

BELIEVERS AND THE LAW – PART 2

ROMANS 7:7-13

SOME GLEANINGS THUS FAR FROM ROMANS

- Paul has established that the law cannot save. **ROM. 3-5**
- The law cannot sanctify. **ROM. 6**
- The law can no longer condemn a believer. **ROM. 7:1-6**

TONIGHT: THE LAW AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO SIN!

In the next two studies, we find out some additional things about our **GRACE RESCUE** from the law!

SOME FACTS ABOUT THE LAW

- The Old Testament lists 414 actual laws.
- By New Testament times, Jewish rabbis had summed up scriptural law in 613 commandments: 248 mandates and 365 prohibitions.
- To those scriptural laws, the rabbis had added countless adjuncts, conditions, and practical interpretations. By the law, ***EPIC FAILURE AWAITS!***

In our passage, Paul gives four basic elements of the convicting work of God's law.

1. THE LAW EXPOSES OUR SIN v. 7b

In other words, because God has disclosed His divine standards of righteousness in the law, men are more accurately able to identify sin, as well as our abject failure to meet those standards.

- Back in **ROM. 2:15** we saw even pagan unbelievers who had never heard of God's revealed law have His "*law written in their hearts.*"
- Paul uses the first person singular pronouns *I* and *me* here in **Chapter 7**, indicating that he is giving his *personal testimony* as well as teaching *universal truth*—***we all struggle with sin!***

JESUS' EXAMPLE

The central theme of the Sermon on the Mount is that God demands perfect righteousness in the heart—not just the head or hands. **MATT. 5:48**

- Which was a righteousness that far surpasses the external and hypocritical righteousness typified by the scribes and Pharisees—who tried to keep the law perfectly, line upon line. **MATT. 5:20**
- The ***SHEMA, PHYLACTERIES, AND MEZUZAHs*** cannot fix the heart.

MAY WE WRITE HIS LAW ON OUR HEARTS!

2. THE LAW AROUSES OUR SINFULNESS v. 8

Faithful ministers of the Gospel always proclaim the demands of God's law first. A person who does not see himself as a lost and helpless sinner will see no need for a Savior.

- When people notice a sign that reads “**Keep off the grass**” or “**Don't pick the flowers,**” for instance, there is often an impulse to do the very thing the sign forbids.
- Sin does not overwhelm the sinner like it does when *the law* becomes known; it stirs up the sin dust in our lives—as in *PILGRIM'S PROGRESS*.

3. THE LAW RUINS SINNERS v. 9-11

CASE IN POINT: Paul was an expert on the law and considered himself to be blameless in regard to it, thus thinking he lived a life that pleased God. **PHIL. 3:6**

- A person who is *deceived* into thinking he is acceptable to God because of his own merit and good works will see no need of salvation and no reason for trusting in Christ.
- Both by the standard of the law and by the standard of grace, the very term *self-righteousness* is a self-contradiction. **IT CANNOT HAPPEN**—*we are ruined!*

4. THE LAW SHOWS HOW BAD THE PROBLEM REALLY IS v. 12-13

The fact that the law reveals, arouses, and condemns sin and brings death to the sinner does not make the law itself evil.

- Paul's point here is that sin is so *“utterly sinful”* and pervasive in humankind that it can even pervert the purpose of God's holy law found in His Word.
- *“Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.”* **PS. 119:11**

THE ULTIMATE PURPOSE OF THE LAW WAS TO DRIVE MEN TO FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.