

Romans

Chapter 7

Romans 7:1-3

“Or do you not know, brothers for I am speaking to those who know the law that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives? For a married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives,

but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.”

- Zelmyra and Herbert Fisher were married on May 13, 1924. In 2008, they earned the Guinness World Record for longest marriage at 84 years.
- **There's no secret to our marriage, we just did what was needed for each other and our family.**
- *Remember marriage is not a contest, never keep a score. God has put the two of you together on the same team to win.*



- *We are both Christians and believe in God. Marriage is a commitment to the Lord. We pray with and for each other every day.*

Marriage Illustration

- Paul continued with his same thought process that he had begun in chapter six using marriage as an illustration to describe the believers changed status and new identification in Jesus.
- Paul links chapter 7, to chapter 6, with the word **or**. Make sure your Bible version has this word in the text because it is important to see the connection to **Romans 6**.
- In **Romans 6:11**, Paul stated that the believer **must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus**.
- Sin's marriage partner, the old man/inherited Adamic nature, is crucified and dead.

- The new man is married and partnered to Jesus. Through the indwelling Spirit sin's power is broken since now we **count** ourselves **dead to sin and alive** (married) **to God in Christ Jesus**.
- The truth that the believer has **died to sin** does not mean that **sin is dead** in the believer and **sin** no longer appeals to him.
- **Died to sin** means we no longer want to sin, we enjoy God, and we delight in His way of living.
- The believer is to **know** the truth of the Scriptures testimony that we have **died to sin** and we have **union** with Christ in His **death** and **resurrection** (**Romans 6:2-9**).

- Paul asks, **Do you not know...**? The word for **know** means **to be ignorant**.
- Again as he did in **Romans 6:3**, Paul does not want any believer to be **ignorant** concerning these fundamental truths taught in the Bible.
- “For, being **ignorant** [same word used in 6:3 and 7:1] of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their **own**, they did not submit to God’s righteousness.”-**Romans 10:3**
- When a people are **ignorant** about what Jesus did for them on the Cross and they are continually refusing to learn about what the Bible says concerning righteousness in Jesus they replace it something else.
- Instead of substituting our sin for His righteousness; they substitute God’s wonderful righteous work with rules and regulations that give themselves a format by which they deem themselves to be holy and righteous.

- Paul is speaking to those **who know the law** and he uses one illustration from the the Law: Marriage to describe the believers changed identity in Jesus.
- At the moment that Paul uttered the word marriage to his Jewish believers they would have started in their understanding of the **law** of marriage with **Genesis 2:24**.
- “ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become **one** flesh.”-**Genesis 2:24**
- The man and the woman though separate are united and their individual independent paths have become **one flesh**.

- However, death breaks the power of the **law** concerning marriage since the **law is binding on a person only as long as he lives**.
- The word for **binding** is the same word that Paul had used in **Romans 6:9;6:14**, where he had described **death** and **sin** no longer having **dominion** over those believers who are in Jesus.
- **Binding**: have authority, rule, control, occupy, hold sway, prevail over.
- However, **if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage** and being of **one flesh** when the husband died she died to the husband and the **law of marriage** and its **dominion** over her.

- The woman is now **released** and set **free from that law** to marry another.
- The word for released is the same word Paul used in **Romans 6:6**, “our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be **brought to nothing**”.
- The word means literally to put out of business.
- When the husband died **the marriage law** over her was put out of business and she was no longer bound to keep it.

Romans 7:4-6

“Likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit for God.

For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit and not in the old way of the written code.”

Marriage to Jesus

- Paul said, **likewise, my brothers, you also have died to the law...**
- Paul applies his illustration to the believer: As the husband's death frees the wife to remarry another so also through the death of Jesus we are set free from the law of sin and death to be united in Jesus.
- **Likewise** as in marriage, when a person becomes a believer, there is complete change in relationship and allegiance.
- We go from loving sin, our old spouse, to loving Jesus.
- We go from living by our own righteous deeds which brings death to relying and trusting Jesus, our new spouse, and His finished work.

- **Likewise** as in marriage, Jesus and the believer become **one flesh**, and everything that is of Jesus is the believer's.
- His perfect obedience, His sinless life, His holiness, His death, His resurrection, His glorification, His riches, His grace, His mercy, His compassion and His love are all the believer's who are united to Jesus.
- **Likewise** as in marriage, a person loses a certain amount independence and freedom.
- A single person can make a determined amount of choices that a married person cannot.

- A person **can choose** to live independently of Jesus but a person who believes **from the heart cannot** live independently of Jesus.
- A believer has been released from the shackles and burden of the old law of sin and death so that we **may belong to another**.
- “Every believer not only died with Christ, but also arose with Him (**6:14**). Thus God has "joined" us "to Christ ('to another')"—in both His death and resurrection. The phrase "might be joined to another" does not imply that our union is only a possibility. God **did unite** us with Christ (6:5)”.-Constable, Thomas

Fruit to God

- The believer's relationship has changed from a life under the fear, the rejection, the shame, and the guilt that comes from striving to gain our acceptance by God through the law.
- At one time as independent sinners we lived according to **our sinful passions bearing fruit for death** and since the power of sin is the law (**1 Cor. 15:56**), the **law aroused** the sinful nature in us.
- Our relationship with the Father is one of intimacy and joy in the Son just as the Father has been doing throughout eternity (**John 17:24**).

- It is not a burden to be joined to a Holy Father Who is humble and gentle of heart and is rich in mercy, in love and in kindness. It is a joy and it produces a fruit to God.
- In **Romans 6:22**, the believer receives through his union with Jesus the **fruit [that] you get leads to sanctification**.
- The believer in union with Jesus is “filled with the **fruit of righteousness** that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”- **Philippians 1:11**
- Through our union with the indwelling Spirit we have “ the **fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is **no law**. ”-**Galatians 5:22-23**
- At the moment of faith a seed was planted in the heart of every born again believer that continues sprout, blossom, grow and ripen through the work of the Holy Spirit that produces a **fruit to God**.

The New Verses the Old

- The believer has been **released** from the law.
- The word for **released** is Paul’s old word meaning the law is out of business, shut down, null, and void.
- The law held us **captive** but, like the wife who died to her husband and was **released** to marry another, we died to the law in Jesus and now, we live in union with Him thorough the **new way of the Spirit**.
- We died in Jesus to **the old way of the written code**, which He did, “by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he **set aside, nailing it to the cross**.”-**Colossians 2:14**

Spiritual Adultery

- At the moment of our new birth in Christ we are joined in union with Him and receive freely all the many benefits that our new relationship provides in Him.
- There is not a physical relationship on the planet that can succeed if one of the spouses is holding their beloved with one hand and their adulterous affair with the other hand.
- “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, **the love of the Father is not in him**. For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life is not from the Father but is from the world.”-**1 John 2:15-16**

- The questions to ask ourselves:
 - Do I trust in everything that my new relationship in union with Jesus does for me?
 - Am I holding on to something, someone, or some form of righteousness that satisfies my fleshly desire to be significant?
 - Am I thinking that God owes me because of how I serve Him? That I am righteous, faithful, a good worker, a good spouse and that is why He chose me?

- We commit spiritual adultery with Jesus whenever we trust in anything other than His complete and finished work: His life, death and resurrection for our righteousness.
- “And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me **in righteousness** and **in justice, in steadfast love** and in **mercy**. I will betroth you to me **in faithfulness**. And you shall know the LORD. And in that day I will answer, declares the LORD, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth, and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel [May God Give Seed], and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will **have mercy on No Mercy**, and I will say to **Not My People, ‘You are my people’**; and he shall say, **‘You are my God.’**”-Hosea 2:19-23

Romans 7:7-12

“What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”

But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead. I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died.

The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.”

The Purpose of the Law

- My Bible had the heading for this section as, “The Law and Sin”, but I think a more appropriate heading would be: “Why Can’t I seem to Get My Act Together?”
- A non-believer would not begin to understand the truths of this section. **This section is for the believer and the truths are Spiritually understood.**
- “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are **spiritually discerned.**”-1 Corinthians 2:14

- Paul begins this section by asking the question: **What then shall we say? That the law is sin?**
- I think for the unbeliever the law is a burden, confining, restrictive to their sinful behavior and lifestyle. Some might even say the law is outdated.
- For the believer the law serves like an MRI machine exposing the sin in our life. A person can’t blame the MRI machine for detecting the disease.
- Paul said, **if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin.**-Vs.7
- The Law is a mirror that reveals the inner man and shows us how dirty we are (James 1:22-25)-Wiersbe, warren

- “The Law brings about wrath. But when there isn’t any law, there isn’t any **violation of the law**.”-**Romans 4:15**
- We shouldn’t merely suppose that a man automatically recognizes that certain thoughts or words or actions are sin against a Holy God.
- Every culture and subculture has a standard of morality by which people judge their actions to be either good or evil but to say it is a **sin against God deserving of His wrath** would not even enter into the equation.
- The Law that is given to us by God indicates to man what is and what is not a **violation against God’s nature**.

- “Bear in mind that it requires the Holy Ghost to convict a man of sin; any man knows that immorality is wrong, his conscience tells him it is; but it takes the Holy Ghost to convince a man that the thing he most highly esteems, his own self-government, is an abomination in the sight of God”.-Chambers, Oswald
- The Holy Spirit brings to the world both conviction of **sin**; the sense that I am selfish and prideful, yet at the same time brings to the believer the strength and comfort to overcome our sin. (John 14:15-31; John 16:5-15)
- Some people out of a conviction of **sins** come to God to seek solace from their guilt; however conviction of **sins** is **NOT** conviction of **sin**.

Covet

- Out of all of the law, what reason could Paul possibly have for choosing, **You shall not Covet**?
- Coveting is the sin that is at the **root** of all other sins.
- The word in the original **epithymos** is a compound word meaning **focused passion**.
- The word for **covet** in the original means a **burning desire**, a craving, and a longing especially towards the things forbidden to us!
- Jesus said, “And others are the ones sown among thorns. They are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches and the **desires** for other things enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.”-**Mark 4:18-19**

- “But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own **desire**. Then **desire** when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.”-**James 1:14-15**
- “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your **passions** are at war within you? You **desire** and do not have, so you murder. You **covet** and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your **passions**.”-**James 4:1-3**
- All of the verbs in the original language are in the present passive tense. Which conveys the idea that it is within **our own nature** or it is the very fabric of who we are to **fall prey** to our **own** desires.
- James makes it personal to each persons desires.

- Once we have become born-again there is no longer an acceptance of yielding to our own desires but there still is a natural disposition to want what we want contrary to God.
- The sinless perfection heresy arises out the confusion over their claim that the natural disposition of man towards sin has been removed (eradicated).
- “Psychologists will tell us that the desire for what one cannot have is the very first craving for wrongdoing in human development. When you say to your child "NO cookies", and they go for the cookie jar anyway, you are seeing that which is as old as the Garden of Eden.”-Pruett, Terry

- Another reason I think Paul selected the sin of coveting is because out of all of the sins; it is the most inward focused, self centered, and ego driven, that gives a person a sense of entitlement.
- Coveting is also the exact opposite of our Father Who is outward focused and Self giving.
- “For desire, in a creature, for aught else but God’s glory, is sin. Imagine Gabriel in God’s presence entertaining desire for something for himself: It would be the beginning of another Lucifer! It would be well, by the way, for all legalists, for those who seek either righteousness or holiness through the Law, to those HEAR the Law: ‘Thou shalt not have evil desire’”-Newell, William
- “Who can say, ‘I have made my heart pure; I am clean from my sin?’”-**Proverbs 20:9**

Sin Seized the Opportunity

- Paul says that as soon as the law is stated **You shall not covet sin seized the opportunity** brought through the commandment.
- Paul didn't know what it was to **covet** until the law told him so but once the **commandment** came it **produced** in Paul an **opportunity** for all sorts of **covetousness** within him.
- "The word opportunity in the original is a military term meaning a base of operations. Prohibition furnishes a springboard from which sin is all too ready to take off." - Harrison, Everett

- The word described the material that was used to launch a military campaign as well as the capital used to launch a business.
- So here the **Law** is seen, by Paul, as furnishing **sin** with the material or capital for its assault upon him. The **Law** serves as a launching pad for **sin**.
- Based upon the Bible the believer now recognizes that his fallen sinful nature is **not good** and there is a **power within us that produces** sinful action against the Law of God.
- Paul claimed that he was as to righteousness under the law, blameless. However, it seems there was a **selfish motive** behind Paul's righteousness, since it was his **own** righteousness not the righteousness that is by faith in Jesus.

Definitions of Sin

- Some definitions of sin throughout Church History:
 - “Sin is any act or thought that robs myself or another human being of his or her self-esteem.”-Schuller, Robert
 - Sin is, “something thought, spoken, or done against the law of God, or omission of something which has been commanded by that law to be thought, spoken or done.”-Arminius, James
-
- Sin is, “a voluntary transgression of a known law”.- Wesley, John
 - “Sin is lack of conformity to the moral law of God, either in act, disposition, or state”.-Strong, A.H.
 - “Sin is a contradiction of God. Sin involves a depraved disposition. A depraved disposition is not simply the absence of a good disposition.”-Murray, John
 - “Sin is not wrong doing, it is wrong being. Sin is mutiny against God’s rule; not vileness of conduct, but red-handed anarchy.”-Chambers, Oswald

Sin

- Paul regards **sin** almost like it is a living evil entity coercing and manipulating Paul into deception.
- Notice:
 - Sin is **seizing** an opportunity **produced in me** all kinds of covetousness.-Vs. 8
 - Sin **seizing an opportunity** through the commandment **deceived me**.-Vs.11
 - It was sin, **producing death in me** through what is good.-Vs.13

- So now it is **no longer I who do it, but sin** that dwells within me.-Vs. 17
- Now if I do what I do not want, it is **no longer I who do it, but sin** that dwells within me.-Vs. 20
- I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and **making me captive to the law of sin** that dwells in my members.-Vs. 23
- That is the proof of the spiritual and wise man. He **knows** that he is **carnal**, and he is **displeased** with himself; indeed, he **hates** himself and **praises** the Law of God, which he **recognizes** because he is **spiritual**. But the proof of a foolish, **carnal man** is this, that he **regards himself as spiritual and is pleased with himself**.”-Luther, Martin

What is Sin?

- **Sin** is a disposition in the heart of man that **produces** in man thoughts, words, and actions **contrary** to the heart and will of God.
- It is self-serving and is a contradiction to God in our thoughts, words, and behaviors.
- The Greek word for **sin** is *harmatia* and it means to **miss the mark** in thought, word, and deed.
- In his own heart man seeks to defend himself and makes excuses for his own nature and places his will above God's will.

- There is a tendency for some to believe that if we have not done certain sinful behaviors that we are not sinners at all. Therefore they do not consider themselves to be sinners, nor experience a real conviction of sin.
- Man does not do particular sinful behaviors and therefore become a sinner. Man is by **nature** sinful and therefore **does** sinful actions.
- Most people today do not believe themselves to be sinners but people will say, "nobody's perfect" or "I make mistakes" or "I'm only human".
- There is clever lie that stains the church to be concerned with the **major sins** of society and settle for the more **subtle sins** in our own life.

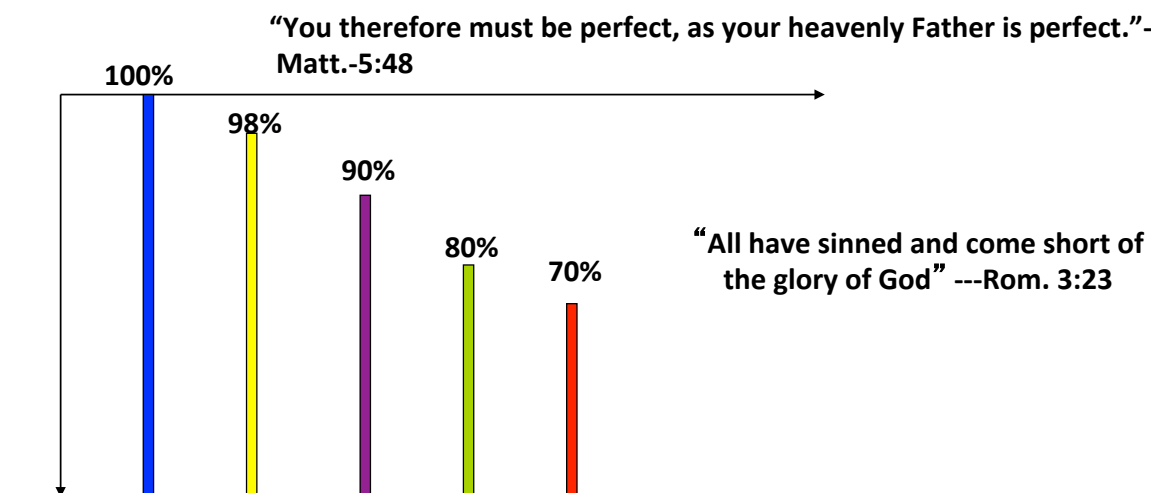
Isn't Funny How?

The sins of others seem so terrible but our sins are not that bad.

“For we dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. But they, measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.”-2 Corinthians 10:12

- However if we compare ourselves to God!
- If we measure ourselves against the only One Who is good, “Who can say, ‘I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin’?”-**Proverbs 20:9**
- No one can say that they are pure in heart; meaning perfect or sinless.
- “For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it”-**James 2:10**
- “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”-**Proverbs 28:13**

The Divine Measuring Stick



- It is worth bearing in mind that the great saints through the ages do not commonly say, 'How good I am!' Rather, they are apt to bewail their sinfulness."-Morris, Leon
- "my memory is nearly gone; but I remember two things: that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior"-Newton, John
- For I **am** the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."-**1 Corinthians 15:9**

- “The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom **I am** the foremost.”-**1 Timothy 1:15**
- “**Holy, holy, holy** is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory...! “And I said: “Woe is me! For **I am** lost; for **I am** a man of unclean lips, and **I dwell** in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!”-**Isaiah 6:3,5**
- "It is because people do not recognize their all-badness that they do not find Christ all in all to them.”-Newell, William

The Law and Sin

- The Law arouses sin within the person.
- “Because the carnal mind is **enmity** against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, **nor indeed can be.**”-**Romans 8:7**
- “Whenever someone establishes a law prohibiting something, the natural tendency of people is to resist it. If you tell a small child, "Don't do such-and-such," you may create a desire within him or her to do it, a desire that was not there before. The Law is a catalyst that aids and even initiates the action of sin in us.”- Constable, Thomas
- **Apart from the law, sin lies dead:** This stands to reason that if the **Law produces sin** then make the **Law** of none effect and **sin** will die.

- The commandments are given to produce **life** but because of sin it produces **death**.
- The commandments are the very essence and character of a Holy Father written for our protection but sin rebels against that authority.
- **Sin deceives** people into believing God is trying to deprive them of something or someone but in the end **kills** us.

- “But the serpent said to the woman, ‘You will not surely die. For God **knows** that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.’”- **Genesis 3:4-5**
- The Law is **holy and righteous and good** and was given to man for our protection in this world but in the end it **exposes** sin and **arouses** sin which ultimately should lead us to the Gospel message.
- The **law**, therefore, is the grand instrument in the hands of a faithful minister, to alarm and awaken sinners.”-Clarke, Adam
- “Instead of being a dynamo that gives us power to overcome, the Law is a magnet that draws out of us all kinds of sin and corruption.”-Wiersbe, Warren

Romans 7:13-14

“Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin.

Sin is the Cause

- The word Paul uses for **good** in the original means the **nature** or the **constitution** of someone or something as being good.
- The **Law** is **good** man is NOT!
- The **law** shows us that **sin** is rooted deep into the nature of man, the **sin** nature.

- The **sin** nature will always show itself to be **sinful beyond measure** or **exceedingly sinful**.
- Why didn't he say, 'exceedingly black,' or 'exceedingly horrible,' or 'exceedingly deadly'? Why, because there is **nothing in the world so bad as sin**. When he wanted to use the very worst word he could find to call sin by, he called it by its own name, and reiterated it: 'sin,' 'exceedingly sinful.'" - Spurgeon, Charles
- "They that know God will be humble; they that know themselves cannot be proud." - John Flavel

Spirit and Flesh

- The law is **spiritual** but man is of the **flesh** and ...those who are in the **flesh** cannot please God (Romans 8:8).
- The problem is not the **law**; the struggle was inside Paul and is inside you and me, **sin**.
- "'Sold under sin' is exactly what the new convert does not know! Forgiven, justified, he knows himself to be: and he has the joy of it! But now to **find an evil nature**, of which he had never become really conscious, and of which he thought himself fully rid, when he first believed, is a 'second lesson' which is often more bitter than the first—of guilt!" - Newell

- “Beloved, I urge *you* as foreigners and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul.”-**2 Peter 2:11**
- Even though Paul says that he is **of the flesh**, the struggle doesn’t mean that he is not a believer.
- His recognition of **sin** shows that God did a work in him and the struggle is caused by indwelling **sin**.
- The Law is spiritual because the Holy Spirit uses it as a standard in convicting man of **sin**.

Romans 7:15-21

For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good.

So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out.

“For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand.

The Struggle

- Paul uses three Greek verbs in expressing behavior in these verses and all are in the **present active tense**:
 - *prasso*, it means to practice or make a business out of something.
 - *poieo*, it means to bring forth, cause, make, or do something to someone or something. Translated in Romans 7, as simply do.
 - *katergadzomai*, it means to work out to a result (whether by personal choice or nature).
- If we translate literally we may be able to get a better understanding of what the Holy Spirit is trying to communicate to the Church through Paul.

ESV Translation Romans 7:15-20	Original Translation Romans 7:15-20
<p>“For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.”</p>	<p>“For that which I am working out I know not: for not what I would, that do I practice; but what I hate, that I do. But if what I would not, that I do, I consent unto the law that it is good. So now it is no more I that am working it out, but sin which dwells in me. For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to work out that which is good is not. For the good which I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I practice. But if what I would not, that I do, it is no more I that is working it out, but sin which dwells in me.”</p>

- For I **do** (work out). As the believer walks with the Lord he begins to see something is a miss.-**Vs. 15**
- In our struggle we find ourselves **working out** the manner of life in which the Holy Spirit inside is teaching us live.
- Paul stated to the Philippian Church to, “**work out** your own salvation with fear and trembling”.-**Philippians 2:12**
- Paul didn’t **understand** (Know) as he was **working out** the law in his life why he continued to **do** (practice) the things he **hated**.
- In his experience, if he **practiced** in life what he did not **want** in relation to God then his conclusion is that He **agreed** with God that the **law is good**, not him.-**Vs.16**

Agreement With God

- The word for **agreed** that Paul used means literally to speak jointly, and then to assent and to consent to something.
- **Assent**: Agree to the truth of something.
- **Consent**: Submit to the truth revealed.
- **Express**: Put into action the revealed truth.
- Putting these three aspects together is what it means to **agree** with God and His word and what it says about me.
- I believe it is true, it is true for me, and I declare it to be true in my life.
- Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful and just to forgive us of all our sins.
- It is a lifestyle of confessing our sins continually.

- Paul in his struggle comes to the conclusion he does not **do (work out)** it but it is the **sin** that **dwells within** him.-Vs. 17
- If I am practicing something that I do not want then there must be another principle power **working out** it's dominion within me causing me to do the things that I do not want to practice.
- For it is not my real self that is **working out** this wickedness but **sin** which **dwells** in me.
- **Sin** for the believer is unwelcome guest, a hateful presence, that is leading me and deceiving me towards the path to my own death and destruction.

Sin's Norm of Deception

- It is important to know how sin works out its deception in our struggle with the flesh.
- The goal of sin's deception is **death**, both spiritual and physical, the means for deception is each person's own **temptation**.
- The source of temptation is deceit.
- "But each person is tempted when he is **drawn away** and **enticed** by his own evil desire. Then after desire has **conceived**, it gives **birth to sin**, and when sin is fully grown, it gives **birth to death**."-James 1:14-15

- **Drawn away**: The mind is fixed on something other than God!
 - **Enticed**: It literally means to catch with bait. The bait is our affections, what we love.
 - **Conceived sin**: The consent of the will to the conception of actual sin! The will becomes engaged.
 - **Birth to sin**: In either action, thought, or word.
 - **Birth to death**: This is the final goal of sin; a hardened heart towards God leading to eternal death!
- Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be **hardened** by the **deceitfulness of sin**.”-**Hebrews 3:12-13**

- Sin’s primary aim is centered towards our heart to go against God and His word!
- Sin draws our **mind** away from God on to something or someone that we think will bring satisfaction to our life but in the end does not!
- The Holy Spirit is what gives the believer the power to go against sin by bringing the focus of our attention back to Jesus and His work on the Cross.
- “Without the comfort and strength of the Holy Spirit, sin will either **harden** us so that we treat it [obeying] with contempt, or else cast us into **despair** and so neglect the gracious means that God has graciously provided us with to defeat it [sin].”- Owen, John

- “It is the blood of Christ which cleanses every spot and stain and which makes us holy and without blemish and fit to stand in the presence of God. **Believers exercise their faith by thinking much about this.** Here faith gets new life and new strength when a sense of vileness has overwhelmed it...Draw near and see its beauty, purity, and effectiveness.”-Owen, John
- “No one who has become part of God’s family makes a practice of sinning, for Christ, God’s Son, **holds him** securely, and the devil cannot get his hands on him.”-**1 John 5:18**
- “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God’s power are **being guarded** through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”-**1 Peter 1:3-5**

- Paul concludes that there is **nothing** within his **flesh** that is **good**.
- Again Paul uses his word for **good** which in the original means the **nature** or the **constitution** of someone or something as being **good**.
- Paul says that his **flesh** is absolutely bankrupt of producing one **good** action towards God.
- “For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the **grace** of God **I am what I am**, and his **grace toward me** was not in vain. On the contrary, I worked harder than any of them, though it was not I, but the **grace of God** that is with me.”-**1 Corinthians 15:9-10**

- Sin demands that God bless me in light of how good I am or how I'm not that bad. But grace will not deal with me on the basis of anything in me - good or bad - but only on the basis of Who God is and the work of His Son.
- In the believer there dwells a deep desire to **do** (work out) what is **right** fostered by the Holy Spirit but there is also an **inability** on our own **power** to work it out.-Vs. 18
- Paul told the Philippians that believers were to have **no confidence** in the **flesh**, and that it is God that **works in us** both **to will and to work**, for His good pleasure(Php. 3:3;2:13).
- No man knows how bad he is until he has tried to be good.”-C.S. Lewis

- “ The one point of the passage is that it describes a man who is trying to be good and holy by his **own efforts** and is beaten back every time by the power of indwelling sin; it thus refers to anyone, regenerate or unregenerate.”-Thomas, Griffin
- For I **do** not **do** the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on **doing** (practicing)-Vs. 19
- Paul came to the conclusion that if he kept **doing** deeds that he had no desire to do, then it is no longer Paul **doing** (working out) it but **sin** that **dwells within** him.

Evil Close at Hand

- Paul recognized that the **law of sin** is in a constant struggle against the believer's desire to do what is right and please God.
- Even when the believer sets his focus upon obeying the Lord; sin fights him all along the way (**evil lies close at hand**-Vs. 21) causing a distraction from praying ,worshipping, bible study, and fellowship.
- If we are doing well in our walk with the Lord pride steps in and begins to make us think that we are some kind of spiritual giant and that we have it all together.
- If we change the core of our thinking to contemplate the Lord he becomes our point of reference.
- "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."-**1 Corinthians 1:31**

Romans 7:22-25

For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being,
but I see in my members another law waging war
against the law of my mind and making me captive
to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

Wretched man that I am!

Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.”

Delight In the Law

- The word Paul for **delight** means to **delight with oneself or inwardly**.
- Paul’s delight is not coming from an outward influence but from his desire in his **inner being** to walk in obedience to the law of God.
- “The unregenerate man could not say, **I delight in the Law of God after the inward man**. For by nature all men are **children of wrath, alienated from the life of God**; and **the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, not subject to the Law of God**. Before his conversion, Saul, as we saw, could help to stone Stephen,—verily thinking he ought to do it; but Paul was not then seeking holiness (as the man in Romans Seven is), but was secure in his own righteousness as a legalist.”-Newell, William

- “Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness. **Delight yourself** in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.”- **Psalm 37**
- “Expect all thy happiness *from* him, and seek it *in* him.”-Clarke, Adam
- When we as believers **delight** ourselves **in the LORD**, He gives us our delight. If **He is our delight**, He gives us more of Himself. “Longings **fixed** on Him fulfill themselves.” –Maclaren, Alexander
- “**Set your minds** on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.”-**Colossians 3:2**

Another Law

- There is **another law** that resides in Paul that gives a total opposite experience of his **delight** in the law of God.
- A different **law** that is **waging war** against the law of his mind.
- Sin’s campaign of war against Paul was successful because it left him **captive to the law of sin**.
- Sin’s campaign to wage war within Paul and win was because there was no power **within himself** to have the victory.
- Paul was captive to his desperate inability of trying to battle sin through the power of his own will power.
- Paul recognized his need for a deliverer if he was going to gain any victory from sin’s powerful grip upon his life.

Wretched Man

- **Wretched man that I am** was the conclusion that Paul derived from his struggle with the law of sin. Notice **I am**, not I was!
- The ancient Greek word **wretched** is more literally, “wretched through the exhaustion of hard labor.”- Vincent, Marvin
- "I've tried everything and nothing helps. I'm at the end of my rope. Is there no one who can do anything for me?"-Peterson, Eugene-The Message
- Paul was totally burned out and **wretched** because of his constant battle to please God **under the Law** was proving to be useless and futile.

Deliverer

- Paul in his struggle against sin called out for a deliver.
- **Who will deliver me from this body of death?** Paul was crying out to the only One who could possibly deliver Him from this body of death.
- “It was the custom of ancient tyrants, when they wished to put men to the most fearful punishments, to tie a dead body to them, placing the two back to back; and there was the living man, with a dead body closely strapped to him, rotting, putrid, corrupting, and this he must drag with him wherever he went. Now, this is just what the Christian has to do. He has within him the new life; he has a living and undying principle, which the Holy Spirit has put within him, but he feels that everyday he has to drag about with him this dead body, this body of death, a thing as loathsome, as hideous, as abominable to his new life, as a dead stinking carcass would be to a living man.”-Spurgeon, Charles

Thanks Be to God

- Paul shifted his focus away from his struggle with the law of sin to the Lord Jesus Christ in thankfulness.
- “For just as the sinner struggles in vain to find forgiveness and peace, until he **looks outside himself to Him** who made peace by the blood of His cross, just so does the quickened soul, struggling unto despair to find victory over sin by self-effort, **look outside himself to Christ.**”-Newell, William
- Paul concludes that with his **mind** he wants to **serve** the **Law of God** and with his **flesh; serve sin.**

- The believer not only needs **forgiveness** from his guilt over sins committed but he also needs **deliverance** from the power of sin that is the main cause of sinful deeds.
- What we need is a Savior to deliver us from this ongoing exhaustive struggle we face every day.
- People think they need to be a **better** person in order to be saved but the law came as a tutor and taught a **perfect standard** that is impossible to achieve; We don't need to be a better person, we need the **Deliverer**, Jesus Who **lived** the perfect standard for us!

- People think if they just had more **will-power** to overcome sin, but the law came and demonstrated that our **will-power is useless** against it. We don't need more will-power; we need the **Deliverer**, Jesus Who is all-power!
- People think that the problem is they don't **understand themselves** very well. But the law is like an MRI machine and perfectly **exposes** that we have a **sin problem** but the law couldn't heal our sin problem. We don't need a doctor, psychologist, or new book; we need the **Deliverer**, Jesus Who wrote and lived the only Book that matters.
- It is by the power of Holy Spirit that this deliverance is begun in us; For the law of the Spirit of life has **set you free** in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death"-**Romans 8:2**