

We can do nothing to gain victory ourselves.

- 2) Paul expressed our frustrated cry, "*Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*"

**b. Paul then assured us that there is victory in Jesus (v.25).**

- 1) He thanked God for victory in Jesus.
- 2) We too must thank God for victory in Jesus.
  - a) With our minds and new nature, we serve the good law of God. Doing right is the desire of every God-fearing Christian.
  - b) However, with our flesh, our sinful nature, we often serve the law of sin.
- 3) The law of God is our friend, but it cannot give us victory. Jesus Christ **alone** can give us the victory. As we yield to Jesus and walk in harmony with the Holy Spirit, God promises victory. (Gal 5:16) "*This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.*"

**Conclusion:** What facts have we learned? **God's law is His perfect standard for doing right, living happily and glorifying Him.** (1) God's law is not the cause of sin. It simply reveals sin like a thermometer. The law is holy, just and good. (2) The law does not cause death. Sin causes death. The problem is not God's "speed" camera; it is our disobedience. (3) The law appeals to our new spirit to do right, but our carnal flesh desires to do wrong. Every day we face a struggle between our new spirit and our old flesh. The problem is not God's law, but our yielding to the flesh. (4) The law is our friend, but it cannot give us victory over sin. We can **only** find victory in Jesus. Staying close to the Lord and yielding to Him will allow us to walk in the Spirit and not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

My friend, do not get discouraged. God's standard is high, but there is victory in Jesus. Follow the victory steps in James 4:7-10. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

If you have not yet trusted Christ to save your soul, God's law condemns you. Your only hope is to receive God's loving gift of salvation. I am happy to show you how if you will speak to me about it.

**Song:** Victory in Jesus - 496

# Is the Law our Friend or Foe?

27 February 2022 AM – Romans 7:7-25 – Ro2022 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** On my morning bike ride, I often see a woman walking her huge Rottweiler. The dog always lunges for me and acts as if it wants to rip me to shreds. I was becoming fearful of him, but the woman told me that the rotating bicycle tires excite him. The last two times that we met, I parked the bike, and walked up to the dog. I discovered that the big Rottweiler is actually friendly.

The Apostle Paul realised that his readers may wonder if God's law was friend or foe. Therefore, he wrote Romans 7 to answer that question.

**Transition:** Here in this chapter, I want us to see four facts that prove the law is our friend, but it is not sin's solution.

## 1. The law is not sin, nor the cause of sin, Ro 7:7-12

Paul begins this section by answering another anticipated question (read v.7).

### a. The law reveals sin, v.7

- 1) **God's law is His perfect standard for doing right, living happily and glorifying Him.**
- 2) **The law reveals sin, just as a thermometer reveals the temperature. However, it does not cause sin any more than a thermostat causes the temperature.**
- 3) God's law does not make sin, nor does it cause us to sin. It simply identifies what is sin and what is not.
- 4) Because God's law commands, "*Thou shalt not covet*", we know that lusting for more than God gives us is sinful. It violates God's law.
- 5) Sin rebels against God's law working in us all kinds of **concupiscence** (i.e., **evil desires**) (v.8). For example, the evil act of being **unkind** would still hurt others even if we were ignorant that God commanded us to be kind.
- 6) However, **once we know God's law**, sin revives and the law condemns us (v.9).

### b. The law reveals our inabilities, v.10

- 1) **When a student takes an exam and fails, the exam did not make him fail; it simply revealed his inabilities in that**

subject.

- 2) God's commandment or law revealed **His perfect standard for doing right**. If kept **flawlessly**, this would lead to eternal life (v.10). We know that is impossible.
- 3) However, sin finds an **occasion, opportunity, or starting place** to deceive us into disobeying God's law and leads to destruction (v.11). The law is **not** our problem. Our problem is our inability to keep the law.

**c. God's law is holy, just and good, v.12**

- 1) God's law is holy, just and good. It is set apart from evil, absolutely right and perfectly good. **God's law is His perfect standard for doing right, living happily and glorifying Him.**
- 2) Therefore, the problem is not with the law; it is with sin.

**2. The law does not cause death, sin does, Ro 7:13**

Here, Paul answers another anticipated question (read v.13).

**a. Sin produced death in us by getting us to disobey the good law.**

- 1) The law pronounced death upon those who failed to obey. (Rom 6:23) "*For the wages of sin is death...*"
- 2) However, death is not the law's fault. It is the fault of sin.
- 3) **If a camera catches you driving faster than the law permits, the fault is not in the camera or in the law. The fault is in your driving speed.** So it is with God's law.

**b. God's good law makes sin exceeding sinful.**

- 1) The pureness of the law makes sin against the law appear even more sinful.
- 2) **My lawn is acceptably green compared to the lawns of several of my neighbours. However, when compared with a rich green lawn, watered abundantly with bore water, fertilised regularly, and manicured carefully, my lawn looks sick.** Likewise, when we may compare our lives to those of ungodly people, we may look quite good, but when compared to God who is sinless and holy, we look filthy. Isaiah put it this way. (Isa 64:6) "*But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like*

*the wind, have taken us away.*"

**3. The law is spiritual, but we are carnal Ro 7:14-23**

**a. This presents a conflict, v.14**

- 1) The law appeals to our new spirit, urging us to do right. The Christian's **new spirit desires to do right**. Amen!
- 2) However, our carnal flesh has **no human strength** to do right. As Jesus warned His disciples, (Matt 26:41) "*Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*"

**b. Paul illustrates that conflict, v.15-20**

- 1) When Paul uses the word "**I**" in these verses, he is speaking of **his new nature** that **desires to do right**.
- 2) He said that he did not understand his own actions (v.15). He often **failed to do** what his spirit wanted to do and instead he **did** what his spirit hated. **Sounds familiar!**
- 3) The fact that he did what his spirit did not want to do showed that the good law was not the problem; sin was the problem (v.16).
- 4) It was **not Paul's new nature** that rebelled against God's law, but the old sinful nature within him (v.17).
- 5) He had a desire in his new nature to do right, but he had **no strength in his sinful flesh** to do right (v.18-19)
- 6) When this happened, it was not his new nature that was ruling him, but his old sinful flesh within (v.20).

**c. The problem is not God's law, v.21-23**

- 1) The problem was the presence of sinful evil (v.21).
- 2) Paul's inward new man **delighted** in God's law (v.22). **That can only be said of a true Christian. Therefore, Paul was not describing the struggles of an unbeliever in this chapter (as some affirm), but the struggles of a Christian.**
- 3) The law of sin within him was fighting against the law of God in his mind. The law of sin was capturing his bodily members (v.23).

**4. The law cannot give us victory over sin, Ro 7:24-25**

**a. Paul was frustrated (v.24)**

- 1) Every Christian is **wretched** or **afflicted** by sin. The law reveals our sin, but it can do nothing to give us victory.