

Apostle Paul Series – Part 5 A Discourse On Romans Seven

Romans 7:1-25

Compiled/formatted by Tom Stephens

Saul, Or Apostle Paul?

Vs 1-3: “Know ye not brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law), how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath a husband is bound by the law to *her* husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of *her* husband. So then if, while *her* husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.”

Paul returns to the question referred to in 6:15: “What then, Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? God forbid!” “*NO! Sin no longer dwells in our mortal bodys!*”—Rom. 6:12.)

Paul illustrates his answer by a comparison with marriage. Marriage is lifelong; but if one partner dies, the other is no longer bound by the law and is free to marry someone else. Therefore, since Paul already stated in 6:14, “*For sin shall have no more dominion (power, authority) over you, for you are not under the law but under grace.*”, we can realize we are fully free from our marriage with the law; and Paul states “now Christians have died to the law, and are married to our Savior, and *should* bear fruit for Him” (see 6:22). Therefore, when we are washed in His precious blood, we are expected to destroy the fruits of the Law (flesh) which was in us, and begin our permanent walk *in the Spirit*. When we sin, we have an advocate with the Father *when we repent* of said sin. Paul continued, without wavering, to walk in the Spirit (see Romans 8).

Vs 4: “Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.”

An exact application of the illustration would be that the law died, and now the believer is free to “marry” grace. Paul’s words are that at salvation, believers died *to the law; the flesh*. Having died to the law, the believer is now free to marry our Savior and bear fruit for Him. Out of the marriage relationship is birthed children; as intimacy with Christ brings the fruit of righteousness (souls; fruits of Spirit). Paul is an Apostle without sin. (see Eph 5:24-32)

Vs 5: “*For when we were in the flesh*, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit unto death.”

Apostle Paul speaks about his past – before his salvation; for when we see the phrase, “When we were in the flesh...”, it *always* refers to the period *prior to the believer’s conversion*. In this context, those in the flesh are not saved, but those in His Spirit *are* saved. On the other hand, both believers and unbelievers may walk in the flesh, but only believers can, and should *always* walk in the Spirit. The law (flesh) aroused sinful desires expressed through members of the body, resulting in death (“*Hath God Said....?*”). If we desire to receive accurate revelation in deciphering scripture, we must observe all rules of God’s Holy writings in His Word.

Vs 6: “*But now* we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.”

But now indicates a *new life* in the *Holy Spirit*, and not in the letter of the law! Now Paul is free of sin, having been cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus and ministering in power and anointing.

“*But God/But Now*. . . In This portion of the Word of God, the expression *But now* points back to the foregoing argument concerning condemnation of the entire world, *as contrast with the present newness of life*. Paul was never guilty of sinning without repentance. Prior to this expression, the Jew, and the Gentile...*all* were under sin. Every mouth is stopped and the world stands guilty before God. There is nothing man can say. God almighty, Creator of man and the universe, declares that all are under His Judgment, because of mankind’s sin. *But God...But now* shows the fulfillment of Grace and life”

But now, (referring to Romans 6:22 and 7:6) being made free from sin; and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end, everlasting life. *But now* shows that this in a very important confirmation that Paul, in his penning of the scriptures, was a believer writing about his own past, prior to his conversion to Christ, ***but now***, walks in the Spirit! *But now* refers to a previous life *away from Christ*, in contrast to “*Behold, all things are become new*”: **References:** Jn. 1:17; Rom. 3:2; 6:22; 7:6; 8:1; 15:23; 16:26; 1 Cor. 2:12; 12:18; 13:12; Gal. 1:23; 2:20; 3:14; 4:9; Eph. 5:8; Phil. 1:20; 2:12; 4:10.

Vs 7: “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet”.

This is a very important confirmation that Paul, in his penning the scriptures, was a believer writing about his own past, prior to his conversion to Christ, *but now*, walks in the Spirit! The next logical question (6:1,15) is: Is the law sin? *God Forbid*. (6:2,15). Paul emphatically denies the law is sinful. Paul uses his personal pre-salvation experiences as an illustration: *The law reveals sin*, just as the use of the word *Commandment*.

Verses 8-25: Concerning Paul’s, *and* our past, sin is described as the pre-conversion experience of all who wants to please God as His child without depending on His grace, mercy and strength (see 8:1-8). In verses 13-20, Paul shows us that sin becomes a master, even though resistance is applied. Verses 21-25, Paul reveals a person’s utter despair as the power of sin over him continues to weaken him. Paul is showing us how sinning will keep mankind us under the law.

Vs 8: - “But sin, taking occasion by the *commandment*, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.”

Sin is *always* rampant—out of the control of man; and sin was not imputed before the law (5:13). Abraham was considered righteous prior to the law by his faith. Though he had many good works (building altars before God), and was obedient, these had nothing to do with God considering him righteous. Only those who followed after God in faith were righteous. Before the law, God judged men as unrighteous only by their disobedience to His previous teachings.

Commandment: The word *commandment* is used in each verse from verse 8 - 12; and concerns the law—our flesh. Paul was speaking of his past, prior to his own salvation.

Vs 9: “I was alive without the law once: but when the *commandment* came, sin revived, and I died.”

Once (Apostle Paul’s past), Paul believed himself to be ok. He was a Pharisee, and it was very common that the Pharisees and Sadducees were very satisfied. Paul felt he was *without, or above the law*. Brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, Paul was a student and doctor of the law, a strict observer of it, and zealous for it, *yet without the law*. Many are *spiritually dead in sin*, yet alive in their self-opinions. The law revealed to Paul by this commandment, he was in the path of destruction because of his sin. Again, this is Paul’s past.

Commandment would always deal with being *under* the law, not grace/faith. Paul had not yet received salvation. Not only was the word, *commandment* used in verse 9, but there was also the past-tense words “once” and “revived”.

Vs 10: “And the *commandment*, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death.”

The law points out the path of righteousness by revealing sin, and it points to life; but since Paul was under the law, in the flesh prior to salvation, it meant death. Paul was saved at this writing, or he would not have been involved in the writing of the Holy Bible, period.

Commandment always concerned the law or our flesh, not grace/faith. The Word of God teaches we must be born of His Spirit. *Also*, the past-tense words, “*which was ordained*”, and “*I found*” strongly illustrates Paul’s previous life under the law.

Paul describes 2 classes of people: those who live according to the flesh and those who live according to the Spirit. Christian should know, if we walk in the flesh/law, we are walking with death, for self-gratification and desires to live in sin; but if we are walking in the Spirit, we have life everlasting and nothing can take us away from pleasing Jesus.

“*For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnal minded is death; but to be spiritual minded is life and peace.* (Rom. 8:5-6).

Conflicts between the Spirit and the flesh: “*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law*” (Galatians 5:16-18).

Paul knew what it meant to walk in the flesh, for he walked this road from his beginning. It only took Jesus a few minutes to cause Paul to change his direction from the evil life of destruction to a wonderful walk in the Spirit of God.

Do not listen to your enemy, the devil! Walk in Jesus’ precious Spirit and you will live. But if you are in the flesh you will die. You see, if you will walk in the Spirit you will not be lusting after the flesh. The flesh lusts against the Spirit; and the Spirit is against the flesh; and they are contrary to one another: so that you cannot do the things that you desire to do for Christ Jesus. But if you are being led of the Spirit of the Lord, you are no longer under the law! But we should remember that Paul was amazed at his unique experience with Jesus while on the way to Damascus that day. Therefore. . .

If we believe Paul, in chapter 7, was a wimp who knew the impossibility of doing the things he desired to do; and the impossibility to live a righteous life-style, then we should reevaluate our current position in life—for, or against freedom in Christ Jesus; for Apostle Paul was likely a greater missionary, evangelist, and Church builder; and had accomplished more for the kingdom of God than any other since the Resurrection of Jesus Christ! If we continue in Him, we will enjoy life forever!

Vs 11: “...sin, taking occasion by the *commandment*, deceived me, and by it, slew me.”

Since the law reveals naked sin to us, it points to life. Yet, because sin reigns in our bodies, it becomes death to us when we walk in the flesh, we become deceived into sinning, which can ruin us spiritually.

Resource: Study Acts 7-9: Saul does all in his power to destroy the young Church just before Christ calls him. Christians *must* Continue to walk in His Spirit.

Paul’s statements that “*deceived me*” and that “*sin slew me*” strengthen the view that a child is innocent until he/she willfully sins against God’s law from the heart. Those who continue in sin, even though they have no knowledge of God’s law, will perish because they have a measure of knowledge of right and wrong, that is, if they resist the calling of Christ’s Spirit. God will not automatically save those who choose not to hear the gospel, nor will He give them a 2nd chance after death. But I believe God will make a way for all to come to Him before it’s too late.

Commandment: Again, Paul speaks of the law, prior to salvation.

Vs 12: “Therefore the law is holy, and the *commandment* holy and just and good.”

The word for law means “teaching” or “direction”. The Law can refer to the 10 commandments, the Pentateuch, or any O.T. law. Paul included the sacrificial system of the Mosaic covenant. He states several things:

- (1) Given by God because of transgressions to prove sin is violation of His Law.
- (2) The Law was good, and holy, but could not service the righteousness of man.
- (3) The Law was a temporary schoolmaster for God’s people until salvation by grace.
- (4) Was given to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by our faith.

Paul speaks of the law/commandments as holy. The problems with sin is not the fault of God’s law, as God’s plan in giving the law was to see the coming of His Son, Jesus Christ, who would solidly defeat the enemy of mankind—so man might walk daily in His Spirit.

Commandment: would always dealt with being *under* the law. Paul had already confirmed his love and faithfulness to Christ Jesus. Therefore, Paul spoke of his past, prior to salvation.

Vs 13: “Has then what is good become death to me? God forbid! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the *commandment* might become exceedingly sinful (See Rom 6:1,5).

Paul answered again, *God Forbid!* The law is *Good*. Again, the problem is not the law, but sin. Sin used the law to produce more sin in the lives of both the unsaved and the carnal Christian. Sin is seen as evil, with awful consequences. Apostle Paul had been redeemed by the blood of Jesus!

Commandment: The subject always dealt with being *under* the law. The Word of God teaches we must be born of His Spirit. The past-tense words, “*was producing death...*” shows effects of the law.

Vs 14: “For we know the law is spiritual. But I am carnal, sold under sin.”

The law is from God. But Paul stated his problem was the sin of carnality speaking about his sinful life in the past; like a slave sold into sin. Unfortunately, most Christians today believe Paul walked as a Christian, continuing in his sin, but the scriptures plainly show that this Paul was penning the life of an unregenerate Saul, a man of Paul’s past.

Vs 15-17: “For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is nomore I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.”

For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not *practice*; but what I hate, that I do. 16) If then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law, that it is good. ***But now, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin that dwells in me.***

In these verses, Paul continues to speak concerning his previous “terribly sinful” life. He speaks of the impossibility of himself living up to righteousness! This is exactly what Apostle Paul teaches against in Galatians 5:16-26. In my own words, Paul said this: “*It is absolutely essential for God’s people to walk in the Spirit!*” (also Romans 8). Read Apostle Paul’s words, *carefully*, for yourself:

“This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. (Gal. 5:16-18). . .

Apostle Paul’s description of some works of the flesh: “*Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: (Gal. 5:17-20—The Judgments, next).*

The Holy Spirits Judgments for fleshly living as penned by Apostle Paul: “*...of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.*” (Gal. 5:21)

Spiritual conflict involves the whole person as he struggles to determine whether he will fully surrender to the “desires of the flesh”, the “dominion of sin”—or whether he will yield to the demands of the Holy Spirit—continuing under the dominion of Christ Jesus.

Vs 18: “For I know that in me, (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find.”

Paul may as well confess that he is unclean in every way because of his flesh which brings forth sin without his ability to resist it. “*Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*” (James 4:7) This verse solidly explains by using his own life experiences, the condition of his heart and soul before he was

brought into the kingdom of God.

Note: The apostle is honorably revealing exactly who he was while he was living fully in the flesh. This absolutely proves that this person was Saul—not Apostle Paul! Saul’s heart was the reasoning for his hate for the Christian faith. Acts 8 reports Saul’s feelings about Stephens’ stoning:

“And Saul was consenting unto his death. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles. And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word.” (Acts 8: 1-4)

Sad...so sad. *This was the condition of Saul’s heart and soul.*

Vs 19: “For the good that I would, I do not do; but the evil which I would not, that I do.”

“Paul may as well confess that he is unclean in every way because of his flesh which brings forth sin without his ability to resist it. *“Resist the devil and he will flee from you.”* (James 4:7) Paul was an unbeliever at this time. To practice doing evil on a regular basis is *gross* sin. Whether or not Paul repented after each occasion, there would be a place where God would judge him for his sins because he was given, as a Christian, every tool, and weapon of Spiritual warfare to overcome habitual sins. Paul was a Christian speaking of a criminal past.

Vs 20: “Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.”

Paul continues to confess his many sins prior to salvation. Born a sinner, he lived under the law. This verse is about Saul as a persecutor and a murderer! *Saul, A man bound to the flesh! His goal was to destroy the Church.* Apostle Paul said, *“You do not have to walk in the flesh”*. (Gal. 5:16-26)

Vs 21: “I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.”

Paul explains a corrupt nature, the flesh. There can be no good results, any more than a stalk of corn growing on a rock; or on the sand. Saul did not understand the means by which Jesus’ Spirit guides those who will walk in the Spirit. Therefore, Saul was the persecutor of the Church, and murderer.

Vs 22: “For I delight in the law of God after the inward man.”

This statement by Saul must not fool the man who walks in the Spirit. Saul did not; for he walked in the flesh. Saul did nothing in half measure. His persecution of the early Church was carried on with such zeal that he wrought havoc among the Christians! By his own testimony we know he enthusiastically and in all good conscience arrested, imprisoned, and even killed many professing christians he could locate. He stood by and consented to the death of Stephen. *Saul was at that time, a religious man, but was of the Pharisees that believed they were doing God’s will.* He sat under the *Old Covenant* teaching of Gamaliel, and understood well, the law.

Vs 23: “I see another law in my members, warring against the war of my mind, and bringing me into *captivity* to the law of sin which is my members.”

The law warring against Paul's mind brought him into captivity to the law of sin in his members. The important point here is to realize that Jesus delivered His own born again children from all the wiles of the devil. He told us by Peter to "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." (James 4:7; see also 1 Peter 5:8; Gal 5:16-18; Rom. 1:1,4)

Vs 24: "O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

Paul defeated? From the day he was saved, filled with the Holy Spirit, healed, led to the desert for 3 years, by the Spirit, and preached the powerful word of God for 40 years, plus, he did a major part in the completion of the Word of God in his epistle—supernaturally—by the Spirit. Since Jesus' resurrection, no man has ever accomplished as much; suffered as much; gained as much!

Vs 25: "I thank God – through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

Paul is gloriously saved on his way to Damascus to get permission to continue in the destruction, where Christ intervened in his life. Paul became a powerful, Holy Spirit filled, on fire preacher for the Kingdom of God!

NOTE: By the time Paul wrote Romans, he was a well seasoned minister of the gospel with many churches to his credit, and thousands of converts, all taught according to the doctrines Jesus supernaturally placed in his heart and mind. Paul was no more a spiritual weakling, or wimp at this point as when first saved!

It's grievous to realize much of the church world today considers Paul to be that partially blind, physically weak and unable to resist sinning person who could *later* minister peace and healing to the Gentiles. This is among the bigger lies the devil manufactured in the Word of God. He wants you and I to believe the greatest leaders of the Christian Church is not only weak, but filled with sins that came from hell, and unable to change.

(All Emphasis' in this paper were indicated by the writer)

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