

## UNMASKING BIBLE TRUTHS School

### Lesson 7

#### The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law (1Cor15:57)

#### THE PRE-CONVERSION EXPERIENCE OF ROMANS 7

What is the true meaning brought forth in Romans ch.7?  
Have your Bibles open to this chapter and your pens and notebooks ready to write

#### **We begin at ch.6:22**

**6:22-23** But now that you **have been set free from sin** and **have become slaves of God**, the **fruit you get leads to sanctification (holiness) and its end, eternal life.**<sup>23</sup> **For the wages of sin is death**, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**7:1** **Or do you not know, brothers**—for I am speaking to those who know the law—that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?

“**Or do you not know, brothers...**” is a connecting statement to the previous verses 22-23 of ch.6

Furthermore in verse 2 & 3 the apostle continues the comparison between the former and the present state of a believer by using marriage as an example, the husband being “the law”

The law is here spoken of, by a common figure, as a person, as to a husband, life and death are ascribed

So we pick up in verse 4...

#### **Paul first speaks of Christian experience**

**7:4** Therefore, my brethren, you also **have become dead** to the law **through the body of Christ**, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should **bear fruit to God**.

We'll now go to the verse commonly quoted to prove that if Paul was bond in sin, how can we be better than Paul: **Romans 7:19 "For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice."**

Those that quote this passage of Scripture are most commonly those that bear the least resemblance to the one they are quoting.

It is with a shameless aim toward justifying their sin that causes those to fall back upon this most popular crutch.

For those that truly know the immeasurable depth and devotion of Paul's ministry, would never have the audacity to malign any portion of the Christian virtues that he so valiantly attained to through a life of unimaginable hardships.

Since the Protestant reformation, man has taken the liberty to seize upon one line of Scripture after another to confirm the validity of his dogmatic and often erroneous doctrines.

Any verse of Scripture that is not taken in context with those Scriptures that support it is nothing more than a pretext.

Just try relating a cohesive conversation to another human being without the benefit of a beginning, a middle, and an end to your thoughts.

Herein lies the wisdom and the folly of man. The wisdom – to seek truth in the Bible, and the folly – to think that he can formulate anything resembling irrefutable conclusions from a single line of Scripture.

It doesn't require a seminary degree to understand that Paul was not confessing an overwhelming stronghold of the powers of sin in ch. 7:19, all it takes is the elementary act of putting his statements in context with the adjoining verses.

The key to success in this however does not lie in spiritual discernment (although necessary) but lies in a heart that longs to serve God and hungers to know the truth!

There are many past tense words used prior to Paul's proclamation in verse **19**.

We begin with verse 5:

Paul begins his argument for the whole chapter:

### **Pre-Christian experience**

**7:5** 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**.

Here we have an explanation to the whole chapter

In the 8th chapter and 8th verse he tells us, "They that are in the flesh (unregenerate state) cannot please God."

Then in the 9<sup>th</sup> verse of ch.8: "But you **are not in the flesh** but **in the Spirit**, **if indeed** the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

**[in the flesh]** We covered this extensively in **LESSON 4 The Doctrine of the New Birth**

**In the flesh** cannot be the **physical body** because we are told to crucify it **Gal.5:24**

**The flesh must be crucified to come to salvation and stay with salvation!**

The answer to what the flesh is, is graphically shown by revealing its sinful works in **Gal. 5:19-21**

"Now the **works of the flesh are evident**, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, <sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, <sup>21</sup> envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I

tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things **will not inherit the kingdom of God.**"

The flesh simply means living in sin! It is the unregenerate state of living a sinful life!

It means the full depravity of fallen man, sold as a slave and under the control of animal appetites and the forces of evil spirits.

And this happens when one reaches the age of accountability and chooses to sin...we will see in **7:9**

Sin has and always will be a choice...since the Garden of Eden until eternity!

We covered this extensively in **LESSON 3 "Are people born with a sin nature"** where we prove we are not born with a sin nature

**[sinful passions which were aroused by the law]**

The sinful passions acted contrary to the law and were revealed and made exceedingly sinful by the law that condemns them (**Rom. 7:13**).

The law was the means of disclosing how sinful we were.

When we **were in the flesh (Gal.5:24; Col.2:11)**, the passions of sin **worked** in our members by the law and **produced** sins that the law had to **condemn** to death.

**As Paul proceeds with his discourse, he compares Christian experience one more time in**

**7:6** 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

**[having died to what we were held by]** We were dead in sins while under law and held helpless to free ourselves from its bondage and death

We are delivered from the law which condemned us for sins, but made no provision for pardon and gave no power to obey it

Paul here speaks of his present experience as with **all** who are in Christ

**Does Paul not say** in the sixth chapter of Romans, just one chapter before 7, in verse 7 "For he that is **dead is justified** from sin?"

Does he not say, **6:1** "How shall we, that are **dead to sin**, live any longer therein?"

Again he says, **6:4** "That like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should **walk in newness of life.**" **7:6** echoes this..."**serve in the newness of the Spirit**"

Does he not say **6:5-8**

Does he not say **6:13** And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being **alive from the dead**, and your members as **instruments of righteousness** to God.

Listen to me, you are either dead in sin or dead to sin!

Does he not say **6:14** "For sin **shall not have dominion** over you; **for** you are **not under the law**, but **under grace.**"

Does he not say **6:15-16**? "What then, shall...

**6:20** "For when you **were the servants of sin**, you **were free** from righteousness."

**6:22** "But now **being made free from sin**, and **become slaves to God**, you have your **fruit unto holiness**, and the **end (or result) everlasting life.**"

Here we have diametric opposition in experience to the seventh chapter, and this all occurs in the preceding chapter 6.

In the seventh he says that he was sold under sin; that sin dwelt in him and held the mastery over him.

In the sixth he declares that the body of sin is destroyed; that the proper Christian experience is freedom **from** sin; that we may have our fruit unto holiness.

Probably not more than an hour or two at the most elapsed between writing of these two chapters.

Now, the candid seeker after light will honestly look for an explanation of this, and not seek a refuge in something that will not enable him to "get over on God" at the judgment bar!

The fact is, that the seventh chapter of Romans is a great parenthesis in between the sixth and the eighth as we have shown by the relation of **6:22-23** to **verse 1** of the **7th**

He does it to show the weakness of human effort under the law to give a satisfactory experience, either in saving from sin or satisfying the soul.

### **Law Cannot Deliver From Sin**

This is explained fully in **verses 7-25 of Romans 7**.

**7:7** 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."*

The law itself is not sinful in demanding me to live right

The law only makes known what sin really is

(**Rom. 3:20**); because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for **through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.** (**1Jn.3:4**)

The law is a tutor - **Gal.3:24** Therefore the **Law has become our tutor (school master) to lead us to Christ**, so that we may be justified by faith.

The law is good - **1Tim.1:8-11** But we know that **the Law is good**, if one uses it lawfully, <sup>9</sup> **realizing the fact** that law **is not made for a righteous man**, but for those who are lawless and rebellious, for the ungodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers<sup>10</sup> and immoral men [c]and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and **whatever else is contrary** to sound teaching,<sup>11</sup> **according to the glorious gospel** of the blessed God, with which I have been entrusted.

So, if you are using the excuse **“For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice”**, and the rest of chapter 7 to live a sinful life, the law is good for you, you are under the law and condemned to hell!

But continuing...

**7:8** **But sin**, taking opportunity **by** the commandment, **produced** in me **all manner of evil desire**. For apart from the law sin *was* dead.

Again, the law exposes sin. Another of the past tense words used in this chapter **“produced”** once again proving a pre-Christian experience.

**7:9** I was once **alive** apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin **became alive** and I **died**.

Paul here speaks of the age of accountability

He says when one is apart from the law they are spiritually alive

The law (commandment) comes, exposes sin, sin comes alive at that time and not before and causes spiritual death

This is also another proof that we are not born with a sin nature and when infants die they do not go to hell

**7:10** And the **commandment**, which *was* to *bring* life, I found **to bring death**.

The commandments (law) bring spiritual death

**7:11** **For** sin, taking occasion by the commandment, **deceived** me, and by it **killed** me.

Once again, Paul uses two more past tense words in explaining clearly here how the law of commandments reveals sin in the unconverted heart. The man described, whether it is Paul or anyone else before conversion, is “**deceived**” – past tense and “**killed**” – past tense.

**7:12** Therefore the law *is* **holy**, and the commandment **holy** and **just** and **good**.

He concludes the law of commandments is holy, just and good.

We want to call attention to the place where he changes the tense, and why

In describing his past experience he gives in the thirteenth verse his closing reason for this awful condition

### **Law Cannot Save from Sin**

**7:13** Has then what is good become death to me? Certainly not! But sin, that it **might appear (or be shown to be)** sin, **was producing** death in me through what is good, so that sin **through the commandment** might **become exceedingly sinful**.

Here again, Paul clearly uses past tense phrase “**was producing**”

Sin is shown to be sin by the commandment and produces spiritual death

Paul makes this declaration as a precursor to the

following verses that will serve to demonstrate what he **WAS** before he was divinely delivered by the power of Jesus Christ

**Rom.8:2** "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus **HAS** made me **FREE** from the law of sin and death."

Paul is no longer in bondage to sin because Jesus (**Rom.8:4**) "Condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled **IN US** who **DO NOT** walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."

Paul makes it plain that sin **produced** in him **all manner of evil desire**, that sin by the commandment **deceived** him, and by it **killed** him, that sin **WAS** producing death in him, but that now Jesus **HAS** made him **FREE!**

Terms that obviously denote victory over his former weaknesses!

Paul goes on in (**Rom.8:4**) to declare that the righteous requirement of the law is fulfilled **IN US** who **DO NOT** walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. Get that?

Paul no longer walks according to the flesh! Man cannot legitimately identify with the apostle Paul in stating "If Paul couldn't obtain victory over his flesh, how can we?"

So, if you're walking or living according to the flesh, remember the law is good for you! (**1Tim.1:8-11**)

Furthermore, the righteous requirement of the law **IS NOT** fulfilled in you!

Now, having made it plain that sin was in him; that the law revealed things in a clearer light; and that human effort was inadequate to the occasion, he puts it down as an inevitable result that such a state would follow, and, simply to make it more forcible, he changes to the **present tense** in the fourteenth verse, and says, "**I** am carnal, sold under sin."

That is, **under the conditions above described in the chapter**, "I am carnal, sold under sin."

Do we not resort to the same method of employing the present tense for the purpose of emphasis?

Whether he meant us to understand that it was his actual experience, trying to obey God under the law without grace, or that he uses the first man singular simply as an illustration of one's experience in that condition, is immaterial; the lesson is the same.

Paul was not writing of himself or the normal Christian life, but of the flesh.

Furthermore, Paul frequently applied things figuratively to himself to increase the force of the statement when he is not speaking of his own man, but only assuming another character.

**Rom.3:5** But if **our** unrighteousness brings out God's righteousness more clearly, what shall we say? That God is unjust in bringing his wrath on **us**? (**I am using a human argument.**)

**1Cor.4:6** Now these things, brethren, I have **figuratively applied** to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other.

So here, Paul explains **verse 13** in verse **14-25**:

**7:14** For we know that the **law is spiritual**, but **I am carnal, sold under sin** (or sold as a slave to sin).

I am carnal - Paul, has compared together the past and present state of believers, that "in the flesh," **Romans 7:5** , and that "in the spirit," **Romans 7:6**

In answering two objections, "Is then the law sin?" **Romans 7:7** , and, "Is the law death?" **Romans 7:13** ,

interweaves the whole process of a man reasoning, groaning, striving, and escaping from the legal to the evangelical state.

**Sold under sin** - Totally enslaved; slaves bought with money were absolutely at their master's disposal

**2Pet.2:19; Jn.8:34; 1Jn.3:8**

**Rom.6:11** Likewise you also, reckon yourselves **to be dead indeed** to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**7:15** For what I am doing, I do not understand. For **what I wish** to do, **that I do not** practice; but **what I hate, that I do.**

What I wish to practice, I cannot, for I am an unwilling slave to sin

After showing in verse **7-14** that sin is more powerful than the law, Paul now shows that sin is more powerful than the man who is a slave to sin (**Rom. 7:15-25**).

**16** If, then, I do what I will not to do, I **agree with the law** that *it is* good.

If I am forced to do what I do not want to do, then it is not I, but sin that enslaves by its indwelling power.

Notice it is even stated by this struggling man "I agree with the law that it is good"

**7:17** But now, *it is* no longer I who do it, but **sin that dwells in me.** (indwelling sin, which is crucified and cast out at the new birth)

**18** For I know that in me (that is, in **my flesh**) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but **how to perform what is good I do not find.**

Why can this man not carry out the good?

The Holy Spirit is not there because the flesh, sin is their slavemaster..they are unsaved!

**19** For the **good** that I will *to do*, **I do not do**; but the **evil** I will not *to do*, **that I practice**.

**20** Now if I do what I will not *to do*, it is **no longer I who do** it, but **sin that dwells in me**.

I have a will, but it is so overpowered by the lusts of sin that I am helpless. My passion is stronger than my reason.

My will, reason, understanding, and my conscience are on God's side and consent to His will and law, but my slavemaster (the flesh, sins) will not consent for me to serve God or His law.

**7:21** I find then a law, that **evil is present** with me, the one who wills to do good.

**22** For I **delight** in the law of God according to the inward man.

Even though they want to do good, evil is present and indwells!

This man even delights in the law of God according to the inward man!

The day of liberty draws near!

**7:23** But I see **another law** in my members, **warring** against the law of my mind, and **bringing me into captivity** to the law of sin which is in my members.

Another inward constraining power of evil inclinations and bodily appetites warring against the law of my mind - The dictate of my mind, which delights in the law of God, and captivating me in spite of all my resistance

That law is stronger than the law of the mind, for it captures man regardless of the protest of the law of the mind

This capturing is not occasional, but complete! Listen...

**7:24** **O wretched man that I am!** Who will deliver me from this body of death?

The struggle has now come to the full height

The body of this death - That is, this body of death; this mass of sin, leading to death eternal, and cleaving as close to me as my body to my soul

We may observe, there is not deliverance yet!

This is not a picture of a redeemed soul, but of a captive of sin!

Every statement in this chapter proves that this was Paul's or anyone else's experience while bound by sin under the law and before he was freed from the law of sin and death!

**7:25** I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, **with the mind** I myself serve the law of God, but **with the flesh** the law of sin.

So then - He here sums up the whole, and concludes what he began in **Romans 7:7** .

I myself - Or rather that I, the man whom Paul is manating, till he has reached deliverance, serve the law of God **with my mind** - My reason and conscience declare for God

But **with my flesh** the law of sin, my corrupt passions and appetites still rebel

The man is now utterly weary of his bondage, and upon

the brink of liberty

This man realizes that the only deliverance from the wretched bondage of sin is through Jesus Christ!

But they are still serving the law of sin in the flesh!

Paul proves both before and after this that there is complete victory over the law of sin (**Rom. 1:16-18; 2:8-11; 3:5-8,24-31; 4:1-24; 5:1-11; 6:1-23; 8:1-13**).

The man is now utterly weary of his bondage, and upon the brink of liberty!

The only way one can be saved is to get to Ch.8!

Finally freedom and deliverance from the law of sin and death!

### **Rom.8:1-14**

Suppose I should take the same plan Paul did in **verse 14-25** in describing my experience to a friend; would he misunderstand me and say it was my experience at time of writing? Let us see.

"My Dear Friend: "I want to tell you a bit of my experience. There was a time in my life when I thought I was good enough. I was unawakened, and was living a good moral life.

But under the preaching of the Word I saw my uncleanness and sinfulness.

I was all right before the light shone upon my path, but when the light came my sinfulness was revealed, and I found myself in a state of death.

I try again to do good, but I cannot. The things I hate I find myself doing.

It is the sin that dwells in me that causes the whole trouble.

I find myself in a sad condition.

“O wretched man that I am!” Who shall bring about my deliverance?

Thank God I have found the way; it is through Jesus Christ my Lord.

There is therefore now no condemnation in my experience, for the Lord has taken it all away, and enables me to walk no more in the old sinful state.”

If I should write thus to a friend, would he misunderstand me and try to make it out that I am yet in a state of sin and living a miserable life?

He certainly would not.

Yet I have changed the tense, just as Paul did, in the very midst of describing the experience.

It is a common belief that all through this life there will be of necessity a warfare between the law of sin and the law of the Spirit, till later on at the hour and article of death the law of the Spirit will conquer and overcome the law of sin.

But was this Paul’s experience? No!

Is this your experience?

Are you using the pre-conversion experience of Romans 7 to hide behind sin?

If you are, I challenge you, you may lay your head on your pillow tonight in your carnal security, and wake up in hell!

We are confident that God’s regenerating power produces a better life than this!

You have all received the knowledge of the truth here today! No excuses, not that you had any before!

For if we sin willfully after we have received the

**knowledge of the truth**, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries." **Hebrews 10:26-27**

One would better trifle with chain lightning than with sin!

In view of the coming judgment, when the hearts of men will be weighed in the balances of divine justice, when sin will be sized up in its awful blackness and heinousness, let us see to it that none of the accursed thing be found upon our souls!

My God save us from fallacious reasoning to hide behind sin in **Romans chapter 7** in Jesus name!

Study Paul's own life and many things he taught.

**Paul's own life: Eph.3:8; 1Cor.4:17;1Ths.2:10; 2Cor.1:12; Ac.23:1**

How could Paul have said this if he was bound in the flesh with sin?: "What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you. **Php.4:9**

**He taught: 1Cor.6:9-11; 11:1; Gal.5:19-21; Eph.4:20-24; Eph.5:3-8; Col.3:5-6; Col.3:5-9; Rom.6;8**

Listen to this one: **1Cor.5:5** "*I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.*"

How could he have handed people over to satan for the destruction of the flesh if he himself was living in the flesh??

**Then in verse 11-13:** "But actually, I wrote to you **not to associate** with any **so-called brother** if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—**not even to eat with such a one.** <sup>12</sup> For what have I to do with

**judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within *the church*?<sup>13</sup> But those who are outside, God judges. **Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.****