

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
The Frustration of Every Follower of Jesus
Romans 7

Last time...the relationship/connection/association between sin and grace:
Separation and Reconciliation

Sin separates from God

Grace reconciles to and separates unto God (in “opposite direction”)

Grace is liberation from sin, not a license to sin

This time...our right relationship with God is not governed by the law but by grace, but...

What gives?

I am liberated from sin...but I still sin.

So frustrating!!!

We will explore the frustration of every follower of Jesus Christ

v1-3 Ch 6:6-11, 14, 18 *ff*

Speaking to the Jews, “Are you all ignorant that the Law rules over, has authority over, a person as long as they have breath in their mortal body?”

A married woman is bound to her husband by the Law as long as he is alive.

When he dies, she is released, freed from, the Law regarding marriage.

If she marries another man while her husband is still alive, the Law proclaims her to be an adulteress.

But the Law does not proclaim her to be an adulteress if she marries another man after her husband dies.

Note: The Law spoke of this regarding the woman yet says nothing about the flip side of the coin – neither husbands marrying another woman
nor husbands divorcing their wives

Why not?

Because the institution of marriage is a mystery – Eph 5:32

Jesus Christ our Bridegroom will NEVER marry another nor divorce us

v4 With v1-3 as the example/teaching point, by the body of Jesus Christ...
died and buried and raised again
we are dead to the Law
Just as is the woman (us)
whose husband (the Law)
has died (been fulfilled, God's justice satisfied)

So, we are free from the Law to be married (become one with) another – Jesus Christ

And, marriage being a mystery, just as Gen 1:28 to Adam and Eve,
so are Jesus Christ and us – to bear fruit pleasing to God

We bear fruit pleasing to the Father by abiding in Jesus Christ the True Vine
John 15:1-8
Gal 5:22-25 fruit of the Spirit
Matt 28:18-20 knowing Jesus and making Him known

So “in Christ”,

- we are freed from sin
- sin has no more dominion over us
- death has no more dominion over us
- the Law has no more dominion over us
- Grace governs our relationship with the Lord
- the fruit of the True Vine is seen in us

v5-6 When we were (past tense, no longer the case) in the flesh...
before we were born-again of the Spirit of God by grace thru faith...
the motions/influences of sin,
which were revealed/made known by the Law (Rom 3:20),
were very active in our mortal bodies
also bearing fruit – rotten fruit...death (Rom 6:23a)

But now...

since we are new creatures in Christ (Jesus-kind)
we are delivered (by Jesus) from the Law (Rom 3:19)

We were dead to God, now we are alive to God
Therefore we should serve our Father and Lord

- in the newness/renewal of the Spirit...new man living a new Life
- not in the oldness of the letter...old man condemned to death by the Law

2 Cor 3:6 (God) also hath made us able ministers of the new testament;
not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth,
but the spirit giveth life.

v7 So what does this mean?
Is the Law sin, is the Law an agent of Sin?

What kind of twisted, warped, and foolish thinking is that?!

Speaking personally, the Apostle Paul testifies that the only way he knew of sin was by the Law (Rom 3:20)

The lust of his flesh was unknown to him until he understood the 10th Commandment, directed at the condition of the heart, the inward man and not the outward man

Phil 3:5-6 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless (in the eyes of man).

But...

v8-9 But sin...the nature of man-kind
taking every opportunity by the 10th Commandment
worked and accomplished in me every kind of lust.

Without the Law, sin was dead...to me, I was without sin
The sin of lust was unknown to me until I understood the 10th Commandment

I was alive (to Self) without the Law once upon a time,
but when understanding of the 10th Commandment came into my understanding...

Acts 9

Gal 1:13-18

sin revived, sprang to life, blossomed, even erupted
and I died

Ezk 18:4

The mystery of sin

We are blind to it...it is dead to us
until the Light is shined on it
and it blossoms...unto death

v10-11 The commandment, which God intended for Life (boundaries within which we are safe), resulted in my death

“I am a good person, I do good, I keep the Law”

gets transformed into

“I am not a good person, I do wrong, I am a Lawbreaker!”

James 2:10

Sin...man-kind's sin nature...

takes every opportunity by the Law

to seduce and kill

v12-13 Man's sin is “the bad guy” (deceiving and destroying), God's Law is

- holy...as God is holy
- just...fair and right
- good...God-like, not man-like (Matt 19:17)

Sin took every opportunity by the Law to seduce and kill me...

so did the Law (good) become death (wages of sin) to me?

God forbid!

What kind of twisted, warped, and foolish thinking is that?!

By the commandment of God, sin was clearly seen for what it is...a deceitful killer

Sin showed its true colors when exposed by the light of the Law

The Law is good...for showing us the superabundantly bad stalking us

v14 We know...experientially
that the Law is spiritual...God-breathed
but I am carnal...Life-less (John 1:4), unregenerate flesh
sold under sin...trafficked by sin

Gen 4:7 If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door. And unto thee *shall be* his (sin's) desire, and thou shalt rule over him (if you obey).

Sin has dominion over unregenerate man-kind

Sin seeks to deceive and destroy man-kind

Now we get to the part of this chapter where we must define and understand in context the terms
“I” and “me”

Either spirit/new/inward, raised unto eternal life
Or flesh/old/outward, the body of this death

spirit vs flesh

We need to read slowly, carefully as Paul expresses his frustration with the condition of the
dual-natured follower of Jesus Christ, a frustration we all share (Gal 5:16-25)

Given v14...

v15 that which I...flesh
do...wrong
I...spirit
allow not...disagree with, do not want to do

what I...spirit
would...desire to do good
that I...flesh
do not

what I...spirit
hate...detest because it is not fruit pleasing to my Father or honoring to my Lord
that do I...flesh

v16 If then I...flesh
do that which I...spirit
would not...desire not to do
I...spirit
consent...agree with God
unto the Law that it is good...God-like and not man-like

Prov 13:14 The law of the wise *is* a fountain of life, to depart from the snares
of death.

v17 Now...after having been born-again of the Spirit of God
it is no more I...spirit
that do it...wrong
but sin...man-kind's nature
that dwells...cohabitates
in me...flesh

In other words, given v14-16, something else is at play!
My own sin nature, my inheritance from Adam and Eve
I cannot say "The devil made me do it," as Eve did

v18 For I...spirit
know...experientially and by the revelation of the Word of God
that in me...flesh
dwells no good thing...my flesh is no-good

There are no good people (Rom 3:10, 23)
"I am a good person" is a self-deception of the sin nature
If there is any good in me, it is Jesus (Gal 2:20)

This is a very bitter pill for prideful/sinful man to swallow
And it declares the utter spiritual bankruptcy of salvation-by-works (religion)

For to will...desire to do good
is present...near at hand (Rom 10:8 quoting Deut 30:14)
with me...spirit
but how to perform...do, obey
that which is good...the Law
I...flesh
find not...it is not in me, not in my flesh

Oh, such internal turmoil in every follower of Jesus Christ!

Matt 26:41b *the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.*
Resulting in great sorrow of spirit!

v19 For the good that I...spirit
would...desire to do
I...flesh
do not

but the evil...worthless depravity of my sin nature
which I...spirit
would not...desire to not do
that I...flesh
do

v20 Now if I...flesh
do that I...spirit
would not...desire to not do
it is no more I...spirit
that do it, but sin that dwells in me...flesh

v21 I...spirit
find then a law...true principle
that when I...spirit
would do good...the Law
evil...my sin nature
is present...near at hand
with me...flesh

v22-23 For I...spirit
delight in the Law of God...I want to do good!
I love Jesus!
I want to follow Jesus everywhere and always!
after the inward man...spirit

But I...spirit
see...by the Light of the Word of God, by the revelation of God, with eyes of faith
another law...a true principle different than the Law of God
warring against...attacking, battling my desire to do good
the law of my mind...the Law of God in my mind, the mind of Christ
i.e. my mind is a battlefield!
and bringing me...flesh
into captivity to the law of sin
which is in my...flesh
members...mortal body

Does this make those “unconquered and repeating sins” OK?
They result in great angst and sorrow!
What is needed is transformation, our mind renewed and fortified

v24 O wretched/miserable man enduring this unending battle raging within me!
Who shall deliver/rescue me...spirit, my eternal being
from the body of this death...this mortal body

I am double-minded and my heart is divided!
I feel like I'm losing my mind!
I cannot deliver myself!

This is a distress call – knowing what to do but not able to do it...in the flesh
This is the Apostle Paul's testimony, remember!
And it was Elijah's (James 5:17)
And it is every follower of Jesus Christ's
We are all in the same boat

v25 Who can deliver/rescue me?
Only Jesus Christ...and He has!

Thank you, Jesus!
Thank you, Father!

PTL the boat we are all in is an ark, the Ark of God to deliver us from the wrath to come!

Result:

1. With the mind I serve the holy, just, and good Law of God
Gal 5:17 Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.
1 Cor 9:27a But I keep under my body, and bring *it* into subjection
I/spirit rule my body/flesh
My body does not rule me
2. With the flesh I serve the law of sin

The struggle continues as long as I have breath...but I have victory in Jesus!

Application/Exhortation

We know right and wrong, good and evil – revealed by the Word of God

We want to do good...but too often do wrong
We are grieved by our repeated failures
We cry and repent
We promise to do better the next time...only to do wrong again

So frustrating, so upsetting!

Because the promise to do better the next time rests on me trusting in "I"...my flesh
Well, in my flesh there is no good thing...my flesh is no-good
So how solid is my promise to do better the next time?
It is hallow
What are the odds of that which is no-good doing good?
Zero

I need help!
I need outside help!
I need God's help!

Luke 24:49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Acts 1:8 ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

Being a witness of Jesus Christ is MUCH more than evangelism!
It is most of all being Christ-like everywhere every day, starting at home
 Being Christ-like is a lifestyle of surrender to the will of the Father in heaven by the power of God indwelling us
 Yet we don't always surrender to the will of the Father, do we?

Such is the frustration of every dual-natured follower of Jesus Christ
 Are we "schitzo", are we losing our minds?
 Do we have a split personality disorder?

This is NOT the human condition; that is no-good sin nature (v18)
This is the agonizing condition of a believer living in a corrupted mortal body...
 the plague of not being perfect in this body of sin

So what are we supposed to do?

1. Be transformed...from carnal delights to delight in the Lord

Rom 12:1-2

Col 3:1-15

Ps 1:1-2 Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

Ps 37:4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart (Himself!)

Ps 40:8 I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law *is* within my heart.

Ps 119:24 Thy testimonies also *are* my delight *and* my counsellors.

Ps 119:77 Let thy tender mercies come unto me, that I may live: for thy law *is* my delight.

2. Know God and serve Him with a perfect heart and a willing mind (1 Chron 28:9)

Ps 103:8-14 the mercy of God

Micah 7:18-19 Who *is* a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth *in* mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.

Hosea 6:6 For I desired mercy, and not sacrifice; and the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Matt 9:13 But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

God has mercy for those who love Him...so He says 8x in Scripture
His mercy endures forever...so He says 42x in Scripture

Our minds are the battlefield

Fill our minds with the Word of God

Have the mind of Christ – a continual surrender to the will of the Father

Call out for the power of God from on high (Holy Spirit) to receive by faith the power of God to be Christ-like

Fight the good fight of faith...starting with the battle within all of us

Abide in the True Vine

Walk in the Spirit

Help is ALWAYS available and is but for the asking