



The Book of Romans Lesson 8 4Q 2017

Who is the Man in Romans 7?

by Dr. Jennings

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

November 17,18, 2017: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Vallejo Dr. SDA church in California.

January 19,20, 2018: Dr. Jennings will be speaking at the Tacoma Central SDA Church, Tacoma, Washington.

Two weeks ago I had the privilege of speaking at the Arlington TX SDA church and we had a great event, met so many friends who already watch us online, and new friends who heard this message for the first time. We gave away many DVDs and had an extremely positive reception.

I want to thank especially Allen Webber and Alyce Whitten who were integral on helping organize this event and also making me feel so welcome when there.

On a sadder note, one of the people I met there, Heidi Medcalf sent the following email last night:

My best friend, Amber lost 10 of her family members (Holcombe family) in the tragic church shooting last Sunday.

Will you please pray and request ongoing prayer during our Bible study class tomorrow?

In addition, I always like to offer up a praise with every prayer request to God. Through this awful tragedy, we are already seeing God's hand performing miracles. Brian and Carla (Amber's Uncle and Aunt) loved the Lord and lived for Him in everything they did. Their oldest son Scott did not believe in God and did not have a relationship with Him, which is why he was not in church with the rest of the family members on that fateful day. Through this tragedy of losing his family, he said he has never seen so much "love" from others and now professes that Jesus is Lord and though losing his entire family, he now sees.

It has been a very emotional week. In talking to Amber's Grandfather (Pappa) he said the following "I've read the book, I know the story and I know how it ends, and therefore I'm ok. I also asked Amber the following question...."If your family knew that by losing their life, Scott would come to know his Savior and one day they would all be reunited in Heaven together, would they have given their lives so that he could know his Father?? She said YES, 100% no doubt about it. We held each other and thanked our Father who is always working for our good and asked Him to hasten his return.



Thank you again for your beautiful message that God is love, the whole world needs to hear the message and I have faith that they will, soon!!!

*Your sister in Christ,
Heidi*

Dr. Jennings was one of a select group of Christian mental health leaders to be invited to the White House to meet with Donald Trump's staff on Wednesday, November 8, 2017, to discuss mental health, opioid addiction and faith-based initiatives. Other attendees included Tim Clinton, PhD, President of the AACC who helped organize this event, James Dobson PhD who advocated for the importance of healthy families in promoting mental wellness, Daniel Amen MD who advocated on educating young people on brain health, Paul Meier MD, Caroline Leaf PhD, Henry Cloud PhD, and others.

Dr. Jennings had the opportunity to dialogue with these thought leaders, including Pastor Paula White, the President's pastor and friend who was integral in bringing this event about. During the meeting with White House staff the attendees had an opportunity to hear the President's initiatives on mental health issues from a variety of staff, including Kellyanne Conway. Attendees were able to provide direct feedback to the President's staff, discuss potential obstacles to effective mental health treatment and suggest solutions. The President's staff was extremely informative, open, and demonstrated a deep commitment to treating the whole person, mind, body and spirit. The President's staff informed attendees of his personal deep commitment to Christian principles, and the many specific changes he is making to improve mental health care in America.

Specifically President Trump has directed the Department of Health and Human Services to:

- Develop programs to address the opioid crisis to include expanded treatment, expanded court ordered treatment, drug courts, diversion from incarceration to treatment, improved communication with families and involvement of faith-based programs
 - Late October, 2017 the office of civil rights put out guidance that if a person has experience an opioid overdose and was treated in an emergency room that confidential rules did not prevent the medical staff from contacting family to inform them of the overdose. This should improve family involvement in getting those struggling with such addictions into treatment and recovery.
- Focus on early detection and early treatment of serious mental problems (i.e. in adolescence)
- Developing crisis intervention programs to provide behavioral health services on site (in community), rather than the ER or hospital, which would increase family and community involvement in care and stabilization
- Integrating physical health care into the care of those with serious mental health problems and substance use disorders
- Enforcing mental health parity laws to ensure those with mental illnesses get the treatment they need



Additionally, this administration is initiating a national program to train primary care providers to ask about suicide on a routine basis in their offices as most people who commit suicide see a primary care provider shortly before committing suicide, but are rarely asked about suicide at those visits.

The President has initiated an office of innovation which has taken up the task of reforming the prison system in America from merely a system of incarceration and punishment, to rehabilitation and reintegration into society. They are seeking to reduce the financial burden on society by reducing the number incarcerated and also returning those incarcerated back into functional society. They are exploring all options, including improved mental health treatment of those in prison, reducing TBI in youth and teaching the young to care for their brains as research has demonstrated that those in prison are more likely to have some form of brain trauma; and faith-based prison ministries to assist those incarcerated in experiencing transformation of heart motive to get a real new start in life.

Dr. Jennings was very encouraged by the meeting and informed this is the first in what is planned as an ongoing dialogue between the faith community and the White House. Please keep us in your prayers that we can effectively communicate and promote God's healing truths!

SABBATH

Read first paragraph, "Few chapters in the Bible..." Why? What causes the confusion? Could it be the assumptions one holds before one goes to the text?

If one conceives of law in a certain way before they read the text will it color how they understand what is being said?

The last paragraph states, "Whatever position one takes, what's important is that Jesus' righteousness covers us and that in His righteousness we stand perfect before God, who promises to sanctify us, to give us victory over sin, and to conform us to the 'image of his son' (Rom. 8:29)."

What does it mean to be covered by the robe of Christ's righteousness?

Why does covering us with the righteousness of Christ cause us to stand perfect before God?

- Does the description above sound like we are standing perfect before God before we are actual perfect before God—why would we need sanctification if we are perfect before God?
- And what kind of a trick is going on if we are somehow able to get God to believe we are perfect, yet we are not perfect? What kind of a God wouldn't know that?
- This confusing description, which is written to bring hope, yet instead causes doubts, is based on misunderstanding God's law, and therefore teaching the robe of Christ righteousness is a metaphor that teaches a legal accounting process rather than a healing and transforming experience in the believer.



Here is one view from the book *Christ's Object Lessons*, do you agree with this view or prefer a different one?

This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us. ... When we submit ourselves to Christ, **the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life.** *This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.* Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. p. 311

Do you agree? So when does the Lord see us covered with the robe of righteousness—before or after we have been healed in heart and mind?

What would it mean then if we teach people the metaphor is a declaration of being seen as perfect before God BEFORE we are healed within? It means we are cheating people, we are leading them to believe a system of lies and falsehood that has a form of godliness, but has no power. This false view leads people to believe they need to have their sins hidden from God—why? Because the legal view has God as the source of inflicted punishment for sin.

In the book above, what was described was healing—nothing legal going on here, it is all about restoration, recreation to righteousness.

SUNDAY

Read Romans 7:1-6:

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? ²For 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. ³So 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.

⁴So, my brothers, you also died to the law through the body of Christ, that you might belong to another, to him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit to God. ⁵For when we were controlled by the sinful nature, the sinful passions aroused by the law were at work in our bodies, so that we bore fruit for death. ⁶But now, by dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law so that we serve in the new way of the Spirit, and not in the old way of the written code. (NIV84)

Why does Paul use a legal analogy? To whom was he writing? What is the point?



“By dying to what once bound us, we have been released from the law...” What once bound us?

- sin, selfishness, fear, survival drive
- our carnal natures
- lies we believe
- guilt and shame

So, verses 4-6 from *The Remedy*:

Therefore, your selfish, fear-ridden heart died when you accepted the truth revealed by Christ's death, and you received a new heart from him who was raised from the dead, in order that you might grow in character—to be like Jesus—and live to honor God.⁵For when we were controlled by the infection of fear and selfishness—which resulted from distrust—the destructive passions revealed by the law were ravaging our bodies, we were terminally ill and spreading death wherever we went.⁶But now, as we die to the distrust, fear and selfishness that once bound us, the law no longer diagnoses us as infected and terminal. In fact, the law now confirms that we have a new heart—not by observing rules, but created within by the Spirit. We are now healthy and loving like Jesus.

First paragraph states, “The Jews had difficulty grasping the fact that this system, given to them of God, should end with the coming of the Messiah. This is what Paul was dealing with—Jewish believers still not ready to abandon what had been such an important part of their lives.”

Did the system of animal sacrifices, circumcision of the body, feasts provide salvation?

Did a person have to participate in that system to be saved?

- Naaman
- Shunammite woman
- Nebuchadnezzar
- Good Samaritan
- The Woman at the Well

Why were the Jews not ready to abandon the system that was such a part of their lives? Was it because they ascribed a value to that system that the system did not actually possess?

What about those who hold to the penal/legal model? Do they have difficulty letting it go? Why? Do they ascribe a value to it that it does not actually possess?

Read last paragraph, “Again, given all else that Paul...” What is the importance of the Bible Sabbath?

What law lens do you see it through?



If we say the Sabbath is an arbitrary test of obedience, that God declared it to be holy and unless he decrees a different day it remains holy by decree—what type of law are we promoting?

What is the importance of the Sabbath? Is it a test of obedience or a gift for some reason?

The Sabbath was made for man not man for the Sabbath—what is its purpose?

What does it do? What makes it holy?

How did the Sabbath as a day of rest come to exist? It was created that way!

What was associated with the creation of the Sabbath? What was happening in the universe during the creation of planet earth?

What do days 1-6 of Creation week reveal about God? that he is powerful

What do we learn about God on day 7? the character of the one who holds the power, truth presented in love but leaving His intelligent creatures free!

So, what is the importance of the Sabbath? It was given to man, man was not given to the Sabbath, so what was it given to man for?

The Sabbath is evidence of God's character of love, and His methods of governing, truth presented in love while leaving his intelligent beings free! The Sabbath declares every week that God runs His universe on Design law. This is why we are to REMEMBER the Sabbath—think, remember—what? God as Creator and His laws as the laws upon which reality are built.

How did Sunday become an official day of worship? By legislative vote—what type of law is this?

So, the two days of worship stand as evidence of two methods of governing or two types of law (design versus imposed)—the days themselves are not the two methods or laws, but are evidences of two methods or laws.

What is the flag of the United States? It is a sign or symbol of the United States of America—is the flag *the* USA? No, it is only a sign. Can a person carry the US flag in combat, but be fighting for the enemy?

If we teach the Sabbath is an arbitrary test of obedience are we representing the truth about God's design law or imposed law? Imposed law, thus we are promoting the Sabbath as a mark for the beastly system of coercion.

Can someone keep Sunday as their day of worship, yet present the truth about God as a God of love and His design law as His method of governing?



C. S. Lewis taught this idea in the last book of the Chronicles of Narnia series when he describes a Calormene soldier named Emeth and his encounter with Aslan the lion. Emeth was a worshiper of Tash and as a result was terrified when he came face to face with Aslan:

I fell at his feet and thought surely this is the hour of death, for the Lion will know that I have served Tash all my days and not him.

But Aslan's response?

Son thou art welcome. But I said, alas Lord I am no son of thine but the servant of Tash. He answered, Child all the service thou hast done to Tash I account as service done to me.

I questioned the Glorious One: Lord, is it then true that thou and Tash are one? The Lion growled and said, It is false. Not because he and I are one, but because we are opposites, I take to me the services which thou hast done to him. For I and he are of such different kinds that no service which is vile can be done to me, and none which is not vile can be done to him. Therefore if any man swear by Tash and keep his oath for the oath's sake, it is by me that he has truly sworn, though he know it not, and it is I who reward him. And if any man do a cruelty in my name, then, though he says the name Aslan, it is Tash whom he serves and by Tash his deed is accepted.

Emeth questions once more:

Lord, I have been seeking Tash all my days.

Beloved, said the Glorious One, unless thy desire had been for me thou shouldst not have sought so long and so truly. For all find what they truly seek.¹

Is it primarily about the day—or is it about the heart, mind and character of the person to be like Jesus?

In addition to the Sabbath being an evidence of God's design law, how are we to relate to it? According to Isaiah it is to be called a delight, a day of celebration, rejoicing, rest and gladness—really the Sabbath is supposed to be a weekly vacation from the stressors of this sinful world—to set aside our burdens and relax—to rest and rejuvenate.

Imagine you went to your favorite beach resort to relax on vacation, but when you got there it was taken over by terrorists and you were held there against your will—how relaxing and enjoyable would your vacation be?

When we present the Sabbath an arbitrary test of obedience, as a day of restriction of liberty, a day in which we can't do this and can't do that, a day that if you do the wrong thing it will go against you in the heavenly courts, we misrepresent God's law, God's character, undermine trust and destroy the



purpose of the Sabbath to be a day of rest and gladness. Thus, we can observe the right day and crucify the Lord of the day.

So the lesson is correct, Paul is not doing away with the Sabbath or the 10 Commandments—he is doing away with the legal understanding of sin and salvation and putting the Commandments in their proper place, a diagnostic instrument. So, if the Sabbath is not a day of rest, joy, rejuvenation, recovery—if the Sabbath is a day of fear, insecurity, worry about whether you did this or that, then the Commandment reveals there is still healing to do in your heart—for perfect love to come in and cast out all the fear and self-referenced thinking about God and the law.

MONDAY

The lesson asks if the 10 Commandment law was done away with at the Cross?

Read Romans 7:7-11 from *The Remedy*:

What shall we say then? Is the law evil and selfish because it increases the amount of evil and selfishness we see? Absolutely not! I would not have known what evil and selfishness looked 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 that I could be cured by working to keep the commandments; but instead, my terminal state only worsened.

What was the problem the Jews had with the law? They thought it could function as a cure—but it was only given to help expose or diagnose what was wrong.

Read fourth paragraph, “Thus, Paul explains...” What do you think of the lesson’s definition of sin: “sin is a violation of the revealed will of God...”?

Can you find this definition in Scripture? What definitions can we find in Scripture?

- sin is the transgression of the law 1Jn 3:4
 - Which means what? Deviating from God’s design
- everything that does not come from faith is sin. Rom 14:23
 - Which means what? Lies believed break the circle of love and trust resulting in fear and selfishness—which is deviant from God’s design of love.



Thus both definitions are about breaching God's design protocols of love.

What about the definition that sin is the violation of the revealed will of God?

- After the 70 year captivity what was God's revealed will? To return to the Promised Land
 - Did Esther and Mordecai return to the Promised Land? Were they sinning?
- What was the revealed will of God in regard to whether Israel should have human kings?
- Did God come to change His will on this?
- Who chose their first two kings?
- Was God helping them sin?

What do you think of the new definition of sin? It is based on authoritarianism i.e. seeing God as a dictator, God said it, you better do it, or it is sin.

We must come back to design law, and then realize it is about the motive of the heart.

- Were either Moses or Abraham sinning when they argued against the reveal will of God?

Read the next paragraph, "In Paul's line of argument..." So how did Christ fulfill the law? What law? How do you understand it?

If the law is like human law then Christ fulfilled it by taking our punishment, but if the law is Design law, Christ restored the design protocols back into humanity and destroyed the deviations that cause death.

- Which view do you find more consistent with how reality works?
- Which view leads you to have greater trust in God?
- Which view undermines trust in God?
- Then which view do you think Satan would support?
- Which view is the common view in the world today?

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, "Because the Jews revered..." This is well said!

Read third paragraph, "*Carnal* means 'fleshly...'" How does Christ free us from the slavery to sin?

Slavery takes our freedom—how does sin take our freedom? Is this a legal slavery, or an actual condition of being?

Read Romans 7:14-20 in *The Remedy*:

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.¹⁵I 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, my old habits, conditioned responses, preconceived ideas and other remnants of the devastation caused by distrust and selfishness are not yet fully removed.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 I 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 that 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 myself that acts, but the vestiges of old habits and conditioned responses that have yet to be removed. And through God's grace, they will soon be removed.

What kind of freedom is being described?

If we focus on a legal model, then what would the experience of the person struggling in Romans 7? Wouldn't it be by cycles of guilt, fear of punishment, seeking legal payments and erasure of records. But what is being described is the reality of a person whose heart has been renewed, but even though the heart is renewed, they haven't yet made Christlike living the automated practices of their life.

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Using the law as a mirror, the Holy Spirit convicts a person that he or she is displeasing God by not fulfilling the requirements of the law.”

What does this sound like? Does this sound very childlike—“you broke the rule and have to go to the principal's office—you're in trouble now!”

Why is God displeased? Is he displeased because we break his rules, that this somehow disrespects him and offends his holiness? Or, is he displeased because breaking his law is breaking the protocols upon which our life and health depend and he is quite unhappy to see those he loves injured and dying?

Read last paragraph, “Unfortunately, by failing to renew...” Do you agree? Is victory over sinful living possible in a trust relationship with Jesus?

What is sad is that the lesson is correct in this paragraph, that victory over sin in our lives is possible in a trust relationship with Jesus with the indwelling power of the Spirit. However, they fail to realize that their legal approach to the sin problem introduces multiple concepts and ideas that keep people



from genuinely trusting God and thus from experiencing victory. So, the legal system sets them up for perpetual insecurity, fear, and discouragement, leading many to give up and leave the church altogether.

We must rid our minds of the legal salvation models that cause so much devastation and imprison so many good people in religion without power to live victoriously.

THURSDAY

Read Romans 7:21-25 from *The Remedy*:

So I find this reality at work: When I want to do good, my old selfish habits and residual feelings of fear are right there with me.²²In my mind, I rejoice in God's methods and principles,²³but I recognize that 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. What a damaged and corrupt man I am! Who will deliver and heal me from a brain and body so diseased and deformed?²⁵Praise 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 in God and love of his methods, but my brain and body remain damaged by years of self-indulgent behavior.

Read first two paragraphs, “In this passage...” What do you understand is happening?

FRIDAY

Read second paragraph, “After Christ died on the cross...” What force did the ceremonial law have before Christ died on the cross?

Could salvation be found in keeping the ceremonial law?

- This is an illustration for the present time, indicating that the gifts and sacrifices being offered were not able to clear the conscience of the worshiper.¹⁰ They are only a matter of food and drink and various ceremonial washings—external regulations applying until the time of the new order. Heb 9:9,10
- I want your constant love, not your animal sacrifices. I would rather have my people know me than burn offerings to me. Hosea 6:6

What is life eternal?

So what force did the ceremonial law have prior to Christ's death?

¹ C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005), 164–65.