAND / Law cannot Save
ONLY A SAVIOR could Lead into Promised Land / Joshua > God is Savior

Notice MOSES DIED STRONG > EYES WERE NOT WEAK
He died HIGH upon Mt. Nebo > Vistas of Promised Land

PRINCIPLES OF GOD’S LAW > revealed thru Moses > Eternal, Unchanging
BUT WE ARE NO LONGER IN THE MOSAIC ECONOMY / Old Covenant

Hebrews “You have NOT come to a mountain that can be touched and that is burning with fire; to darkness, gloom and storm; to a trumpet blast... The sight was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am trembling with fear."

But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” (12.18-24)

Heb 7.12 – JESUS is a Priest “in the order of Melchizedek, not in order of Aaron.. when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law”

MOSAIC ECONOMY > Glorious End in Active & Passive Obedience of Christ
"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.” Matthew 5.17

10.4 “Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.”

ETERNAL PRINCIPLES OF GOD’S LAW > Timeless & Eternal – NEVER DIE
BUT MOSAIC EXPRESSION OF THOSE PRINCIPLES IS PASSING ERA

v. 4 “So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ”
DIED TO LAW > Christ died for us > PAID BROKEN LAWS PENALTY for US
RISEN > “that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead”

Gal 2 “For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with X and I no longer live, but X lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.”

vs. 19,20

PARALLELS between Romans 6 (Freedom from Sin) & 7 (Freedom from Law)

6.2 “we died to sin” / 7.4 “we died to the law”

6.3 “died to sin thru union w/ X’s death” / 7.4 “died to law thru body of Christ”

6.7 “justified and freed from sin” / 7.6 “released from the law”

6.4 “shared Christ’s resurrection” / 7.4 “belong to Him who is raised from dead”

6.4 “now live in newness of life” / 7.6 “now serve in newness of Spirit”

6.22 “fruit leads to holiness” / 7.4 “we bear fruit to God”

Chs. 5 –7 CONFRONTED BY TWO DIFFERENT CHOICES & DESTINIES

Ch. 5 – In Adam which leads to Death OR In Christ which results in Life

Ch. 6 – BODY > Instrument of Wickedness or Instrument of Righteousness
Slave of Sin OR Slave of the Savior and Sovereign Jesus Christ

Vs. 5 & 6 - SERIES OF CONTRASTS > Results of Release from Law’s Grip
Bound by Old Written Code of Law OR Serve in New Way of the Spirit

1. Contrast between what we were and what we are now

CONTROLLED by flesh, law, sin, & death > v. 5 “controlled by sinful nature”
NOT THAT BODY IS EVIL > Good Body > Devoted to BAD PURPOSES

v. 6 NOW “we serve in the new way of the Spirit” – ETERNAL TRUTHS
OF GOD WHICH SHINED IN THE DYING EYES OF MOSES / written on Heart

2. Contrast between former and present relationships to the Law

OLD LIFE v. 5 “sinful passions aroused by law” / NOW v. 6 “released from law”
WITHOUT CHRIST > Law leads away from God > Law Given to the Saved

WORLD OFFERS MORAL EDUCATION – Teaches Safe Sex / AIDS Prevention
Jr. High kids learn to put Condoms on Banana

v. 5 “sinful passions aroused by law” > LOOK FOR MORE THAN A BANANA

JOHN STOTT “The motives and means of our service has completely changed.
Why do we serve? Not because the law is our master and we have to, but because
Christ is our husband and we want to. Not because obedience leads to salvation,
but because salvation leads to obedience”

3. Contrast betwn what we did as unbelievers and what we do in Christ

RESULT OF OLD LIFE v. 5 “we bore fruit for death”

RESULT OF NEW LIFE v. 4 we “belong to...him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.”

2. Reason for the Law

LOOKS LIKE THE LAW IS WEARING A BLACK HAT > but it is NOT!

v. 7 “What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not!”

v. 13 “Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means!”

Ch 6 – Defense of Grace > It does not Encourage Sin

Ch 7 – Defense of Law > It does not Create Sin and Death

OUR FALLEN NATURE is to BLAME for Sin and Death

PAUL GIVES HIS TESTIMONY – He is the “I” of these verses / LIKE US ALL

a. The Law REVEALS SIN – God’s searchlight in hand of the Holy Spirit

v. 7 “Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law.”

3.20 “through the law we become conscious of sin”

JAMES > Reading Law // Looking at your face in a Mirror / See Your Real Self

Rich Young Ruler / PROUD OF HIS / Outward Moral Conformity to Law

SOME SPECULATE THAT THIS YOUNG RULER WAS PAUL HIMSELF

Paul Bragged “as for legalistic righteousness, (I was) faultless” Phil 3.8

ONE OF 10 COMMANDMENTS > focus on Inward Morality > Heart Condition

v. 7 “For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “Do not covet.” > Form of IDOLATRY = Putting something in PLACE OF GOD

THIS COMMAND GOT UNDER PAUL’S SKIN > spoiled his legal perfection

JOHN MURRAY “Apparently covetousness was the last vice of which he suspected himself; it was the first to be exposed.”

Like Rich YOUNG RULER – Paul went away from God’s Righteous Mirror SAD

b. The Law PROVOKES SIN Law awakens the SLEEPING GIANT WITHIN

v. 8 “But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead.”

“the power of sin is the law” 1 Corinthians 15.56

8.7 “the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so” > SIN TWISTS THE FUNCTION OF GOD’S GOOD LAW

FRUIT OF TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

Never Looked that Good Until God said “You shall not eat it, lest you die”

RAISE KIDS with ONLY DO NOT’S > Do Not be Surprised when they go & DO AUGUSTINE’S “Confessions” > Crime in his youth w/ friends > Stealing Pears

Stole Many Pears – Ate Very Few – Threw MOST of them to the PIGS

HAD EVEN MORE PEARS IN HIS OWN HOME

“I only picked them that I might steal...I loved nothing in it except the thieving”

JAMES BOICE – “One spring, when I was in the sixth grade, our school principal came into the classroom just before we were to be released to go home for lunch. He said he heard that some of the students had been bringing firecrackers to school, and he wanted to say that it definitely was not allowed. Firecrackers are dangerous. They were against the Pennsylvania state law. If any of his students even brought a firecracker into the school, even if he did not set it off, he would be expelled from school immediately. He would never be able to come back.

Well! I did not own any firecrackers. I had not even been thinking about firecrackers. But, you know, when you get to thinking about firecrackers that really is an intriguing subject. And as I thought about them I remembered that one of my friends had some.

On the way home for lunch a friend and I went to this other friend’s house, picked up a firecracker, and returned to the school with it forty-five minutes later. We went into the cloakroom, invited another boy to come in with us, and said, ‘You hold the firecracker by the middle of the fuse. Pinch it very tight. Then we will light it. The others will think it is going to explode. But when it burns down to your fingers it will go out, and everything will be all right.’

What we had not counted on was that the lighted fuse would burn our friend’s fingers. When it did, our friend dropped the firecracker. It exploded in an immense cloud of blue smoke and tiny bits of white paper, in the midst of which we emerged, a bit shaken, from the closet.

You cannot imagine how loud a firecracker sounds in an old school building with high ceilings, marble floors, and plaster walls! Nor can you imagine how quickly a principal can rush out of his office, down the hall, and into one of the classrooms. The principal was there even before my friends and I had staggered through the cloakroom's open door. He was as stunned as we were, though differently. I remember him saying over and over again, as we had been sent home and had come back to his office with our parents. 'I had just made the announcement. I had just told them not to bring any firecrackers into school. I just can't believe it.' He couldn't believe it then. But I am sure that our rebellion, as well as countless other acts of rebellion by thousands of other children over the years, eventually turned him into a staunch, believing Calvinist – at least so far as the doctrine of total depravity of children is concerned."

THAT IS WHAT THE LAW DOES – IT PROVOKES WICKEDNESS

Legalism does not make one More Spiritual BUT More Sinful > AROUSES SIN

c. The Law BRINGS US TO AN END OF OURSELVES

FOUR STEPS LISTED in vs. 9 – Paul's Testimony // to ALL OF US

1. "Once I was alive apart from law" > Youth, Unaware of Law's Condemnation
2. "but when the commandment came" > Bar Mitzvah / Son of Law / Accountable
3. "sin sprang to life" > Youthful Rebellion – Law aroused appetite for sin
4. "and I died" > Guilty Lawbreaker / Reap the Wages of Sin

v. 10 I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death."

Galatians 3.21 "For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law."

LAW CANNOT GIVE LIFE – ONLY SHOW SINNER THEIR GUILT

LAW CANNOT RESTRAIN SIN – any more than Fast Car restrains a Bad Driver

NOTHING MORE DEADLY THAN CHURCH WITH HIGH STANDARDS
Encourages members to attain those standard in their own strength

ADMIRE VIRTUE OF DEVOUTLY RELIGIOUS – Muslim, Mormon, JW
Very Commands they strive to Obey > Lead to Pride, Rebellion, and Death

MORE SUBTLE LEGALISM – Christians follow a Man – even Good Man, Good Teacher, Good Leader, Pastor, Preacher > GOD USES LEADERS TO HELP Man ONLY GIVES > INFORMATION / Only Holy Spirit gives ILLUMINATION

MARTYN LLOYD-JONES > 9 WAYS SIN COMMONLY DECEIVES US

1. Sin gets us to misuse the law, convincing us that as long as we have not sinned outwardly and visibly, we are all right, forgetting that with God the thoughts and intentions of the heart are important.
2. Sometimes sin changes its tactics and tells us that everything is hopeless and we might as well keep on sinning.
3. Sin tells us that it does not matter whether or not we are holy. It says, ‘why don’t you keep on sinning so grace may abound?’
4. Sin deceives us by making us angry at the law, feeling that God is against us if he prohibits anything. If he were for us, we think, he would let us do what we want and be happy.
5. Sin gets us to believe that the law is unreasonable, impossible, and unjust.
6. Sin makes us think highly of ourselves. It makes us ask why we should be bound by any law. Why shouldn’t we become a law unto ourselves?
7. Sin tells us the law is oppressive, keeping us from developing the wonderful gifts and talents we have within us, all of which would emerge if only we did not have to be held back by God’s commandments.
8. Sin makes righteousness look drab and unattractive.
9. Sin causes us to discount the consequences of willful disobedience. Like the serpent told Eve, “You will not die, your eyes will be opened, you will be like God

d. The Law shows the SINFULNESS OF SIN

QUESTION – v. 7 “Is the law sin?”

v. 12 “So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

AHA! LAW REALLY DOES WEAR A WHITE HAT - holy, righteous and good!

HOLY > Reflects TRANSCENDENCE and PURITY of God

RIGHTEOUS > Reflects the EQUITY of God

GOOD > Promotes man’s HIGHEST WELL-BEING, shows GOODNESS of God

ETERNAL TRUTHS OF RIGHTEOUS, HOLY GOD “more precious than gold, than much pure gold; they are sweeter than honey, than honey from the comb.”

BUT LAW > as God’s Searchlight > REVEALS, AROUSES, EXPOSES SIN
SOMETHING IS RADICALLY WRONG SOMEWHERE > Not with Law > US!

v. 13 “Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.”

SIN IS EXCEEDINGLY SIN > not merely a Mistake, Accident, Weakness

John Gerstner preached a strong message like this about sin at one church

Afterward a woman listener said “You make me feel this small”

(Holding her thumb close to her index finger)

GERSTNER “But, Madam, that’s too big. That’s much too big. Don’t you know that that much self-righteousness will send you to hell?”

LAW WAS GIVEN TO DRIVE OUT ALL SELF RIGHTEOUSNESS

So that we might fully embrace Jesus Christ alone as our Savior

vs. 3,4 WE ARE “released from that law... died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God.”

JAMES BOICE “One day the great God of the universe is going to throw a party. It will be the most magnificent party that has ever been held. The banquet will be spread in heaven. The guests will be numbered in the billions. The angelic legions will be there to serve the honored guests. Jesus, the Bridegroom, will be seated at his Father’s right hand. And you will be there, too, for this is the great marriage supper of the Lamb. You will be there. Do you understand that? *You will be there.* Nothing is going to keep you from that great celebration – if you are really joined to Jesus Christ. So what are you doing? Are you living a half-hearted life for Jesus Christ now? If you know where you are headed, you will be preparing for that day with every spiritual thought you have and every deed you do. You will be bearing fruit for God, because on that day of celebration you will be able to lift it up and offer it to him with pure hands and joy unspeakable.”