

Romans 7:5–13 (NKJV)

⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. ⁶ But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter. ⁷ What shall we say then? *Is* the law sin? 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.*”⁸ But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all *manner of evil* desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. ⁹ I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. ¹⁰ And the commandment, which *was* to bring life, I found to bring death. ¹¹ For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*. ¹² Therefore the law *is* holy, and the commandment holy and just and good. ¹³ Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it might appear sin, was producing death in me through what is good, so that sin through the commandment might become exceedingly sinful.

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We did not bear fruit to God before we were saved, while we were still in the _____. During those days, our sinful passions, _____, which were aroused, made stronger, by the prohibitions of the law worked through the members of our body to produce death, _____ from God. For as Paul has already said,

Romans 6:23 (NKJV) For the wages (_____, payoff, result) of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

But now - in contrast to the way our life was before we were saved, having been delivered or _____ from the penalties of the law through our faith in Christ, we are now dead to that old covenant of the law. Now we live in the new covenant that is characterized by the renewing power of the _____ who dwells within the life of the believer. We are

Indwelt by the Spirit

_____ by the Spirit

Empowered by the Spirit

_____ by the Spirit

rather than trying to gain favor with God by seeking to live by the _____ of the covenant of the law.

While this may not seem such a great contrast to us who have never lived under the covenant of the law, it was a revolutionary change for the Jews. It is not exaggeration to say that their life was the _____. It is interesting that the Jews of Jesus' day, who lived after God had already declared the covenant of the law to be broken, were actually more intent on the _____ of the law than were the Hebrews while the covenant of the law was still in effect. We may well see in this a glimpse into the usually unseen battle with _____, powers, and rulers of darkness. While Israel was still in the covenant of the law with God, even though it did not offer salvation, it still offered covenant relationship with God and could be a stepping stone to _____ and personal relationship. So the devil and all his demonic host, _____ the keeping of the law. But after the covenant was _____, the devil did not have near the interest in hindering the keeping of the law. In fact, he was glad for the focus on the now defunct old covenant of the law to hinder men's _____ and longing for the new covenant to come through _____.

So following the return of the _____ from exile, a renewed focus on the law arose among the Jews. The rabbis studied every jot and tittle of the law, discussed it, debated it, interpreted it, wrote about it and built up a hefty _____ system based upon it. They determined that the law consisted of

_____ commandments
Of 248 mandates
And _____ prohibitions
And an endless supply of explanations, interpretations and _____.

That is why Peter described this legalistic system at the Jerusalem Council as

Acts 15:10 (NKJV)... a _____ on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

Two things about this legalistic system based upon the old covenant of the law were prevalent:

1. The rabbis and the people looked to the keeping to the law as their means of _____ to God. The keeping of the law, along with the fact that they were children of Abraham, was what they believed would get them into heaven.
2. As legalism always does, the system majored on the _____ to the neglect of the internal, so much so that today it often seems humorous. For instance, if the rope on the well broke on the Sabbath, you could tie a _____ knot, but not a _____ one. If a man stood at the door begging on the Sabbath, if he stuck his hand inside, you could put bread in it. But you could not _____ bread across the threshold of your house to give to a hungry man outside without being guilty of violating the Sabbath.

Thus was the common understanding of Saul of Tarsus, and almost all of the Jews when Jesus walked the roads of Galilee and Judea.

⁷ What shall we say then?
 Is the law sin?
 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."

So then, is the law evil? **Is the law itself sin?**
 Paul's answer is the strongest _____
 he can write: **Certainly not!** And the Holy Spirit
 begins to show us four _____ for the
 law, each of them still working effectively, even in the
 days of Jesus and of Paul. He does this through
 Paul's own personal testimony. Paul says, "**I would
 not have known sin except through the law.**" That
 does not mean Paul was not a sinner or have a sin
 nature, but he did not _____ of himself in that
 way. He did not realize what a sinner he was. He
 was a Pharisee and his testimony is in

**Philippians 3:5–6 (NKJV) ⁵ circumcised the eighth
 day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a
 Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a
 Pharisee; ⁶ concerning zeal, persecuting the church;
 concerning the righteousness which is in the law,**

Paul, then Saul, kept the outward requirements
 of the law meticulously. What prepared Saul's heart
 for his conversion on the Damascus road was the
 Holy Spirit's use of the law to address the inner sins
 of the _____. Of all the Ten Commandments:

- Don't worship other gods
- Don't worship images
- Don't take name of the Lord in vain
- Keep the Sabbath holy
- Honor father and mother
- Don't murder
- Don't commit adultery
- Don't steal
- Don't lie
- Don't _____

The most _____ of all the commandments
 is "You shall not covet." Apparently, that was Saul's
 weakness. This was not a sin of outward act but of

inward desire. And the law revealed that this unseen, probably unexpressed, un-acted upon desire was sin in the eyes of Holy God. The law _____ sin to self-righteous Saul of Tarsus. This was probably a part of what Jesus spoke of when He said to Saul

Acts 26:14 (NKJV) ...'Saul, Saul, ... It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

Thus, **the first purpose of the law** as summarized by John MacArthur was that **the law revealed _____**. Now Paul testifies of a **second**, surprising, **purpose of the law**. **The law _____ sin.**

Before coming to Christ, Paul found that the discovery that coveting in his heart was still sin was not sufficient to make him _____. For just as a “No Parking” sign stirs a desire to park in that convenient spot, so God’s law “You shall not covet” stirred the _____ present in every lost man or woman, so that **sin** used the _____ to **produce evil desire**. “**Sin was dead**” does not mean it did not exist, but without the law, it was not as _____ or effective.

Paul’s testimony shows us a **third purpose for the law**, even in its day of misuse by the Jews. **The law _____ the sinner**. **I was alive once without the law** means that Paul thought his life was right with God in his former state of ignorant zealotry in keeping the outward demands of the law. But when he came to understand the **commandment** of God and its _____ nature, **sin** became a live issue for him, for he realized he was not meeting nor could he meet the holy _____ of God. He realized his _____. He **died**. He knew he was separated from God.

Thus, the law, **commandment**, which should and would produce blessing, **life**, if kept, instead produced _____, by arousing sin that had been revealed, leaving the sinner in a ruined, helpless condition – dead in trespasses and sin.

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

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

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

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

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

¹³ Has then what is good
 become
 death
 to me?

Certainly not!

But sin,
 that it might appear sin,
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good, so that
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 through the commandment
 might become
 exceedingly sinful.

Paul now reiterates verse 8 but adds a note of how sin uses the law for its evil work. **Sin...deceived me.** It should not surprise us here to find the way of sin is the way of the _____. He is a liar and the father of lies. So also, sin deceives. The greatest deception of sin is that a person can be made right with God by good works and his own merit. Every religion except biblical, evangelical Christianity is based upon the premise that man is made righteous by the things he _____. Thus it produces spiritual separation. **Sin... killed me.**

Therefore we should not _____ the law, but sin, for what is evil. The law, the commandments, are holy, just and good. What else could they be? They come from the mouth of God Himself.

So, did the law produce my separation from God? Absolutely not! The law simply revealed the _____ of sin itself, and that is the **fourth purpose of the law**, even during Paul's own day when it was terribly distorted. **The law showed sin for what it was and is...** exceedingly sinful and producing death, eternal separation from God.

Thus the law fulfills its ultimate purpose – to bring men to Christ.

Galatians 3:24 (NKJV) Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.
