

ROMANS SERIES THIRTEEN
POST SALVATION BLUES
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Romans 7

●SLIDES: Failure poster pictures

●SLIDE: “Failure: When your best just isn’t good enough.”

Paul is in a tremendous struggle with his failure and inability to be the kind of man both he and God want him to be.

His best just isn’t good enough.

●SLIDE: ROMANS 7:15-24: *I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.... 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.... 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?*

●SLIDE: [pix of declaration of independence] Romans 6 – The Christian Declaration of Independence: We are free from our sin nature. We never have to sin again.

Revolutionary War still goes on.

SLIDE OVERHEAD: Know—Calculate—Offer.

Struggle with sin nature. Count it dead, but overcoming process.

Also have struggle with what Paul calls the Law.

SLIDE OVERHEAD: Diagram: Last week: ~~Sin Nature~~ --- ~~died to its power~~ --- resurrected life
This week: ~~Law~~ _ --- ~~died to its power~~ --- resurrected life

●SLIDE: **THE LAW IS REALLY GOOD—BUT...IT IS REALLY KILLING ME! (Romans 7:7-13).**

Define Law: Mosaic Law (Genesis-Deuteronomy) and the Prophets (rest of books not including poetry).

Law in Paul’s day included Law and Prophets + Talmud, etc. Extra bodies of interpretations:

Jews were really tied to the law

Paul was trained well in all of this—and he was having a hard time getting over it.

Tired to find contemporary analogy

Modern Parallel: All the religious rules and regulations people raised up as the way to please and reach God.

Lana: People tend to be afraid of church because terrified of the laws.

Still staying away in droves.

Church not always a safe place because Pharisees have made up a list of laws.

Preaching on Gray areas: Why don’t you preachers just come up with a list of laws so we will know what is a sin and what is not?”

Romans 7:7-24 Paul points out that the Law is really good. The problem is not with the Law. The problem is

with him—he is not able to live up to it.
As a result the Law can be really bad if we don't know why it is there.

●SLIDE: THE LAW IS REALLY GOOD.

SLIDE OVERHEAD: The Law was given for our own best interests.
It can help to keep us out of trouble and make life better.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13: And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but ... to observe the Lord's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

Man on phone with relationship issues. Friend told him it is OK to have sex with someone else who is already in a relationship because “No one can control where cupid flies.”
“What about the other person who is squeezed out—and hurt. People get hurt when we go outside the bounds of proper behavior.

The Law was put in place to give us guidance until Jesus came and both birthed and adopted us into His family (Galatians 3:19-4:7).

The Law reveals sin (7:7).

READ ROMANS 7:7: *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."*

He uses coveting. This is the last of the Ten Commandments, and it differs from the other nine in that it is an inward attitude, not an outward action. Covetousness leads to the breaking of the other commandments! It is an insidious sin that most people never recognize in their own lives, but God's Law reveals it.

The Rich Ruler in Mark 10:17-27 is a good example of the use of the Law to reveal sin and show a man his need for a Savior.

True, he had never committed adultery, robbed anyone, given false witness, or dishonored his parents; but what about his covetousness? When Jesus told him to sell his goods and give to the poor, the man went away in great sorrow. The Commandment “Thou shalt not covet” had revealed to him what a sinner he really was! Instead of admitting his sin, he rejected Christ and went away unconverted.

It shows me how sinful I really am.

University Hospital echocardiogram: “Here is the problem.”

“We're going to have to x-ray.” So he puts you on that table and that amazing, miraculous machine does its click, click, click, taking those pictures. There's some ominous sounds around you, and then you wait. Then you go back into his office, and he slips a negative up on this lighted screen. And you look at your x-ray. He says to you, “You have a tumor on your lung.” What would he think if you said, “What? Not me. That's in the machine. You can't blame me for that. The machine is the problem.”

No. All the machine does is expose what's there. And that's all the law does. It tells you what's there. Now, listen, the law tells the truth. Sin is there.

●SLIDE:—BUT...THE LAW IS REALLY KILLING ME!

SLIDE OVERHEAD: The Law arouses sin (7:8-9).

READ ROMANS 7:8-9: *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.*

Something in human nature wants to rebel whenever a law is given.

Illustrate – pass sidewalk at University Hospital – beautiful grass. One day sign, “Don’t walk on the grass”. Never thought about it before. Put toe on grass.

At TMC – Pass many doors. Never tempted to enter. Saw one door near pediatric wing – “Danger, Open Shaft, Do not Open”. Stopped – hand on knob – it was locked.

Instruct a child not to go near the water, and that is the very thing he will do! Why? “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be” (Rom 8:7).

One way at University Hospital.

One way at Casas’ entrance: met Lynette and her daughter learning to drive. She threw up her hands. I haven’t done it since—except for a few times.

The Law cannot give life. It leads, in fact, to spiritual death (7:10-11).

READ ROMANS 7:10-11: 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.

One way at University Hospital: My turn, ritual, gone through back way for years—long before they remodeled and made my back door turn a one way entrance.

Then they remodeled and put a sign, one way only.

I still use it. Saves me time. Totally safe. Only now I look out for cops and I feel bad about what I do.

My conscience comes into play

The Law cannot change us nor enable us to do well (7:14-17).

Romans 7:14-17: We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin. 15 I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. 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.

My friends, what a description of the average Christian life!

Most Christians have guilt complexes galore! Want to do right – witness, read Bible, pray, be sure – Know what to do – Don’t have power to do it.

Romans 7:22-24a: 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!

“Wretched”. (The Greek word indicates a person who is exhausted after a battle.) What could be more wretched than exerting all your energy to try to live a good life, only to discover that

●SLIDE: Failure: when your best just isn’t good enough!

Romans 7:24b-25: 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!

- SLIDE: JESUS ALONE CAN RESCUE US FROM THE BONDAGE OF THE LAW (Romans 7:1-6)

Because the believer is united to Christ, he is dead to the Law and no longer under its authority. But he is alive to God and able to draw upon the power of the Holy Spirit.

- SLIDE: ROMANS 7:1-2: *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.*
- SLIDE: ROMANS 7:3: *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.*

SLIDE OVERHEAD: Notice that in Paul illustration there is only one woman, while there are two husbands. The woman is in a difficult position, for she can only be wife of one of the two, and unfortunately she is married to the less desirable one. The man to whom she is married is a good man; but he is so exacting! Yet, all of his demands are perfectly legitimate.

Thus, she is in great distress. She is fully aware that she often makes mistakes, but she lives with a husband who makes it seem as though everything she says and does is wrong!

If only she were married to that other man all would be well. He is no less exacting than her husband, but He helps much. She would love to marry Him, but her husband is still alive. What can she do?

The first husband is the Law; the second husband is Christ; and we are the woman.

But her only hope of release is through the death of her first husband, and he holds on to life most tenaciously. Indeed there is not the least prospect of his passing away. "Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished." (Matthew 5:18).

If the Law will never pass away, then how can I ever be united to Christ? How can I marry a second husband if my first husband stubbornly refuses to die? There is one way out. If he will not die, I can die; and if I die the marriage relationship is dissolved.

And that is exactly God's way of deliverance from the law. Verses 1 to 3 show that the husband should die, but in verse 4 we see that in fact it is the woman who dies.

- SLIDE: ROMANS 7:4: *So, 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.*

When Christ died, we were identified in Him; we died with Christ.

But that is not all. Remember, our Lord did not remain in the grave. On the third day He rose again and since we are in Christ we are risen, too!

Death has dissolved the old marriage relationship, so that the woman, driven to despair by the constant demands of her former husband, who never lifted a finger to help her carry them out, is now set free to

marry the other Man, who with every demand He makes becomes in her the power for its fulfillment.

By the body of Christ that sinful woman has died, but being united to Him in death she is united to Him also in resurrection.

The Law of God is not annulled; it is perfectly fulfilled, for the ridded Lord Jesus now lives out His life in her, and His life is always well-pleasing to the Father.

●**SLIDE:** The sin nature has no law. The new nature needs no law.

●**SLIDE: IN CHRIST WE ARE RESURRECTED TO THE LAW OF LOVE.**

Jesus infused new meaning into the first and greatest commandments when He revealed how the Law and the Prophets (rules and regulations) properly related to them.

MATTHEW 5:17-18: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18 I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."

Came not to destroy the law, but to fulfill it.
Sermon on the Mount fulfillments

JOHN 13:34-35: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

► **SLIDE #:** *Matthew 22:37-40: Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."*

●**SLIDE OVERHEAD:** "Love God and others (Relationships) On these two hang all the Law (Doctrines) and the Prophets (Behaviors)."

Doctrine and Behavior are like the Curbs and gutters of a street. They set limits and boundaries and they are very important.

Acts 4:12: Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

Behaviors are important. How does the Word say I should behave?

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6: It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid fornication; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you.

Terry: "Today we talked about pre-marital sex!"

David, "That's not what you talked about!"

Terry: You weren't even there!"

David: "Such is will of God...that you avoid fornication" What you talked about today was fornication. But they called it premarital sex. Pre – getting ahead – like I'm getting something early.

SLIDE OVERHEAD: When we follow the right doctrine and behavior, we will have a great relationship with God and with others. There are people who choose to live so far outside of the doctrine and behaviors that they break all of the relationships.

Let's talk about the significance of the word "Hang."

Not just law and prophets—significance is that it is hanging on Loving God and Others. Without that hook, it all falls down.

This explains the Pharisees. These religious leaders were so concerned with what to believe and how to behave that they forgot that the purpose of the Law and the Prophets was to lead people further in their relationships with God and others.

Story of MAN WITH THE WITHERED HAND healed by Christ on the Sabbath.

Can get an ox out of ditch on the Sabbath but can't heal a man with a withered hand!
Heal the hand on the Sabbath: an act of love transcends the laws, rules and regulations.

Anthony Campolo preaching evangelistic crusade in Sacramento, Ca. Thosands came to the meetings and many gave their lives to Christ.

Planning meeting many upset: successful crusade in the community and no mention by the newspaper or television media.

Campolo explained that this is no big deal to the media.

Campolo: "Suggestion: World AIDS week. Let's do something about that. Put out press release that tonight's offering will go to programs in the Sacramento area for people suffering from AIDS. If you want news coverage, that will make news.

"It is news when a bunch of evangelical Xns are willing to express love in a tangible way to people suffering from AIDS. We say we love those people, but it is usually just a bunch of words. Too many Christians and Preachers constantly yelling that people with AIDS are horrible and that God sent AIDS to punish homosexuals. Let's put our money where our mouth is."

The press release went out later that morning.

That evening the media coverage was extensive. All three major television stations were on hand with cameras and the two newspapers had reporters.

The choir sang and the tv cameras were not turned on. Campolo preached and the media paid no attention. They wanted to see what happened when it came time for evangelical Xns to give to help alleviate pain and suffering in the AIDS community.

Later that night Campolo turned on the evening news to see how the whole thing was covered.

They showed the offering being taken and then interviewed some of the people leaving the arena.

One old grandmother was moved to tears as she said, "My grandson has AIDS, and this is the first time I have ever been able to talk about it, because up until now I was made to feel so ashamed of him. I feel that he was affirmed tonight."

They interviewed one tough looking guy who was grossly overweight. His hair was a mess and he needed a shave, but they stuck a microphone under his chin and asked him, "Well, what did you think of the offering tonight?"

He answered in a gruff voice, “Well, what about it?”

The interviewer replied, “Well, people with AIDS are usually homosexuals, and you evangelical Xns haven’t been too kindly disposed to them, have you? How do you feel about your money going to people who are probably gay?”

His answer was splendid: “I don’t much about this homo stuff. All I know is that when people are sick, we’re supposed to help take care of them. Christian love is for everybody.”

What we believe and how we behave are intended to lead us into a deeper relationships with God and others.
If this is not occurring, we are still bound to the Law.

But in Christ, we died to that. We can live a better, more resurrected way!