

Romans 7:5-25

⁵For while we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the **law**, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. ⁶But now we are released from the law, having died to that which held us captive, so that we serve in the new way of the **Spirit** and not in the old way of the written code.

⁷What then shall we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. For I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, “You shall not covet.”

⁸But sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. For apart from the law, sin lies dead.

⁹I was once alive apart from the law, but when the commandment came, sin came alive and I died. ¹⁰The very commandment that promised life proved to be death to me. ¹¹For sin, seizing an opportunity through the commandment, deceived me and through it killed me. ¹²So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and righteous and good.

¹³Did that which is good, then, bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, producing death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. ¹⁴For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. ¹⁵For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. ¹⁶Now if I do what I do not want, I agree with the law, that it is good. ¹⁷So now it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me. ¹⁸For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh. For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out. ¹⁹For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing. ²⁰Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹So I find it to be a law that when I want to do right, evil lies close at hand. ²²For I delight in the law of God, in my inner being, ²³but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

²⁴Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?

²⁵Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

Powerless to change

*I do not understand my own actions.
For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.*

A controversial passage

- Who is he talking about?
- Chapter 7 and the law ('law' 20x and 'commandment' 6x)
- Romans and the law
- A framework for understanding:

7:5 is expanded in 7:7-25

7:6 is expanded in 8:1-17

Powerless to change

- The law isn't bad – we are! (7:7-12)
- The law is good – it shows us we are not! (7:13-20)
- But the law is powerless to change us (7:21-25)

The Christian and the law

- The *powerlessness* of the law (3:19-20; 4:14-15; 7:5)
- The *value* of the law (3:1-2; 7:7,12,13,22)
- The *end* of the law (8:1-4; 10:4; 7:6; 13:8-10)