

Redemption in Romans Lesson 8 3Q 2010

The Man of Romans 7

SABBATH

Read second paragraph, “Bible students...” thoughts?

What does this paragraph say to you? What questions come to your mind?

If we stand perfect before God then why does He need to then sanctify us and conform us to the image of His Son?

Is there a different way to say this? Could it mean we stand before God in a restored trust and in that trust He heals us and restores us to the image of His Son?

What do you think is Paul talking about in regard to Romans 7? Is Paul referring to the converted man’s struggle or the uncovered man? Let’s see if we can answer that this week.

SUNDAY

Romans 7:1-6 Paul uses the analogy of a woman married and after the death of her husband she is no longer legally bound to her husband. He does this to say something about the Jews and their relationship to the law – what lesson do you derive?

Read third paragraph, “As the death...” thoughts?

What does it mean “delivers her from the law of her husband?” The previous paragraph said, “she is free from the law that bound her to him.” Any difference?

What about the death of the old life through Christ? What does this mean? Did it deliver just the Jews? What were the Jews delivered from?

Were the Jews, previous to Christ, involved in a system that brought salvation? Was salvation possible through the blood of animals?

Had the Jews attempted to save themselves through their own effort at obeying the law? Didn't Christ deliver all humanity from trying to save self?

The lesson suggests the analogy is teaching deliverance from the Jewish system of ordinances – what do you think? What law would a person die to? What law would they be delivered from? Is it the ceremonial law or is it the law of sin and death, i.e. selfishness?

What would be the basis of the new marriage? Would it be to the same husband? Is the husband the ceremonial system or the law of sin and death? Is the new husband a new system, or a new life based on a new law the law of love in union with Christ?

Read Romans 7:1-3

Do you not know, brothers—for I am speaking to men who know the law—that the law has authority over a man only as long as he lives? ² For example, by law a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he is alive, but if her husband dies, she is released from the law of marriage. ³ So then, if she marries another man while her husband is still alive, she is called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is released from that law and is not an adulteress, even though she marries another man.

- The Woman is human will – our individuality –
- The first husband who dies is our carnal nature, selfishness, the law of sin and death. We are born with our will enslaved to our carnal natures. When we die to selfishness our will can be united with another.
- The second husband is Christ and the law of love

The last paragraph says that Paul would not suggest that the 10 Commandments were no longer binding, was the ceremonial law binding? In what way was it binding?

What is Paul trying to free them from? Was it the ceremonies and rituals designed to teach them about the Messiah, or the distorted, twisted, belief system they had developed about those rituals that prevented them from being free from the law of sin and death i.e. selfishness?

Was there ever any saving benefit in sacrificing animals?

MONDAY

Read fourth paragraph, "Thus, Paul explains..." thoughts? Could you find a definition for sin in Scripture like this? What do you think about it?

Violation of the revealed will of God? When Satan sinned in heaven had there been a list of rules not to lie? If God's will on this issue was so clearly revealed in heaven why did 1/3 of the perfect angels, without carnal natures choose to rebel against it?

But in heaven, service is not rendered in the spirit of legality. When Satan rebelled against the law of Jehovah, the thought that there was a law came to the angels almost as an awakening to something unthought of. In their ministry the angels are not as servants, but as sons. There is perfect unity between them and their Creator. Obedience is to them no drudgery. {MB 109.2}

What was the purpose of the written law? To make sin easier to see, why? Could it be that God's will i.e. methods, law, principles weren't easily seen? And why were they not easy to see? Could it be because Satan began to misrepresent, distort and twist thus causing confusion?

How has God used law and what does it say about Him?

What about the idea of recognizing oneself as a sinner under condemnation and death and “In this sense, the person dies”?

Read Romans 7:7-11:

⁷ What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, “Do not covet.” ⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire. For apart from law, sin is dead. ⁹ Once I was alive apart from law; but when the commandment came, sin sprang to life and I died. ¹⁰ I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. ¹¹ For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death. (NIV)

Thought about this? Here is my paraphrase:

^{7:7} What shall we say then? Is the law evil and selfish because it increases the amount of evil and selfishness we see? Absolutely not! For I would not have known what evil and selfishness looks like if it wasn't for the diagnostic efficacy of the law. I would not have realized that coveting was evil and selfish if the law didn't say, “Don't covet.” ⁸ But selfishness, taking advantage of the fact that the law is only a diagnostic instrument and not a remedy, magnified every covetous desire within me. For apart from the diagnostic ability of the law, sin is unrecognizable. ⁹ Once I thought I was healthy and free from the infection of distrust, fear and selfishness, but then the commandment examined me, exposed how utterly infected I was and diagnosed me as terminal. ¹⁰ I discovered that the very commandment given only to diagnose my condition, I had unwittingly attempted to use as a cure and thus my condition only worsened. ¹¹ For selfishness, taking advantage of the fact that the commandment could only diagnose and not cure, deceived me into thinking I could be cured by working to keep

the commandments, but instead my terminal state only worsened.

TUESDAY

The lesson states some really great things in Tuesday's lesson.

Read the first three paragraphs, "Because the Jews..." well said, on all accounts. Thoughts?

We agree with all of this. Isn't God wonderful to provide us with such an efficient diagnostic tool to help us realize our need?

What has been the problem with the law through history?

Romans 7:12-15 from my paraphrase:

¹² So understand this, the law diagnoses perfectly, and the commandment is the standard of what is right and good, set apart by God, to reveal what is evil and destructive.

^{7:13} Did the law, which did good by diagnosing what was wrong with me, become the source of my terminal condition? Of course not! It only exposed what was already in me so that I could recognize how totally decayed, putrid and near death I was, so that through the lens of the commandment I might become utterly disgusted with evil and selfishness and long for a cure.

^{7:14} We know that the law is consistent, reliable and reasonable; but I am inconsistent, unreliable and unreasonable, because the infection of distrust, fear and selfishness has warped my mind and damaged my thinking. ¹⁵ I am frustrated with what I do. For having been restored to trust, I want to do what is in harmony with God and his methods and principles; but I find that even though I trust God, old habits, conditioned responses, preconceived ideas and other remnants of the devastation caused by distrust and selfishness are not yet fully removed.

Thoughts?

If the law is a diagnostic instrument and not a remedy to sin why do some suggest the need we have is to pay the penalty of the law?

Read bottom green section – thoughts? Why is it not a good idea to play with sin? We are changed, we actually alter ourselves, our neural circuits, our gene expression and makes it harder to be free. One hit of cocaine activates a gene which produces a protein, not previously produced, which causes increased cravings for cocaine.

WEDESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Using the law...” thoughts?

Can we fulfill the requirements of the law? So is the law reminding us no matter what we do God is displeased with us? Are we displeasing to God? What about being the apple of His eye?

If your child is sick with a terminal disease and suffering, is your child displeasing to you?

What is the problem with this sentence? The lesson has made it clear that we can never fulfill the requirements of the law, that we were born in this condition not of our own choosing, and now suggest we are displeasing to God? Is it not sin that is displeasing to God?

Read Romans 7:16-20

¹⁶ And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree that the law is good. ¹⁷ As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. ¹⁸ I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

Thoughts? Converted or unconverted man?

My paraphrase:

¹⁶ And if I find an old habit causing me to behave in ways that I now find detestable, I affirm that the law is a very helpful tool revealing residual damage in need of healing. ¹⁷ What is happening is this: I have come to trust God and desire to do his will, but old habits and conditioned responses, which present almost reflexively in certain situations, have not yet been totally eliminated and thus cause me to do things I do not want to do. ¹⁸ I know that my mind was completely infected with distrust, fear and selfishness which totally perverted all my desires and faculties, so that even when distrust has been eradicated and trust has been restored, the damage caused by years of distrustful and selfish behavior has not yet been fully healed. So I find, at times, I have the desire to do what is right, but do not yet have the ability to carry out the desire. ¹⁹ For the old habits and conditioned responses are not the good I want to do; no, they are remnants of my selfish unconverted mind. ²⁰ So, if I find myself doing what I no longer desire to do, it is not I, but vestiges of old habits and conditioned responses that have yet to be removed, and through God's grace will soon be removed.

Does it matter how we see sin? Are old habits, conditioned responses, preconceived ideas excuses to avoid victory? Even though we struggle with these is victory reasonable to pursue?

THURSDAY

Read Romans 7:21-25

²¹ So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. ²⁴

What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Thoughts?

Read first paragraph, "In this passage..." thoughts?

From my paraphrase:

^{7:21} So, I find this reality at work: When I want to do good, old selfish habits and residual feelings of fear are right there with me. ²² For in my mind I rejoice in God's methods and principles; ²³ but I recognize I remain damaged from years of being infected with distrust and practicing Satan's methods, so that even though the infection of distrust has been removed, the old habits of fear and self-promotion tempt me from within. ²⁴ What a damaged and corrupt man I am! Who will deliver and heal me from a brain and body so diseased and deformed? ²⁵ Praise be to God – for he has provided the healing solution through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I find that in my mind I am now renewed with trust for God and love of his methods, but my brain and body remain damaged by years of self-indulgent behavior.

Thoughts?

FRIDAY

Read third paragraph, "After Christ..." thoughts? What force did the ceremonial law have before the Cross?

Discuss questions 1-3