

In my flesh, I cannot do the good I want to do, and I cannot keep from doing the evil I do not want to do.

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.



romans

THE GOSPEL OF GOD

The problem: there is a powerful presence of sin in me.

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.*

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?*

Christ has rescued me!

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.*

The Real Problem with Me

Romans 7:7-25

Is God's Law the problem?

⁷ *What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not!*

What does God's Law do?

1. The law shows us the reality and extent of sin.

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."

"...through the law we become conscious of sin." Romans 3:20

2. The law provokes sin.

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.*

3. The law results in spiritual death.

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.*

4. The law reveals that sin deceives and puts to death.

¹¹ *For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.*

5. The law shows the ways God wants people to live.

¹² *So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.*

Psalm 19:7-14

6. The law exposes sin for what it is—showing sin to be the true cause of separation from God (“death”).

¹³ *Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! But in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it produced death in me through what was good, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.*

Galatians 3:19, 22-25

The law is spiritual—but I am unspiritual (“fleshly”).

¹⁴ *We know that the law is spiritual; but I am unspiritual, sold as a slave to sin.*

In my “flesh”—I live a life of struggle against 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.*

Sin lives in me—and I have no power (in my flesh) capable of overcoming it.

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.*