

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to Romans 7

By the way – this is our 21<sup>st</sup> study in the book of Romans –

A letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to the believers in Rome and to us today about the fundamentals of Christianity –

About how we are to walk in His grace – day by day.

Now – I know I had you turn your bibles to Romans 7 –

Keep your finger there and go to Psalm 19

One of my favorite Psalm – A Davidic Psalm

And as I was looking at our text – it reminded me of this Psalm.

So, listen to David's meditations on the Law of God

**[Psa 19:7-14 NKJV] 7 The law of the LORD [is] perfect, converting the soul; The testimony of the LORD [is] sure, making wise the simple; 8 The statutes of the LORD [are] right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD [is] pure, enlightening the eyes; 9 The fear of the LORD [is] clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD [are] true [and] righteous altogether. 10 More to be**

desired [are they] than gold, Yea, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them Your servant is warned, [And] in keeping them [there is] great reward. 12 Who can understand [his] errors? Cleanse me from secret [faults]. 13 Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous [sins]; Let them not have dominion over me. Then I shall be blameless, And I shall be innocent of great transgression. 14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my Redeemer.

God said that David was a man after His own heart

Though David lived long before Christ, he understood what it meant to live by grace.

And that is what Paul is going to talk about in our text today – What is our relationship to the law as we walk by grace.

Let's pray...

Read Text –

Once again – I want to remind us that the Apostle Paul knew that there would be people reading this letter or listening to this letter who would object to what he was writing.

He knew there would be individuals who would jump to the wrong conclusion and begin to falsely accuse Paul of teaching something that he wasn't teaching.

And one of the wrong conclusion that they would come to was that Paul wanted to do away with the law.

That Paul was saying that the law was not important

That Paul was saying that we live in grace and ignore the law

Especially after our study last week in the first six verse of ch 7 – where Paul used the illustration of marriage as we died to self and therefore no longer married to law (in a union with the law) and because of the work of Jesus upon the cross - we (the believer died) we are free to be in union with Jesus – where we now walk by grace.

We identify with Christ

There is a new relationship

A new covenant

We have a new life now

Because of our union with Jesus – good fruit is produced

The law could not save us

The law could not make us holy

The law produced death –

We are free from the regulations

We are free from the obligations – do this, don't do that

We go from bondage, under the law to a real liberty and a new life in Christ

But we have to be careful here church

Because the law still has its place in the life of the believer.

By the way –

Pay attention to how many times Paul uses the word “law” and commandment in our study this morning.

**[Rom 7:7-12 NKJV] 7 What shall we say then?**

What shall we say then –

This is the third time Paul has used this expression

In Chapter 6:1

**[Rom 6:1 NKJV] 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? – the issue here, grace**

**[Rom 6:15 NKJV] 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! – the issue here freedom**

And here

**[Is] the law sin?**

His response -

**Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet."**

Normally today – people think about the law of God as being archaic

They think of the law of God as being obsolete

That it is no longer in effect

That it was something used in the Old Testament times –

We are now in the New Testament times –

So the mindset is that the law has no effect upon us.

However, Paul – in the middle of his letter about the Gospel of Grace and the fundamentals of Christian doctrine – gives us an emphasis to the law and he does so in the present tense –

Because the law is still critical for us to come to know Jesus and also to continue to follow and abide in Him.

So the first thing that the law does in the life of the believer -

**The law defines for us what sin is.**

That is one of the purposes of the law – it defines for us what sin is.

God has declared for all of mankind and all of eternity what sin is.

The law tells us what is right and what is wrong

The law reveals God's righteous standard and how we all miss the mark – how we all fall short of the glory of God.

Society doesn't define what sin is

- Look at the world we live in today, what people called sin 30 years ago is no longer called sin.

Man doesn't define what sin is

A pastor doesn't define what sin is

God's law does that for us.

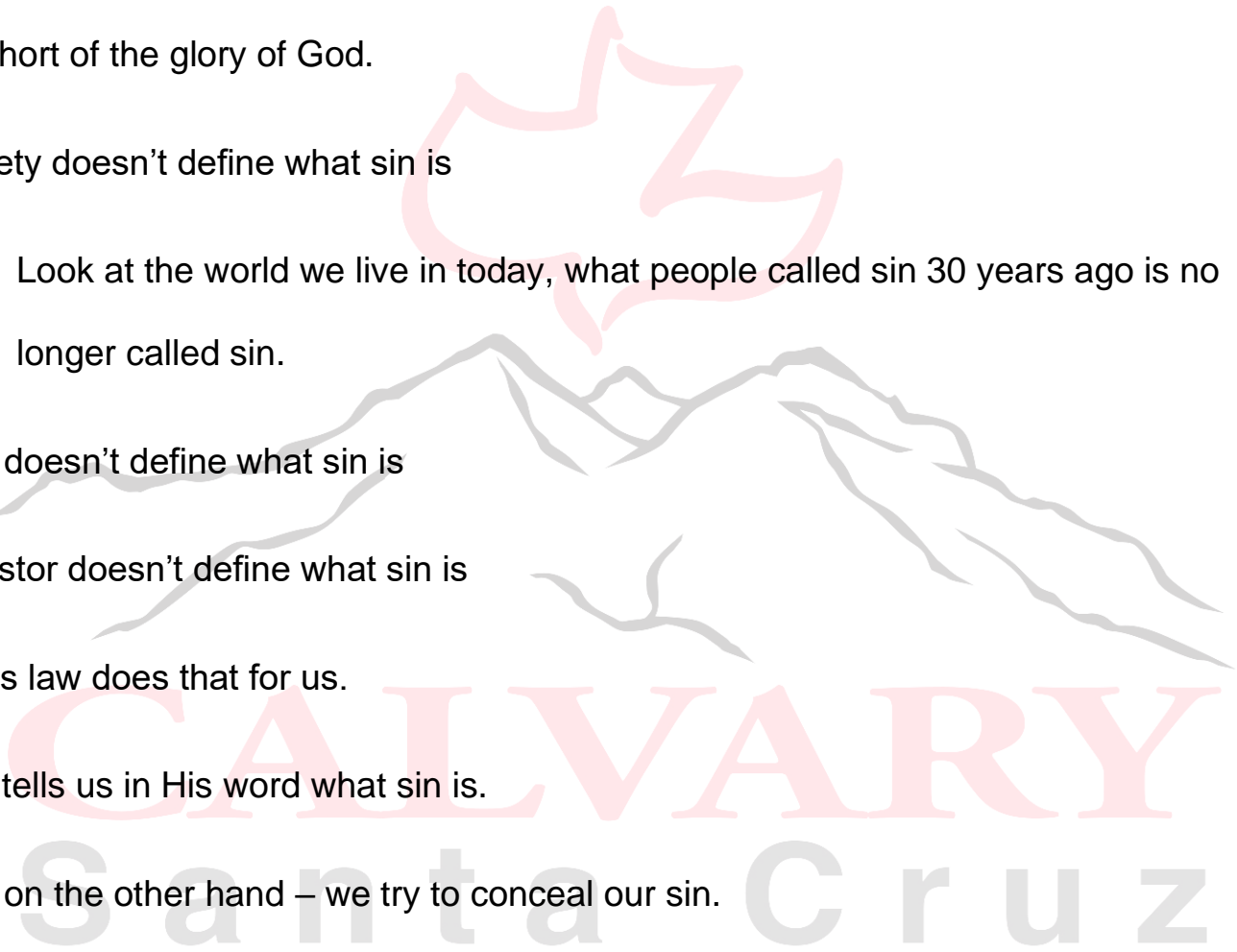
God tells us in His word what sin is.

Man on the other hand – we try to conceal our sin.

We don't even want to identify it as sin

We want to call it by another name.

It is not pride



It is not adultery

It is not stealing

We try to soften the blow and call it by another name.

It is not sin – it is just my weakness, it is just a mistake, it is just my sinful nature (Even though, Paul told us already that we don't have a sinful nature anymore because the Old Man is dead – sin is no longer our master – we have one nature, Jesus' nature)

We should let the bible speak for itself

Another thing that the law does is it reveals that we are sinners.

This is something that Paul uses as a personal illustration

I had you make a note –

For I would not have known covetousness

What Paul is saying here is, "I found out how coveting I really was because the law told me"

Now, the interesting thing about covetousness is how different it is to the other nine commandments.

The other nine commandments speak of action

Do this – don't do this

Covetousness speaks of an attitude –

It speaks of a desire (heart)

It is a desire of something that belongs to another.

It could be something material – car, house, clothes

It could be relationship –

It could be ministry –

Covetousness leads to other sins

It is the hidden thing of the heart of man

It is the personal sin that is within that we try to cover up.

A perfect example of this is the rich young ruler

Turn with me to Mark 10

**[Mar 10:17-22 NKJV] 17 Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, “Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” 18 So Jesus said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one [is] good but One, [that is], God. 19 “You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’ “ 20 And he answered and**



said to Him, “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.” 21 Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, “One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.” 22 But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.

You see church, Jesus looks past the outward of the rich young ruler and looked at the inward and saw that this guy was all hung up on his stuff.

He was hung up on his stuff / on his riches – that was the covetousness that he had in his heart.

Jesus sees the heart – “You need to get rid of this and follow me and you are going to be fine”

But the rich young ruler couldn't and he walked away from Jesus

He walked away from eternal life

He walked away from peace with God

Because he loved stuff.

The Apostle Paul is another example – very similar to the rich young ruler.

He looked good on the outside.

He was doing the do's and don'ts –

But inside sin was raging.

By the way – Eve, in the garden of Eden, coveted the fruit – she desired. She saw that it was good and pleasant to the eyes.

Achan coveted what belonged to God after the fall of Jericho.

David coveted Bathsheba – even though she belonged to another man.

What is the opposite of covetousness is contentment.

Turn with me to 1 Tim 6

**[1Ti 6:3-6 NKJV] 3 If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, [even] the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, 4 he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, 5 useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a [means of] gain. From such withdraw yourself. (here is the key) 6 Now godliness with contentment is great gain.**

It is not simply being satisfied with what we already have.

It is adding godliness into our life (which only occurs as we simply abide in Jesus Christ)

And as we add godliness into our lives – contentment will grow.

We desire spiritual growth

We desire gain

Godliness comes first and then contentment

When we live a life pleasing to God – we come to a point where all those things that we once had a desire for – we already had them.

It is an attitude of trusting God – that whatever He sends our way – we trust Him.

Turn with me to Psalm 84

I am going to share this amazing promise we have.

**[Psa 84:10-11 NKJV] 10 For a day in Your courts [is] better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. 11 For the LORD God [is] a sun and shield; The LORD will give grace and glory; No good [thing] will He withhold From those who walk uprightly.**

The believer who puts their faith in Jesus Christ – receives God’s good things on the basis of Jesus’ goodness, grace – and it is our response to grace – as we lean on the Holy Spirit – then we walk uprightly.

**8 But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all [manner of evil] desire. For apart from the law sin [was] dead.**

So far –

Paul has demonstrated to us that the law defines what sin is

The law reveals to us that we are all sinners

Here in verse 8 Paul points out that the law serves the sinner by increasing his or her awareness of sin.

It is important that we understand that the law doesn't make us sin – we sin because we are sinners.

The law simply stirs up what is already inside of us.

The law adds gas to the fire.

Someone might ask – how is that a good thing???

It is a good thing because it brings it out into the open

The law shows us that we have a problem

So when Paul says at the end of verse 8 that apart from the law sin was dead – Paul is not saying that sin was nonexistent.

He is saying that sin is lying dormant in the heart.

That sin is not fully active – as active as it would be, until the law said, “You can’t do that”

Again, the law is not the cause of sin, sin is the cause of sin.

The law simply gets it out into the open

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

This is what Paul is saying –

“There was a point in my life where I was living just fine.”

I already mentioned that Paul was doing all the commandments that speak of action –  
Philippians 3:5-6

Apart from the heart searching ministry of law – he was good.

He was driven by religion.

Just like the rich young ruler –

But when the commandment came – notice, singular – he is referring to the 10<sup>th</sup>  
commandment – about coveting

When Paul understood the true meaning of the law – he realized something profound.

He realized that he was a sinner and that he was worthy of death – because he violated the law.

He became guilty of it

It was at that moment that Paul realized that there was something wrong.

He had guilty.

But the law is incapable of removing guilt.

**10 And the commandment, which [was] to [bring] life, I found to [bring] death.**

Once again, Paul is referring to the commandment he struggled with – covetousness.

And what Paul is saying here is that the commandment which was ordained to life – it was good.

Paul found that the opposite was true because the law said – Do not covet and he coveted – so he was guilty.

The outcome to him was a curse -

**[Gal 3:10-13 NKJV] 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." 11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God [is] evident, for "the just shall live by faith." 12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by**

**them." 13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed [is] everyone who hangs on a tree"),**

Again what Paul is saying here is that the law did what it was supposed to do.

To bring us to Jesus Christ

To bring us to a point where we know we grasp that we are sinners

That we all fall short of the glory of God

And therefore we all need a Savior.

We may make it appear that we are keeping the law –

Like the rich young ruler or like a spiritually immature Paul

But we are only deceiving ourselves.

**11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed [me].**

Sin always deceives us

Sin always overpromises and underdelivers.

So here is what happens –

Sin enjoys boasting of its ability – the law says - do

What happens when you put both of those things together.

You get misinformed people that believe that they can meet God's righteous standard by following the law.

But the gospel of grace says – it is not about you.

It's not about what people see

It's by faith and by grace

**12 Therefore the law [is] holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.**

Paul wants us to understand that the Law isn't the problem; sin is.

It's man's spiritual inability - that's at fault.

The Law is holy because it's a picture of the character & nature of God.

The law is holy – you know what is not holy – our flesh

So here's the answer to our question about our relationship to the Law now that we've been born again and come in to God's grace.

We've been changed from rebels to children of God

As His children we bear His image & grow into His likeness,

Which is revealed by the Law.



The Law becomes a valuable resource in our growth in grace

It helps us know what holiness looks like when it's at work in our daily life.

And it reveals what's good, not just for the here and now but for all eternity.

As believers, we're under grace, not law.

The life that you and I live now by faith – God used a holy, a just, a righteous law to lead us to the cross of Jesus Christ

It reveals to us what sin is

It reveals to us that we are sinners in need of a Savior

It shows us how deceitful sin can be

And it shows us that God has provided a way out

That by faith in Him, our sins can be forgiven today.

But so ought to be good students of the law because it gives us a better understanding of the One we're married to—Jesus.

AMEN

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

The law required what it couldn't give and grace will give exactly what it requires.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

