

The Footsteps of Faith Series
Lesson # 11 “Righteousness includes freedom from the Law”
Part II

Romans 7:7-25

Scripture: Romans 1:16-17

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. 17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS man SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

Introduction:

When I was little my dad liked to go deer hunting. He could talk for hours on end about deer hunting trips to Colorado and the big one that got away.

When I was fourteen or so I began to go with my dad hunting. On our first trip out I killed a deer early in the morning and that was a great adventure. We took it home and dressed it out with all the fan fare allowable by law.

Pictures were taken and I was welcomed into the brotherhood of men.....that is until our second hunting trip. Now that I was seasoned veteran of deer hunting I set a little taller in the seat as we drove along.

As we drove along I talked to dad about big game and possible trophies and I was right in the middle of some hunting strategy when I saw it. ...The biggest buck I had ever seen. In a split second I was grabbing for my gun and fumbling with bullets until dad shut me down. He said you can't shoot from a car...He went on to ask where it was?

I pointed it out and as dad inched forward in the old brown truck. I reached the lowest point of my hunting experience. It was just a tree branch. I had just shown how ignorant I was about deer hunting. Dad passed it away as just a mistake, but I was really bothered.

I still have a hard time not believing that it was a big buck. I had seen the image crystal clear in my mind.....yet the truth was I was wrong.

Transitional Statement:

Church, the same thing happens in religion, many people have been convinced of truths about God that are just false illusions. But the cost for mistakes about godliness far exceed missing a trophy deer. Mistakes about God will lead us to death.

Read: Romans 7:7-13

“What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, “YOU SHALL NOT COVET.” 8 But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. 9 I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; 10 and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; 11 for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. 12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good. 13 Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful.”

Lesson:

I. The First thing to look at here is the question “*Is the Law Sin?*”

Verse 7

“What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? May it never be! On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, “YOU SHALL NOT COVET.”

- A. Now he starts this by saying “*What shall we say then?*”
 - 1. A device Paul uses to point out error.
- B. And he brings up this question “*Is the Law sin?*”
 - 1. More simply stated does the Law of Moses violate God’s will?
 - a. To which an obvious answer would be, certainly not God Himself made the Law.
 - b. So why does Paul ask a question that really has its own answer?
 - 2. It seems that Jewish Christians, who were not fully willing to let go of Judaism as their path for righteousness and turn and fully embrace Christ, these people were willing to stretch to any length to get the desires of their hearts. Behind the scenes they were slandering the Apostles (Romans 3:8) and they were trying to use ridiculous proofs against them like: their saying the Law is sin, to win their point.
 - a. They were trying to confuse the people
 - b. They were trying to divide the people
 - c. All to get their way over something they didn’t even understand

3. Church, sometimes I have seen this very attitude in the Lord's Church. Christians more concerned with the desires of their hearts than working together, sometimes even willing to destroy each other or what they don't understand.
 - a. Paul writes an entire book about divisiveness (1 Corinthians)
 - b. God warns us about keeping company with the divisive (Titus 3:10)
 - c. In Proverbs 6:19, King Solomon in his great wisdom Points out that spreading strife among the brothers is an abomination.
 - d. God tells us if we have a problem with someone we are suppose to go to them in love, face to face (Matt 18:15) and stop all the gum flapping behind the scenes and certainly not develop sides against each other

-It saddens me greatly to know of more than one church that Satan has destroyed, not by some overwhelming outside force, but Satan using godly people.

C. So Paul stands up in defense of the gospel

1. He saw himself appointed for the very cause (Phil 1:16)
2. This guy wasn't willing to stand by idly, but he made a stand for the truth
3. Basically, Paul was willing to place himself on the line for Jesus
 - a. He opened himself up to attacks for the glory of God.
 - b. For which he was ridiculed, criticized, and even stoned and left for dead.
 - c. And Church, I can't help but wonder what direction we are headed as a brotherhood when our single biggest problem is just getting folks to come to church.
4. Peter tells us in 1 Peter 3:15 to "...always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you..."
5. Church, the greatest agents of change have always come from people who were willing to lay down their life for a cause.
 - a. Christ laid down his life for us
 - b. And 1 John 3:16 say that we should lay down our lives for others.

D. But, to this question, Paul says that the “*Law is not sin*”

1. He says “*On the contrary*”
 - a. It’s just the opposite
 - b. It is not a violation of God’s will but a fundamental support of it
2. He says that I wouldn’t have known what sin was unless the law had pointed it out.
 - a. The Law:
 - Taught us the difference between right and wrong
 - It taught us who God is
 - And gave us the fundamentals of how to have a relationship with Him
 - It established His boundaries
 - b. Being released from the Law has to do with being released from it as a systematic approach to righteousness. It doesn’t mean that it is worthless or futile or even sin. Just the opposite....it lead us to Christ.

E. Then Paul brings up an example

1. I wouldn’t have known what coveting was unless the Law pointed it out.
 - a. In other words the Law defined sin because it set forth God’s expectation in our life.
2. And interestingly enough this is the last of the 10 commandments and really deals with the desires of the heart.
3. Church, where is the desire of our hearts?

F. So the Law is not sin !

II. But Sin found its opportunity in the Law

Verse 8

8 But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead.

A. But here Paul says the fact is that Sin took its opportunity through the Law

1. Opportunity is a Greek word “*aphorme*” used to talk about the starting point of a battle.

2. And Sin used the Law to establish a base of operations to kill God's people.
- B. You see sin recognized that mankind often follows their own desires and even more so when told what to do or what not to do.
1. One thing stands true about mankind in general ...they like to have things their own way....I think this is true for us today.
 2. And it is without doubt, one of Satan's greatest footholds.
- C. In a way here we might think of sin kind of like a parasite. It can't make it on its own. So it attaches itself to a host sucking the life out of them while contaminating everything else along its way.
1. So Paul might easily counter here by saying *should we keep promoting the Law as a host of sin?*
 2. Because without the host the parasite (Sin) dies
 3. In short, Paul reminds these Christians that under Christ there is life, because apart from the Law sin is dead.
 - a. You see the grace of God is no host for sin
- D. Also it is interesting here that sin is personified
1. It is seen with human like abilities
 2. It can look for opportunities
 - a. And take advantage of them
 3. It is able to produce or accomplish things in us.
- E. But Church, we are not helpless in regard to sin
1. The idea of predestination, that God has pre established our destiny and it can't be changed,is hog wash.
 2. We do have a choice....A choice to follow the desire of sin or to search for the heart of God.

III. Under the Law Sin killed man

Verse 9

9 I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died;

A. Under the Law sin's result was death.

1. Because under a legal Law there is no justification

B. Mankind died, because they yielded to sin.

IV. The commandment was meant to result in life.

Verses 10-11

10 and this commandment, which was to result in life, proved to result in death for me; 11 for sin, taking an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me.

A. Meant to lead to life

1. To lead us to Christ

B. But proved to result in death

1. Because sin deceived man and killed them

a. Sin can be so deceptive

b. Promising great rewards ...justifying itself the whole way.

c. While sucking the life out of us

2. Who is ultimately responsible for being deceived?

a. We are !

3. And how can we stop sin's deception

a. Through God's word

b. And prayer

V. So the Law is Holy & the commandment is Holy, Righteous, and Good

12 So then, the Law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

A. The Law is good.

1. It served its purpose leading us to Christ

2. And still serves to teach us about God and our relationship with Him.

3. It lead us to the intended righteousness

B. The only thing wrong with the Law was man's inability to keep it.

1. But God knew of man's failings and put the Law in only as a temporary system to lead us to grace under Christ.

VI. Therefore Sin is the cause of death, not the Law

13 Therefore did that which is good become a cause of death for me? May it never be! Rather it was sin, in order that it might be shown to be sin by effecting my death through that which is good, so that through the commandment sin would become utterly sinful."

A. It was sin that caused death not the Law

B. And it happened this way so that sin could be exposed for what it is and become utterly repulsive to us.

Conclusion:

Spiritually speaking these Jewish Christians found themselves mistaking tree branches for deer.

But God wants it clear that His good intention for us is to live placing our trust in Jesus the Christ. Having life under a system of grace and mercy.

Maybe your tired of trying to